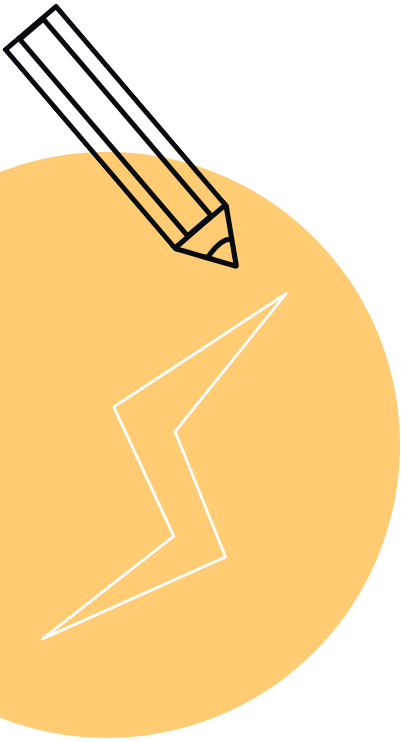


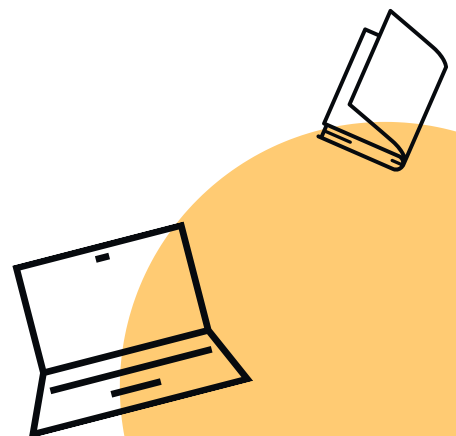
# Unit 4



## Fiction

### Overview

In this unit, students will tap into their imagination and write short stories. They will break any genre of fiction into its fundamental parts—plot, character, dialogue, point of view



# Essential Questions

- How can universal themes be expressed through plot, conflict, structure, tone, etc.?
- How do authors develop characters that become alive to readers, and what role does viewpoint play in the development of characters?
- What techniques are effective in creating fiction pieces that will appeal to a broad audience?

# Essential Learning Outcomes

- Students will be familiar with the craft elements of creative writing, including plot, scene, characters, point-of-view, dialogue, imagery, and other elements of literary prose.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to incorporate literary elements in their own prose.
- Students will use critical thinking and problem solving to critique others' nonfiction and communicate suggestions about strengths and weaknesses of drafts to peers.

## Unit Resources

[Intro to Fiction](#)

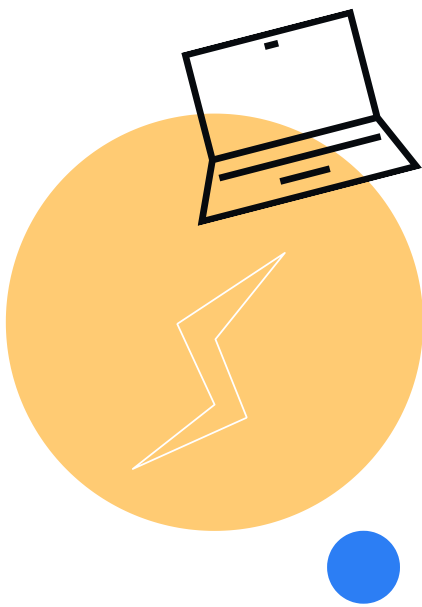
[Figurative Language Activity](#)

[Destroy Your Favorite Place Activity](#)

[Peer Review Guidelines and Activity](#)

## Videos

[Fiction Video Playlist](#)



## Watch

Minnesota Author Lesley Nneka Arimah talks about her book, *What It Means When a Man Falls From the Sky: Stories*.

[https://youtu.be/\\_I-QbD2Y-YE](https://youtu.be/_I-QbD2Y-YE)

Then as a class, brainstorm types/ genres of fiction and have students share examples of favorites.

- Fantasy
- Horror
- Mystery
- Romance
- Science Fiction
- Thriller and Suspense
- Western

# Reading Fiction

Share these fiction book links with the class.

## **What it Means When a Man Falls From the Sky by Lesley Arimah**

<https://canvas.hamline.edu/courses/10478/files/709069>

## **Two Kinds by Amy Tan**

<https://cpb-us>

[w2.wpmucdn.com/campuspress.yale.edu/dist/4/2533/files/2018/08/t](https://w2.wpmucdn.com/campuspress.yale.edu/dist/4/2533/files/2018/08/two-kinds-amy-tan-1nl7jzy.pdf)

[wo-kinds-amy-tan-1nl7jzy.pdf](https://w2.wpmucdn.com/campuspress.yale.edu/dist/4/2533/files/2018/08/two-kinds-amy-tan-1nl7jzy.pdf)

# Writing Prompts

*Writer Igniter*

<https://diymfa.com/writer-igniter>

Share the Writer Igniter link with the class and have students write a flash fiction (<500 words) piece using the character, situation, prop and setting that they get. Click the shuffle on Writer Igniter home page to get a randomly generated prompt. Then start writing!

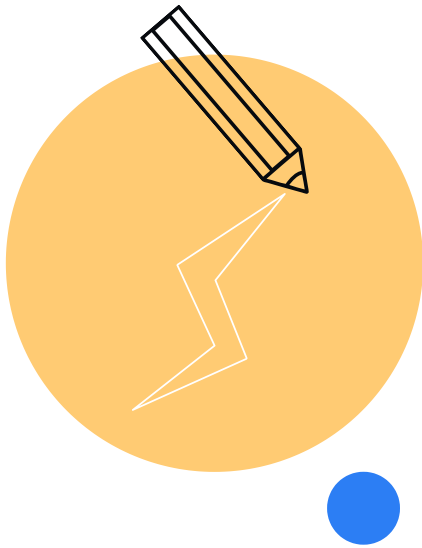


# Creating suspense using figurative language

For suspense writing, focus on simile and metaphor comparisons as well as onomatopoeia. Use example texts to model the use of similes and metaphors in suspenseful writing. In the *Monkey's Paw* by W.W. Jacobs, I highlight the following simile: "As I wished, it twisted in my hands like a snake." And the following metaphor. "[the] pathways a bog, and the road's a torrent." Ask students to think about the imagery portrayed through these examples, and how they add to the suspense of the text.

I also display the following sentence from "The Most Dangerous Game" by Richard Connell as an example of onomatopoeia: "Twenty feet below him the sea rumbled and hissed."

Now that students have taken a look at these elements in a mentor text, they are ready to craft their own.



## Activity

Each image is a scary or suspenseful scene. Ask students to choose one image to write a suspense scene. They are directed to include as many examples of similes, metaphors, and onomatopoeia as possible!



# Destroy your favorite place

Writing about place is crucial in many types of creative prose. This activity starts with a generic prompt: Write about your favorite place (or a place you used to spend a lot of time) in as much detail as possible. Students are often eager to share descriptions of the library, their grandmother's front porch, or the playground in their old neighborhood

Then make them destroy those places. Write about the destruction of this place. How was it destroyed? What does that place look like now? What emotions come to the surface? This is much harder, even heartbreaking, for some students to imagine. I remind them that this part isn't necessarily true and that they can "destroy" the place in any number of ways: neglected and overgrown yards are as interesting as explosions.

# Giving and Receiving Feedback

*Have the class break out into peer feedback groups of 3-5 students.*

In these groups, students will be sharing some of the works they have created in class so far. Using the following guidelines.

## **Giving Peer Feedback**

When your role in peer review is to give feedback, your job is to help the writer by giving your reaction as a reader to the writing. Think about the kind of feedback you would like to get and also how you would like that feedback to be given. Be sensitive but honest. The point is to help the writer consider ways to improve the work. What follows here are some basic rules to follow for responding to someone else's writing.

**First, listen to the writer.** What kind of feedback are they asking for? Make a note about what kind of feedback the writer has requested and keep that in mind as you respond.

**Be kind.** When you are receiving criticism, isn't it easier to hear if the person giving the criticism is kind and respectful to you? Do the same for your peer.

**Comment on the higher order concerns first.** That means asking questions about anything that confuses you, checking to see if the writing did what the assignment called for, and considering if it makes sense.

**Use "I" statements** to help stay focused on your reaction to the writing. For example, instead of saying, "You aren't clear in this paragraph," try saying, "I'm confused in this paragraph. Did you mean X or Y?"

**Be specific.** Never say "I liked it" or "It was good" unless you follow up with an explanation of exactly what you liked or thought was good. The same goes for criticism; say exactly what confused you or what was missing.



**Ask questions.** Use questions to clarify what the writer means or what the writer is trying to say.

**Potential Focus Areas in Critiques:**

In what ways does it achieve/fail to achieve its purpose?

How could the piece improve overall?

What aspects of the piece do you really like?

How did the piece affect you?

What sort of impact does it have, if any?

**General Issues:**

Genre: Does it fit the genre of writing?

Tone: Does the language fit the genre, content, and purpose of the piece?

Initial stage: Does the opening of the piece make you want to keep reading?

Setting: Is the setting apparent? Are there details about the time/place/location? Does the setting play an important role?

Senses: Are you captivated by the writing in terms of senses/ does the writing make you taste, feel, see, smell, and hear in your imagination?

Language: Is the writing exciting? Strange? Too simple? Would you need a dictionary or map to understand what's happening?

Predictability: Is the writing too predictable? Is it so unpredictable that it leaves too many loose ties at the end?

Distractions: Is there anything in the writing that takes away from its depth?

## Make the Most of Peer Feedback

Now let's consider your role in receiving feedback, not giving it. Are you eager to get feedback? Scared to share your work? If you are receiving feedback from your peers, remember that ultimately you get to decide what feedback to accept. If you don't think the feedback is correct, ask your instructor what they think. And give your peers a break; they are also just learning how to give feedback.

One way to improve the feedback you get is to ask for the kind of feedback you want. Don't be afraid to give your peer reviewer some direction. Listen to or read the feedback with an open mind. Consider that the peer reviewer is your reader. It's good to know what a real reader got out of your writing.

If you aren't sure about the feedback or feel upset about it, reconsider the suggestions after a break. It's okay to say, "I'll think about that." If you feel that the reviewer is trying to change your style so that the paper doesn't sound like you anymore, consider whether the feedback helps you make the paper better. If not, feel free to set that feedback aside.