

# East Side Voices Project

## Workshop Syllabus

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Every Saturday (2/7/09 – 5/9/09)  
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.  
Mt. Pleasant H.S. – P1222

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### Objective:

This project will document the voices of the people from the historic east side of San Jose, California through monologues, giving these underprivileged and underrepresented characters a voice in contemporary literature. The mission of this project is to open a dialogue and facilitate greater cultural understanding between ethnic groups.

Each student will create a series of monologue pieces portraying characters based on real people who live and/or work on San Jose's east side, characters representing a diversity of walks of life and age groups. Students will meet and interview east side residents and workers in their neighborhoods and work places, then write character-driven monologues in poetry and prose, based on these individuals. The initial interviews will be recorded (with the subject's permission) creating raw material on which the writers will base their monologues. The purpose of constructing these monologues is to expose the full dimension of the lives of east side residents to the wider audience, lives that are quite diverse, representing a multiplicity of cultural backgrounds and attitudes-- a quite different American reality than that depicted in the media and in mainstream works of American poetry, fiction and non-fiction.

### Assignments:

Assignments will be given out every week based on the materials covered in the workshop. These assignments will be designed as building blocks to assist students reach the overall objective of this project. You will be expected to make revisions to a number of assignments and resubmit them in a final portfolio.

Workshop students will also be expected to participate in readings and/or performances of poems and/or short prose pieces. Events will be scheduled for June both at Mt. Pleasant H.S. and MLK Library at SJSU with dates to be announced at a later date.

Always include your name, the date, and the description of the assignment on the right hand corner of everything you turn in.

## Calendar:

2/7 Introductions. Discuss genres.

Discuss project overview, descriptions, and expectations. Q&A's.

Workshop sign-up. Every student must sign-up for a minimum of 2 group workshops.

Language Part 1: What is an image? What is a simile? What is a metaphor? What are some other literary devices?

In class assignment: Write a description about yourself, selecting images that show your attitudes, personality, or beliefs. SHOW NOT TELL.

Reading: Handout on "Language" and "How to Conduct an Interview"

Assignment (s): Make a list of 9 descriptions about people's behavior, mannerism and speech by observing people you don't know. Use images to **show and not tell**. Bring in questions/ comments about the reading to share with the class.

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2/14 Discuss reading and go over assignment (s).

Overview on how to conduct an interview.

In class assignment: Mock interview – conduct a short interview of a fellow student in workshop. (10 minutes)

Language Part 2: How to write in descriptive, concrete language.

Reading: Handout on "Poetry" and sample poems.

Assignment (s): Bring in a list of 4 – 6 people you would like to interview for this project. These can be people you know or don't know. List 1- 2 sentences about why each person would make an interesting subject for your writing, use concrete language. Write a short poem/story (maximum 1 page) about the student you interviewed in class. Use at least 1 simile/metaphor /literary device and remember to include descriptive, concrete images. Bring in questions/ comments about the reading to share with the class.

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2/21 Discuss reading and go over assignment (s).

What is a monologue? Discuss how to write persona poetry. Read and discuss sample poems.

In class assignment: Write a persona poem consisting of 2 sets of couplets.

Reading: Handout on "Fiction"

Assignment (s): Contact your subject and conduct interview #1. Work on your first draft of poem/prose from interview #1. Bring a sample persona poem to share with the class.

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2/28 Discuss reading and go over assignment (s).  
Discuss how to write monologue for fiction.

In class assignment: Write a paragraph about one of your relatives/friends in their voice. Think about some of the phrases that they use, gestures and qualities that make them unique.

Assignment (s): Poem/prose from interview #1 DUE.

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3/7 Workshop: If you're on this list, bring 30 copies of your work for the class.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment (s): Contact your subject and conduct interview #2. Work on your first draft of poem/prose from interview #2. Bring in questions/comments about the reading to share with the class.

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3/14 Workshop: If you're on this list, bring 30 copies of your work for the class.

6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment (s): Poem/prose from interview #2 DUE. Make revisions to poem/prose from interview #1.

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3/21 Workshop: If you're on this list, bring 30 copies of your work for the class.

11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment (s): Contact your subject and set-up interview #3. Work on your first draft of poem/prose from interview #3.

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3/28 Workshop: If you're on this list, bring 30 copies of your work for the class.

- 16. \_\_\_\_\_
- 17. \_\_\_\_\_
- 18. \_\_\_\_\_
- 19. \_\_\_\_\_
- 20. \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment (s): Poem/prose from interview #3 DUE. Make revisions to poem/prose from interview #2.

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4/4 Workshop: If you're on this list, bring 30 copies of your work for the class.

- 21. \_\_\_\_\_
- 22. \_\_\_\_\_
- 23. \_\_\_\_\_
- 24. \_\_\_\_\_
- 25. \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment (s): Contact your subject and set-up interview #4. Work on your first draft of poem/prose from interview #4.

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4/11 Easter Break – NO WORKSHOP

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4/18 Workshop: If you're on this list, bring 30 copies of your work for the class.

- 26. \_\_\_\_\_
- 27. \_\_\_\_\_
- 28. \_\_\_\_\_
- 29. \_\_\_\_\_
- 30. \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment (s): Poem/prose from interview #4 DUE. Make revisions to poem/prose from interview #3.

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4/25 Workshop: If you're on this list, bring 30 copies of your work for the class.

- 31. \_\_\_\_\_
- 32. \_\_\_\_\_
- 33. \_\_\_\_\_
- 34. \_\_\_\_\_
- 35. \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment (s): Make revisions to poem/prose from interview #4.

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5/2 Workshop: If you're on this list, bring 30 copies of your work for the class. Catch-up week.

36. \_\_\_\_\_

37. \_\_\_\_\_

38. \_\_\_\_\_

39. \_\_\_\_\_

40. \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment (s): Work on your final portfolio.

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5/9 In class performance: Student will read/perform 1 – 3 poems / 1 story / 1 play for the workshop.

**Final Portfolio DUE:** Turn in a printed portfolio of a minimum of 3 revised pieces of your work along with the original (and email a digital version of your final portfolio to [sle@samanthale.com](mailto:sle@samanthale.com) by Friday 5/8).

Assignment (s): Continue to revise your work and practice for the events. Have a great summer.

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**Notes:**