

CW500: Story Outlining

Course Description

CW500, Story Outlining will introduce you to a story outline model that can be used for creative writing. The basic components of a story are presented, discussed, and implemented in hands-on projects including theme, characters, conflict, and plot. You will practice applying what you learn by analyzing the movie *The Fugitive* each week. Using the concepts and principles you learn, your final deliverable will be to apply what you learn each week to develop a story outline at your own pace.

Getting Started

Our first live webcast will be on Thursday, February 26 at 6 pm Pacific Time. The instructor will contact you at the beginning of the class with detailed information on how to get started in the course and attend the first webcast. Looking forward to working with you this semester!

Please do the following to prepare for the course:

- Familiarize yourself with the syllabus, the class schedule, weekly deliverables, and grading scheme.
- Create your blog page (either create a blog at www.blogger.com and send the link to the instructor or use the blog block feature in Moodle).
- Visit the [Dim Dim](#) website and ensure the tool will work with your browser.
- Rent or buy the movie *The Fugitive* and get familiar with the movie by watching it.
- Read the [Wikipedia summary of the movie The Fugitive](#).
- Introduce yourself in the [News forum](#) and express your objectives for taking this course.

Instructor: Steve Corbett

Portfolio Website: <http://www.mindsting.net/edtecportfolio/index.htm>

Email: lightningblast@live.com

Office Hours: Steve will be available to answer questions in the office hours chat from 5pm to 6pm on Thursdays. He is also available to answer any questions through email every day. You can usually expect a response within 24 hours of sending your question. Steve is not supported by any assistant or graduate student, so please be patient. He is very interested in your learning and will contact you as soon as he can.

Course Goal

This course will enable you to gain a broad understanding of the key principles and concepts needed to effectively outline a story. You will be able to use the techniques you learn to analyze existing stories. In addition, you will be able to speak informatively about how to outline a story and you will be able to apply the techniques toward outlining your own stories.

Objectives

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Define what a story is.
- List and define the basic elements of a story outline.
- Evaluate an existing story to identify the theme and the thematic characters.
- Identify a theme for a story based on your values.
- Evaluate an existing story to identify the conflict and the conflict characters.
- Differentiate between thematic characters and conflict characters.
- Identify the primary goal of your conflict characters.
- Create a character.
- Use the “what if” technique to come up with an idea for a story conflict related to your theme.
- List and define the basic plot elements that comprise the beginning, middle, and end of a story.
- Evaluate an existing story to identify the events that comprise the plot elements of the story.
- Use the plot elements that comprise the beginning, middle, and end of a story to creatively outline key events for your own story.

Technology Requirements

Hardware needs:

- A computer with at least 1.0 GHz speed, 250 Mb RAM, 80 GB hard drive, an audio board, and high-speed Internet access.
- A microphone and headset or speakers.
- Video camera (webcam) – this is optional but very useful.
- Access to a television and DVD/VHS so you can watch the movie *The Fugitive*.

Software needs:

- A current, up to date web browser is required. Firefox works well, but Safari, Internet Explorer, and Opera should also do the trick.
- Microsoft Office or a program that allows you to view office application created files. This includes Open Office or Keynote for mac.
- Adobe Reader
- Adobe Flash (player only)
- Quicktime
- Dim Dim – run from within your web browser

Course learning materials

Except for the movie *The Fugitive*, all other materials for this course can be found online within the course, free of charge. This also means there is very little sympathy for those who do not follow the material.

The course website: <http://distance-educator.com/lms/moodle/course/view.php?id=27>

This is the main hub of the course and you should familiarize yourself with its layout. Here you will find the course schedule, syllabus, course news forum, selected reading materials, as well as links to other resources you may find helpful with the course.

Course Communication

Communication in this course will be both synchronous and asynchronous.

Synchronous:

Each week there will be a synchronous class meeting held in DimDim. These class sessions will be held once a week, Thursdays, 6-7 pm PST. You need to set up your free account at <http://www.dimdim.com/>. Live attendance is optional, but highly encouraged.

If you are unable to attend the live session, please attend the archive of the session. To inform the instructor of your completion of an archived session, please send him the Word of Week provided at the end of the archived session.

Asynchronous:

All the assignments and deliverables are to be completed asynchronously including blog entries and posts to the class forum. If you have any tips or other information you would like to share with the class about topics relevant to the course, please contribute to the [Knowledge Share Wiki](#).

Asynchronous communication will also go through email. When emailing the instructor a question, use the following format: QUESTION: course number.last name.topic of your question.

Example: QUESTION: CW500.Corbett.Dim Dim

When you have completed an assignment, please notify the instructor through email. For assignment emails, the subject line should be in the following format: ASSIGNMENT: course number.last name.week number.assignment.

Example: ASSIGNMENT: CW500.Corbett.Week2.My Theme

Course Policies

Attendance:

- Attendance for this course is not mandatory, but recommended. If you do miss classes it is important that you keep pace by following the archived sessions prior to the next live session.

Assignments:

- Assignments associated with posting analyses of *The Fugitive* to the class forum must be completed before the next week's class session. Late entries will receive half a grade value.
- Contributions to the course glossary must be completed before the next week's class session. Late entries will receive half a grade value.
- Assignments associated with posting to your blog can be done at your own pace, but should be completed before the next week's class session. **All assigned blog entries must be completed by the end of the course.**
- Quizzes must be completed in the week assigned. Late completion will receive half a grade value.

Assessment

The primary source of points for this class will come from participation through class sessions, forum posts, glossary contributions, and blog entries.

Another source of points will come from class quizzes and the submission of your final story outline as a Word document at the end of the course.

All deliverables/assignments and their grading values are listed in the tables below under grading scheme.

Grading scheme

Incomplete policy

Don't find yourself in a situation in which you need an incomplete! Story outlining is a continuous and systematic effort. It is extremely important for you to complete your blog entries at a pace that does not prevent you from submitting your final outline by the end of the course.

Summary of Grading

Total points 100

A = 90-100

B = 80 – 89

C = 70-79

D = 60 – 69

F = < 60

You will receive a course grade based on your work on the following assignments:

Create a Story Outline	
Deliverable	Points
Week 1 Blog: Story Reflection	1
Week 2 Blog: Identify Your Theme	3
Week 3 Blog: Create a Character and Identify His/Her Goal	3
Week 4 Blog: Create Your Idea Using the "What If" Method	3
Week 5 Blog: Identify the Conflict Between Your Protagonist and Antagonist	3
Week 6 Blog: Identify a Setting for Your Story	3
Week 7 Blog: Identify the Plot "Beginning" Elements of Your Story	3

Week 8 Blog: Identify the Plot "Middle" Elements of Your Story	3
Week 9 Blog: Identify the Plot "Ending" Elements of Your Story	3
Week 10: Final story outline submitted as a Word document	25
TOTAL	50

Other Deliverables	
Deliverable	Points
Week 2 Quiz	10
Week 10 Quiz	10
The Fugitive Forum Postings (3 points each assignment)	24
Contributions to Course Glossary (1 point each assignment)	6
TOTAL	50

Other Resources

Some of the students taking this course are geographically disbursed. To assist you with determining the time of class sessions based on your local time, please look it up on the World Time Clock web site.

Link to the World Time Clock website:

<http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/fixedtime.html?month=2&day=26&year=2009&hour=18&min=0&sec=0&p1=770>

Schedule of Topics

Week 1 – Introduction to Story Outlining

Topics

- General overview of course – objectives, goals, etc.
- What is a Story?

Assignments

- Forum post: [Basic Story Outline of *The Fugitive*](#)
- Blog post: Story Reflection
- Contribute to Course Glossary

Week 2 - Theme

Topics

- Theme
- Thematic Characters

Assignments

- Forum post: [Theme and Theme Characters of *The Fugitive*](#)
- Blog post: Identify Your Theme
- Contribute to Course Glossary
- Quiz on the Basics of Story Outlining and Themes

Week 3 – Character Development

Topics

- Developing Characters

Assignments

- Blog post: Create a Character and Identify His/Her Goal

Week 4 – Idea Development

Topics

- Idea
- The “What If” Method

Assignments

- Forum post: Main Idea of *The Fugitive*
- Blog post: Create Your Idea Using the “What If” Method

Week 5 – Conflict

Topics

- Conflict
- Conflict Characters: Protagonist and Antagonist
- Difference Between Thematic and Conflict Characters

Assignments

- Forum post: Protagonist and Antagonist of *The Fugitive*
- Blog post: Identify the Conflict Between Your Protagonist and Antagonist
- Contribute to Course Glossary

Week 6 – Setting

Topics

- Setting

Assignments

- Forum post: Setting of *The Fugitive*
- Blog post: Identify a Setting for Your Story

Week 7 – Plot “Beginning” Elements

Topics

- Plot Overview
- Opening Balance
- Initial Disturbance/Hook
- Protagonist Decision

Assignments

- Forum post: Plot “Beginning” Elements of *The Fugitive*
- Blog post: Identify the Plot “Beginning” Elements of Your Story
- Contribute to Course Glossary

Week 8 – Plot “Middle” Elements

Topics

- Rising Action
- Antagonist Decision
- Obstacles
- Mid-Act Crisis
- Moment of Enlightenment

Assignments

- Forum post: Plot “Middle” Elements of *The Fugitive*
- Blog post: Identify the Plot “Middle” Elements of Your Story
- Contribute to Course Glossary

Week 9 – Plot “Ending” Elements

Topics

- Climax
- Falling Action/Denouement
- Catharsis
- Wrap-ups
- Closing Balance

Assignments

- Forum post: Plot “Ending” Elements of *The Fugitive*
- Blog post: Identify the Plot “Ending” Elements of Your Story
- Contribute to Course Glossary

Week 10 – End of the Course

Topics

- None

Assignments

- Quiz on Characters, Conflict, Setting and Plot
- Final Story Outline DUE