Introduction to Fiction & Poetry (CRWRI-UA 815)
July 7th - August 13th
Tuesday/Thursday 1:30-4:40
Room: TBD
Office Hours: By Appointment
Instructor: Marlene Morgan
Email: mbm545@nyu.edu

“Literature differs from life in that life is amorphously full of detail, and rarely directs us toward it, whereas literature teaches us to notice. Literature makes us better noticers of life; we get to practice on life itself; which in turn makes us better readers of detail in literature; which in turn makes us better readers of life.” --James Wood, How Fiction Works

Required Texts
James Wood’s How Fiction Works
Helen Vendler’s Poems, Poets, Poetry

Description
Class time will be divided between a craft lesson and workshop. For the craft portion of the class, we’ll use literary criticism to delve more deeply into various works of fiction and poetry. This class differs from a typical English class in that we’ll put more of an emphasis on the mechanics of fiction and poetry—characterization, plotting, rhythm, structure, etc. As a class we’ll also workshop student work with a focus on constructive critique. Students will write original works of fiction and poetry and receive feedback on these pieces from their classmates. Students of all levels of experience are welcome to take this course.

Workshop Submissions
These submissions should be double-spaced in 12-point font with page numbers. Please proofread these pieces for grammatical mistakes. For poetry workshop, you may submit one poem of reasonable length at a time. For fiction workshop, you may submit one 8-20 page piece of fiction or several short pieces. If you are submitting a novel excerpt, please provide a short summary for context. You will submit two poetry pieces and two fiction pieces over the course of the class. For the last class, you must edit one of your pieces for resubmission. You can write about whatever you like except this class or your classmates.

Additional Homework
You must write a short feedback letter of at least one paragraph in length for each piece up for workshop. You are also to do the reading as listed below and a weekly assigned response to the reading. This may take the format of a short writing exercise, questions in response to the reading, or a list of sentences you found notable from the reading.

Calendar
Tuesday, July 7th  Introduction, Syllabus, Writing Exercises
Vendler, “The Poem as Life”
Gluck, “The School Children”
Whitman, “Hours Continuing Long”
Stevens, “The Plain Sense of Things”

Thursday, July 9th  Wood, “Narrating”
Chekov, “The Lady with the Little Dog”
Workshop 1, Poetry: Group A
Tuesday, July 14th
Vendler, “Poems as Pleasure” “Rhythm”
Williams, “Poem”
Brooks, “We Real Cool”
Hardy, “The Darkling Thrush”
Frost, “After Apple-Picking”
Alexander, “Nineteen”
Workshop 2, Poetry: Group B

Thursday, July 16th
Wood, “Character”
Munro, “The Bear Came Over the Mountain”
Workshop 3, Poetry: Group A

Tuesday, July 21st
Vendler, “Describing Poems” “Poetic Kinds”
Rich, “Necessities of Life”
Larkin, “Talking in Bed”
Dickinson, “The Heart asks Pleasure”
Sandburg, “Grass”
Keats, “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer”
Workshop 4, Poetry: Group B

Thursday, July 23rd
Wood, “Detail”
Nabokov, “Spring in Fialta”
Workshop 5, Fiction: Group 1

Tuesday, July 28th
Vendler, “The Play of Language”
Keats, “To Autumn”
Yeats, “The Wild Swans at Coole”
Bishop, “One Art”
Harjo, “Song for the Deer and Myself to Return On”
Workshop 6, Fiction: Group 2

Thursday, July 30th
Wood, “Sympathy and Complexity”
Butler, “Bloodchild”
Workshop 7, Fiction: Group 3

Tuesday, August 4th
Vendler, “Constructing a Self”
Heaney, “Mid-Term Break”
Wright, “Self-Portrait”
Hughes, “Genius Child”
Dove, “Wingfoot Lake”
Workshop 8, Fiction: Group 1

Thursday, August 6th
Wood, “A Brief History of Consciousness”
Saunders, “Jon”
Workshop 9, Fiction: Group 2

Tuesday, August 11th
Vendler, “History and Regionality”
Lowell, “The March 1”
Hughes, “World War II”
Alexie, “On the Amtrak from Boston to New York City”
Walcott, “The Gulf”
Graham, “What the End is For”
Martinez, “History as a Second Language”
Workshop 10, Fiction: Group 3

Thursday, August 13th Concluding Remarks, Writing Exercises, Edited Piece Due

**Grades**
Everyone in the class is capable of getting an A. You won’t be graded on the quality of your writing but on your commitment to the class. Please turn in your assignments on time, participate in class discussion, and engage with the reading.

**Technology**
No laptop or phone use during class time.

**Plagiarism**
Please don’t plagiarize. I’ll have to refer you to the college for disciplinary action. Since you aren’t graded on the quality of work, plagiarism will not help your grade.

**Disability Disclosure Statement**
Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability; or who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should please register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980

NYU’s Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities

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