

Important questions and answers on the course « Techniques de création littéraire »

What is creative writing ?

Creative writing is a form of writing that goes beyond the bounds of technical writing, academic writing, or journalistic writing. It is the **art of expressing one's thoughts, emotions, and ideas in a unique and imaginative way**. Creative writing often involves the **use of literary techniques such as symbolism, metaphor, and imagery to convey meaning, evoke emotions, and create vivid images in the reader's mind**.

Some **examples of creative writing** include poetry, fiction (such as short stories and novels), memoirs, personal essays, and plays. **The goal of creative writing** is often to entertain, inspire, or provoke thought in the reader, rather than simply conveying information. Creative writing can be pursued as a hobby or profession, and many successful writers have gained recognition and acclaim for their work.

What is to write creatively ?

To write creatively is to **use language in a way that goes beyond the ordinary or expected**. It involves using **one's imagination and creativity to convey a message or story in a unique and compelling way**. This can include using **literary devices such as metaphor, simile, symbolism, and imagery to create vivid and engaging descriptions, or developing characters that are complex and interesting**.

Writing creatively also involves taking risks with language and experimenting with different styles and structures to create something new and original. It requires the writer to be willing to step outside of their comfort zone and try new things, whether it's writing in a different genre or exploring new themes and ideas.

Ultimately, writing creatively is about tapping into one's inner creativity and using words to express oneself in a way that is meaningful, impactful, and engaging to the reader

What are the techniques of creative writings and how are they used ?

There are many techniques that writers use to create engaging and impactful works of creative writing. Here are some examples :

Imagery : This involves creating vivid mental pictures in the reader's mind using sensory details such as **sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell**. Writers use imagery to make their writing more engaging and to help readers connect emotionally with the story.

Metaphor and simile : These are literary devices used to make comparisons between two things in a way that is not meant to be taken literally. Metaphors and similes can be used to create powerful images and to convey complex ideas in a more accessible way.

Dialogue : Dialogue is the conversation between characters in a story. It is used to reveal character traits, advance the plot, and provide insights into the story's themes and messages.

Characterization : This involves creating fully developed and believable characters that readers can relate to and care about. Characterization can be achieved through physical descriptions, actions, dialogue, and inner thoughts and feelings.

Plot and structure : This involves creating a storyline that is engaging and well-paced. It can include elements such as conflict, rising action, climax, and resolution, and can be structured in different ways depending on the genre and style of the writing.

Point of view : This refers to the perspective from which the story is told, such as first person, third person, or omniscient. The choice of point of view can have a significant impact on the reader's experience of the story.

These are just a few examples of the many techniques that writers use to create engaging and impactful works of creative writing. The specific techniques used will depend on the writer's style, genre, and intended message.

What is the difference between creative writing and creative nonfiction ?

The main difference between **creative writing** and **creative nonfiction** is that creative writing typically refers to **works of fiction**, such as novels, short stories, and poetry, while creative nonfiction refers to **works that are based on real events or people**, but are written using literary techniques commonly associated with fiction.

Creative writing is typically focused on telling a story that is not based on real events, and involves the use of imagination and creativity to create characters, plotlines, and settings that are entirely fictional. Creative writing often employs **literary devices** such as symbolism, metaphor, and imagery to create a unique and engaging narrative.

In contrast, **creative nonfiction** is focused on telling a true story in a way that is engaging and compelling to the reader. Creative nonfiction may involve using literary techniques such as dialogue, characterization, and scene-setting to bring real events and people to life in a way that is similar to how a work of fiction might be written. However, unlike creative writing, creative nonfiction is based on real events and is expected to adhere to the truth as closely as possible.

Some **examples of creative nonfiction** include **memoirs, personal essays, and literary journalism**. These works often use techniques commonly associated with creative writing, such as the use of metaphor and imagery, but are grounded in real events and experiences.

Why language is said to be incontrovertible in creative writings ?

Language is said to be incontrovertible in creative writing because it is the **primary tool** that writers use to convey their ideas, emotions, and messages to the reader. Unlike in other forms of writing, such as technical or academic writing, where the focus is on conveying factual information in a clear and concise manner, creative writing is focused on using language in a way that is imaginative and expressive.

In **creative writing**, the words and phrases that are used are carefully chosen to create a specific effect or mood, to evoke certain emotions, or to convey a particular message. Because of this, the language used in creative writing is often considered to be « **incontrovertible**, » meaning that it

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cannot be argued with or disputed, because it is an integral part of the writer's artistic vision and intent.

Moreover, language in creative writing is often used in a way that is open to interpretation and encourages the reader to engage with the text on a deeper level. The use of literary devices such as metaphor, symbolism, and imagery allows writers to create multiple layers of meaning in their writing, which can be interpreted in different ways by different readers.

Ultimately, the language used in creative writing is what gives it its power and impact, and it is through the skilled use of language that writers are able to create works that resonate with readers and have a lasting impact.

What is difamiliarization in creative writings ?

Difamiliarization is a literary technique used in creative writing that involves presenting familiar objects or situations in a new or unfamiliar way. Also known as defamiliarization, this technique is intended to challenge the reader's assumptions and encourage them to see things in a fresh, new way.

Difamiliarization can take many different forms, depending on the context of the writing. For example, a writer might use unusual metaphors or similes to describe a common object, or might use an unexpected perspective to describe a familiar scene.

One of the most famous examples of difamiliarization is found in the works of the Russian formalist, Viktor Shklovsky, who argued that the purpose of art was to « make the stone stony » - in other words, to remove the automatic perceptions that come with familiarity and force the reader to see things in a new light.

Difamiliarization is often used in creative writing to create a sense of disorientation or to challenge the reader's preconceptions about a particular subject. By presenting familiar objects or situations in a new way, writers can encourage readers to think more deeply about the world around them, and to question their assumptions and beliefs.

What are the types of creative writings ?

There are many types of creative writing, each with its own unique characteristics and purposes. Here are some of the most common types of creative writing :

Fiction : This includes novels, short stories, novellas, and flash fiction. These works of creative writing are entirely imagined by the author and may feature a wide range of genres, including science fiction, fantasy, historical fiction, romance, and literary fiction.

Poetry : Poetry is a form of creative writing that uses language to evoke emotions, create images, and convey ideas. Poems may be written in a variety of forms, including sonnets, free verse, haiku, and epic poetry.

Creative nonfiction : This includes personal essays, memoirs, travel writing, and literary journalism. Unlike traditional nonfiction writing, creative nonfiction uses literary techniques such as imagery, dialogue, and narrative to tell a true story in a compelling and engaging way.

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Drama : Drama is a form of creative writing that is intended to be performed. It includes plays, screenplays, and scripts for television and film.

Hybrid genres : Some works of creative writing defy categorization and blend elements of different genres. For example, a graphic novel might combine elements of fiction and visual art, while a prose poem might blend elements of poetry and creative nonfiction.

Each of these types of creative writing offers writers a unique set of challenges and opportunities, and many writers may explore multiple genres over the course of their careers.

Examples of creative writings ?

There are many *examples of creative writing* across various genres. Here are a few examples :

Fiction : « To Kill a Mockingbird » by Harper Lee, « The Great Gatsby » by F. Scott Fitzgerald, « Pride and Prejudice » by Jane Austen, « The Catcher in the Rye » by J.D. Salinger.

Poetry : « The Waste Land » by T.S. Eliot, « Howl » by Allen Ginsberg, « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock » by T.S. Eliot, « The Road Not Taken » by Robert Frost.

Creative nonfiction : « The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks » by Rebecca Skloot, « The New Jim Crow » by Michelle Alexander, « In Cold Blood » by Truman Capote, « The Year of Magical Thinking » by Joan Didion.

Drama : « Hamlet » by William Shakespeare, « Death of a Salesman » by Arthur Miller, « A Streetcar Named Desire » by Tennessee Williams, « Angels in America » by Tony Kushner.

Hybrid genres : « Maus » by Art Spiegelman (a graphic novel and memoir), « Citizen : An American Lyric » by Claudia Rankine (a blend of poetry, prose, and visual art), « The Argonauts » by Maggie Nelson (a mix of memoir, critical theory, and cultural commentary).

These works showcase the breadth and depth of creative writing and illustrate how writers use language and literary devices to tell compelling stories, evoke emotion, and explore complex themes and ideas

What is to write a coherent paragraph in creative writings ?

In creative writing, a *coherent paragraph* is one that effectively communicates a single idea or theme to the reader. It should be structured in a way that is clear and easy to follow, with each sentence building upon the previous one to create a logical flow of ideas.

To write a coherent paragraph in creative writing, you should start by identifying the *central idea or theme* you want to convey. This might be a specific image, emotion, or concept that you want to explore in greater detail. Once you have identified your central idea, you should begin crafting sentences that support and expand upon it.

Effective paragraph construction involves using transitional phrases and topic sentences to create a clear and logical progression of ideas. You should also pay attention to the rhythm and pacing of your writing, using sentence structure and punctuation to create emphasis and variation.

In creative writing, *coherence* is especially important, as it helps to draw the reader into the world of your story or poem and to engage them on an emotional level. By crafting paragraphs that are

coherent and well-structured, you can create a powerful and immersive reading experience for your audience.

What about creating mood and atmosphere in creative writings ?

Creating mood and **atmosphere** is an essential aspect of creative writing, as it helps to immerse the reader in the world of the story or poem and to evoke emotions and feelings that are central to the narrative. Here are some tips for creating mood and atmosphere in your creative writing :

Use sensory details : By incorporating vivid sensory details such as sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures, you can help to create a rich and immersive world that draws the reader in and engages their senses.

Consider the setting : The setting of your story or poem can have a significant impact on the mood and atmosphere you are trying to create. For example, a dark, foreboding forest might create a sense of unease or danger, while a sunny, peaceful beach might evoke feelings of relaxation and tranquility.

Use figurative language : Metaphors, similes, and other types of figurative language can help to create mood and atmosphere by establishing connections between seemingly unrelated things and creating a sense of resonance and depth.

Pay attention to pacing : The pacing of your writing can also play a role in creating mood and atmosphere. By varying sentence length and structure, you can create a sense of tension or release that can enhance the emotional impact of your writing.

Focus on character emotions : Finally, the emotions and feelings of your characters can have a profound effect on the mood and atmosphere of your writing. By paying close attention to their inner lives and emotional states, you can create a sense of empathy and connection that can help to engage the reader on a deeper level

How to characters more vivid in creative writings ?

Making characters more vivid in creative writing involves **creating fully-realized, complex, and multidimensional characters that feel like real people**. Here are some tips for making your characters more vivid :

Create a backstory : Characters with a rich and interesting backstory are more likely to feel real and fully-formed. Consider where your character came from, what their family life was like, and what significant events have shaped them into the person they are today.

Give them unique quirks : Small, idiosyncratic details can help to bring your characters to life and make them feel like real people. Consider giving your characters unique quirks or habits, such as a nervous tic or a tendency to use a specific catchphrase.

Develop their relationships : The relationships between your characters can be a rich source of conflict, tension, and emotion. Consider how each character feels about the others and what their interactions reveal about their personalities and motivations.

Show, don't tell : Rather than simply describing your characters' traits and characteristics, try to show them in action. Use dialogue, actions, and thoughts to reveal your characters' inner lives and motivations.

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Give them goals : Characters who have clear, well-defined goals are more likely to feel active and engaged in the story. Consider what your character wants and what they are willing to do to achieve it.

By paying close attention to these elements and crafting fully-realized characters, you can make them more **vivid and memorable, and create a more engaging and immersive reading experience for your audience.**

What is Pathetic Fallacy in creative writing ?

Pathetic fallacy is a literary device often used in creative writing that involves **attributing human emotions or feelings to nature or inanimate objects**. It is a form of personification that suggests a connection between the inner emotional state of a character and the external world.

For example, if a character is feeling *sad or melancholy*, a writer might use **pathetic fallacy** to **describe** the rain as « weeping » or the clouds as « heavy with sorrow ». Similarly, if a character is feeling *happy or content*, the writer might **describe** the sun as « smiling » or the flowers as « dancing with joy ».

The use of pathetic fallacy can be a **powerful way to evoke emotions and create a sense of atmosphere or mood in a piece of creative writing**. By suggesting a connection between the inner emotional state of the character and the external world, the writer can create a sense of resonance and depth that draws the reader in and engages them on an emotional level.

What is the Freytag's Pyramid and its parts in creative writing ?

Freytag's Pyramid, also known as the **dramatic arc**, is a commonly used framework in creative writing and storytelling that outlines the basic structure of a narrative. It is named after the German playwright **Gustav Freytag**, who identified its key components in his analysis of dramatic structure.

Freytag's Pyramid is composed of **five parts** :

Exposition : The exposition is the beginning of the story, where the characters, setting, and basic situation are introduced. It sets the stage for the narrative and establishes the context in which the story will unfold.

Rising Action : The rising action is the part of the story where the conflict or central problem is introduced and begins to build in intensity. It is the point where the story starts to gain momentum and the tension begins to rise.

Climax : The climax is the turning point of the story, where the conflict reaches its peak and the outcome becomes inevitable. It is the moment of highest tension and the most dramatic point in the narrative.

Falling Action : The falling action is the part of the story where the conflict is resolved and the tension begins to dissipate. It is the point where the story starts to wind down and the loose ends are tied up.

Resolution : The resolution is the end of the story, where the final outcome is revealed and the narrative is brought to a close. It is the point where the reader can reflect on the story as a whole and the characters' journeys are completed.

Freytag's Pyramid provides a **useful framework** for writers to structure their narratives and ensure that they have a compelling arc that engages the reader and leads to a satisfying conclusion.

Discuss the importance of style, difamiliarization, description, figures of speech and language in creative writing ?

Style, difamiliarization, description, figures of speech, and language are all important elements of creative writing that help to create an engaging and immersive reading experience. Here's a brief discussion of their importance :

Style : Style refers to the writer's unique voice and approach to writing. It encompasses everything from sentence structure and word choice to tone and mood. A strong and distinct style can make a piece of writing stand out, and can help to create a sense of personality and individuality that connects with readers.

Difamiliarization : Difamiliarization, or defamiliarization, is a technique used in creative writing that involves presenting familiar objects or ideas in a new or unusual way. By disrupting the reader's expectations, difamiliarization can create a sense of surprise or disorientation that engages the reader and encourages them to think more deeply about the text.

Description : Description involves using sensory details to create vivid and compelling imagery in the reader's mind. By painting a rich and detailed picture of the setting, characters, and events in a story, description can help to bring the narrative to life and make it more immersive and engaging.

Figures of speech : Figures of speech are techniques that use language in creative and unexpected ways, such as simile, metaphor, personification, and hyperbole. By using figures of speech, writers can create vivid and memorable images in the reader's mind, and can add depth and complexity to their writing.

Language : Language is the foundation of creative writing, and includes everything from word choice and sentence structure to rhythm and pacing. By carefully selecting and arranging their words, writers can create a rich and evocative tapestry of language that engages the reader and brings their story to life.

In summary, style, difamiliarization, description, figures of speech, and language are **all crucial elements of creative writing that can help to create a unique, engaging, and memorable reading experience**. By mastering these techniques, writers can elevate their writing and connect with readers on a deeper level.

What about point of view in creative writing ?

Point of view (POV) is an essential element of creative writing that refers to the perspective from which a story is told. It determines who is telling the story and how the reader experiences the narrative.

There are **three main types of POV** in creative writing :

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First Person POV : In first person POV, the narrator is a character within the story, and the story is told from their perspective, using « I » or « we ». This POV allows for a more intimate and personal connection between the reader and the narrator, but limits the reader's understanding of events to only what the narrator knows.

Second Person POV : Second person POV is less common in creative writing and involves addressing the reader directly, using « you ». This POV can create a sense of immediacy and engagement with the reader, but can also feel intrusive or demanding.

Third Person POV : Third person POV is the most common POV in creative writing, and involves a narrator who is not a character in the story. This POV can be further divided into three subtypes :

Third Person Omniscient : In third person omniscient POV, the narrator knows everything about the characters and events in the story, and can provide insights into their thoughts and feelings.

Third Person Limited : In third person limited POV, the narrator has limited access to the thoughts and feelings of the characters, and the story is told from the perspective of one or a few specific characters.

Third Person Objective : In third person objective POV, the narrator is an observer who does not provide any insight into the thoughts or feelings of the characters, and simply reports what is happening in a neutral and objective manner.

The choice of POV can have a **significant impact on the reader's experience of the story**. By selecting the right POV for their narrative, writers can create a **sense of intimacy, immediacy, or detachment**, and can shape the reader's understanding of events and characters in the story.

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