

WRITER IN RESIDENCE SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAMME

An eight-week sign-up programme consisting of a weekly creative writing workshop for secondary school students from 1st to 5th year. The lessons are fun, fast-paced, and practical, with discussion, writing exercises, and a focus on editing and work to a professional level.

WEEK 1 – Introduction: A mission statement will be taken so the students’ specific interests can be folded into the course. We will then look at idea generation and basic story structure.

WEEK 2 – Character: We will zero in on the four crucial aspects of character – *want, need, limitation, strength*, using pop culture examples, log lines, and deep-diving on balancing relatability, likeability and realism.

WEEK 3 – Narrative Voice: We will break down various opening chapters to look at what makes an arresting voice. Students will experiment with different genres, *show don’t tell*, and how to develop their unique viewpoint on the world into a narrative voice.

WEEK 4 – The Science of Magic: This week is about worldbuilding – designing a setting, building magic systems and how to achieve narrative unity between description and plot.

WEEK 5 – Dialogue: How to portray character through dialogue, how to use it to influence pacing, the art of exposition and how to tackle script-writing.

WEEK 6 - Poetry: We will look at rhythm, brevity, performance and editing, as well as dealing with tough or political issues through verse. With optional guest speaker from Dublin’s vibrant spoken word scene.

WEEK 7 – Editing: This week we will discuss how to edit your work professionally, the difference between a first draft and a final draft, how to prepare a manuscript for submission to a publisher and how to talk critically about someone else’s work.

WEEK 8 – Getting Published: In our final week, we will look at the process of submitting to competitions and publishers – SMF, cover letter, synopses, and discuss how you find the best agent and the best deal.

GRADUATION – Open Evening: After the eight weeks, a piece the students have worked on for the duration of the course will be showcased in a night of readings for parents and staff.

The above is just my template. I can adapt the course to your own requirements – longer classes, guest speakers, building portfolios, exam techniques, one-on-one tutoring, etc. Teachers are welcome to sit in and participate or take notes on the various assignments and creative writing techniques.

An eight-week course of weekly one-hour sessions costs 1600e plus VAT at 23%. For more information, contact my assistant at info@daverudden.com