

# 10 Essential Lessons You'll Learn in a Creative Writing Workshop

Adapted from Melissa Donovan (<http://www.writingforward.com/creative-writing/10-essential-lessons-youll-learn-in-a-creative-writing-workshop>)

*What can you learn in a creative writing workshop?*

When I look back over all my years of formal education, from preschool through college, only a few classes truly changed my life.

In sixth grade, we did a lesson on space, which fascinated me. I remember a lot of what I learned. Later, I took astronomy and learned even more about the universe. A class on women writers introduced me to a whole world of literature I didn't know existed. And two writing workshops (poetry and creative writing) put me on the path to becoming a professional writer.

The main difference between a regular class and a workshop is that a workshop is interactive. You work together with your classmates, reading each other's work, suggesting improvements, asking questions, and sharing insights. Instead of learning from just one teacher, you're learning from all the different knowledge and wisdom your classmates have to offer.

## What You Can Learn From a Creative Writing Workshop

1. **Discover yourself and your path.** One day, while sitting in creative writing workshop, I had the strangest feeling. The best way I can describe it is that I felt like I was exactly where I was supposed to be. It was the moment I knew without a doubt that I would be a writer.
2. **Find out what your writing strengths are.** The best part about receiving suggestions from your peers is that they tell you what you're doing right, which is good to know. When you learn about what you're doing well, it is easier to accept that you still have work to do.
3. **Accept the weaknesses in your writing.** No matter how good your writing is right now, there are things you can do to improve it. When 20 people tell you that certain parts of your writing could be improved or that you need to watch your grammar, it's a good idea to listen.
4. **Learn how to handle critiques of your work.** The first few suggestions might be a bit rough, but once you see how they make your writing so much better, you'll start looking forward to them. You'll learn how to separate yourself from your work and you'll

be able to not only handle but actually look forward to suggestions.

5. **Help others improve their work.** When other writers put your suggestions into action, express appreciation for your ideas and suggestions, and/or describe how you helped them improve their writing, it feels good.
6. **Meet people who share your passion.** There's nothing like sitting in a room surrounded by people who are just as excited about writing as you are. It's not only inspiring—it's comforting. Plus, it's a great opportunity to meet people, some of whom may become lifelong friends, writing partners, or members of your future writers' group.
7. **Improve your writing.** This, of course, is the main reason most people take a creative writing workshop. The ultimate goal is to become a better writer, and a workshop will definitely do the trick. You'll also put a lot more effort into everything you write because you know other people will read it carefully. This builds excellent writing habits.
8. **Adopt new writing techniques.** Between the teacher and your peers, you'll discover all kinds of interesting new writing tools and techniques. This can happen simply by talking to others, as well as by reading everyone else's work.
9. **Expand your knowledge.** When you throw yourself in with a larger group of writers, you'll have a chance to read all kinds of writing styles and genres. In one creative writing workshop, you'll find poets, horror writers, fiction writers, memoirists, and more. You'll be forced to read and develop a critical eye for a wide variety of literature.
10. **Gain experience and get a lot of creative writing practice.** This is one of the most valuable benefits of a workshop. When writers work on their own, they tend to put things off. They generally don't finish most of the projects they start. In a workshop, you're forced to get it done. This gives you lots of great experience and practice, and it also builds good writing habits.

# Advantages of a Writing Workshop

Adapted from <https://www.bubok.com/blog/advantages-of-a-writing-workshop/>

*Here are 10 reasons why you should consider taking a writing course:*

1. **Writing can be learned.** Even though writing feels easy, there is always room for improvement. A writing class or literary workshop will give your talent the needed background education and open your mind to a lot of helpful tips and tricks that can be used to practice.
2. **Say yes to new writing skills.** When you're in a creative writing workshop, be sure to learn new and helpful writing skills for your specific genre (such as poetry or story-writing). All the skills you learn will always come in handy.
3. **Meet people with common interests.** Writing with others who have similar interests is always rewarding. Meeting people who have similar writing interests is helpful for the future.
4. **Reading helps you become more creative.** In most workshops you do not only write but you also do a lot of reading. You will discover authors and writing styles you may find interesting, surprising, or inspiring.
5. **Homework time!** Take the homework seriously. Most home exercises are designed to develop your skills, encourage your writing, and even give you ideas when you feel stuck!
6. **It may help you to find a writing routine.** By delivering assignments on time, you will be forced to sit down and fill out those empty white pages. The more you make time to write, the easier it will be to stick to a schedule. Developing a writing routine is a great way to focus on your writing.
7. **Take advantage of the teacher.** They will lead you in the right direction, improve common writing mistakes, and improve or define your writing style.
8. **In a writing workshop, you can test your limits and overcome challenges.** Sharing your funny or frustrating writing experiences with other writers and authors is a great exercise to see how others have developed their writing skills.
9. **Don't forget the fun!** Writing should be a pleasure—take advantage of all the opportunities that are given to you when you're in a workshop, no matter how silly they seem. Participate in games, role-plays, chats, and discussions, which are all designed to inspire you and push your creativity.
10. **It's a great way to publicize your work.** Who knows who you might meet at the workshop? Also, a lot of writing workshops also have open house events that might display your writing. You never know who you might meet at these types of events.