

Teacher Training Certificate Course: 6 Month Overview



WEEKEND 1

Creating a nourishing culture in your group

“Teacher centered” vs. “Student Centered”
(or explaining versus inductive teaching)

What to tell students on the first meeting of
your writing group

How to lead a writing exercise, especially the
first one

Writing “prompts” (i.e. topics given) vs.
writing experiments (e.g. prisms through
which people can discover their own genius)

What are the problems with mainstream
teaching methodology?

“Critique” vs. “Feedback”

Feedback styles and “phenomenology”

Core teaching values—mine and yours

The improv. theater concept of “blocking”

“Asymmetry, Writing and The Mind”—intro
to the theory

Preliminary discussion of the writing group
you want to lead

Discussion of readings: *Writing Open the
Mind* by Andy Couturier

WEEKEND 2

Leading writing exercises: How to get
students to stumble onto what they didn't
know they knew

Intro to some basic exercises from *Writing
Open the Mind*. How they work, and what
their purpose is.

Different categories of exercises: how to and
why each kind:

- syllable sounds
- resequencings
- agog/automatic writing

- shatter-scramble
- oscillations
- prisms
- asymmetrical lists
- architectures
- nature and location
- sway
- kinetic exercises

Discussion of main texts: *Art and Fear* and
Part 2 of *Writing Open the Mind*

Getting started on setting up your groups—
Who do you want to teach?

Introduction of major theory pieces:

Appreciative Inquiry

Reader Response Theory

Post-modernist linguistic theory

Hermeneutics

Phenomenology

Speech Act Theory

Asymmetry as it relates to resequencing

and macro organization

Ritual Studies

WEEKEND 3

A single exercise and how to make variations
on it: “A Tinderbox of Attitudes”

Variations on “prism” exercises: Genres,
Attitudes, Voices, Purposes

What makes a good exercise? Figure out
what you *want* to have happen in the
exercise (while also being open to
something else happening...)

How do we choose variations? What works
and doesn't work?

Posters for recruitment—what Andy uses
Introduction to marking/ responding to
student writing on paper: student examples
Micro-structural and macro-structural forms
Variations on the exercise “Number Count
Splice” —how to determine what
parameters *you* want to use when leading
an exercise
Sentence Elements, an introduction:
“appositives”, “verbals”, “absolutes”

WEEKEND 4

Logistics of creating your groups
What kind of writing class do *you* want to
teach? —How many hours per session?
Workshops versus longer courses. One-two
days. Weeklongs. Weekly classes
Size: One-on-one vs. small groups vs. larger
groups
What are the logistics for different sized
groups?
Thoughts on remote teaching
Review of major theory pieces
How to turn theory into an exercise
Recruitment Part 2: Posters, email lists,
website content and design, online
registration
Phone recruiting role play
Setting up your groups:
Choosing a good location
Setting up the room
Managing energy levels in the group
Preventing conflicts between students
Barrier free teaching/ inclusiveness (e.g. not
marginalizing *anyone*)
Working with time so everyone is relaxed,
yet everyone is included
Doing one-on-one conferencing
Guiding feedback in a group, Part 2
Psychological issues that come up in class

Spotting the student’s “issues” or blockages.
How to deal with fear.
Is this therapy? (No, but...)
“Difficult” students
Second language and “marginalized” students

WEEKEND 5

Re-Seeing Revision—bringing improvisation
and creativity to the process
Theory—Nancy Sommers, “dissonance” and
resequencing
Writing in Nature--Reading: *Spell of the
Sensuous*—David Abram
Writing from the Body—Readings: Augusto
Boal, Keith Johnstone, Ruth Zaporah
Teaching poetry
Teaching fiction
Teaching so called “non creative” writing
Building it as a business, Part 2
Improv. theater re: writing teaching
The neuroscience angle
Theory: deeper—
Gadamer, Flower and Hayes, Haswell,
Coe, Christensen, Rosenblatt, Fish
Emotions in the writing process
What is “Deep” writing?
Teaching Book Completion Groups

WEEKEND 6

Writing in Nature and Writing from the
Body, part 2
Creating and testing new exercises
Your presentations
Re-examining the problems with mainstream
writing-teaching culture
Launching your business: Website and online
registration Part 2, poster services,
social media, public lectures
Let’s look again at core teaching values
Six month overview and review
Graduation!