

# **Creative Writing**

## **Our Mission**

The students will develop their unique voice through the writing, critiquing, revising and reading of various genres, including the short story, creative non-fiction, poetry, playwriting and screenwriting. They will workshop and produce their writing in a variety of individual, group, performance and publishing formats.

## **Overview of Four Years**

### **9<sup>th</sup> Grade**

In the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, the students will focus on the fundamentals of creative writing, building the vocabulary they need to talk about and advance their work. Their course work will include an Introduction to Short Story and Poetry Writing, Creative Non-Fiction Writing, and Humanities. High school is different from middle school; the students must learn to balance the demands of their art area with the rigorous academic requirements at HSPVA.

### **10<sup>th</sup> Grade**

In the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, the students will focus more on dramatic writing. They will take Playwriting and Screenwriting, and supplemental courses such as Acting and Digital Storytelling that will help them better understand the genres in which they are writing.

### **11<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Having taken introductory classes in various genres, the students will now choose one area on which to focus, and they will meet in smaller, intensive workshops to further develop their craft. Additionally, 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will edit and produce a literary journal and learn more about the business of editing and publishing. The students will also take part in master classes with guest lecturers and writers.

### **12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

In their final year at HPSVA, the students will continue to workshop their pieces in smaller groups, with the goal of writing, revising and editing a full-length novel, a collection of poems or short stories, or a full-length play or screenplay and prepare for their Senior Recital. They will take part in master classes with guest lecturers and writers and ready their portfolios for college applications.

## **Course Descriptions**

### ***FRESHMEN***

#### **Introduction to the Craft of Writing**

The students will examine theme, character, diction, syntax and figurative language in published works to gain a deeper understanding of how these elements add meaning to texts. The students will complete in-class writing exercises and participate in classroom discussions on their original works.

#### **The Short Story**

The students will examine the style of a diverse range of published short story writers. They will complete in-class writing exercises and participate in classroom discussion on original works. The students will be expected to keep a writing journal and to complete one short story with revisions.

#### **Poetry**

The students will examine the style of a diverse range of published poets. They will complete in-class writing exercises and participate in classroom discussions on original works. The students will be expected to keep a writing journal and to complete 3 poems with revisions.

#### **Creative Non-Fiction**

The students will examine the style of a diverse range of published essayists. They will complete in-class writing exercises and participate in classroom discussions on original works. The students will be expected to keep a writing journal and to complete a personal essay with revisions.

### ***SOPHOMORES***

#### **Playwriting**

The students will examine the style of a diverse range of produced playwrights. They will complete in-class writing exercises and participate in classroom discussions on original works. The students will be expected to keep a writing journal and to complete a 10-minute play with revisions.

#### **Character and Dialogue**

The students will study fictional and historical characters to better determine what makes a character strong. They will also study different types of dialogue, from the heightened to the realistic, to better understand what constitutes engaging dialogue. The students will participate in in-class writing exercises and in classroom discussions.

#### **Screenwriting**

The students will examine the style of a diverse range of screenwriters and filmmakers. They will complete in-class writing exercises and participate in classroom discussion on original works. The students will be expected to keep a writing journal and to complete a 10 page scene from a film with revision.

#### **Digital Storytelling**

The students will create stories using images and words on the computer (using Windows Moviemaker/Adobe Premier Elements?). The students will be expected to complete a video set to previously published music or poetry and a video set to their original ideas.

## ***JUNIORS***

### **Writing Workshop I**

The students will hone in on their individual interests and strengths. They will choose a genre on which to focus their writing and meet in small groups to focus on their particular craft. The students will participate in group discussions and individual critiques.

### **Writing Workshop II**

The students will further develop their skills with independent writing time. They will choose a genre on which to focus their writing. They will meet in small groups to focus on their particular craft and participate in group discussions and individual critiques. The student will be expected to produce 40-50 revised and edited pages at the end of the course.

### **Editing, Revising and Selecting: Monthly Performance\***

The students will learn the rules and language of editing, proofreading and copy editing, following the rules set forth in the Chicago Manual of Style. The students will also be responsible for selecting the pieces for and organizing the performances of monthly public readings or performances of original works.

### **Editing, Revising and Selecting: Literary Journal\***

The students will learn the rules and language of editing, proofreading and copy editing, following the rules set forth in the Chicago Manual of Style. The students will also be responsible for selecting the pieces for and organizing the publication of the Literary Journal.

\*can be combined as one class, divided into different interest groups

## ***SENIORS***

### **Senior Thesis**

The students will draft and revise a work from their chosen genre. This may include a collection of short stories, a selection of poetry, a full-length play or a full-length screenplay.

### **Senior Project**

The students will prepare their theses for production in the form of a reading of their stories or poems, a staged reading of their play, a filmed excerpt or staged reading of a film script. The students will get ready and submit their writing to various publishing, production and competitive opportunities.

### **Senior Elective**

The students will create text in a new format. This may include, but is not limited to, a graphic novel, a chapbook, a short video, or children's literature. The students may also choose to repeat an earlier class such as digital storytelling or oral interpretation, completing the coursework in a more in-depth level.