

Writing picture books

Start date 5th April 2020 **Time** 10:00 – 16:45

Venue Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge

Tutor Pippa Goodhart **Course code** 1920NDX214

Director of Academic Centres Dr Corinne Boz

For further information on this course, please contact Head of Academic Centre Administration
Katherine Roddwell

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Tutor biography

Pippa is the author of more than a hundred books for children ranging from picture books, through early reader books, to novels. Best known amongst her picture books are the prize-winning, million-copy selling, *You Choose* books illustrated by Nick Sharratt. She writes picture books for a number of big publishers such as Penguin Random House, Bloomsbury, and Egmont, but also for small independent publishers such as Tiny Owl, Flying Eye, and Little Door.

The challenges of working minimal text together with pictures in a book format to suit a very young audience and difficult market make picture book writing a very particular skill.

Pippa has enjoyed teaching writing for children for many years. As well as teaching at ICE, she has taught at De Montfort and Nottingham Trent Universities, for SCBWI (the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators), and via Jericho Writers.

Course programme

09:30	Terrace bar open for pre-course tea/coffee
10:00 – 11:15	Thinking about the young child audience for picture books. Can we remember that young child view of the world from our own childhoods? Considering the demands of the market, and therefore of publishers and agents, when they consider a text.
11:15	Coffee
11:45 – 13:00	What is a story? How to achieve a strong simple story suited to the young audience, and how to shape it using plot and character. Discussion and writing.
13:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:15	Looking at the book format, and the restrictions and opportunities it offers the writer. Rework your story to fit the format. Are there opportunities to dramatise the story in less obvious ways?
15:15	Tea
15:30 – 16:45	Workshopping your stories. Considering how best to approach getting published.
16:45	Day-school ends

Course syllabus

Aims:

1. To explore the range of picture books, and to consider how they suit their young audience.
2. To shape and write a potential picture book story, considering illustration and design as well as text.
3. To develop an understanding of the market, and how to pursue publication.

Content:

We will look at a range of modern picture books, and consider what story topics and treatments best suit the market and audience for these books, and why. We will look at how best to work pictures and text together (even though we are not producing any pictures ourselves) to bring a story to life through the page turns of a book designed to be read out loud. We will write and workshop stories, and then consider how best to achieve publication.

Presentation of the course:

The day will be presented through a mixture of seminars led by the tutor and course discussions. We will work together on one story idea, and then participants will write their own individual story. Those stories will be read out loud and workshopped together.

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- Appreciate how picture books work text and pictures together, combining different disciplines to work towards one end product.
- Develop an understanding of how the publishing world works, specifically in regard to the picture book market.
- Respond to the needs and tastes of young children.
- Respond to team work, and apply skills in critiquing and receiving criticism in constructive ways.

Reading and resources list

Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Books about writing:		
Coppard, Yvonne & Newberry, Linda	<i>Writing Children's Fiction</i>	Bloomsbury, 2013
Whitford Paul, Ann	<i>Writing Picture Books</i>	Writer's Digest, 2018
Some picture books:		
Brown, Peter	<i>Mr Tiger Goes Wild</i>	Two Hoots, 2014
Browne, Eileen	<i>Handa's Surprise</i>	Walker Books, 2006
Carter, Lou & Allwright, Deborah	<i>There Is No Dragon In This Story</i>	Bloomsbury, 2017
Sanna, Franseca	<i>The Journey</i>	Flying Eye, 2016

These are example of interesting picture books, but there are many more and a huge variety. Read and observe lots in a library, or, even better, share them with a young child and notice what they react to.

Website addresses

www.pippagoodhart.co.uk
<http://picturebookden.blogspot.com/>

Additional information

Venue

Details of how to find Madingley Hall can be found on our website:
<http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/who-we-are/how-to-find-the-institute>

Refreshments

Tea and coffee and lunch will be provided. If you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies and have not already advised us, please inform our Admissions Team on ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk or +44 (0)1223 746262.

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: 24 April 2019