

The Creative Writer

White County Creative Writers

www.whitecountyc creativewriters.org

Establishing settings to convey mood

By Jason Glass

What is the role scenery and setting play in our writing? Sometimes the setting can be as important for the story as the characters. Sometimes its the little things that help set the overall mood of a piece.

The Hunger Games, for example, is set in a post-WWIII America, but there is more to it than that. The author also played with how they set up the characters.

For instance: President Snow always wears white, has white hair, and loves white roses. He is the bad guy, while the all black wearing Mockingjay are heroes.



Photo by Del Garrett

Jason Glass

President Coin is a wild-card good guy that turns bad in the end. She always wears grey and has grey hair.

I thought these (differences) were interesting.

On top of these, I plan to show how a love story is just a love story, or a western is just another western, unless we find ways to tweak the environment to add a new level of interest.

The setting can also play the part of a protagonist or antagonist. If the love story is between two Jewish youths, it takes on a whole new aura if the setting is 1938 Germany versus modern New York.

**Next meeting, Aug. 21,
6:30 p.m., at Simmons
First Bank, 401 South
Main Street in Searcy.
BRING LIBRARY DISPLAY ITEMS!**

The Creative Writer

is a monthly newsletter for the White County Creative Writers group of Searcy, Ark.

If you have news stories or photos to share, send them to del.garrett.s0ke@gmail.com. Deadline for reader submission is seven days prior to each month's meeting. WCCW reserves the right to edit all submissions.

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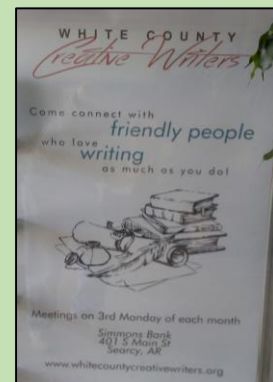
Our display at Searcy library tells about WCCW's Sept. 2 writers conference

The White County Creative Writers' 22nd Annual Writing Conference will be held Sept. 2, 2017, on the second floor of the American Heritage Conference Center at Harding University in Searcy.

Conference registrations must be postmarked by Aug. 28, 2017. A registration fee of \$25 includes the luncheon.

For a list of guest speakers, see our website:

www.whitecountyc creativewriters.org



Highlights from last month's meeting – give voice as in a play

We talked about giving “voice” to your characters. Divide your characters into three groups: Primary lead characters, secondary recurring characters, and tertiary “walk-on” that only provide a bit of information when needed.

The strongest voices go to your lead characters – hero, villain, and any other character, such as sidekicks, who might play a major role in your story.

Think of your story or book as it appears on stage in live theater. Up front are all the major players, whether they are on stage or just being talked about by the other characters, such as James Bond, Goldfinger, and “Q”. Behind them are the secondary characters who recur throughout the play, Money Penny and “M”. Tertiary characters provide information to the hero (and the reader), think CIA’s Felix. Tertiary characters are like pieces of furniture or stage props – use them only when you need them.

Spend most of your efforts on giving voice to the lead characters, a little on the secondary characters, and practically none on the other characters.

All cops sound like cops, so give one of your detectives an accent. In a romance, have one lead sound like Cary Grant and the other sound like Sam Elliott. Both have charm, but their voice is different. Break up one’s speech patter with some “uhs” and “hmmms”.

Cops don’t sound like doctors and doctors don’t sound like street punks. **KNOW YOUR STEREOTYPICAL SOUNDS.** A street cop might sound like a street punk if he’s working undercover.

Just as you have been told to use actors as character models in the way they look and act, use them likewise in the way they sound. Slang, regional dialect, humor, strong silent types. Can you imagine Clint Eastwood as a ballerina in lipstick? How about PeeWee Herman as U.S. Marshall Matt Dillon? No? Well, doesn’t that suggest using hero actors as heroes and fops as the secondary characters? Use stereotypes!



Highlights presents ‘Discover Nature and Stories’

In its Oct. 8-11, 2017 workshop, [The Art and Craft of Nature Writing and Illustration](#), you will:

- Use basic tools and techniques for nature observation and journaling.
- Identify solid nature story ideas for various children’s publishing markets.
- Work with experts to improve the accuracy and depth of your writing.
- Receive a one-on-one manuscript critique.
- Have ample writing time.

Faculty: Julie Zickefoose, Kate Garchinsky, **Special Guest:** Laurence Pringle.

To learn more about this workshop, visit their web page:

<http://www.highlightsfoundation.org/workshops/the-art-and-craft-of-nature-writing-2017/>