

Weekend Courses 2024-25

Creative Writing Retreat

Start date: 15 August 2025 **End date:** 17 August 2025

Venue: Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge
CB23 8AQ

Tutor: Dr Yvonne Battle-Felton **Course Code:** 2425NRX057

Tutor biography

Dr Yvonne Battle-Felton is an author, academic, host, creative producer, and writer. She won the Northern Writers Award in fiction in 2017. *Remembered*, her debut novel, was longlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction (2019) and shortlisted for the Jhalak Prize (2020). Yvonne has six children's titles in Penguin Random House's Ladybird series. Yvonne is Senior Commissioning Editor at John Murray where she publishes literary fiction. Inspired by Shirley Jackson's *The Lottery*, *Curdle Creek*, Yvonne's second novel, publishes in October 2024 (Dialogue Books/Henry Holt). Yvonne has an MA in writing (dual concentration fiction/creative non-fiction) from Johns Hopkins University and a Creative Writing PhD from Lancaster University where she has taught Creative Writing. As a researcher, she is interested in storytelling, the power of stories to build, develop, and heal communities, silences in narrative, stories as advocacy, and representation. She is a novelist, short story writer, and essayist. She has taught creative writing at University of Cumbria, Liverpool John Moores, and most recently at Sheffield Hallam University where she was Principal Lecturer in Creative Writing and the Business and Enterprise Lead for Humanities. Yvonne is the Academic Director of Creative Writing here at the University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education.

Summary of content

Our Creative Writing Retreats balance tutor-led sessions and motivational starts to your writing day, with time to focus on your projects, and small-group workshops.

Each short, intensive retreat is designed to inspire writing and forge a writing community, and includes scheduled time to write, discussions and sharing your work and readings with fellow students.

Aims

This course aims to:

- support you in starting a project
- help develop a short story or novel
- encourage you to complete a draft

Course sessions

Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the Terrace Bar which opens at 18:15. Tea/coffee making facilities are available in the bedrooms.

19:00	Dinner
20:30 – 22:00	Introductions and discussion: weekend schedule and introductions
22:00	Terrace Bar open for informal discussion

Saturday

07:30	Breakfast (for residents only)
09:00 – 09:30	Setting up for your writing session
09:30 – 10:30	Your time to write
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	Your time to write
13:00	Lunch
13:45 – 14:15	Tackling issues: what's on your mind about your writing task?
14:15 – 18:00	Your time to write (tea available with other participants 16:00-16.30)
18:00 – 18:30	Free time
18:30	Dinner
20:00 – 21:30/21:45	Short readings – sharing your own writing (5 minutes for each participant, reading out either your workshop submission piece, something you have written during the Retreat, or a piece you have written before the Retreat)
21:30/21:45	Terrace Bar open for informal discussion

Sunday

07:30	Breakfast (for residents only)
09:00 – 09:30	The final hurdle: setting goals for the rest of the Retreat
09:30 – 10:30	Your time to write
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:00	Your time to write
12:00 – 12:30	Closing reflections
12:45	Lunch
The course will disperse after lunch	

Presentation of the course

Each retreat will be guided by author/academic, Yvonne Battle-Felton and aims to support you in starting a project, developing a short story or novel, and/or encouraging you to complete a draft. As you progress through the carefully designed weekend, we would expect you to be motivated by ideas sparked by discussion sessions and conversations with your fellow writers, inspired by your surroundings and encouraged by the small group workshops, with the result that you are able to make good headway on your chosen writing project.

During the 'Your time to write' sessions, Dr Yvonne Battle-Felton will hold up to 5 x five-person workshops. These are optional: participants who wish to join these will be assigned a timeslot in advance. Workshop participants will be asked to submit up to 750 words in advance (prose), up to 3 poems (up to 25 lines each), or 7 pages of script.

Learning outcomes

As a result of the course, you will gain a greater understanding of the subject and you should be able to:

- have made headway into your writing project
- be inspired and encouraged to write more of your project

Reading and resources list

There are no compulsory readings for this course.

Note: Institute of Continuing Education (ICE) students 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 ICE course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

(Information correct as of April 2024)