

The basics of creative writing

An exciting introductory course for new writers of short stories, novels, memoirs and books for children.

Every art form, from cooking to painting to furniture making, has basic skills that the beginner has to master before he or she can move on to creating competent and original work.

This online course teaches the basic skills of creative writing: dialogue, action and description. Students learn how to balance these elements in their writing, how to introduce mood and tension, and how to write scenes that read professionally.

Course details:

Modules: three modules

Duration: four months

Start date: at any time; applications all year round

Student completes 30 writing exercises with one-on-one instruction from a tutor

Tutor:

Helen Brain is the author of over 30 books for children, and has contributed stories and plays to numerous school anthologies. Her teen novel, *Tamara*, won an ATKV award. She has also published short stories for adults, and her highly acclaimed memoir, *Here Be Lions*, was published by Oshun in 2006.

Admission requirements:

- Students must be proficient in the English language
- Email and internet access required
- No previous tertiary qualification required

Curriculum:

Module one: the components of fiction

- 20 practical lessons in the nitty-gritty basics of creative writing.
- Learning the components: description, action and dialogue.
- Tasks: complete and submit 20 short exercises in these elements.

Module two: learning how to write scenes

- Putting it all together - learn how to write balanced scenes using description, action and dialogue.
- Learning from the experts - analysing scenes from the world's best fiction writers.
- Writing apprentice pieces.
- Tasks: analyse ten scenes from established writers for description, action, dialogue, mood and pace. Write apprentice pieces in the style of five of the listed writers.

Module three: writing your own scenes

- How to decide on the balance between action, dialogue and description.
- How to begin writing.
- How to edit and rewrite.
- Coping with writer's block.
- Tasks: write five 1,000 word scenes from the list of prompts. Rewriting and editing your scenes.

How does the course work?

The course consists of three modules. Detailed class notes covering the content of each module are emailed to students. At the end of each section, students will be required to complete writing exercises. In total, the course includes forty short writing assignments, all of which count towards the final result of the student, marked out of 500. Once the writing assignment has been completed, and emailed to the lecturer, an assessment and feedback will be sent to the student, and the module will be considered complete. The next module will then be emailed to the student.

Conditions of certification:

Students will receive an SA Writers College Certificate upon successful completion of the course, provided they meet the following conditions:

- Students must have completed all 30 writing assignments.
- The course must have been completed within three months of registration.
- Students are expected to attain a minimum average of 50% for the course

Date: 09 February 2018

Venue: Online correspondence, Countrywide

Cost: R4,795

Date: 23 February 2018

Venue: Online correspondence, Countrywide

Cost: R4,795

Date: 02 March 2018

Venue: Online correspondence, Countrywide

Cost: R4,795

Date: 30 March 2018

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Date: 06 April 2018

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Cost: R4,795

Date: 25 May 2018

Venue: Online correspondence, Countrywide

Cost: R4,795

Date: 01 June 2018

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