

Short Story Assignments

Week 4 (Feb. 6)--**Short Story 1 due**

Week 11 (March 27)--**Short Story 2 due**

Week 17 (May 8)--**Portfolio Due (1 final draft short story)**

Assignment:

- Can be written in first or third person
- Between 1,000 and 4,000 words

Helpful hints:

- Create a character who undergoes an experience that leaves the character changed. Thus the action described is "moving" action, not "fixed" action. It is action that does not repeat itself, such as the events in a "typical" day might be repeated, but is, rather, action that leads toward change, the action of an out-of-the-ordinary day.
- This also contributes an important element -- writing about an event, or a series of events, in time. This adds both theme (the significance of the action) and plot (the action).
- The story should convey in a dramatic way the emotional impact of an event on a character or narrator, not to merely make the point or to show there was a lesson to be learned. The challenge is to get the reader to relive the experience with the narrator, not merely understand what happened. Keep in mind the conventions of fiction -- suspense, conflict and climax, description and pacing.
- Use the structure: ABDCE, where A is Action, B is Background, D is development, C is Climax and E is Ending. Begin near the end of the chronology of the event, in other words, and flash back to fill in exposition necessary to understand the conflict and the characters.