

Creative Writing and Effective Speaking

Summary

Name of Discipline:	Creative Writing and Effective Speaking
Teacher(s):	Bökös Borbála-Mária Szabó Roland-Attila
Contact(s):	bokosborbala@partium.ro rolandszabo@partium.ro
Weekly Hours (course + seminar/lab/practice):	1 course + 1 seminar
Credits:	5
Language of Instruction:	English
Year of Study (recommended):	All years

Prerequisites

A good command of English language is necessary (min. B2 level).

Course Content

Abstract

This course is designed to introduce students to the fundamentals of creative writing and storytelling as well as developing techniques to form their own ideas and have nuanced opinions on any topic in speaking. Over 14 weeks, students will use critical thinking, practice debating skills, and improve their ability to improvise, dwell on details, and view topics from multiple perspectives – all necessary for them to learn how to develop compelling narratives, create vivid characters, and craft engaging settings. Through a mix of theory, analysis, and practical writing and speaking exercises, students will refine their creative skills and produce original written works. The course will focus on both the art and craft of storytelling, encouraging students to find their unique voice as speakers and writers.

Course Objectives:

- To understand the key elements of narrative structure and storytelling.
- To acquire techniques in speaking which enhance fluency, continuity, and spontaneity
- To develop skills in creating dynamic characters, settings, and plots.
- To improve critical thinking and debating skills
- To explore different genres and styles of creative writing.
- To delve into multiple perspectives and develop the ability to view a topic from several angles
- To practice and refine writing through guided exercises and workshops.
- To form relevant opinions, reflect on others' viewpoints and interact constructively
- To critique and revise written work, both individually and collaboratively.
- To provide and accept constructive criticism to and from each other

Topics

Writing:

Week	Topic
Week 1	<p>Introduction to Creative Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: What is Creative Writing? Finding Your Voice- Lesson: Overview of creative writing genres, free writing exercises to spark creativity.- Exercises:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- discussing favorite stories, discussing personal stories- Creative Task: write a short piece (200-300 words) inspired by a personal memory.
Week 2	<p>Understanding Narrative Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: The Basics of Narrative Structure (Beginning, Middle, End)- Lesson: The three-act structure, story arcs, and pacing.- Exercises:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- looking at short stories written from different POV (point of view)- Creative Task: write a short piece (200-300 words) from 1st or 3rd POV, contrasting perspectives, arguments
Week 3	<p>Creating Compelling Characters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: Character Development, Motivation, and Growth- Lesson: Building complex characters with desires, flaws, and arcs.- Excerpts :<ul style="list-style-type: none">- discussing favorite fantasy/anime characters, using visual prompts for character design, discussing personality traits- Creative Task: write a character sketch for a protagonist and antagonist (100-200 words each).
Week 4	<p>Crafting Vivid Settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: Worldbuilding, Atmosphere, and Setting as Character- Lesson: The role of setting in storytelling, creating a sense of place.- Exercises:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Creative Task: describe a setting in detail, focusing on sensory details and atmosphere (100-200 words).
Week 5	<p>Developing Strong Dialogue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: Writing Realistic and Purposeful Dialogue- Lesson: Techniques for writing dialogue that reveals character and advances the plot.- Exercises: discussing examples of dialogues in fiction and real life situations- Creative Task: Write and act out a dialogue-driven scene between two characters (200-300 words)
Week 6	<p>Theme and Symbolism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: Using Themes and Symbols to Add Depth- Lesson: How to weave themes and symbols into a narrative for deeper meaning.- Exercises:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- identifying expressive themes, ideas, symbols in short stories and visual stories (animes, comics)- Creative Task: Identify a theme and symbol for a story idea, then write a scene that incorporates them (200 words)
Week 7	<p>Building Tension and Conflict. Resolution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: Types of Conflict, Suspense, and Climax- Lesson: Techniques for building narrative tension and resolving conflict.- Exercises:<ul style="list-style-type: none">-discussing tensions and conflicts in human and cultural relations. Everyday life experiences.- Creative Task: Write a scene that builds to a climax, focusing on increasing tension, and arriving to a resolution (max 300 words). Use an everyday situation.

Speaking:

Week 1	<p>Introduction to Speaking Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: What are speaking skills?- Lesson: Overview of factors that influence and determine fluency, continuity and spontaneity.- Exercises:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- talking about a familiar topic- using strategies / giving tips and recommendations / establishing goals- Creative Task: Share a personal memory.
Week 2	<p>Voice Inflexion and Body Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: Speaking in such a way that others want to listen- Lesson: create interest with prosody, intonation, pitch, tone as well as body language- Speaking exercises:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Acting out situations in different contexts- Tell familiar stories to practice enthusiastic tone
Week 3	<p>Improvisation and Creating Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: Multiple Perspectives and Approaches- Lesson: Acquiring strategies to develop new ideas and to use improvisation successfully- Speaking exercises:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Improvisation games- Picture-based speaking tasks- Creative Task: Brainstorm ideas on several topics / Connect any personal experience
Week 4	<p>Debating Skills and Building Relevant Arguments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: The role and use of critical thinking in argument development- Lesson: Detailing arguments for/against something / developing reasons for holding a particular point-of view- Speaking exercises:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Shifting perspectives- Inventing possible reasons for people's certain actions and points of view- Creative Task: Debates in pairs with the purpose to convince the other person.
Week 5	<p>Meaningful Interaction: Engaging with the Speaking Partner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: Listening skills and Connecting with the Speaker- Lesson: Focusing and Reflecting on What Is Being Said- Listening and Speaking exercises:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Listening to speakers expressing opinions to reflect on them- Continue ideas / Ask questions / Reflect with an opinion- Creative Task: Perform a dialogue in which both speakers engage in what the other person says about a given topic.
Week 6	<p>Exploring Vivid Vocabulary and Range of Complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Topics: Vocabulary and Language Improvement- Lesson: Discovering a variety of ways to express an idea, including synonyms and different language structures.- Speaking Exercises:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Talking about a topic with Vocabulary Prompts- Rephrasing our opinions to express the same ideas differently- Creative Task: Research a topic in terms of vocabulary and then force yourself to use the words while talking about it in a monologue. Include a few new sentence structures.

Week 7	<p>Problem-Solving Group Discussions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Topics: Organized Speaking Based on Preparations - Lesson: Researching solutions and preparing for discussions in order to solve a problem. - Exercises: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brainstorming the nature of the problem and the possible reasons - Researching for possible solutions - Practicing giving and accepting constructive criticism - Creative Task: Carry out a group discussion where each member strives to contribute in order to move the discussion towards the resolution.
---------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Learning Outcomes

After completing the course, students will be able to:

- Write and revise original works of fiction with well-developed characters, settings, and plots.
- Identify and apply narrative structures, including the three-act structure, to create compelling stories.
- Analyze and incorporate literary techniques such as dialogue, point of view, and symbolism into their own writing.
- Experiment with different genres and styles of creative writing, expanding their versatility as writers.
- Critically evaluate their own work and the work of peers, providing constructive feedback.
- Understand the process of revision and its importance in refining creative work.
- Prepare and submit their writing for publication, understanding the steps involved in the publishing process.
- Develop a consistent writing practice that supports ongoing creative growth and exploration.

-
- Understand the factors that determine the overall quality of a spoken text including its effect on the audience
 - Vary voice inflexion and use body language adequately according to what the communicated message requires.
 - Use improvisation to their own advantage in order to maintain idea-construction on the spot
 - Build relevant arguments and improve their debating skills
 - Interact meaningfully with another speaking partner by increasing efficiency in listening skills
 - Understand how varied vocabulary and a certain level of complexity add diversity to a delivered message
 - Participate constructively in group discussions where contribution is the norm.

This syllabus is designed to guide students through the essential elements of creative writing and speaking, providing them with the tools and confidence to craft their own stories and pursue their writing and oral communication goals.

Assessment

Class Activity (active involvement in discussions, presentations, class assignments) 100%

Requirements to Pass

Minimum 30% in Class Activity and minimum a 5th grade obtained from each part of the course (writing+speaking).

Bibliography:

Bal, Mieke. *Narratology*. Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 2009.

Bennet, Andy. *An introduction to literature, criticism and theory*. Harlow: Pierson Longman, 2004.

Chatman, Seymour Benjamin. *Story and discourse: narrative structures in fiction and film*. NY: Cornell UP, 1983.

Forster, E. M. *Aspects of the novel*. London: Penguin, 2000.

Foster, Thomas. *How to read literature*. New York, Harper Perennial, 2011.

Genard, Gary. *How to Give a Speech*, Cedar & Maitland Press, 2007.

Hauge, Michael. *Writing Screenplays that Sell*. London: Methuen Drama, 2011.

Harrington, David and Charles LeBeau. *Speaking of Speech*. MacMillan, 2009.

Kline, John A. *Speaking Effectively*. Pearson Education Ltd, 2004.

McCormack, Joan and Sebastian Watkins. *English for Academic Study: Speaking Course Book*, Garnet Publishing Ltd, 2009.

Scholes, Robert. *The Nature of Narrative*. Oxford UP, 2006.

Shippey, Tom. *The Oxford Book of Fantasy Stories*, Oxford UP, 2003.

Thompson, Kristine. *Storytelling in the new Hollywood: Understanding Classical narrative Technique*. London: Harvard UP, 2001.

Thornbury, Scott. *How to Teach Speaking*. Longman, 2005.

Tracy, Brian. *Speak to Win. How to Present with Power in Any Situation*. AMACOM, 2008.

Writing Prose: Techniques and Purposes, Toronto: Oxford UP, 1981.