

WRTG 200
Creative Writing Studio

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Territorial Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge that we are gathered here today on the unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples, including the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh nations. Unceded means that this land was never surrendered, relinquished or handed over in any way.

Territorial Acknowledgement

Today, most of BC remains unceded sovereign Native lands, over which neither the Canadian or BC governments have the legal or moral authority to govern. I hope that our words and actions today can help to foster a better understanding of how we can support Indigenous sovereignty as settlers and uninvited guests on this land, AND to work to create new relationships with the Original Peoples of this land, based in honour and respect.

Syllabus

The most challenging aspect of this class is the schedule.

Work in groups of 3 to examine the syllabus + schedule to try and figure out how it all works.

Write down any questions that arise in your discussion.

Also consider proposing agreements that we could jointly decide to follow in the running of this class.

Joint Agreements for this Class

The Interview

Talk to the person you are paired with. Get some interesting information from them.

Whatever Works: finding out what you care about

The Menu (think of your own answers first)

- What makes you angry?
- What are you afraid of?
- What do you want?
- What's thrilling? What hurts?
- What really changed you?
- Who really changed you?

“I always write from my own experiences, whether I've had them or not.” – Ron Carlson

The Interview

Write one sentence as objectively as possible. Describe the person journalistically, focusing on the facts of their life as they have related them to you.

Write another sentence as if they are a character in a story. Describe them as -creatively- as possible. Take some creative license with the facts.

Whatever Works

Freewriting: start with the phrase, “I remember...” and keep writing. Don’t stop. Do not stop. Stop stopping.

Write the story of a scar you have.

George Saunders

Video

On Story

Jane was
a jerk.

You
write
now.

Whatever Works: Pillow Book

- Things I wish had never been said.
- Red things.
- Things more embarrassing than nudity.
- Things to put off as long as possible.
- Things to die for.
- Acid things.
- Things that only last a day.

Abstract + Concrete

Write a passage which describes a room, using concrete words to account for its physical component -- its furniture, surfaces, dimensions, occupants and so on. Continue your description by using abstract words to interpret the specifics you have written about.

Abstract + Concrete

When you have written this passage, take a look at it. Underline the words that refer concretely; circle those that express abstractions. Consider the patterns these words make, the experience they present to the reader.

Discuss with your partner: would the passage make a different impression on the reader if the abstract expressions preceded rather than followed the concrete expressions? If the reader encountered only abstract claims? Only concrete descriptions?

Room Exercise

Collaboratively draw a room. Include specific items that a person who might inhabit that room would want.

Then each of you write your own character sketch of the person who lives in that space.

Next Class

Collaborative Assignment

Hand in your creative reading responses to the list poems, “The Gathering Cloud,” and Janet Burroway’s “Whatever Works” (all posted on Moodle)