

Workshop 1

About Workshop 1

The Workshop 1 page on our Canvas site describes the purpose and goals of Workshop 1. If you don't know those things by now, *you're in trouble*. Go reread what I wrote there!

Workshop 1 Requirements

There are two requirements for Workshop 1, and one optional exercise:

1. REQUIRED: Submit the first 2-3 pages of a story AND 2-3 pages of poetry (3 *pages* of poetry, not 3 poems), properly formatted, by the assigned due date. Submit your work as a single attachment to a forum message posted in your workshop group forum (more info on this below in "Workshop Groups").
2. REQUIRED: Read your group members' work, and compose a thoughtful response to each work using the "Workshop Response" guidelines below.
3. OPTIONAL: Complete the Author's Reflection exercise at the end of this document. *Why do it?* It will guide you through reflection, which is a crucial part of the creative process, it can help you figure out how to develop and strengthen your creative work, and it may provide great material for you to use in the Final Portfolio.

Below you'll find detailed info on these requirements and step-by-step instructions on what to do.

Workshop Groups, Submitting Your Work

Workshop groups have been randomly selected, and are listed below. Each workshop group has its own forum thread on our Canvas site, linked on the Workshop 1 page. To submit your work, create a message, title it with your name, and post your work. You can either copy/paste your work into the message body, or provide a link to a Google Doc. If you provide a link to a Google Doc, you must be certain to set sharing permissions so your group members and I can read your work.

To respond to group member's work, simply respond to each person's message and type your work (no need for attachments).

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Morgan Bertsch Maddie Gephart Jenna Nissly	Destiny Blanton Taylor Grabel Madison Payne	Lily Cameron Kristen Larson Josh Schneider
Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
Paige Clifton Taylor Squires Lujia Yang	Jingjie Cui Alan Mejia Anglique Stellmach	Tonya Dull Andrea Mussari Joshua Sweet

NOTE ON DEVELOPING YOUR FIRST DRAFT: At the end of this handout, you'll find a guide ("Finding Your Work") that will lead you through a series of steps to help you develop an idea for your story/poetry. This guide is not required. You don't need to submit the results. It isn't graded. It's purely an exercise to help you develop your first draft.

NOTE ON POETRY FORMATTING: Poetry may be single-spaced. Boldface your poem titles, and leave a little white space between poems—just enough to show readers where one poem ends and the next one begins. DO NOT try to get away with placing one extremely short poem on each page, just to reach the page limit.

Workshop 1 Grading

Each of our workshops is worth 25 points of your course grade.

In Workshop 1, you will receive 10 points for:

- Submitting your creative work to the appropriate Canvas workshop forum, properly formatted, by the due date.

In Workshop 1, you will receive 15 points for:

- Responding thoughtfully to your group members' work using the "Workshop Response" guidelines below, but the due date.

NOTE ON GRADING WORKSHOP RESPONSES: If one or more of your group members does not submit their work on time, you are not obligated to respond to it. If a group member does not submit work at all, it won't affect the other group members' grades. In other words, if a group member is not contributing to the group, it's not the other group members' problem, and their grades won't be affected.

Workshop Responses

After submitting your work, your second step is to read your group members' work and respond to it. You are required to write one response to each of your group member's rough drafts. **However, I strongly encourage lots of back-and-forth discussion**—that's the next best thing to live discussion. You do not need to post your response as an attachment. Simply type it into the message body of your response.

Your response is simply an informal "letter to the author" that offers thoughtful observations and questions about the work. **Remember, this workshop is NOT about "fixing" the work or making recommendations, so avoid offering suggestions for improvement, etc.** Just stick to the guidelines below. There is no length requirement for the response. As a guideline, write the kind of detailed, thoughtful response that you hope to receive yourself from your group members.

When you're responding to fiction, write a response that addresses the following:

- What aspect of this story really interests you: Is it the main character? Another character? The conflict of the story? The plot?
- What do you believe the main character wants or needs, and why? (Review character want/need from Module 2, if necessary.)
- What conflicts or obstacles stand in the main character's way to getting what he/she wants/needs? (Review character want/need from Module 2, if necessary.)
- Do you think the main character will ever get what he/she wants/needs? If so, how? If not, why?
- How do you think the story will end?

When you're responding to poetry, write a response that addresses the following:

- What seems to be the central “thing”—the main subject—that all of the poems revolve around? Be specific. For example, don't say all of the poems are about love, say they're about romantic love, or fraternal love, or about the dangers of falling in love, or the rewards of loving a specific something or someone.
- Do the poems spend most of their time expressing emotions or thoughts about *abstract concepts* (love, hate, friendship, loss, etc.), or do they use a lot of *concrete and specific imagery* (a cut, a rusty hammer, a vine curled around a rock, an empty room, etc.)? What images stand out to you?
- Does the poet seem to be writing about his/her own experience in order to express something about the poet himself/herself (“self-referential” poetry), or is the poet consciously using his/her own experience to participate in a larger subject that impacts a larger *discourse community*? Explain.
- What other angles or perspectives do you think the poet might use to explore his/her main subject? For example, if the current poems explore the joys of romantic love, which is only one perspective on romantic love, do you think the poet's future poems might explore the dangers of romantic love, or the challenges, the rewards, the humor, the chaos, etc., of romantic love?

VERY HELPFUL HANDOUT: [FINDING YOUR WORK](#) <--click here to access the handout

OPTIONAL EXERCISE: AUTHOR'S REFLECTION

This exercise is for your own use—nothing required, nothing graded, nothing to turn in.

After you've received feedback from your workshop group, freewrite responses to the following questions. **It's important to *write* your responses, and not just *think* about them.** Writing slows

your brain down and allows for deeper, more productive thinking. In addition, you can use what you've written to complete your Final Portfolio. Bonus!

Using the results of your interview and your own notes and thoughts on your story/poetry, write a response to the following questions.

Questions to respond to if you're writing a story:

1. Your interviewers discussed your main character's want/need and the story's conflict among themselves, and then asked you to respond to the same questions. Compare their responses with yours: What similarities and differences do you see?
2. Is there anything in any of the responses that might offer a way to develop your main character's want/need, and the story's conflict? Brainstorm different ways to incorporate your answers above into your story. Remember, this is intense, focused freewriting. Get an idea down, *explore it*, then move on to another idea.
3. Explore whether or not one of the secondary characters interviewed might work as the main character. How would the story change? Would the story be more compelling from this character's POV (why/why not)?
4. Add any other questions, observations, etc., that you feel are necessary to explore.

Questions to respond to if you're writing poetry:

1. Your interviewers discussed their thoughts on your poems' subject matter and imagery before asking you to respond to the same questions. Compare how your interviewers read your poems' subject matter and imagery to your own responses to the questions about subject and imagery. What similarities and differences do you see?
2. Before they interviewed you, your interviewers briefly discussed the structure of your poetry (observation + "turn"). How effectively do you feel you're employing this structure? Can you brainstorm ways to include observation and turn more effectively?
3. Before they interviewed you, your interviewers briefly discussed whether or not your poems feature more abstractions than imagery. What's your response to their comments? Do you think your poems contain too much abstraction? Can you think of ways to further develop your imagery in order to draw out your subject matter more clearly?
4. Add any other questions, observations, etc., that you feel are necessary to explore.