

Laura Purdie Salas – Online Writing Courses

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Getting to a Poem: For Brand New Poets

A one-week online workshop from May 12–16, 2008

Have you been wanting to try poetry? But when you face the blank page, nothing happens? Try this weeklong introductory class to dip your toes into the water. Here's how it will work:

You will read a private blog post each day that will walk you through the process of getting a poem down on paper (or screen). We'll talk about the fears that keep us from starting poems, the feelings that block us from spilling out what's inside.

In my posts, I'll share sample poems, techniques that have worked for me, and suggestions for you to try. I'll also share a poets' resource list to introduce you to some great books and websites full of poems and poetry instruction and inspiration. In addition, I'm going to ask you to make the leap and write some poems yourself (no matter how rough they are). I'll give you specific directions for these poems, so that you're not facing a blank page with no idea where to start.

Each day, we'll post our thoughts, our individual poem drafts, and our questions in this safe, supportive, encouraging environment. I'll respond to your thoughts and your poems each day and gently guide you. It's not lecture from me—everyone will participate in these lively discussions.

I'll ask you to set aside between 30 and 60 minutes each day for the class. By the end of the week, you will feel more confident, more enthusiastic about your poetic impulses, and more daring about your writing. You will also have made connections with other beginning poets. Maybe some of you will want to form a critique/support group. But most of all, you will have a sense of direction about where you want to go with your poetry.

Nuts & Bolts Info: Getting to a Poem! For Brand New Poets

The class will be **limited to 20 people**.

The cost is \$100.

You do not need to purchase any outside or additional materials for the class.

All class materials will be confidential. The materials I post are for your information and use, and you are free to print them out to save as a reference. I ask that you not forward them to other people or photocopy, email, or share them in any form with other people. Letters and writing samples posted by classmates are strictly confidential and you should not retain copies of anyone's work. Thanks for your cooperation. We need these assurances to make everyone feel comfortable sharing their work!

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Instructor Bio

Laura Purdie Salas started out writing for grown-ups, but she soon discovered that kids were her favorite audience. After graduating from college with an English degree (emphasis in Creative Writing), she worked as a magazine editor, writing occasional freelance articles for newspapers and other magazines on health and education topics. She then taught 8th-grade English for two years and rediscovered her love for children's literature. Laura turned her focus to writing for kids and has never looked back. She writes realistic fiction, all kinds of poetry, and nonfiction books and articles. But poetry is her first love!

Laura is a member of the [Children's Literature Network](#) and the [Society for Children's Book Writers and Illustrators](#). She teaches writing for children (to adults) through the [Loft Literary Center](#) in Minneapolis and is a former instructor for the [Institute of Children's Literature](#).

Laura has [six poetry books](#) with Capstone Press. Four more Capstone poetry books will come out in the fall of 2008, and her picture book poetry collection with Clarion Books is due out in spring of 2009. Laura is also the author of [Write Your Own Poetry](#). In addition, she has written poems for various classroom materials. She has also written more than 35 nonfiction books for kids. Click [here](#) for a complete listing of her published and forthcoming books.

You can learn more about Laura at her [website](#). She also blogs about poetry frequently at [laurasalas: writing the world for kids](#).

Is This Class for You?

This class **is** for you if you are a:

Brand New Writer: Poetry is a whole different way of seeing things. If you're not a writer, but you're thinking you'd like to try poetry, that's perfectly fine.

Brand New Poet: Even if you have published fiction or nonfiction, if you haven't written much poetry, this is the class for you.

Teacher/Educator/Librarian Who Doesn't Like Poetry: If you must teach poetry-writing to kids, but you don't feel comfortable with it yourself, this workshop can help. You will probably approach poetry-writing with the same anxiety your students do! You'll become more comfortable and enthusiastic through this workshop.

This class **is not** for you if you are a:

Kid: This class is for adults who want to write for kids or teens. Sorry!

Intermediate or Advanced Poet: If you've published poems or have studied poetry extensively through courses or how-to books, you probably won't get enough out of this course to make it worth your while. Email me if you're not sure. Thanks!

What Previous Workshop Students Have Said

"Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! If only every February, I could get a ray of hope and inspiration like that which your course gave me...Getting quick feedback on each of our poems encouraged, motivated and got me excited to try the next exercise. Most importantly, when you told us something didn't work in our poems, it didn't sting one bit."

---*Carol-Anne Hoyte*

"Thank you for such an informative and fun week. I am so appreciative of your instruction and hope to implement many of your "I hope you wills." I'd also like to thank all my classmates— your poems were wonderful, and I learned so much from the group sharing. And I've had such fun!"

---*Vie Herlocker*

"Thank you Laura for a wonderful week. It went by extremely fast and I am delighted with everything I have learned. I am a beginner poem writer and you have given me a tremendous base from which to work from."

---*Janice Nelson*