

## The Keys to Creative Writing: *Plot*

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**Start date** Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2019      **Time** 10:00 – 16:45

**Venue** Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge

**Tutor** Sarah Burton      **Course code**

**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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**To book** See: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk) or telephone 01223 746 262

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### Tutor biography

Sarah Burton's publications include two critically acclaimed biographies, *Impostors: Six Kinds of Liar* (Penguin, 2000) and *A Double Life: a Biography of Charles and Mary Lamb* (Penguin, 2003; shortlisted for the Mind Book of the Year award); a children's book, *The Miracle in Bethlehem: A Storyteller's Tale* (Floris, 2008); a page-to-stage guide, *How to Put on a Community Play* (Aurora, 2011); and the humorous *Complete and Utter History of the World By Samuel Stewart, Aged 9* (Short Books, 2013). She has just finished a novel and is currently working on a book about creative writing with Jem Poster. Sarah was Course Director of the Creative Writing MSt at Cambridge University's Institute of Continuing Education 2013-2017 and she continues to teach day schools, weekends, online courses and summer programmes for ICE. She also runs the Creative Writing Retreats at Madingley Hall.

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## Course programme

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| 09:30         | Terrace bar open for pre-course tea/coffee    |
| 10:00 – 11:15 | <b>Session 1 – What is plot?</b>              |
| 11:15         | Coffee  |
| 11:45 – 13:00 | <b>Session 2 – The dynamics of plot</b>       |
| 13:00         | Lunch   |
| 14:00 – 15:15 | <b>Session 3 – Progressing plot</b>           |
| 15:15         | Tea   |
| 15:30 – 16:45 | <b>Session 4 – Revelation and concealment</b> |
| 16:45         | Day-school ends                               |

## Course syllabus

### Aims

**The course aims to equip students with:**

- an understanding of how plots operate;
- the skills to create and develop plots in their own writing.

### Content

This is one of a series of six one-day courses which may be taken individually or in combination with others. It is designed to equip writers with the skills and knowledge essential to producing successful novels and short stories. All courses in the series are suitable both for beginners and those with some experience, addressing the nuts and bolts of fiction and the development of individual voice and vision.

**In this day school we'll begin by asking ourselves what our story is *about* and go on to discover ways of creating compelling and effective narratives.** We'll consider what roles character and conflict play in plot development and consider the difference between the story as it unfolds to the reader and the mechanics of unseen plot. As a result of the day school students should feel better equipped to 'own' and manage the structure of their story.

### Presentation of the course

Classes are relaxed but focused. The atmosphere is supportive and designed to build confidence and develop skills through a combination of reading, discussions and practical exercises.

### Outcomes

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

- understand how plots operate;
- appropriate and deploy the skills necessary to create and develop plots in their own writing.

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## Reading and resources list

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No preparatory reading is required. Extracts of texts will be provided in the class on the day.

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## Additional information

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### 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](mailto: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:* 29 April 2019