

The Giving Tree Collective
**ENRICHMENT
STUDIO** *BY*

WRITE YOUR MEMOIR

BEGINS APRIL 11

WITH
WENDY BYARD



THEGIVINGTREECOLLECTIVE.COM

"When we look carefully and deeply at our lives, we create not only new insights but personal empowerment."
-Wendy Byard



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ENRICHMENT
STUDIO ♪

Series Cost: \$225 per person
Call (248) 572-4135 to register
Payment is due at the time of registration;
Minimum Registration of 5 people

THE NARRATIVE/MEMOIR ESSAY WRITING SEMINAR 1



• 5 CLASS SERIES WITH WENDY BYARD

TUESDAYS FROM 6:00-7:30 PM CLASS DATES: APRIL 11 & 18, MAY 2, 9 & 23

Often, when I announce to students that we are writing a personal narrative or memoir, I hear the following lamentations: "Oh no! I'm boring. I haven't done anything important in my life. I'm not worth writing about."

Of course, this is patently false for each of us. We all have worthwhile stories to tell. The memoir is not necessarily the mind-blowing November you trekked Mt. Kilimanjaro or the 21st birthday you wrestled a shark off Fiji. Instead, a strong narrative is most often a simple story, one that is yes, vividly told, but most importantly authentic, truthful, heartfelt, and meaningful to both writer and reader. It reveals a truth, a lesson, a warning, some instruction, or an awareness that may fill a void of understanding in both. It also may simply offer provocation to spark contemplation.

Through the narrative, the writer shares a moment in their lives that was somehow impactful or instrumental, although they might not be exactly sure why at first. This particular writing journey requires considerable introspection with the writer looking closely at the life event. It also requires true investment as the writer seeks new and more profound insights. This also may result in personal empowerment that can be gifted to others. To achieve these results, answering

"So what" is the most important question writing instructors introduce to their students. "So what" is not meant to be rude but to push writers to answer the following:

- Why am I compelled to closely examine this life event?
- Why should readers care about my story?
- How will it impact them meaningfully?
- Beyond a truth, lesson, moral, or simple thought provocation, what of my writing artistry will readers enjoy that also will enhance my purpose?

The narrative typically focuses on a moment of time, or several moments that tie together, but not weeks or months. Writers want to powerfully immerse readers in the moment with all of the elements of great storytelling. A drawn-out accounting cannot achieve this. Thus, the narrative is an active telling of a compelling moment in life that usually has a beginning, middle, and end. It relies on all the characteristics of a great story: powerful hook, description, detail, climax, dialogue, organization, syntax, rhetorical tools (metaphor, symbolism, etc.), and strong ending.

A thoughtful writing journey can lead to a meaningful, powerfully told story that has the potential to change lives – the writer's and readers'. So, let's embark on this journey together and spark change!



Everything is your Teacher

A Creative Writing Seminar focusing on the Memoir

Taught by Published Author & Writing Professor Wendy Byard

Hello, fellow lifelong learners!

Have you always been interested in writing? Perhaps harbored a desire to write an essay or see your work published? Maybe you seek to enhance your process or join forces with a fellowship of thoughtful writers? If so, please consider my four-week course: "Everything is your Teacher."

This seminar will focus on writing a memoir or narrative essay, a short piece of fiction that allows you to go back into your personal past and choose a meaningful event in your life. The goal is to carefully consider this event, reflecting deeply and gaining insight and empowerment. By the end of the short course, you will produce a strong piece of writing with purpose that reflects numerous creative writing strategies. Your work will answer the important questions, "So what? Why should readers care? What do I have say with my unique lens and voice? " And, most importantly, "How am I empowered by this writing journey?"

About me: I am a published book author and magazine writer, Mott College composition professor for twenty years, and owner of a graphic design company. You can learn more at toteachandreach.com and wordgirlmarketing.com. So, if you are interested in a stimulating and enjoyable experience, please sign up, and let's go on this journey together!

"A serious life, by definition, is a life one reflects on, a life one tries to make sense of and bear witness to." - Vivian Gornick

Best Regards,

Wendy Byard



The Giving Tree Collective

**ENRICHMENT
STUDIO**

"WRITE YOUR MEMOIR" 5-WEEK SCHEDULE

TUESDAY
APRIL 11, 2023

INTRODUCTIONS/LETTER TO WENDY/PARTNERS
STUDENT GOALS/SEMINAR GOALS
NARRATIVE/MEMOIR OVERVIEW
TOPIC DISCUSSION/METHODS
READING/ANALYSIS
HOMEWORK

TUESDAY
APRIL 18, 2023

CLASS DISCUSSION/TOPIC REVIEW
WRITING PROCESS OVERVIEW
READING/ANALYSIS/RHETORICAL TOOLS
HOMEWORK

TUESDAY
MAY 2, 2023

CLASS DISCUSSION
READING/ANALYSIS/RHETORICAL TOOLS
ROUGH DRAFT PEER REVIEW
ROUGH DRAFT REVIEW WITH WENDY
HOMEWORK

TUESDAY
MAY 9, 2023

CLASS DISCUSSION/SECOND DRAFT DUE
2ND DRAFT PEER REVIEW
2ND DRAFT REVIEW WITH WENDY
HOMEWORK

TUESDAY
MAY 23, 2023

FINAL DRAFT DUE
SHARED READINGS OF FINAL DRAFT
CELEBRATION: WINE AND SNACKS AT THE
WELLNESS CENTER
EMAIL FINAL PAPER TO WENDY AS PDF

AGENDA

- Date:** April 11, 2023
Time: 6 pm-7:30 pm
Location: The Giving Tree Collective
Instructor: Wendy Byard



Class Business

- Introductions: Wendy and Writers.
- Discuss Seminar Purpose and Goals
- Provide phone number and email address.
- Discuss toteachandreach.com/memoir.
- Write letter to Wendy.
- Partners: share contact information/bonding activity.

Diagnostic Writing

Write a lengthy paragraph about something you did last weekend. Tell it like a story and make it vivid: details, descriptions, dialogue sensory imagery, great opening, and purpose for readers. Turn in to Wendy tonight.

Notes:

Just do your best! Wendy is only trying to get a sense of your writing strengths and areas to work on. Thank you!

Narrative/Memoir Essay Overview

- Read a student narrative essay & discuss its strengths.
- Read articles about the essay and narrative essay.
- What are the characteristics of a good story/essay?
- Review bland essay.
- What is writing purpose/exigence?
- Read another narrative essay. Analyze.

Homework:

For homework, read "Salvation" in the online course pack. Write down its strengths. What did you think Hughes did well? Be prepared to share your views next week.

The Writing Process

- What is your writing process?
- Review the typical writing process and its importance.
- Discuss importance of topic and methods to generate ideas: part of of prewriting.

Homework:

Engage in the topic prewriting methods. Think about purpose for readers. Later in the week, choose a topic that best meets our criteria & prewrite about it: 2 pages of free flowing notes (memories/insights). Bring topic/prewriting to class.