

Course outline: Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques



What makes Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques even better than our foundation courses? And why should you take the next step with us?

Key points

- Choose from any of these options:
 - Learn from anywhere with our 5-week online course (approximately 2 hours per week)
 - OR
 - Learn in our Sydney or Melbourne classrooms over an intensive weekend (2 full days) or over five weeks (2 hours per week).
- Presenters:
 - Pamela Freeman, Cathie Tasker, Lisa Heidke, Nicole Hayes
- **\$450 inc GST.**
- Go to writerscentre.com.au/advancedfiction for upcoming dates.

If you've completed one of our foundation courses or, if you feel you already have a good understanding of the craft of creative writing and have a work of fiction underway...

Then you're ready to take the next step. So get ready.

No matter what stage of the publishing process you're at, this course is for you. So you think you might be the next Ernest Hemingway or J.K. Rowling – that's a truly exciting thought. Just remember – and we think you probably get this anyway – you're on a *journey*. Writing is a process of continual improvement. Does that sound like hard work? You bet it is. But it's also very fulfilling.

If you took a 'before' and 'after' picture of where you are now and where you'll be after the *next* round of intensive exercises, tasks and workshopping (oh yes, and writing, writing, writing), you'll look back at the old you and see yourself as an amateur.

Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques is the kind of training that will turn you from a good writer into a *great* writer.

You'll discover:

- **advanced character development** techniques so that you get more out of your main ones and make your minor characters more interesting and believable
- how to ensure that **each character's voice is unique** and distinct: putting yourself in the shoes of the reader and seeing what they see
- strategies to keep those pages turning through **effective structuring and pacing** of your story
- the ideal way to approach your **climax and resolution**: how they shape the final story and how to write them
- the right way to deal with **scene development**: this is the engine room of your fiction, including how to write authentic dialogue and ensure your characters interact in a believable way
- techniques to ensure your **get your pacing right**: use your writing to manipulate time and manage the **art of exposition**
- the art of **fine-tuning**: successfully editing and proofreading your story and its structure, with examples from published pieces and other students' work.

And MUCH more!



Jessica Shirvington completed both creativewritingcourse.com.au and **Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques**. She says: *"I was surrounded by other people who were passionate about writing. During the course, I sent out my manuscript and it actually got picked up by an agent. It was great because it was just the right environment for me to be in and it worked really well."* Now Jessica has a multi-book publishing deal and Steven Spielberg's production company has bought the television rights! We're not saying you'll get the same – but *who knows?*

Learn from the best

J.K. Rowling, Ernest Hemingway, Emily Bronte, Jodi Picoult, Matthew Reilly, George R. R. Martin (author of *Game of Thrones*), Stieg Larsson and other super successful authors.

Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques has a brimful of examples and techniques that great writers like these use. You'll be learning from the best.

Plus, we'll be workshopping each other's writing throughout and you'll get valuable feedback from your peers to help ratchet up your writing skills even more.

Take your writing skills, story and characters to a whole new level

It will help you turn a heroine into an *unforgettable* heroine, a short story into a story the reader won't want to end, an interesting plot into a *riveting* plot.

Think about the great stories and characters in movies and books: Gordon Gekko in *Wall Street*, Travis Bickle in *Taxi Driver*, Dorothy in *Wizard Of Oz*, Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone With the Wind*. Characters like that don't just pop out of a writer's pen perfectly formed; they go through many incarnations. They start out as a thought, then a shadow, then an outline, then a sketch, then... you get the idea.

Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques will help you build your characters into real, multi-dimensional, unforgettable people that jump off the page. The sort of characters your readers will think about when they're not reading the story, when they're driving, or at work or changing nappies. They'll wonder what your characters are up to and what's going to happen to them. They'll miss them when they're not turning the pages of the world you've created.

Tangible results: A finished product

At the end of your intensive, practical training, you will have the skills to create a finished product you can be proud of: a short story you'll be rapt with and the skills to be able to make it even better.

Module 1: Characters

Most great pieces of fiction are remembered primarily for their characters. Whether it's Jane Eyre or James Bond, strong central characters engage readers and inspire writers. In this module we will explore how to find, create or extend your main characters and how to place them within a world of believable minor characters.

We will consider:

- What makes a character interesting?
- Is it better to draw characters from real life?
- How does research affect character development?
- How many characters are too many?

- How do you make similar characters distinct on the page?
- What are the pitfalls in creating characters?
- What is the 'character's journey' and how will it affect your story?

By the end of the module, you will have (at least) a central character on whom to base a piece of writing.

Module 2: Voice

A great character, a great writer, will have a distinctive 'voice'. In this module we will look in more detail at narrative position and how it affects storytelling.

We will also practise creating different 'voices' for the characters we developed in the last module.

How do you convey a character's attitudes, education, world view, background and history through their 'voice' in your story? We will practise control of tense, tone and word choice; and look at how the interaction of the character with his or her environment (including other characters) creates the reader's understanding of and involvement with your character.

This module aims to get your characters walking and talking and coming alive!

Module 3: Structure

Now you have your characters, what are you going to do with them? How do you create a story that readers will devour? Inspiration is a great starting point, but it can be helpful to know where you're heading.

In this module we will look at climax and resolution, and how these shape the final story. What makes a climax a climax? How does knowing the climax help you to write the story or to edit it later?

The structure of great stories is integral to the development of the characters. We will look further at the concept of the character's journey and how it relates to structural issues in writing. By the end of this module you will know the climax of your story!

Module 4: Writing scenes

Knowing what you want to write and actually writing it can sometimes be very different things! This module looks at principles of scene development: dialogue, pacing, manipulation of time, character interaction and management of exposition.

We will consider:

- choosing a narrative position and point of view
- knowing a scene's function in the story
- how to control rhythm and pace
- when to start and end a scene.

This is the nuts and bolts of 'getting it down on the page'. You will choose a scene from your story to write in full. With help from the presenter, you will plan and then write the scene.

Module 5: Redrafting

No piece of work is finished on first draft, unless you're a complete genius (or you don't care about quality).

In the module, we examine in detail the processes of structural editing, copy-editing and proofreading, using examples from both published pieces and other students' work. We will also talk about the relationship between author and editor in the publishing world.

In-class editing of the scene from Module 4 will give you further skills in improving your work. This module is the opportunity for you to understand how to take your work to the next level, and it will challenge you to decide how serious you are about being published.

By the end of the course, you will have developed the characters, the storyline and the main scenes for a story – now it's up to you to write the whole thing!

Exclusive access to our Graduates' Club

When you graduate from **Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques**, you'll receive exclusive access to our online Creative Writing Graduates' Group on Facebook. It's a great place to ask questions and get ongoing support from an encouraging and active community of writers.

So, are you ready for the next step in your writing journey? We can't wait to see you at Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques!

We offer the following formats for this course

5-week online course

- New weekly module released each Monday – approximately 2 hours of content.
- A weekly assignment is due each Sunday (with personalised feedback given by your online tutor).

5-week classroom course

- 2 hours per week, for 5 weeks.
- You'll be expected to do your own writing practice including some assignments during the week.

Weekend intensive classroom course

- 10am–4pm on Saturday and Sunday (including 1-hour lunch break).
- Allow approximately 1 hour to complete an overnight assignment after day 1.

Your presenters



Dr Pamela Freeman is the award-winning author of more than 30 books. Her most recent book, published under the name of Pamela Hart, is *The Desert Nurse*, a WWI historical novel set in Cairo and the Sinai, and covers the entire war, ending on Armistice Day. In 2017 *A Letter from Italy*, a historical novel set at the height of World War I was published.

In 2016, *The War Bride*, a historical novel set shortly after World War I was published, sequel to *The Soldier's Wife* (2015) (all published by Hachette Australia). For children, her most recent publication is the Princess Betony series published by Walker Books. Her new book for kids, *Lake Eyre*, is a non-fiction picture book (Walker Books, 2016).

Pamela also writes fantasy fiction for adults. She is best known for the Castings trilogy (published in the US, the UK, France, Spain, Portugal and Germany as well as Australia) and for *Ember and Ash*, winner of the Aurealis Award for best fantasy novel. Another children's book, *Victor's Challenge*, was published in 2009 in Australia and the UK and won the Aurealis Award for Best Children's Fantasy.

Pamela started as a children's writer, and many of her books have been shortlisted for the State Literary Awards, the Children's Book Council Book of the Year Awards, the Koala Awards and the Wilderness Society Environment Awards. Pamela – who is also an accomplished scriptwriter – taught creative writing at the University of Technology, Sydney for many years. She has also been a guest lecturer at the University of Sydney

and taught writing workshops around Australia for the National Book Council and various state libraries. Pamela has a Doctor of Creative Arts in Writing from the University of Technology, Sydney.

She has published numerous short stories and has spoken at various writers' festivals around the country. Her most recent book for young adults, *The Black Dress*, a fictional account of the childhood of Mary MacKillop in the Australia of the 1840s to 1860s, won the NSW History Prize for Young People.

Pamela is also Director of Creative Writing Faculty here at the Australian Writers' Centre.

Website: www.pamelafreeman.com

Pamela teaches: Dialogue Writing Masterclass; Creative Writing Stage 1; Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques; Reboot Your Writing; Novel Writing Essentials; Fantasy, Science Fiction and More and Write Your Novel 6-month Program.



Cathie Tasker is a fiction editor with over 25 years' experience. She has mentored many manuscripts to publication and is experienced at guiding and motivating writers to improve their work.

Cathie has worked as an editor and publisher with HarperCollins, Scholastic Australia and Koala Books. She also worked as Marketing Manager for Koala Books and as a Book Club Editor at Scholastic Australia. In her career, Cathie has edited and commissioned nearly 800 books, many of which went on to become bestsellers and win awards.

Cathie has edited the work of Jackie French, Wendy Orr, Garth Nix, Mem Fox, Cathy Wilcox, Jennifer Fallon, Garry Disher, and three Australian Writers' Centre presenters: Pamela Freeman, Judith Rossell and Sue Whiting.

She has judged and convened panels for numerous organisations including the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA), the Aurealis Awards (fantasy, science fiction, horror, short stories, novellas and novels), the Bundanon Trust Artist in Residence, the Society of Women Writers, and the International Board on Books for Young People. Cathie also contributed to the Australasian update to *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* (Second Edition, 2015).

Cathie teaches Creative Writing Stage 1; Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques; Writing Picture Books; Writing Picture Books Masterclass; Short Story Essentials; Write Your Novel: 6-month Program.



Lisa Heidke is a Sydney-based author with six published novels. Her most recent novel, *It Started with a Kiss*, was released in 2015.

Claudia's Big Break (2011) was listed in *The Sydney Morning Herald* as one of the Top 10 Australian Bestsellers. In 2012, it was also a finalist in the Favourite Contemporary Romance category of the Australian Romance Readers Awards.

Lisa's other novels include *Stella Makes Good* (2012), *What Kate Did Next* (2010), *Lucy Springer Gets Even* (2009) and *The Callahan Split*.

Visit Lisa's website: lisaheidke.com

Lisa teaches Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques and Creative Writing Stage 1.



Nicole Hayes is an award-winning author whose recent book, *A Shadow's Breath* (Penguin Random House 2017) is currently garnering acclaim. She is also a writing instructor who has taught writing for more than six years at universities, TAFEs and schools around Australia, including four years teaching Creative Writing at University of Melbourne. She has been a popular presenter at the Australian Writers' Centre since 2012.

Her books include Young Adult novels, *The Whole of My World* (Random House, 2013), *One True Thing* (Penguin Random House, 2015) -- winner of the Children's Peace Literature Award, CBCA Notable Book, and shortlisted for the WA Premier's Literary Award, WA Young Readers Book Awards and YABBA Awards -- and her recent release, *A Shadow's Breath* (Penguin Random House, 2017), which is currently garnering acclaim.

Last year she published an anthology of writing from writers and thinkers from the margins who love AFL, called, *From the Outer: Footy Like You've Never Heard It* (Black Inc 2016) co-edited with Alicia Sometimes. On the back of this release, Alicia and Nicole joined with four friends to form the groundbreaking all-female Australian football podcast, The Outer Sanctum. Alicia and Nicole also collaborated on a book for kids about women's AFL – *A Footy Girl's Guide to the Stars of 2017* (Nero Books, 2017) published at the start of the inaugural AFLW competition.

Nicole teaches Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques; Creative Writing Stage 1 and How to Write a Short Story in One Day.

Enrolment conditions – No really, you should read these

Please make sure you've chosen your course carefully. We don't refund course fees once they have been processed. If you can't attend the course you've booked into, **advise us in writing at least two weeks before** the course starts, and you'll receive a credit note for the full value of the course. You can use this credit note towards another course. (You cannot, however, use this credit note to buy things at supermarkets or movie theatres or kitchenware stores. They will simply look at you and say "this is an AWC credit note, not cash. What are you doing?")

In exceptional circumstances, special consideration may be given for withdrawals or transfers within the two-week period. If this occurs, you'll be charged a \$50 administration fee and a credit note will be issued for the remaining amount.

Exceptional circumstances are defined as serious personal considerations or illness (documentation will be required). The Australian Writers' Centre can't accept responsibility for changes in work commitments. It's in bold because it's extra important.

Once your course has commenced, there are no transfers.

These conditions apply whether or not you enrol in a course within two weeks of it beginning.

We reserve the right to cancel or terminate a course or refuse any enrolment as permitted by law. We also reserve the right to change the presenter of a course in certain circumstances. Naturally, if a course is cancelled by us, you'll be offered a credit note or full refund.

You also should understand that the course materials are copyright and you agree never to sell, rent or otherwise distribute your course materials in any way. Not even on Amazon.

All enrolled students are automatically included on the Australian Writers' Centre's mailing list which informs people about upcoming courses, writing opportunities, author events, competitions and exclusive discounts with our partners. We think that's a really good thing, but of course you are welcome to unsubscribe at any time.

What critics had to say about our enrolment conditions:

"Gripping, could not put them down. Five stars!"

"Kept you guessing at every turn – wonderful, compelling stuff."

"If you only read one set of enrolment conditions this year, make it these."

So that's Advanced Fiction Writing Techniques (It's amazing)

Next step: enrolling into one of our course dates.

Go to writerscentre.com.au/advancedfiction to be taken to our course page.

And if you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact our super-friendly, super-helpful team on the contact details listed below.

Australian Writers' Centre

Website: WritersCentre.com.au

Please direct all enquiries to our head office

Email: courses@writerscentre.com.au

Phone: (02) 9929 0088