Hi everyone,

It was a pleasure working with all of you. Here are some notes from our class discussion. My book recommendations are at the end.

Best wishes,

Cheryl

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Read the following excerpt from JK Rowling’s *Harry Potter*. You may recognize this as Professor Severus Snape’s lecture at the beginning of Potion Making class at Hogwarts.

“‘You are here to learn the subtle science and exact art of potion-making,’ he began. He spoke in barely more than a whisper, but they caught every word – like Professor McGonagall, Snape had the gift of keeping a class silent without effort. ‘As there is little foolish wand-waving here, many of you will hardly believe this is magic. I don’t expect you will really understand the beauty of the softly simmering cauldron with its shimmering fumes, the delicate power of liquids that creep through human veins, bewitching the mind, ensnaring the senses ... I can teach you how to bottle fame, brew glory, even stopper death – if you aren’t as big a bunch of dunderheads as I usually have to teach.’...”

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Take a few minutes to jot down in your notebook:

1. What do you notice about Rowling’s style of writing? Are the sentences long or short? What does she describe? Why do you think she is describing those things?
2. What do you like about the writing that you might want to mimic in your own writing?

Class Discussion Notes:

✔ Long sentences
✔ Eloquent and poetic; taking the lecture as a whole
✔ Detailed diction; describing potion making process
✔ Shows Snape’s attitude towards the students. We learn more about the character. Character development.
✔ Punctuation
✔ Builds background and atmosphere using verbs
✔ You want to be part of the class; Rowling thinking about her reader
✔ “Potions creeping through veins”- character trait, likes power.
✔ Repeating “s” sound
✔ Softly simmering cauldron with its shimmering fumes - alliteration; simmering and shimmering are separated by the letter “h”
✔ “Began” then starts lecture, makes you feel like you are part of the class

Big Concept

Remember, mentor texts can be any genre. The next time you read a book or an article think about why you are enjoying it or what you like about it. We can learn strategies from the authors we are reading to help make our own writing better.

Review of how you can revise your work
1. Idea and Detail Moves
2. Sentence Moves
3. Word Choice or Tone Moves
How to borrow books from your local library during the quarantine:

There is an app called “Libby” where you can link your library card. You can borrow up to ten books and have up to seven on hold.

Book Recommendations (in no particular order)

Books to improve your writing

*Zen in the Art of Writing* by Ray Bradbury

Inspiring essays about creativity and where inspiration comes from. It is also fun to read. One of my favorite quotes from the book is: “I have never listened to anyone who criticized my taste in space travel, sideshows or gorillas. When this occurs, I pack up my dinosaurs and leave the room.”

*The Elements of Style* by William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White

A compact book about style, grammar, and usage that is frequently used in colleges.

Science Fiction Authors to Explore

1. Isaac Asimov
2. Ursula K. LeGuin
3. H.G. Wells
4. Jules Verne
5. Ray Bradbury
6. Arthur C. Clarke
7. Algis Budrys
8. Jack McDevitt
9. J.R.R. Tolkien
Cheryl’s Favorites

_Eight Modern Essayists_ by William Smart

One of my favorite collection of essays. There are eight twentieth century essayists in this book: Virginia Woolf, George Orwell, E. B. White, James Baldwin, Joan Didion, James McConkey, Cynthia Ozick, and Alice Walker.

_And Then There were None_ by Agatha Christie

Agatha Christie is known as The Queen of Mysteries for a reason. This is my favorite mystery, because I did not see the ending coming.

_The Great Gatsby_ by F. Scott Fitzgerald

There are many beautiful images in this book. For example, “And so with the sunshine and the great bursts of leaves growing on the trees, just as things grow in fast movies, I had that familiar conviction that life was beginning over again with the summer.” Why do you think Fitzgerald included fast movies in the description about the beginning of summer? Fitzgerald also has other books that are full of rich descriptions.

Have books to recommend? Looking for a different type of book? Email me through the cloud learning website, and I will create another list of class recommendations.

Thank you for a great class!