



say  
what  
you  
need  
to  
say



Climb out of the box.  
Summer writing workshops.  
[cwpfairfield.org](http://cwpfairfield.org)



## **Connecticut Writing Project at Fairfield**

Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions

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### What is a Young Adult Literacy Lab?

Labs are based on the writer's workshop model: rather than give students a formulaic key to the writing kingdom, we give them the tools and materials they need to build their own. We treat them as equals; we listen to their opinions, value their perspectives, and respect the passion that they bring to their writing. We meet our students where they are. They are all over the map, and we get lost and found together.

### Do I have to be a good writer to attend?

The only requirements are enthusiasm for writing and a desire to improve your writing skills.

### Who teaches the Labs?

Labs are staffed by certified teachers, professional writers, other experts, and graduate students.

### What is the ratio of writers to instructors?

We try to maintain a ratio of 1 adult writer for every 8 to 10 young writers.

### How long are the Labs?

Labs run from 9am to 3pm, M-F. Click [here](#) to see a sample schedule.

### But it's summer. Why should I sign up for a class?

Because writing is vital to learning, thinking, creating, and communicating in the 21st century. We write to change the world, and what could be more fun than that?

### Sign me up! Wait. How do I sign up?

Register by clicking [here](#). Please note that we have simplified our registration process. All that is required to reserve a spot in any Lab is an application form. Tuition must be paid in full one week prior to the Lab start date.

### Speaking of tuition, how much do the Labs cost?

Labs are \$350 for the first 1-week Lab and \$300 for each additional Lab/week.

## How will I know if I've been accepted?

Once we've received your application, we'll send a confirmation email. Look for a second email with room assignments and other details closer to the Lab start.

## Can I sign up for more than one Lab?

***Nothing would make us happier.***

### THE LABS:

## Little Labs for Younger Writers

### Little Lab for Big Imaginations

**July 6 – 10 or July 13 – 17, grades 3 – 6**

Aspiring young writers need room to use their imaginations and a little inspiration, and this Lab provides both. Each week, we'll write—and draw!—our way around the beautiful Fairfield campus, taking inspiration from nature, literature, personal experience, and each other. We'll spark our young writers' imaginations with discussion, performance, play, and, above all, the license to be creative. Throughout the week, and all around the campus, students will live the lives of authors, writing, illustrating, publishing, and even performing texts. This year, we've added a graphic novel component: students will have the opportunity to illustrate their own stories, and they'll bring home their very own picture book. We recommend this Lab for students who are already writers, those whose writing skills need a little spit and polish, and, of course, for kids who love to laugh, because—call us crazy—we think writing is fun!

**\*We are offering 2 sessions of this Lab; each week will consist of the same curriculum.**

### Little Lab for Big Poets

**July 13 – 17, grades 3 – 6**

All children need to play, but what we adults sometimes forget is that not all play is physical. For readers and writers and lovers of words, for children of all ages, *poetry* is play. This Lab will combine kids' innate desire to move with their natural instinct to try to understand and describe the world around them. Through a variety of group and individual games and activities, our Big Poets will use movement to learn the basics of poetry—things like alliteration, rhythm, tone, voice, metaphor, and more. They'll

expand and explore both their physical and social worlds, and along the way, they'll produce poetry in motion.

## Young Adult Literacy Labs

### Speak Your Self: a Poetry Lab

**July 6 – 10, grades 7 – 12**

The West African tradition of oral, or spoken word, poetry originated in the form of praise poems that were created to teach young people who they are, where they come from, and what special gifts they bring into the world. In this workshop, young poets will engage in this and other spoken word traditions, while they explore poetic techniques and forms, such as metaphor, imagery, acrostic, list poems, place poems, and more. Coupled with your imagination, senses, and creativity, these elements will enable you to get to know yourself as a person, as a member of a global tribe of creative minds, and as a poet in your own right. By performing and speaking your poetry out loud, you'll bring your voice out into the world and share your unique and authentic self.

### All the World's a Stage I & II

**July 6 – 10 and 13 – 17, grades 7 – 12**

Who says children should be seen and not heard? Certainly not us. We say bring on the drama, people! In this Lab, you'll study the basic elements of drama—action, character, conflict, dialogue—practice the skills it takes to write an entertaining play or screenplay, and then develop your own idea from the page to the stage. The two-week workshop will culminate in the Lab's first-ever festival, featuring staged readings of our students' sensational scripts. Work independently or in collaboration with your friends; just remember: The play's the thing!

**\*This is a 2-week Lab; the 2nd week will build on the curriculum of the 1st, but students may sign up for a single week.**

### It Was a Dark and Stormy Night: Writing Your Novel (Or At Least the First Chapter)

**July 13 – 17 and 20 – 24, grades 7 – 12**

Is there *anything* better than a great book? We don't think so, and if you're the kind of kid who's been writing the next Great American Novel in the margins of your algebra notebook, this is the Lab for you. Stories have the power to transport us across time and space, but they're only truly

magical if the characters are well-developed, the setting is vivid, and the plot sinks its hooks in and grabs you. Through workshops and writing exercises, small writers' groups, and guidance from professional storytellers, young writers in this Lab will take their book proposal from first sentence to first chapter. Last summer, guest author Jason Odell Williams told our writers that every book needs an elevator pitch; that is, a concise and compelling synopsis that convinces your fellow elevator rider that yours is... The. Best. Book. Ever. In Week 1, we'll get you to your 30-second pitch. You'll have a setting, a plot, an interesting conflict, characters with names and back stories, and, most importantly, the kind of passion for your story that inspires great writers. And once you've got your pitch, you need a book—or at least a few chapters. In Week 2, you'll take your draft to the next step, working on character development, authentic dialogue, plot transitions, and pacing. By the end of the Lab, you'll have turned those scribbles in the margins of your algebra notebook into a masterful story.

**\*This is a 2-week Lab; the 2nd week will build on the curriculum of the 1st, but students may sign up for a single week.**

### [The Art of Storytelling: A Graphic Novel Lab](#)

**July 20 – 24, grades 7 – 12**

Writers don't all think in compound, complex sentences. Some of us see the characters before we see their words. Some of us see the silence in a heated disagreement. Some of us see the small town before we know what happens there. A graphic novel is so much more than an illustrated story; it is a visual literacy. Deconstructing a graphic novel gives you insight into how they work and teaches you how to create your own. In this lab, you'll learn to recognize when a word works better than a picture, when a panel can substitute for exposition, and how using the two together makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts. Graphic novels are compound, complex things: a little bit art and a little bit literature and a whole lot of fun.

### [Stop the Presses! Journalism Lab I & II](#)

**July 20 – 24 and 27 – 31, grades 7 – 12**

Hone your journalistic and writing acumen the old-fashioned way: by pounding the pavement and seeking out sources as an apprentice journalist. In this Lab, you'll practice the skills you learn by putting them to immediate use, penning all the news that's fit to print. But this is no old-

fashioned journalism workshop. In a nod to the changing landscape, cub reporters will marry traditional reporting skills with digital technology and tell stories across multiple media platforms. We'll delve deeply into interviewing, newsroom ethics, and, of course, writing, during this empowering experience that seats you in the editor's chair of your own publication, the CWP Chronicle. By the end of the two weeks, you'll have published a polished story and experienced the power of the press first-hand.

**\*This is a 2-week Lab; the 2nd week will build on the curriculum of the 1st, but students may sign up for a single week.**

### [Project Citizen: Write a Wrong](#)

**July 27 – 31, grades 7 – 12**

The world is full of injustice. Happily, the world is also full of writers. For as long as there have been social movements, there have been citizens who have wielded the pen and not the sword in the battle against tyranny, injustice, and oppression. They know that writing is a way to share our human experiences, and that it can also be a powerful motivator. Words can inspire, instigate, or inflame. They can transport, transform, and touch. Whatever your issue is—whether big or small, global or local—your writing can change the world. So join us, the rabble-rousers and the rebels with a cause, as we learn to use persuasive techniques to move hearts and minds and challenge the status quo.

### [Ideas Worth Writing: A TED Lab](#)

**July 27 – 31, grades 7 – 12**

The “TED” in TED Talks stands for technology, entertainment, and design: three areas of contemporary culture that, collectively, are shaping our future. In the 21st century, writing straddles all three spheres, and knowing how to write so others will listen is a skill that can help shape *your* future. Because behind every great TED talk is a well-written speech. In this Lab, you'll practice the fundamentals of good public speaking, learn to speak extemporaneously (and what extemporaneously means), and, ultimately, produce and perform your own TED talk. By the end of the week, you'll be able to deliver your speech confidently, knowing that you're supported by well-organized, thoughtful, and inspired writing. Think you have something to say? This is the Lab for you.

## Who Do You Think You Are? The College Essay & Other Personal Narratives

### August 3 – 7, grades 9 – 12 (esp. rising seniors)

The college essay is among the most important pieces of writing in a high school student's career. Paradoxically, it is also the essay for which most students are least prepared because the college essay is not a five-paragraph essay; it is (or at least it should be) an idiosyncratic and compelling personal narrative limited only by word count. So how do you write one of those? First, breathe. Don't panic. You've got this covered, you just don't realize it. How do we know? Everyone has a story, even you. And we know—it feels like this essay is *themoostimportantstoryyouwill evertell*, but it's just a story—about that funny thing you did, or the amazing event you witnessed, or the time when you... Let our experts guide you through the process. You give us 5 days, we'll give you some giggles and a college essay.

### Young Adult Literacy Lab Highlights

- Branded our summer work deliberately
- Advertised in school newspapers
- Advertised on a state site for summer programs
- Tapped into the use of Constant Contact
- Increased enrollment from 72 participating youth in 2013 to 135 in 2014 to 154 in 2015
- Used youth surveys to determine alterations in programming.
- Published POW! The Anthology (2nd Edition), and included teachers from 2014 Summer Invitational
- Used [CWPFairfield.Org](http://CWPFairfield.Org) to highlight summer work (tapped into the skills of an undergraduate and graduate student to blog about programs.
- Co-planned a literacy event between ISI teachers, Fairfield University Men's Basketball Team, and Ubuntu Academy kids.
- Focused on specific genres in each lab.
- Hosted Friday proms so each student could showcase their writing for the week.
- Allowed for single author work and collaborative, community projects each week.
- Emphasized FUN!
- Deliberately collected data from Lab teachers and students to learn from our changes.
- Coordinated with Invitational Summer Institute - hence the laboratory motif.
- Brought in professional writers