



## Flash fiction

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<b>Credit / award</b>	Non-accredited		
<b>Start date</b>	9 May 2016	<b>End date</b>	13 June 2016
<b>Day and time</b>	Mondays at 2pm – 4pm	<b>No of meetings</b>	5
<b>Venue</b>	Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge, CB23 8AQ		
<b>Course Director</b>	Dr Sarah Burton		
<b>Fee</b>	£150	<b>Course code</b>	1516NWR009
<b>For further information on this course, please contact</b>	Public Programmes Co-ordinator, Clare Kerr <a href="mailto:clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk">clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk</a> or 01223 746237		
<b>To book</b>	See: <a href="http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk">www.ice.cam.ac.uk</a> or telephone 01223 746262		

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### Course Director biography

Dr Sarah Burton's publications are diverse, including two critically acclaimed biographies, *Impostors: Six Kinds of Liar* (2000; translated into Korean, Japanese, Czech and Spanish) and *A Double Life: a Biography of Charles and Mary Lamb* (2003; shortlisted for the Mind Book of the Year award); a children's book, *The Miracle in Bethlehem: A Storyteller's Tale* (2008), and a page-to-stage guide, *How to Put on a Community Play* (2011). She also writes short stories and reviews fiction and non-fiction for *The Spectator* and other titles. Her spoof, *The Complete and Utter History of the World By Samuel Stewart, Aged 9*, was published by Short Books in 2013. She was Writer in Residence for the Hosking Houses Trust in 2009 and the publication of the historical novel which she began there, *H*, is currently being negotiated with Hodder. *H* was shortlisted for the Lucy Cavendish Fiction Prize 2013. Sarah has also written and produced seven community plays, and is Course Director of the new Masters programme in Creative Writing at ICE

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### Course syllabus

#### Aims

Flash fiction is the art of the very short story and is a great place for beginners to start and old hands to refine their skills. The course will equip students with the transferable skills of economic, efficient and effective writing.

#### Content

Sessions expose students to a range of styles, subjects and approaches and aim to build both confidence and expertise through writing short complete pieces of fiction.

**Session 1 (9 May):** *Just so stories*

Parables, fables and 'moral' tales.

**Session 2 (16 May):** *Once upon a time...*

Slice-of-life, Chekhovian or 'formless' stories.

**Session 3 (23 May):** *Whose story is it anyway?*

Exploring narrative voice.

**Session 4 (6 June):** *To cut a long story short...*

Economy: making every word count.

**Session 5 (13 June):** *What if...?*

Magical realism.

### **Presentation of the course**

Structured questions and discussions during the sessions. Students will also be encouraged to explore flash fiction sites on the internet.

Interaction with students on VLE and by email outside sessions. Students will be encouraged to post their work on the VLE for communal constructive feedback.

### **Outcomes**

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to understand, and have some experience with:

1. conventional plot-based storytelling;
2. slice-of-life or 'formless' storytelling;
3. experimenting with different narrative voices;
4. applying principles of economy and efficiency to create a tight and effective piece of writing.

### **Student participation**

All students are expected to take an active part in this university-level course. Therefore, all students will be expected to:

- (i) attend at least two-thirds of the classes;
- (ii) participate actively in class.

## Reading and resources list

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Author	Title	Publisher and date
THOMAS, James; THOMAS, Denise and HAZUKA, Tom (eds)	<i>Flash Fiction: 72 Very Short Stories</i>	New York & London: WW Norton & Co, 1992

**Note** Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

*Information correct as of:* 26 April 2016