

Section 9

Revising the Novel: Building Scene with Subtext and Symbol

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Each of the five three-hour sessions combines discussion, analysis, and critiquing with an overview of the upcoming assignment.

Monday:

The Narrator's Camera—Moving between Outer and Inner Worlds

Considering the nature of fiction

Exploring the nature of scene

Exploiting the role of subtext

Understating

 The reader relationship with the characters

Using psychic distance

Laying a revision foundation

 Discussion of sample paragraph

Homework

Revise the sample paragraph in terms of the weaknesses identified earlier. Use this revision to identify—and strategize about—areas you want to tackle in your own revision.

Tuesday:

Secrets from Screenwriters—Building Scenes with Treatments, Triangles and Pairs

Using the hook to develop plot and scene

Creating exquisite moments

Avoiding the dangerous temptations

 Victimizing the protagonist

 Revisiting versus developing

 Writing to the climax

Cornering yourself—and creating suspense

Homework:

Prepare a treatment for a scene *or*

Re-plot a section based on the concept of hooks.

Wednesday

The Dance of Dialogue—Relying on Subtext and Context

Making dialogue central

Performing the different scripts waltz

Using the pivotal speech on character and reader

Removing for subtext

Grounding with context

 The mini-story, or how can you use a deer?

Homework:

Revise a section of dialogue to capitalize on subtext and context.

Thursday:

Scene and Scenery—Managing Stage Business, Transition and Sequel

Setting the table for the guests

Characterizing

Setting

Other characters

Plot

Adding emotional transition

Revisiting causality

Transition

Sequel

The short story series

Homework:

Revise a passage focusing on stage business, transition and sequel.

Friday:

The Seductive Power of Symbolism—Managing Fictional Debts with Fictional Credits

Synthesizing tension, character appeal and haunting environment

The “What if?” approach

Backdrop versus foreground

Picking pointers from poets

Metaphors and commenting on them

Cementing the screenwriting connection

Homework:

Conceptualize a scene in terms of tension—at least partially set in the external world. Then ground this scene in a setting that offers both literal and symbolic meaning.

Credit Option: Participants earn 1 credit by attending class and completing the assigned work for the week: daily reading, writing at least five pages of original work, and critiquing of own and others’ work. To earn 2 credits, participants submit an additional five pages of their work. Participants earning 3 credits complete all of the above requirements supplemented by another five to 10 pages of creative work or a short paper synthesizing how the material covered during the week applies to their own creative projects and/or teaching. The work must be handed in within two weeks of final class date.