



Adult Writing Workshops

These can be presented at your local library, community centre or another location but moveable tables or a board table is required (round table format). Participation is part of the workshop format. Fees are dependent on the number of registrants expected and specifics of your request. For a workshop format, suitable numbers are six to twelve participants. Additional workshop topics are available and can be tailored to your needs. Examples: Self-publishing, and Making Your Writers' Feedback Group More Effective. Generally, workshops are open to both new and experienced writers. Length and content adapted as:

- Three hours
- 1 or 2 day workshop (6 hours per day including 1 hour for lunch)
- A number of three-hour workshops
- More extensive treatments may be available for week-long workshops.

Creative Nonfiction: Oxymoron with Options, Opportunities and Pitfalls

Can nonfiction be both fact-based or "truthful" and creative? Many writers suggest creative nonfiction deserves recognition as a full-fledged genre as fascinating, challenging and worthy as traditional fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Yes, boundaries do become blurred. Dangers lurk beneath the grey and murky "waters," and writers have faced legal challenges. Yet, for wordsmiths, having a sense of the form means learning tools and techniques of the genre. Discovering some of the masters makes reading and writing biography, autobiography, public history, historical fiction and personal essay more compelling. Come with pen, paper and questions.

Duration 3 hours. Weekend workshops can be made available.

Creative Writing: An Introduction

Many dream of writing. The challenge is getting started and developing habits that will help fulfil those dreams. The course will be an opportunity to explore and experiment with many different types of creative writing, from poetry to articles to short stories. Learning what and how to share and how to respond to the work of others is also part of becoming comfortable with writing, writing groups and our own writing projects. So, plan to begin the process in a supportive environment.

Duration 3 hours. Weekend workshops can be made available.

Developing Great Characters

Although most come to their projects with specific characters in mind, writers can work on depth of characterization to make them believable. Writing great characters is more than a matter of deciding whether they will be flat or round characters with personalities that are static or evolving. Take the opportunity to consider new ways to think about your characters so that they come to life in the minds of readers.

Duration 3 hours.

First Three Chapters

The first three chapters of any book-length work, fiction or nonfiction, are critical in determining the direction for the rest of the work, as well as in capturing the attention of potential publishers and readers. Through discussion and feedback, explore approaches to make those chapters the best they can be.

Duration 9 hours (3 sessions) or weekend workshop.

For Calgary writers, this course is periodically offered through Faculty of Extension at Mount Royal University.

From Empty Page to Publication

Where do you find ideas for writing? What genre should you choose? What do you need to know about writing nonfiction, fiction or poetry. When you get bogged down or suffer writer's block, how can you re-vitalize yourself and your work? In this workshop, you write, experiment, share and learn tips, too.

Duration 3 hours. Weekend workshops can be made available.

Jumble of Genres & Styles

The same heroic or tragic story can inspire fiction, nonfiction or poetry. The choice of genre governs what writers may include in their work as well as their writing style. You will explore such choices and compare original draft material to edited/printed version of the excerpt. Then experiment with writing the same content in different genres and in the styles consistent with that form. Also, learn what is meant by “genre fiction” and have some fun with it.

Duration 3 hours. Weekend workshops can be made available.

Plot

Plot is more than what happens next, and it’s more than having a conflict. Plot development can take many forms and “shapes.” Whether you are plotting a literary short story, captivating a significant historical event, developing a psychological thriller or tackling a genre novel, you need some type of tension to captivate readers. Evaluate traditional plot forms and explore other possibilities to make what happens as interesting as possible.

Duration 3 hours.

Whose Story Is It?

In crafting true and fictional stories, the most important decision you make is who tells the tale. That means choosing a “point of view.” Discover how changing the narrator and viewpoint lead to entirely different stories — perhaps an even better ones! With tips and examples from her own writing, Faye will demonstrate the power of point of view as a writing tool. Then, participants have the opportunity to begin drafting stories. What is left? Why, sharing those creations!

Duration: 3 hours.

Submissions and Markets

Writing can be pleasure, business or both. If your goal is to see your words in print, discover what to expect, what works and what doesn’t work. Whether you want to publish articles, poetry, fiction or books, learn tips on possible markets, effective queries, formats for submissions, useful web sites and helpful groups so you can achieve your dream. Submissions and Markets booklet accompanies workshop.

Duration 6 hours or weekend workshop.

The Editing Process; The Edited Manuscript

See and experience the editing process from both an author’s and editor’s points of views. What are the various types and styles of editing? What should authors expect? When should editors tread lightly? When push comes to shove, who should win? Why? And how can writers and editors make the process work better so both come out winners? Booklet accompanies workshop.

Duration 6 hours or weekend workshop

Journals, Blogs and Personal Essays

Journals and other types of personal writing help us get writing and keep writing. Useful to people in many professions, for writers, they are places to capture thoughts, emotions, scenes, people and important details. Sometimes, they even become the chosen style for fiction. Discover the array of uses and how to make them unique and especially valuable.

Duration 3 hours.

Writing Lives Into Stories

Sometimes, we realize it is time to share what we know about eccentric great grandpa, brave Aunt Mary or our own experiences. Whether you want to publish a life-based fiction, create a family keepsake, submit to a community history, or write a tribute for a special occasion, discover writing styles that will help you captivate readers. Experiment with finding the balance between matters of the head and heart. Come to the workshop with an idea of the story you want to tell. Participants will write portions of those stories and share them with the class.

Duration 12 hours (4 sessions) or weekend workshop.

For Calgary writers, this course is periodically offered through the Faculty of Extension at Mount Royal University.

Writing Articles to Publish

Have you ever read an article and thought, "I could have written that"? This workshop shows you where to find ideas and turn them into a marketable venture. Half the class is spent exploring short nonfiction from concept to draft, the other half discussing how markets work. This is ideal for novice writers wishing to write for the magazine market.

Duration 6 hours or weekend workshop.

For Calgary writers, this course is periodically offered through Faculty of Extension at Mount Royal University.