LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

Writing For Performance

AME_4_WFP

Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences

2011-12

LEVEL 4 (YEAR 1)

Table of Contents

1. UNIT DETAILS

Unit Title:	Writing for Performance
Unit Level:	4
Unit Reference Number:	AME-4-WFP
Credit Value:	20
Student Study Hours:	150
Contact Hours:	44
Private Study Hours:	105
Pre-requisite Learning (If applicable):	None
Co-requisite Units (If applicable):	None
Course(s):	BA (Hons) Creative Writing and BA (Hons) Creative Writing & English
Year and Semester	Year 1, Semester 2
Unit Coordinator:	Dr Colin Harvey
UC Contact Details (Tel, Email, Room)	Tel: 0207 815 5702
	Email: harveycb@lsbu.ac.uk
	Room B404, Borough Road
Teaching Team & Contact Details (If applicable):	Jennifer Farmer, farmerj@lsbu.ac.uk
Subject Area:	Arts, Media and English
Summary of Assessment Method:	The pass mark for this unit is 40% overall.

Assessment 1
Synopsis for the planned script (30%) bring to Week 6 of the unit, Thursday 8th March 2012 and then submit the PROPOSAL formally by Tuesday 13th March 2011.
PROPOSAL DEADLINE:
       Tuesday 13th March 2012

Assessment 2
Students originate a five to ten page script for performance (65%). The script is performed and then submitted.
SCRIPT DEADLINE: Tuesday 8th May 2011

Assessment 3
Students originate a 1000 word Reflective Essay examining the strengths and weaknesses of the finished script (25%)
REFLECTIVE ESSAY DEADLINE: Thursday 10th May 2011

2. SHORT DESCRIPTION

Performance is another vibrant avenue for creative writers to explore. In this unit, you'll have the chance to test your own abilities as a writer for live performance, and to learn about the particularities of performance as a medium, both in terms of stage and site-specific work. Writing for Performance introduces the codes and conventions involved in creating scripts either for stage or other kinds of live performance. You'll be introduced to the particularities associated with structuring

scripts, creating characters and manufacturing dialogue for various kinds of live performance.

3.   AIMS OF THE UNIT

The aims of this unit are to:

- Introduce you to the codes and conventions associated with writing scripts for performance
- Outline approaches to structure, plotting, dialogue and characterisation for short performance scripts
- Introduce concepts of performance-based writing language, including kinetics and proxemics
- Impress upon you the importance of rewriting

4.   LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this unit, you'll be able to:

4.1   Knowledge and Understanding

- Illustrate some understanding of the specific characteristics of writing for performance
- Demonstrate some awareness of the markets for performance writing locally, nationally and internationally

4.2   Intellectual Skills

- Understand the difference between story, structure and plot
- Demonstrate awareness of a variety of methods of exposition, and the advantages/disadvantages of each of these methods
- Understand the specific challenges and strengths of writing for live performance

4.3   Practical Skills

- Evaluate critically professionally produced work
- Learn to layout script according to professional standards

4.4   Transferable Skills

- Illustrate a critical vocabulary and analytical skills relevant to live performance narrative
- Demonstrate skills in editing and rewriting

5.   ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

The pass mark for this unit is 40% overall.

Assessment 1
Synopsis for the planned script (30%) bring to Week 6 of the unit, Thursday 8th March 2012 and then submit the PROPOSAL formally by Tuesday 13th March 2011.
PROPOSAL DEADLINE: Tuesday 13th March 2012

Assessment 2
Students originate a five to ten page script for performance (65%). The script is performed and then submitted.
SCRIPT DEADLINE: Monday 7th May 2011

Assessment 3
Students originate a 1000 word Reflective Essay examining the strengths and weaknesses of the finished script (25%)
REFLECTIVE ESSAY DEADLINE: Thursday 10th May 2011

A Reflective Essay outlining the following:
1. The origin of the idea.
2. The development of the idea, including influences, referenced according to Harvard standards.
3. The development of your own skills.
4. The interrelationship of form and content. Did form influence content or vice versa?
5. The strengths and weaknesses of the finished artifact.

As with the creative writing element of the submission, the Essay should be word processed and contain references to the theoretical concerns covered in this unit and elsewhere on the course.

6.   FEEDBACK

MARKING AND FEEDBACK

Work will be returned with feedback and a percentage grade between 0% and 100%. The grade remains provisional until confirmed by the July Examination Board. Any student who would like to discuss their coursework in more detail should make an appointment to see the Unit Co-ordinator.

After your work has been marked by the Lecturer, it is internally moderated by a second member of the teaching team to check that the marking is fair and consistent.

Feedback will normally be given to students   working days after the submission of an assignment.

COURSEWORK EXTENSIONS

If you are unable to complete the Work by the deadline due to extenuating circumstances, you must follow the following procedure:

- Talk to Dr Colin Harvey, Principal Lecturer and Subject Leader for The Writing Lab, based in B404, email harveycb@lsbu.ac.uk. If Colin agrees the Extension go to the next stage:
- Get a Late Submission Coursework Form from the Student Information Centre on the 2nd Floor of Borough Road (or download from the web site), complete Part A and ask the Course Director to sign the form agreeing to the extension
- Hand in the form with the coursework on the agreed extension deadline

If you request an extension for medical reasons you must supply a medical certificate. Applying for an extension does not guarantee getting one. The maximum extension of the deadline date is two calendar weeks. Coursework submitted within this extended deadline will be marked in the normal way.

MARKS FOR COURSEWORK SUBMITTED LATE

The maximum marks for any coursework submitted up to two weeks after the deadline date or after an agreed extension is 40%. Coursework submitted more than two weeks after the deadline will be **failed**. The July Examination Board will decide whether the student is to be given the opportunity to redeem failure, provided that the student has submitted a claim for extenuating circumstances which has been accepted by the Board.

Refer to your Course Guide for more information on extenuating circumstances.

STUDENT FEEDBACK AND UNIT EVALUATIONS

Students are strongly advised to speak to the lecturer as soon as possible if they have any concerns about the unit. This is the best way to ensure that the lecturer is aware of your concerns immediately and can address them as best as possible. Alternatively, students can see their Course Director.

Once a term, students may ask the student representative to raise specific issues regarding units at the Course Board meetings.

Students will be asked to complete an anonymous unit evaluation in Week 10, 11 or 12. Unit evaluations are an important part of the University's quality assurance systems and provide a valuable mechanism for obtaining student feedback and identifying ways in which the unit can be improved and updated. Unit evaluations are distributed to the Unit Coordinator, Course Director, Head of Department and the Dean of the Faculty.

7.   INTRODUCTION TO STUDYING THE UNIT

7.1   Overview of the Main Content

Writing for Performance introduces and explores some of the foundational approaches necessary to the creation of scripts for performance. These might be for the stage, but they might be equally suited to some other kind of 'site-specific' performance. Along the way we'll explore conceptions of performativity as well examining the nuts and bolts of writing performance-based scripts.

7.2   Overview of Types of Classes

Most classes will commence with an informal discussion of a given topic. Some time will then be given to writing exercises or to the setting of assignments. This will be followed by a group discussion of students' work.

This unit will use a range of teaching and learning methods, summarised below:

7.3   Seminars - Seminars are a place for learning through the discussion and analysis of texts, which enable students to explore key issues in detail. Seminars are also used for the development of core skills such as effective reading and discussion. Seminars are student-led and all students are expected to participate fully and to come prepared each week with questions and comments on the readings and subject matter. All students will be expected to present individual and group research in seminars. Although not formally assessed, the work done in preparing for seminar presentations is essential for successful completion of the coursework and Work.

7.4   Blackboard - This Unit Guide is also available online through Blackboard. To access Blackboard you will need a University IT account. You can register for this as soon as you have your student ID number. All students who have an LSBU computer account will have a Blackboard account automatically. Usernames and passwords for Blackboard will be the same as for other LSBU computer resources. To find out how to activate your IT account and use Blackboard, go to the New Student Checklist at www.lsbu.ac.uk.

7.5   Self managed study - It is essential for the successful completion of this unit that all students acknowledge the responsibility they have for their self-managed learning. Students will be given independent reading, research and other seminar preparation each week. You should aim to spend about 5-6 hours a week reading and preparing for this unit. The more you read, the more substance you can bring to an issue or topic under discussion. **You should always read the core texts and any other material that is given out by the lecturer**. You should also try to seek out secondary works on the core texts and issues and build a foundation of material on which your written work can be based.

It is very easy to procrastinate when it comes to self managed learning. Just thinking about work is wasteful and miserable, and getting stuck in straight away creates genuinely 'free' time when you finish early. To be successful at university, and later in your career, you need to set deadlines for yourself and stick to them. Break tasks up into manageable chunks and make good use of short time slots. Make sure you prioritise your tasks – they could be:

Urgent but not important	Urgent and important
Neither urgent nor important	Important but not urgent

7.6   Effective learners complete tasks from all four boxes every day. If you only complete the urgent tasks, you will create a backlog for the future. In addition, tasks are often done more easily when they are not urgent and can be approached in a more relaxed and creative way. Remember to multi-task – it is often better to start several jobs, even if you don't finish them all, that out all your time and energy into one job.

7.7   For more information on study skills, refer to

- LSBU Learning and Development Centre Core Skills Survival Guide, available online
- LSBU Learning and Development Centre Level 1 book, Don't Panic, available online
- The LSBU Learning and Development Centre online Study Skills materials
- Or visit the Learning Development Centre in Caxton House on Borough Road.

7.8   Importance of Student Self-Managed Learning Time

It is vital all students should read the assignments before class, and the core materials are compulsory for this course. Reading leads to well informed and more provocative discussion. Students are encouraged to

write and re-write material for their Works throughout the semester rather than leaving it to the last minute. Students are strongly encouraged to submit work for group discussion, to share their own work; receive constructive feedback; and learn from the diverse work they are exposed to.

7.9 Presentation of Work

- Works must be word-processed using one side of the paper only.
- Font size should be 11 or 12 pt.
- All work should be line spaced at 1.5 with enough space in the left and right margins for comments and corrections.
- Carefully proof your work before submission. Make sure that you have answered the question, you have identified the key issues clearly, you have used sufficient examples and references to support your points, the essay is well structured and ideas are appropriately linked, and the style is not too colloquial or flippant. Check the grammar and spelling carefully as errors make your work appear careless and will reduce your overall mark.
- Include a cover page which states your student identity number, your course, the name of the unit, the name of the lecturer, the title of the assignment and the due date.

Submission of Work

All work must be handed in to the Student Information Centre, Room 266, on the 2nd Floor of Borough Road by the deadline. When you hand in your work you will be asked to fill out a cover sheet and be given a receipt which you must keep. If the office or the lecturer loses your essay, your receipt is proof that you handed it in. It is a good idea to keep your work on disk and as a hard copy.

8.0 Employability

This unit equips you with a foundational grasp of writing scripts for live performance. The skills delivered in this unit are essential for those graduates from Creative Writing seeking careers in which speech-writing is called upon; additionally the unit further enhances your abilities at structuring and editing written work, and places heavy emphasis upon the importance of brevity, all skills relevant to related industries such as advertising copywriting.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING (PDP)

What is Personal Development Planning (PDP)?
PDP is a structured and supported process undertaken by a student to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational, and career development.

Personal Development Planning is a way of articulating existing principles and practices. Academic tutors have always encouraged students to make progress towards intellectual independence, to become more self-aware, and to plan for and take responsibility for their own development. PDP makes explicit the

presence and value of established processes that are central to learning in Higher Education, and the concept that the dialogue between tutor and tutee supports not only the student's deepening understanding of their subject, but also the student's growing ability to think critically about their own performance and how to improve it.

Why is PDP important?
There are good reasons why you should do PDP, other than the fact that you are required to do so. University is not like school or college as students are expected to take greater responsibility for their own learning. Examining what is expected of you on your programme, and reflecting on where you are in relation to this, increases your chances of success. Participating in PDP can also help you gain an advantage in a competitive job market and equip you with transferable skills for lifelong learning and your chosen career.

The main aims of PDP are, therefore, to help students:
- Become more effective, independent and confident self-directed learners
- Understand how they are learning and relate their learning to a wider context
- Improve their general skills for study and career management
- Articulate their personal, education and career development goals
- Evaluate their progress towards the achievement of their goals
- Develop a positive attitude to learning throughout life

WHAT RESULTS FROM THE PDP PROCESS?

PDP RESULTS IN TWO MAIN OUTCOMES:

- THE FIRST IS ENHANCED SELF-AWARENESS OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES AND DIRECTIONS FOR CHANGE. THE PROCESS IS INTENDED TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND THE VALUE ADDED THROUGH LEARNING, THAT IS ABOVE AND BEYOND ATTAINMENT IN THE SUBJECTS YOU HAVE STUDIED. IT IS HOLISTIC AND RELATES TO YOUR DEVELOPMENT AS A WHOLE PERSON.

- The second outcome is a **Personal Development Record (PDR)**. The information in the record is owned by you and its maintenance, authenticity and use is your responsibility. Your PDR is the product of the PDP process. It is your property and will only be seen by yourself and your personal tutor. Your PDR is the place where you keep evidence of:

O YOUR PERSONAL GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENTS

O AREAS YOU HAVE IDENTIFIED FOR IMPROVEMENT

O PLANS OF ACTION TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS

O THE ACTIONS TAKEN TO ACHIEVE IMPROVEMENT

O REFLECTIONS ON YOUR PROGRESS

You can maintain your Personal Development Record in any electronic or paper-based format that works for you, but it is probably best assembled as a collection

of documents, notes, reports, reflective statements, feedback etc in a 3-ring binder. It is a Work of materials that you will use as evidence of your personal development.

What is reflection?
PDP can involve different forms of reflection and reflective learning. Reflection involves more than consideration of what we have achieved; it looks in more depth at how and why we achieve. If you can recognise this 'how' and 'why', you can capitalise on it to maximise your efficiency in many ways. Reflection is not just an add-on extra to academic learning but is an essential component of good quality learning and the representation of that learning. Reflection supports learning by providing the right conditions for learning.

A useful way to approach the process of structured self-reflection is to think about the skills you have used to succeed in certain tasks and to analyse how competent or confident you feel in using those skills. You can find more information on how to do this in the **Personal Development Planning booklet, Don't Panic**, published by the Learning Development Centre, which can be obtained from Caxton House or online at www.lsbu.ac.uk/caxton. The guide provides really useful information on surface learning and deep learning, learning strategies and principles, carrying out skills and diagnostic audits, personal development planning tools, SMART goals, SWOT analysis as well as templates you can adapt.

PDP in this unit
In this unit, knowledge, understanding and skills will be developed through a range of teaching and learning methods, specific exercises in class seminars, in private study time, and through discussion with your Personal Tutor. During the unit you will be asked to prepare notes and a short reflective statement about yourself and your development during your first semester at LSBU. The purpose is to help you focus on your own goals and ambitions, and to help you discover areas in which you feel you need to build on your present abilities. It will also show you the areas in which you are making progress, and there will be many. You should keep all your notes in your Personal Development Record.

The Palgrave Study Guide, **Skills for Success: The Personal Development Planning Handbook by Stella Cottrell**, available in the Perry Library, is an excellent resource and highly recommended.

8.   THE PROGRAMME OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

2 Feb
Week One: 9-1pmpm Performance and Performativity

In the first week we'll introduce the unit and examine what we'll be covering week-by-week. We'll take a look at the rationale for the unit and the assessment criteria for **Writing for Performance**. This first session will be taken up with a discussion of what constitutes performance, but also what

constitutes 'performativity'.

9 Feb
Week Two: 9-1pm Aspects of Performance

We will look at some examples of work written for performance, including written work to be read before the seminar, and filmed examples of work in performance. We will discuss the relationship between text and performance.

16 Feb
Week Three: 9-1pm The Elements of Script

We will break down the key elements of a script, analyse their function and how to employ them. This session will communicate all the essential tools for writing a piece for performance.

23 Feb
Week Four: 9-1pm Proposals for Scripts

Each student is asked to bring in three ideas they are considering writing for a performed piece – these should each be expressed as a single sentence. These ideas will be discussed by the group, and at the end of the session you will be asked which of them you have decided to work on.

1 March
Week Five: 9-1pm Developing the Script

8 March
Week Six: 9-1pm

This week is the deadline to bring in your synopsis of your planned script including the first page of script to read out to the group for discussion and comment.

In addition, you need to formally submit your synopsis for Tuesday 13th March 2012

15 March
Week Seven: 9-1pm Script Workshops and Tutorials

Work will be presented during the session for feedback and constructive critique.

22 March
Week Eight: 9-1pm Workshop with Actors

Actors will workshop a selected of work from the class.

29 March
Week Nine: Self-Managed Study

This week is dedicated to self-managed study, so there is no formal session.

EASTER VACATION

26 April
Week Ten: 9-1pm   Script Workshops

Work will be presented during the session for feedback and constructive critique.

3 May
Week Eleven: 9-1pm   Tutorials

These will be arranged in the previous session, prior to the Easter vacation.

<mark>**SCRIPT DEADLINE:**   **Monday 7th May 2012**</mark>

<mark>**REFLECTIVE ESSAY DEADLINE:**   **Thursday 10th May 2012**</mark>

10 May
Week Twelve: Feedback Session

9.   LEARNING RESOURCES

Artaud, Antonin (2000) *The Theatre and Its Double*. London: Grove Press

Barker, Howard (1989) *Arguments for a Theatre* London: John Calder

Barker, Howard (1987) *Possibilities*: John Calder

Brecht, Bertolt (1978) *On Theatre*. London: Methuen

Boal, Augusto (2002) *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*. London: Routledge

Brook, Peter (2008) *The Empty Space*. London: Penguin

Coult, Tony and Kershaw, Baz (1983) *Engineers of the Imagination*. London: Methuen

Churchill, Caryl (2000) *Far Away*. London: Nick Hern Books

Crimp, Martin (1997) *Attempts on her Life* London: Faber and Faber

Esslin, Martin (2001) *Theatre of the Absurd*. London: Metheun

green, debbie tucker (2005) *generations*. London: Nick Hern Books

Grotowski, Jerzy (1975) *Towards a Poor Theatre*. London: Methuen

Kane, Sarah (2001) *Complete Plays* London: Methuen

Kelly, Dennis (2007) *Taking Care of Baby*. London: Oberon Books

Mamet, David (2002) *Three Uses of the Knife*. London: Methuen

Parks, Suzan-Lori (2001) *The Red Letter Plays*. New York: Theatre Communications Group

Sierz, Alex (2001) *In-Yer-Face: British Drama Today*. London: Faber and Faber

Shange, Ntozake (1978) *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf*. London: Methuen

Stanislavski, Constantin (1989) *An Actor Prepares*. London: Routledge

Students will be required to see at least three live performances during the term. Every two weeks, the lecturer will provide a list of performances from which to choose.

PLAGIARISM

What exactly is PLAGIARISM ?

The act of plagiarism is to pass off as your own work, the ideas or thoughts of someone else, without giving credit to that other person by quoting the reference to the original. There is no standard definition and dictionaries will vary slightly, but put simply, it is a form of **CHEATING** and **THEFT.**

- **Plagiarism is** presenting another student`s course work or project as your own work.
- **Plagiarism is** putting into your own words commentary or ideas from another source without giving the reference(s).
- **Plagiarism is** quoting phrases, sentences, complete paragraphs or more, from an existing published source without using quotation marks and full references.
- **Plagiarism is** cutting and pasting from a website, electronic journal article etc. without indicating where your information has come from.
- **Plagiarism is** buying your course work essays from an internet service and hoping your tutor will not notice.

What you should be aware of:
- **Intentional Plagiarism** is the deliberate failure to reference anything. Lack of time is not an excuse.
- **Unintentional Plagiarism** can happen if you have correctly paraphrased the originals but not acknowledged the sources. It will NOT occur if you fully understand the rules of referencing. There is NO excuse for "unintentional plagiarism". You are responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it.
- **Collaboration**. If you have received considerable help from other people you should give credit to them for this and if you were in a group project make it clear which section each member contributed.
- **Collusion**. This occurs if you knowingly plan with other students to gain an unfair advantage, e.g. by allowing your coursework to be copied, or by accepting a mark for a group project to which you did not actually contribute.

THE SOLUTION = CORRECT REFERENCING, or CITING

The method of referencing used by most, but not all, departments in the University is called the Harvard system. Make sure you know which one your department uses. Referencing using the Harvard system involves giving the name of the contributor(s) to any journal article, book (or chapter within) plus the date of publication, in the text of your work, and listing full details at the end of your essay or project.

You must list all the sources of information you use if they are not your own. Sources of "Information" in this context include : music, photos, DVD or video clips, computer programs, maps, cartoons etc., as well as written texts either from an original print source or any electronic source. It covers anything produced as a result of someone's creative and original work.

Full details are in the **Help Sheet no. 30 – Referencing Using the Harvard**

System : Frequently Asked Questions and also **Help Sheet no. 31 – Referencing Electronic Sources.** These are available in all the libraries and can be copied from our web site LISA
(**http://www.lisa.lsbu.ac.uk**) (Help Sheets section of Services for Students)

Why is referencing so important?

In a university, you need to present your work in an acceptable academic style. This includes research which makes reference to the existing works of other people and knowing when you need to reference (or " cite") your sources. By following the recognised guidelines and respecting and building upon the existing work of other people you will get higher marks for attributing these ideas.

Your tutors appreciate that your first piece of course work may be your first as an independent learner. If you are having problems, mention it to them. Think about how your own work will then be seen by others. By acknowledging the sources of the material you have used and quoted from, you are providing evidence of your extensive research, protecting the originality of your work, and enabling your reader to follow up any references given. This will also show your achievement in the context of individualised learning and the development of your critical abilities.

DO
- Always check what is required of you for each assignment, project, or dissertation. Ask the responsible member of staff – your tutor, Course Director, or Unit Co-ordinator.
- Paraphrase the original work or summarise it in your OWN WORDS. Remember that you will still need to reference the original.
- Put any phrase or sentence which you have used word for word into "quotation marks"
- Use quotes sparingly – or the text may not be easy to read.
- Give yourself time to do all the references IN FULL
- Reference anything you are not sure about – just in case.
- Make a note of the full reference AT THE TIME of reading the original, especially if it is a chapter from a book or a document from the Internet.
- Try to read the ORIGINAL work you are using, rather than someone else's comments on it. YOUR interpretations and additions are what your tutor wants to read.
- If you can't find the original, make reference to it, AND to the source material in which you read about it.
- Evaluate carefully any information found from a random internet search where you have not linked from a reputable web page or database.

DON'T
- EVER CONSIDER using any of the essay writing or document purchasing services available on the internet. Credit your tutor with the ability to recognise a "cut and paste job", especially if the bottom line says "from Essays-R-Us.com." or similar. This is "Cyberplagiarism".
- Assume information on the Internet is exempt from the need to reference.
- Let your own work be used without getting credit for it. Plagiarism is by no means unique to LSBU and students elsewhere may be using YOUR work.

WHERE YOU DON'T NEED TO USE REFERENCES

- If you are writing up your own genuine experiences, observations, experimental data, fieldwork, etc.
- You are mentioning something which is "common knowledge", i.e. well-known facts like historical dates, something well documented elsewhere.

FURTHER MEASURES TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

- If English is not your first language and you are worried that your style is not good then consult LSBU`s Learning Development Centre. You may think that copying material from the internet will help solve your written English problem but your tutor will notice a change in style at once. !!
- Your tutor will also be suspicious if your text starts to include very specialised words (e.g. outside your usual knowledge) or wonder why your style suddenly changes. Differences in layout and format will also be a give-away.
- It is also unwise to attempt a discussion of someone else`s ideas without fully understanding the argument they are making. If such material is not fully referenced your tutor will suspect that you have not read the original. A good technique is to include just enough quotes to support your case.
- Make time to develop skills in paraphrasing (re-writing, putting into different words) not just to avoid obvious copying but to help clarify the meaning of your statement and to "add value" to your research.
- We KNOW it can take as long to do a correct reference as it does to write up the actual information researched. However, if you do run out of time, a poor mark is always better than a penalty for plagiarism.

You may also be breaking copyright rules if you reproduce material not covered by the licensing agreement, e.g. music scores, maps, illustrations.

How to do a Creative Writing Reflective Essay

In addition to formal academic essays, many of the units you undertake will require you to produce a Reflective Essay. This requires a slightly different approach to that of other kinds of essays, in that you as a writer are being asked to reflect specifically on your own work.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is it for?
The Reflective Essay is designed to test your abilities at integrating theory and practice in the context of your own creative work. You need to talk about the process of producing your work in a considered, thoughtful way and analyse the development of your skills carefully and articulately. The Reflective Essay needs a front page and a Bibliography on a separate back page. You can include Appendices of material (newspaper clippings, images, etc.) at the back if you wish, but you must refer to this material within the Reflective Essay itself.

2.   How do I integrate theory and practice?
In all of your units you'll discuss a range of theories related to the creation and analysis of stories. The Reflective Essay asks you to take these theories – and other appropriate theory you may have come across – and apply them to your own work. You must reference any ideas you discuss in the course of your Reflective Essay. On the Creative Writing side particularly 'theory' might mean literary analysis, film and theatre analysis or herald from other areas of cultural and media theory. Your supervising tutor will be able to point you in the right direction.

3. How do I reference sole authored books in the Analysis?
You need to reference any books you've used within the body of the Reflective Essay and at the end of the Essay in the Bibliography. Failure to reference a direct quotation is considered **plagiarism** and can result in an immediate fail, depending on the scale of the offence.

The exact nature of referencing depends on the book. Some are what's called 'sole-authored' books, such as the Janet Murray book about interactive fiction, *Hamlet on the Holodeck*. If you quote directly from a book the quotation must not exceed 100 words and you must credit the author along with the year of publication and the page number. Direct quotations of more than 25 words should be indented as in the following direct quotation from Murray:

> The computer is chameleonic. It can be seen as a theatre, a town hall, an unravelling book, an animated wonderland, a sports arena, and even a potential life form… As the most powerful representational medium yet invented, it should be put to the highest tasks of society. Whether or not we will one day be rewarded with the arrival of the cyberbard, we should hasten to place this new compositional tool as firmly as possible in the hands of the storytellers.

<div align="right">Murray, J.H. (1999:284)</div>

Alternatively, you can paraphrase what Murray thinks as in the following example:

Murray suggests multiple ways in which the computer can be understood as a storytelling mechanism: she sees it as a way of delivering the kinds of stories normally associated with literature, but also as a means for enabling theatrical performance or creating fantastical environments for users to explore. She uses the term 'cyberbard' to describe storytellers who might one day use computers rather than the novel, theatre or film to convey narratives (Murray 1999:284).

4.   **How do I reference edited books in the Analysis?**
Academic books are frequently edited compilations of work by different authors. The following is a quote from an essay by Torben Grodal from *The Video Game Theory Reader*:

> Several video game researchers have used Roger Caillois's categorization of games as a tool for categorising video games in contrast to narratives… But a comparison between video games and Caillois's categories creates more problems than it solves.
>
> <div align="right">Grodal (2003:139)</div>

5.   **How do I reference books and essays in the Bibliography?**
The Bibliography is an essential element of academic writing. It goes at the end of the Analysis (much like the Reading Lists in your unit guides). You need to list books and essays alphabetically, surname followed by initial, year of publication, title of the publication, location of publication and name of the publisher. Like so:

Bibliography

Grodal, T. (2003) *Stories for Ear, Eye, and Muscles* in Perron, B. and Wolf, M.J.P. (2003) *The Video Game Theory Reader*. London: Routledge

Murray, J.H. (1999) *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace*. Massachusetts: MIT Press

This process may seem time-consuming, but the more you do it the easier the process will become. It's a good idea to compile your Bibliography as you go, rather than having to assemble it hurriedly immediately prior to the deadline.

6.   **Can I reference other people's work?**
Yes please! We definitely want you to place your work in context alongside other professionally produced material. You might compare your work to other writers that have dealt with similar subject matter, or examine other writers who work in a similar style to you. These might be novelists, short story writers, screenwriters, theatre writers, comic book authors, songwriters – tell us about your influences.

6.   **How many books, films, etc. should I reference in the Reflective Essay for Game Contexts?**
For Year 1 units we expect to see at least five books or essays referenced (that can include online essays).

7.   **Can I use images?**
Please do. However, you should make reference to these in your Reflective Essay (e.g. "see Fig 1"). All images should be placed in the Appendices of your Reflective Essay. NB Please do not print out material from the Internet and put it in the back of your Analysis: you're being marked on quality rather than quantity. Please also steer clear of "clip art".

Finally, please proof-read your work prior to submission. Make sure you check your basic grammar: its and it's, for example, and their, they're and there. You should submit your finished Reflective Essay in a plastic folder, attaching a yellow submission cover sheet to the front and making sure you get a receipt for your work.

Any problems, questions or queries, feel free to contact Dr Colin Harvey using email – that's harveycb@lsbu.ac.uk

Good luck!

10.