

Read: “Apollo” & “Sonny’s Blues”

1. Opening Question: What did you write down for your five elements? Also, sign up for workshops. (12:20)
2. Introduce triangle of plot, character, voice (language),
  - a. Plot: what happens
  - b. Character: whose decisions propel the plot.
  - c. Voice/Language: as derivative from POV. (12:35)
3. Discuss Readings, “Girl” and “Brownies”
  - a. “Girl”: What & How
  - b. “Girl” Where do you see those three elements happening?
  - c. “Brownies” What & How
  - d. “Brownies” Where do you see those three elements happening? (till 1:10)
4. Go over Exercise A. (Last five minutes)

## Week 2:

### Monday, August 28: Character

Read: “Apollo” by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie & “Sonny’s Blues” by James Baldwin

**Submit by 10am on iCollege Dropbox:** Reading Response Two

Bring to Class: Exercise A

FNC:

Read: “A Temporary Matter” and “A Good Man is Hard to Find”

Submit to Drop Box: Reading Response Three

Bring to Class: Exercise B

1. Opening Question: Tell us two things about the character you invented for Exercise A.
2. Craft Talk: Writing developed characters:
  - a. The importance of agency, ability to make decisions
  - b. Remembering to include reactions (introduce: **interior monologue**)
  - c. Brief exercise: list three characters from any kind of story you connect to, what helped you connect to them? Transform into traits to list on the board.
3. Discuss Readings:
  - a. Apollo What & How
  - b. Which passages point to character development? Where do you see the character making decisions that tell us something about who they are?
  - c. Sonny’s Blues What & How
  - d. Which passages point to character development? Where do you see the character making decisions that tell us something about who they are?
4. Go over Exercise B

### Wednesday, August 30: Plot (or, “And Then What Happens”)

Read: “A Temporary Matter” by Jhumpa Lahiri, “A Good Man is Hard to Find” by Flannery O’Connor

**Submit by 10am on iCollege Dropbox:** Reading Response Three

Bring to Class: Exercise B

FNC:

Read: Virgins & Persimmons

iCollege Dropbox by 10am: Reading Response Four

Bring to Class: Exercise C

1. Opening Question: Summarize your flash piece in two sentences or less. (Who is it about and what happens to them?)
2. Craft Talk: “And Then What Happens”
  - a. Emphasize once more the importance to decision-making characters who have clear needs/wants.
  - b. Actions & (Direr and Direr) Consequences
  - c. Aim for inevitable surprise (O’Connor for example—we expect the encounter with the Misfit, we don’t expect what comes of it)
3. Readings:
  - a. Lahiri: play “And then what happens?”
  - b. How does Lahiri have inevitable surprise?
  - c. O’Connor: play “And then what happens?”
4. Go over exercise C

**Week 3:**

**Monday, September 4:**

NO CLASS, LABOR DAY

**Wednesday, September 6: Point of View**

Read: “Virgins” by Danielle Evans & “Persimmons” by Yiyun Li

**Submit by 10am on iCollege Dropbox:** Reading Response Four

Bring to Class: Exercise C

FNC:

Read: “The Princess of Cambodia” and “CivilWarLand in Decline”

Submit to Dropbox: Reading Response Five

Bring to Class: Exercise D

1. Opening Question: What two characters described what event in your exercise C?
2. Craft Talk: My Favorite Decisions (Choosing POV and Tense)
  - a. Discuss Modes of POV, their individual challenges
  - b. Discuss how tense impacts the language/accessibility of these POVs
  - c. Why do you think we’re just writing first and third stories in this class? What do first and third lend themselves to for learning how to write a short story?
3. Readings
  - a. What and How for Evans
  - b. What and How for Li
  - c. What are the limitations you see in their use of POV?
  - d. How would these stories be different if they’d chosen another POV?

#### 4. Go Over Exercise D

#### **Week 4:**

#### **Monday, September 11: Setting and Pacing**

Read: “The Princess of Cambodia” by Rattawut Lapcharoensap & “CivilWarLand in Bad Decline” by George Saunders.

**Submit by 10am on iCollege Dropbox:** Reading Response Five

Bring to Class: Exercise D:

FNC:

Read: “Cathedral” and “I Dream of Microwaves”

Submit to Dropbox: Reading Response Six

Bring to Class: Exercise E

1. Opening Question: What settings did you have in your exercise?
2. Craft Talk I: A Word About Setting:
  - a. Revealing it through action so that you can show not tell. (Tell story about writing those screenplay stage directions for Brian Webster)
  - b. Make sure it's connected to POV
  - c. Point out passages in Lapchareonsap & Saunders that are examples of setting, well executed
3. Craft Talk: The Clothesline Approach to Managing Time in a Short Story
  - a. Draw a clothesline on the board
  - b. Discuss dramatic present, flashback, flash forward
  - c. Do the timeline for Lapchareonsap's & Saunders's stories
4. Go over Exercise E.

#### **Wednesday, September 13: Dialogue**

Read: “Cathedral” by Raymond Carver & “I Dream of Microwaves” by Imad Raman

**Submit by 10am on iCollege Dropbox:** Reading Response Six

Bring to Class: Exercise E:

FNC:

Read: “Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned” & “Never Marry a Mexican”

Submit to Dropbox: Reading Response Six

Bring to Class: Exercise F

1. Opening Question: What was your conversation about in the dialogue assignment?
2. Craft Talk: Why Dialogue Can Make or Break a Story
  - a. Bret Anthony Johnston's slush pile tactic of checking dialogue first
  - b. Knowing when to summarize (juicy bits only, pls)
  - c. The usefulness of having characters lie in dialogue
  - d. Options for formatting: basic rules of how to structure, the ways others have messed with it. (Show examples from McCarthy and Nguyen)
  - e. Dialogue is rhythm.

3. Readings
  - a. Look at how Carver and Raman use gestures
  - b. Look at their rhythms
  - c. Look at their reactions
4. Go over Exercise F

**Week 5:**

**Monday, September 18: Description and Voice**

Read: “Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned” by Wells Tower and “Never Marry a Mexican” by Sandra Cisneros.

**Submit by 10am on iCollege Dropbox:** Reading Response Seven

Bring to Class: Exercise F:

FNC:

Read: Workshop stories by \_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_

Submit to Dropbox: Responses to Workshop 1

Bring to Class: Manuscripts with hardcopy responses/notes for workshop

1. Opening Question: What did you review for exercise F?
2. Craft Talk: Voice and Description
  - a. Relationship to POV—“not everyone would know that bag is Prada”
  - b. Finding a rhythm in a voice/listening to your writing
  - c. Precision—get rid of passive voice, emphasize verbs in your description
3. Readings:
  - a. How does Tower use voice?
  - b. How does Cisneros?
  - c. Point out key description paragraphs from each, unpack them.
4. What to expect with workshop, reminder of how to write responses.

