



# For the JOY of Learning

Course Catalog

# Mission

My mission is to offer high-quality, dynamic, and engaging creative writing classes and workshops to young people in Bend. Creative writing is not only nourishing for the imagination, but also develops your close-reading skills, your critical thinking, and your understanding of how language works. In addition, creative writing can help young people discover who they are and what they love, develop deep empathy for different cultures and ways of life, and build a creative community with their peers.

# About Me

I am a writer, performer, educator, and youth mentor who believes in the power of passion-driven learning. I believe that learning should be a JOYFUL experience that leaves plenty of room for natural curiosity. I have a passion for reading and writing and I believe that both help us discover our true selves and become better critical thinkers, empathetic listeners, and compassionate doers.

I have been an educator since 2007, working with high school and middle school students in English, creative writing, and humanities across the globe, most recently at Cascades Academy, REALMS Middle School and Bend Parks and Recreation in Bend, OR . Along the way I received an MA in Literature and an MFA in Writing for Children. I am currently writing books for children but my passion for creative education has ignited a desire to create a stress-free and grade-free environment for learning where students can be themselves and follow their own instincts in the literary arts.



[www.forthejoyoflearning.com](http://www.forthejoyoflearning.com)



# My Courses

The following courses are generally designed as six-week courses that meet once a week after school for 90 minutes per session, but all of them can be adjusted (including into a single in-school workshop). I may also have availability to teach electives that meet during school hours.

Courses that can be adapted to different age groups have been indicated, but there may be even more flexibility, so please ask.

I prefer to limit my classes to 12 students, with a minimum of 8, to ensure that each student gets individualized attention.

At present I charge \$175 per student per 6-week course, but I am open to negotiating adjusted rates for need-base students or in-school electives.

# Elementary School



# Story Camp

Do you love reading and writing stories? Come let your imagination take flight in this dynamic story camp. Through games, art, puppets, theater, reading and writing we will explore the incredible world of storytelling while also having a whole lot of fun! Learn how to create fantastic, interesting characters. Design the perfect setting for your story. Figure out how to craft an exciting plot that creates conflict and offers satisfying resolution. Beyond just writing, expect to be on your feet and collaborating with your peers to create new stories and new worlds in a supportive, creative environment.

# Nature Writing

The great outdoors have inspired poets, writers, and storytellers since time began! In this fun, interactive writing camp, we will use nature as our inspiration for writing poems, stories, and short plays. We will read excerpts from some great nature writers, play storytelling games, and explore the natural world around us to find seeds of ideas for our own creative projects.

# Puppets & Performance

Puppet theater is a unique storytelling style with deep roots in history and cultures around the world. It requires storytelling and design techniques that provide a fun, artistic challenge. In this workshop, students will learn about different kinds of puppets, design and build their own puppets as original characters, and write and perform stories through puppet shows.

# Reclaiming Fairy Tales

Fairy tales and folk tales exist across every culture and civilization in the world, passed on through generations of both oral and written storytelling. But sometimes these stories don't fit well into the modern world with our new values and perspectives. In this class, we will explore fairy tales from different cultures, draw inspiration from them, and rewrite them to better reflect modern values of equality, inclusivity, and empowerment.

# Middle School



# The Art of the Story

This course is designed for middle school writers who are interested in writing short stories, a novel, or a screenplay. Whether you already have some ideas written down or know you have a story inside of you, in this course you will learn how to plan, structure and start writing the story you've always wanted to write. Each week focuses on different story elements, including compelling characters, plot and structure, setting and description, conflict and resolution, and effective dialogue. Each mini lesson is followed by targeted writing exercises that can be applied directly to the story you are writing. By the end of this course you will have a creative writing toolkit to continue bringing your stories to life!

# Page to Stage

(Elementary Adaptable)

In this dynamic, high-energy class, we will explore short stories, book excerpts, and poetry through the context of theater and performance. While most reading happens in silence, solitude, and stillness, this class will bring reading into the realm of voices, collaboration and movement. Studies show that when we study language through body movement and performance, we internalize ideas in a more concrete way. For those who love words and storytelling and the joy of bringing them to life, this is the course for you! You don't need any theater experience, just a willingness to put yourself out there and casually perform in a safe, supportive environment with no judgment.



# A Whole New World: Sci-fi and Fantasy Worldbuilding

(High School Adaptable)

For those who love to read and write sci-fi and fantasy, this course is designed to take a deep dive into what it takes to create new worlds through the craft of worldbuilding. From the physical landscape, climate, and strange flora and fauna to the histories, socio-economic structures of societies, and magic systems, there is a lot to play with before a story set in a new world can even begin! Learn how to create beautiful, complex, and believable worlds that could serve as the background for endless stories and adventures.

# Book Lovers Book Club

(Elementary Adaptable)

This is a course for kids who love to read books! And talk about books! And do fun, creative activities related to books! Over six weeks, we will read some great books (and YOU get to provide suggestions for what we read). During our meetings we will discuss these books and engage in dynamic, interactive activities related to these books. This could include artistic responses, writing fan fiction, writing book reviews (or video book reviews), or putting on puppet shows. Come excited to read some fun, diverse stories and engage with other book lovers.

# High School



# Poetry Craft & Critique

This course is designed for high school students who love to write poetry and want to connect with other teen poets. Over six weeks, writers will learn techniques that address essential elements of poetry while getting a chance to give and receive feedback on their own creative work. Studying and practicing the art of poetry improves your close-reading skills, critical thinking, and creative problem solving. Each student will receive detailed feedback from me on their work as well as some tips for continuing to develop their poetry craft moving forward.

# Fiction Craft & Critique

This course is designed for high school students who love to write fiction and want to connect with other teen writers. Over six weeks, writers will learn techniques that address essential elements of storytelling craft while getting a chance to give and receive feedback on their own creative work. Each class will begin with a 45-minute story craft mini-lesson, followed by related writing exercises. Students will receive detailed feedback from me on their work as well as some tips for continuing to develop their story ideas and writing craft moving forward.

# Now I Become Myself

(For High School Seniors)

Senior year is a pivotal time in a young adult's life, fraught with complex thoughts and emotions about the next phase in life. In this course, rising seniors will engage in deep reflection about their hopes, fears, anxieties and goals for the upcoming school year and beyond. Through writing exercises and thoughtful discussion with peers, students will turn inward to start exploring who they are and what they want in life. This reflection may develop into the basis for a powerful, personal college essay, ignite ideas about alternative post-secondary paths, or help students make a meaningful plan for how to most enjoy their final year at school while still preparing for the future. At its essence this is a writing course designed around what it means to be a young adult on the brink of transition.

## Other Ideas?

I am always excited to discuss and design new courses to meet student interest and needs or to align with school programming. I also offer writing mentorship to students who are excited to dig even deeper into their writing and need some accountability and guidance. I can provide references from Bend Parks and Rec, REALMS Middle School, and Cascades Academy upon request.

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[www.forthejoyoflearning.com](http://www.forthejoyoflearning.com)

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