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NMH SUMMER SESSION

2010
College Prep Program
CREATIVE WRITING

This course was designed to provide students with the opportunity to explore and experiment with different forms of creative writing, including fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction. The class spent one full week on each of the following organizing principles: description, creative nonfiction, narrative point of view, character, and plot. The first few days of each week, the students wrote 20 lines of poetry and 1000 to 1500 words of prose per day, depending on the amount of reading on any particular night. At the end of the week, they polished one piece of prose and one poem for submission for a grade. Consequently, over the course of five weeks, they generated portfolios of some 20 pieces of rough work and five polished pieces. Peer and teacher editing was emphasized throughout the course, to give feedback on every piece of student writing.

The students read short stories by Michael Chabon, T.C. Boyle, John Barth, and Tim O'Brien, and the teachers supplied poems from various sources. Poetry instruction included basic prosody so that student writers could practice formulaic poetry in addition to free verse. They were required to choose, memorize, and recite at least 10 lines of poetry every week, to give them practice speaking under pressure as well as knowing a poem so well that its delivery amounted to interpretation. Final grades were based on that test, completion of daily assignments, weekly polished pieces, class participation, and the final project.

The class met for three hours, six days a week, for the five-week session. Students received approximately three hours of homework per evening, usually consisting of both reading and writing.

TEXTS: Chabon, Michael, ed. *McSweeney's Mammoth Treasury of Thrilling Tales*. New York: Vintage, 2002.
Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual, Fifth Edition*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009.

Master Teacher: John W. Adams
Northfield Mount Hermon School

Teaching Intern: Jessica Bonnem
Opelousas Senior High School