

2018 Cedar Falls Christian Writers Workshop Session Topics

Jocelyn Green's sessions:

The Key to Being a Successful Writer – DAY 1

In a world already full of books, magazines, and digital content, do you ever wonder what more we could possibly add that hasn't already been written? What makes any writer successful? Hear from readers, writers, editors, and publishers in this session as we explore what success could mean for you. Hint: it may not be what you think!

9 Ways to Bolster Historical Research – DAY 1 BREAKOUT

When it comes to writing historical fiction, the better the research, the better the book. Anchor your reader in immersive and believable story worlds that will make history feel alive. This workshop will show you what to look for, where to look, how to incorporate your golden details, and offer pointers on avoiding pitfalls common to the historical novelist.

Note: While this workshop is designed primarily for the historical novelist, the tools will also translate for those who write memoir, history-related nonfiction, and journalism that encompasses historical context.

The 5 Love Languages for Writers – DAY 2

Let's face it. We don't all feel loved by the same expressions. While one person feels valued with quality time, another feels loved mostly by words of affirmation. Understanding the five primary love languages, as distinguished by Dr. Gary Chapman, will help novelists, memoir writers, and biographers tap into untold layers of relationships. The lessons learned here will apply within the context of marriage or romance, parent-child, friendships, co-workers, etc. Not only will you be able to increase believable tension and conflict in your writing, you'll be equipped to decrease it in your personal relationships after this workshop.

Promotion Pizazz! Partnering with Authors and Influencers to Get Your Message Out – DAY 2 BREAKOUT

Do you shy away from self-promotion? Are you such a committed introvert that marketing makes you shudder? Never fear. If you answered yes (and even if you didn't), this workshop will show you how to manage pressure-free marketing for your book by teaming up with fellow authors in your genre and by mobilizing influencers to spread the word for you. You'll come away with fresh ideas from case studies and examples from real marketing campaigns.

The Author E-newsletter: The What, How and Why of the Writer's Most Valuable Marketing Tool – DAY 3

Publishers agree, whether you write fiction or nonfiction, the most helpful aspect of the writer's platform is the author e-newsletter. This workshop will tell you why, then offer several ideas on how to build your subscription list, how often to send it, what to include, and what happens when readers don't open your emails. We'll take a look at sample emails from a variety of authors to get your creative juices flowing.

Shelly Beach's sessions:

How to Create a Personal Brand - DAY 1

Learn why branding is a non-negotiable for a writer, as well as the basic steps to achieve your personal brand. There's a lot more to achieving great personal branding than tricking the algorithms. According to a Jobvite survey of recruiters, 95 percent of those polled viewed a competitive personal brand as an essential differentiator for attracting the best applicants in today's workplace. Your branding through your online presence, in combination with proposals and personal communication, are essential to distinguishing yourself from a myriad of other authors. You will learn: reasons why branding will help make you a more successful writer, the importance of image, and steps for building your brand.

Electronic Media Kits – DAY 1 BREAKOUT

Every author needs an electronic media kit. This session will teach the essentials of what media kits should include, why writers need them, and how to build them.

Screenplay Basics – DAY 2 BREAKOUT

Learn the key elements of screenplay writing and how screenplay writing can enhance your novel structure. You will learn 1.) beat sheet structure, 2.) screenplay layout and tools, and 3.) how to think like a screenwriter.

Mary Kenyon’s sessions:

Creativity IS Your Legacy – DAY 1

Mary shares how her mother’s legacy and a “magic pencil” prompted her to take her writing seriously. She delves into the science behind the study of creativity, and the Biblical perspective that each of us has an inherent artisan soul. Mary will inspire and encourage with writing exercises and concrete ways to incorporate creativity into everyday life. It’s never too late to take back your crayons, reconnect with your childhood, and live your own creative legacy. Attendees will receive their own magic pencil to jumpstart their creative endeavors.

Proposal Writing for Non-Fiction Books – DAY 2, during consultations

Ninety-percent of non-fiction books are sold by a book proposal that includes two or three completed chapters, not a completed manuscript. The book proposal is the business plan that sells the book concept to a publisher or agent. This intensive, 90-minute power-point lab is not for the faint-hearted writer. It is for anyone who is ready to pitch a non-fiction project. The power point includes actual examples from Mary’s proposals that have resulted in book contracts, along with generous handouts. Attendees will leave this session with one of the most crucial parts of their proposal: a synopsis of their work in progress.

Mary Knippel’s session:

The Pen’s in Your Hand – Unleash Your Story Worth Writing – DAY 1

Explore taking pen (or magic pencil) in hand to unleash your story worth writing. Step into your story and claim your legacy. Yes, Legacy, because all of our experiences in our daily lives create the foundation of our impact on the world...the legacy we leave behind. Be inspired, informed, delighted and empowered in this session to take ownership of your true purpose message, claim your voice and assert the power you possess in your unique story. Learn fun, fast and effective tips and techniques to ignite your writing spark and create your personal empowerment strategy to unleash your inner writer.

Jolene Philo’s session:

Beyond Vanity Publishing: 10 Creative Ways to Publish What You Write – DAY 1 BREAKOUT

Many writers believe the only ways to get their work in front of an audience are through a traditional publishing house or self-publishing venues that may not have the author’s best interest at heart. This workshop redefines publishing by helping writers determine who they’re writing for and explores creative ways to deliver content to their audience, with such keepsakes as family cookbooks, children’s books through a print-on-demand online publisher, books copied and bound at Copyworks, and other alternatives to vanity self-publishing.

Jolene Philo and Anne Philo Fleck’s session:

A Blog for Your Ears: Podcast Basics – DAY 2 BREAKOUT

What is podcasting and what can it do for you as a writer? Anne and Jolene will answer that question and more in this workshop about the audio delivery system that came on the scene in the early 2000s that was being used by 30 percent of Americans in 2016. You'll learn how podcasts can be used to build your platform and content as well as what you need to get started.

Kailen Fleck's session:

Performing Your Work – DAY TWO BREAKOUT

You know your work, but do you know how to perform your work? You know how to talk about your work with others, but what if performing your work for others gave them a more complete experience? These are skills that audio book readers and professional speakers develop, and we're going to scratch the surface in this coaching session. Bring a sample of your work and Kailen will show you how to strengthen your skills for reading aloud to others.

Cherie Dargan's session:

Going Google! How Using Gmail and Google Apps can make you more productive – DAY 1, during consultations

Whether you are writing articles for a church bulletin, putting together your family history for your children, submitting articles for publication, thinking about starting your own blog, or working on your first book, Gmail and Google Apps can help keep you organized and help you be more productive. I will demonstrate how I use Google Docs/Drive as well as Google Calendar, Gmail, and Google Photos. You will learn: tips for using Gmail and the calendar more effectively to track deadlines (bonus: view them with apps on mobile devices) and how to set up folders in Google Drive to organize information, keep project documents backed up online, and give you access to them from any place with Wi-Fi. Also, we will cover how to use Google Photos (hint: you might not know you have this app automatically if you have a Gmail account and take pictures with your smartphone)

Mary Jedlicka Humston's session:

When Life's Challenges Challenge Your Writing – DAY 2 BREAKOUT

You never planned for it to happen. Tragedies, changes in family situations, others dependent on your help, accidents, injuries, job loss... the list goes on and on. How do you carve out writing time when you're shoulder-deep into exhausting life situations? What is God calling you to do? Find writing-time no matter what? Or, can you accept it if the answer is to wait? This workshop explores how to discern God's path when writing and life collide and vie for your precious time. You will learn helpful examples of the different choices other writers have made when dealing with life's challenges, how to come to peace (not guilt) with waiting given different ages and stage of life. Also, you'll learn to prioritize what's important during difficult times and to figure out what you're capable of achieving.

Gail Kittelson's session:

Incorporating Irony in our Writing – DAY 2 BREAKOUT

We all experience irony in our everyday lives...those instances when we look at each other and exclaim, "How weird is that?" Using irony in our writing can increase depth in our plot and characters, add tension, and even add humor. What's not to love about irony? In this session, you will learn to recognize and appreciate irony, increase your understanding of irony, create a personal definition, and find motivation to employ irony in personal writing.

Lyn Vandebroke's sessions:

Travel Writing - How to Tax Deduct Your Way Through Your Next Great Adventure – DAY 2 BREAKOUTS

Ever think about traveling the world *and* getting paid for your fun trips? Lyn's travel writing class offers how-to steps for making this dream job a reality.

Part I - Where/How to begin

- Find the story, write the story, sell the story
- Credentials. Press Pass. 'Backstage' Access.
- Building your expertise

Part II - The Business of Writing: Getting your next adventure to pay for itself

- Around the world with one under-the-seat carry-on. How-to demonstration.
- Airport security. Travel safety.
- Advice/hand-out from IRS-endorsed Tax Attorney
- Keeping records/memories that build a future, secure invitations, produce an income

Note: As of this writing, Lyn is on a two-week travel writing/photography trip to Iceland, London, Scotland and Iverness Highlands. On her itinerary list is spending a night in a castle, a whiskey distillery, and a little fishing village, while traveling by puddle jumper plane, fishing boat, and sleeper train along the way.

Darcy Maulsby's session:

Writing to Make a Social Statement – DAY 2 BREAKOUT

How did we get so rude? What can you as a writer do about the troubling trend of demonization, which involves a shift from debating issues to attacking people? Plenty! Darcy will tap into her 20-year writing career to share her top 10 essential tips for success when writing to make a social statement—along with the one fatal error to avoid. Darcy has applied these proven strategies from her columns and *Des Moines Register* op-eds to her testimony before the U.S. Senate. You'll 1.) discover the most surprising way to clarify your beliefs, 2.) the most effective ways to write with a distinctive voice that amplifies your impact, whether you're crafting essays, blog posts, social media posts, op-eds or letters to the editor and 3.) how to become a force for good that can influence and inspire others.

Jonathan Stull's session:

The Poem as Parable – DAY 2 BREAKOUT

Comparing the similarities of poetry and the Parables found in the Bible can further the understanding of the power of metaphor and develop confidence in reading the definable and the indefinable. This session will address the complexities and (simplicities) of the Word, empowering readers to both feel at home in the expansiveness of the Mystery and to discover more meaning in our walk through the everyday world.

Sara Broers' (replacing Katelyn Soult's) session:

How to Leverage Social Media to Grow Your Audience – DAY 2

As a writer, you have the opportunity to promote yourself and your writing online, offer value for prospective readers and clients, and create a community. How? The answer: social media. In this session, learn how to stand out on several popular platforms and create a strategy to grow your presence. Sara will share creative examples and best practices to effectively manage mainstream social media platforms, including strategies to grow your following. You will also gain tips for creating social media content that speaks to your ideal audience. We have added time for interactive Q & A with Sara and other speakers/authors using social media.

Jean Vaux's session:

Using Word Power to Break Through Blocks – DAY 3

Since writers are wired for words, why not use that lens to solve issues? Learn four simple strategies using word power to break through blocks in writing and in life.