



Course details

Course title

Literature: The story of the detective story

Course code

Q00020027

Course date

Start: 12/05/25

End: 16/06/25

Number of classes

5 sessions

Timetable

Mon 12th May, 10:30 to 12:30

Mon 19th May, 10:30 to 12:30

Mon 2nd Jun, 10:30 to 12:30

Mon 9th Jun, 10:30 to 12:30

Mon 16th Jun, 10:30 to 12:30

Branch

Bromley Central

Tutor

Brandon Robshaw

Fee range

Free to £47.00

How you'll learn

You'll join a small group of fellow learners for classes at the venue indicated. Some materials may be provided in our virtual learning environment.

Got it!
In venue

Venue

Ripley Arts Centre (Bromley)
24 Sundridge Avenue
Bromley
BR1 2PX

Level of study

Beginners

Course overview

The detective story is one of the most popular literary genres, as well as one that has produced some classic novels. Each week we focus on a short detective story or novel, reading and discussing key passages. The selected novels are in chronological order, from the 19th century to modern times. We begin with Edgar Allan Poe and Conan Doyle, and end with Sophie Hannah. We'll be able to share and debate interpretations, sharpen our critical and appreciative faculties, understand what detective fiction can tell us about the society and culture that produced it, and, hopefully, be inspired to read other works by the writers featured on the course. The course is funded by the Greater London Combined Authority.

Course description

Over the six weeks you'll take part in lively discussions, analysing and interpreting great works of detective fiction. To understand literature, we need to engage with it on three levels: our own personal response to it as a work of art; an attempt to understand the preoccupations, aims and agenda of the writer, as illuminated by their biography; and an enquiry into what it can tell us the wider culture and society that produced it. Each class starts with a short lecture from the tutor, putting the work in its historical and cultural context; we then read selected passages and explore all three levels. Be prepared for plenty of (good-natured) disagreement. The stories and novels under discussion are: 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' by Poe; 'Silver Blaze' by Conan Doyle; The Mysterious Affair at Styles by Agatha Christie; Strong Poison by Dorothy Sayers; The Big Sleep by Raymond Chandler; Last Bus to Woodstock by Colin Dexter; and Little Face by Sophie Hannah. The earliest of these texts are available free online, and selected passages will be posted on Canvas before each session. A course for everyone who loves detectives, literature and talking about detectives and literature. And of course tea and biscuits feature in every class.

What financial support is available?

We don't want anything to stand in your way when it comes to bringing Adult learning within reach so if you need anything to support you to achieve your goals then speak to one of our education experts during your enrolment journey. Most of our courses are government funded but if you don't qualify or need alternative financial help to access them then let us know.

What other support is available?

All of our digital content, teaching and learning activities and assessments are designed to be accessible so if you need any additional support you can discuss this with the education experts during your enrolment journey and we will do all we can to make sure you have optimal access.

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