

## The Keys to Creative Writing: *Character*

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**Start date** Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2019      **Time** 10:00 – 16:45

**Venue** Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge

**Tutor** Jem Poster      **Course code**

**Director of Academic Centres** Dr Corinne Boz

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

Jem Poster worked as an archaeologist, surveying and excavating a range of sites on behalf of the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments, before taking up an administrative post with Cambridge University's Institute of Continuing Education in 1987. From 1993 to 2003 he was University Lecturer in Literature with Oxford University's Department for Continuing Education and a fellow of Kellogg College. From 2003 to 2012 he was Professor of Creative Writing at Aberystwyth University, and is now Emeritus Professor. He is the author of two novels, *Courting Shadows* (2002) and *Rifling Paradise* (2006), as well as a collection of poetry, *Brought to Light* (2001), and is editor of volume 3 of the six-volume Oxford University Press *Edward Thomas: Prose Writings* (2018). He has won prizes in major poetry competitions including first prize in both the Cardiff International Poetry Competition in 1995 and the Peterloo Poets Open Poetry Competition in 2001. He has been Chair of the editorial board of Wales's leading literary journal, *New Welsh Review* and Programme Advisor to Cambridge University's MSt in Creative Writing; he is currently an Affiliated Lecturer of Cambridge University's Institute of Continuing Education, and Director of its Summer Programme in Creative Writing. He is Director of Academic Programmes for the Financial Times Oxford Literary Festival and in 2014 spent four months as Writer in Residence at Arizona State University.

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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: Who are these people?</b>
11:15	Coffee
11:45 – 13:00	<b>Session 2: Character and plot</b>
13:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:15	<b>Session 3: Showing and telling</b>
15:15	Tea
15:30 – 16:45	<b>Session 4: Thinking and feeling</b>
16:45	Day-school ends

## **Course syllabus**

### **Aims**

The course aims to equip students with:

- an understanding of how to create believable characters;
- an understanding of the relationship between character and plot;
- the skills to create and develop characters 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 explore ways of breathing life into our characters and making them believable and interesting.** We'll also consider ways of introducing characters to the reader; the relative merits of 'showing' and 'telling'; and the relationship between character and plot. As a result of the day school students should feel better equipped to invent and develop characters and have a confident understanding of the strategies available to them.

### **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 to create believable characters;
- understand the relationship between plot and character;
- appropriate and deploy the skills necessary to create and develop characters 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