



Young
Audiences
Arts for
Learning

Northern California

Integrated Arts Residency Program Guide

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Alyson Bingham

Creative Writing

K-12



About the Artist

Alyson Bingham MEd MFA is full-time educator and writer who has taught Writing and English programs for advanced students at UC Berkeley and Mills College. She also organized a monthly poetry reading and workshop series at Mills and directed a creative writing program on a Navajo reservation in New Mexico. Her passion for the written word, combined with an empathic and responsive teaching style, has allowed her to be an effective educator with elementary through college students. Alyson specializes in creating curriculum which focus on themes of self-advocacy, academic and personal goal setting, and student-driven projects. She connects students to their writing by examining the connection of literature to social justice aims, while preparing students with a solid foundation in writing, critical reading, and classic and contemporary literature. Known for her commitment to students with special learning needs and her exceptional success in raising student test scores, Alyson prides herself on integrating writing skills across the educational curriculum, and helping students reach their full potential through active engagement in the learning process.

About the Program

Alyson has a diverse range of expertise and experience and is extremely adept at creating curriculum that best fits the needs of teachers and students. She is currently training new teachers (K-12 and Special Education) at three Bay Area colleges and is very knowledgeable about standards, curriculum, expectations, and the needs of teachers and students. Some of

her areas of expertise are: Creative Writing, Poetry, Bookmaking, Art, Community Building, Conflict Resolution, Theatre, Music Appreciation, and Mixed Genre.

Teaching Philosophy:

Alyson believes that with structure, encouragement, inspiration, and clear expectations, everyone can express themselves through the written word. She is passionate about writing; her enthusiasm is infectious through her inspirational, creative, and structured teaching style.

Learning Objectives:

Each student will experience creative writing through poetry, short story, the editing process, and performance. Students will gain an awareness of writing strategies and develop tools to further their exploration of the writing process.

Teacher Preparation for the Program:

Discuss a well-known story or poem with the class. Speculate about the writer's artistic process. Brainstorm questions. Some Suggestions: What does it mean to be a writer? How do authors create new work? Why is writing important in our culture? What is your writing process?

Vocabulary and Key Concepts

Alyson will discuss the basic concepts of writing, focusing on grade level specific content standards and equivalent vocabulary.

English-Language Arts Content Standards

The 8-week unit will address English- Language Arts Content Standards in Writing, Written and Oral Language Conventions, and Listening and Speaking Strategies. The specific standards addressed will be tailored to each grade level and the needs of the students.

Resources

This varies according to teacher resources and requests.

Sample Eight-Week Lesson Outline

Week 1: Introduction to Creative Writing/Poetry

Discussion about expectations and fears around writing, writing habits, and personal writing goals. Exploration of the effects of sensory details on writing through poetry. Students will create a poem as a class with and without sensory details, free write to music, and then create a poem on their own.

Week 2: Personal Narrative

Students will write a story about a personal artifact or piece of clothing that is significant to them using sensory details. Students will learn the fundamentals of peer editing and will share and comment on the work of a peer.

Week 3: Letter Writing

The class will read and discuss Langston Hughes's "Theme for English B". Depending on the age of

the students, they will discuss rhythm, meaning, impact, emotionality, historical, and political content. Students will use some of the same writing strategies as Hughes to describe themselves to their teacher in a letter.

Week 4: Inspiration

Discussion about writers block and some strategies to alleviate it. Students will brainstorm a list of questions and ideas to refer to if they get stuck writing in the future. Each student will write a piece based on a postcard. (No specified genre.)

Week 5: Dialogue

Students will explore and discuss dialogue from the book they are currently reading. Each student will create a comic strip and create a dialogue for each frame. This can be tied to a current theme the class is studying.

Week 6: Editing

Students will further explore the concept of peer editing and will review their pieces with a peer or group of peers in preparation for bookmaking and presentations.

Week 7: Bookmaking

Students will create handmade books and will write the final drafts of their work into their new books. This activity will be followed by a discussion about the fundamentals of performance including choosing a piece, timing, articulation, stage presence, and audience appreciation.

Week 8: Presentations

Students will present and show their work to an audience of their peers, teachers, and families.