

# The Power of Story: Craft in Narrative Writing with Professor Peter Catalanotto

Based on the Course currently taught by Professor Catalanotto at:



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

**Pratt**



A workshop room with whiteboards, sticky notes, and people working at tables. The room has large windows on the left, a yellow wall, and several whiteboards covered in colorful sticky notes. People are seated at white tables, some writing on papers. The room is well-lit and appears to be a collaborative workspace.

## WORKSHOP OVERVIEW:

In this course, students will delve into the **creative process of narrative writing**, transitioning from initial inspiration to the **completion of a short fiction story**.

They will become adept at distinguishing the intricacies of **crafting a compelling story from simply describing an event**.

**Throughout twelve online sessions**, the course will guide students through various exercises and assignments designed to underscore the key elements of narrative writing.

Students will attain a thorough understanding of what is necessary to **create compelling stories** and **personal essays ideal for college applications**.

## CONFERENCE DETAILS



Students get a **Completion Certificate** from The Ivy Learning Lab and The Big Red Group, **signed by the Professor.**



Opportunity to get a **Letter of Recommendation** from the **Professor\***



20th Aug - 5th Nov 2024  
2 hours/day



No. of sessions: 12- Online  
1 session per week



Grades 8-12



INR 50,000 + 18% GST (



Deadline :  
10th August 2024



**Class Size: 20 Students**

# CREATE **YOUR OWN FICTION SHORT STORY** BY THE END OF THIS WORKSHOP!

**Secure Your Spot!**



# KNOW YOUR Instructor

Professor of Writing at:



# Pratt



Peter Catalanotto has written seventeen books for children, including *Monkey & Robot*, *More of Monkey & Robot*, *The Newbies*, *Question Boy Meets Little Miss Know-It-All*, *Ivan the Terrier*, *Matthew A.B.C.*, and *Emily's Art*, of which *School Library Journal* said in a starred review, “whether viewed from afar or up close, this creative and heartfelt book is a masterpiece.”

In 2008, First Lady Laura Bush commissioned Peter to illustrate the White House holiday brochure.

He currently teaches the first children's book writing course offered by both Columbia University and Pratt Institute.

Peter has illustrated more than thirty books for other writers including George Ella Lyon, Cynthia Rylant, Mary Pope Osborne, Joanne Ryder, Robert Burleigh, and Megan McDonald.

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## Peter Catalanotto

Author & Illustrator

Award winning author of  
**15+** books

## Session 1: Story

- Learn what a story is, as opposed to merely an incident or an event.
- Learn how to cultivate ideas from their lives and imaginations.
- Writing exercise.
- Writing assignment.

## Session 2: Themes in Personal Essays/College Application Essays

- Discuss stories that resonate with you and why you were affected.
- Explore major themes for narratives.
- Discover what stories affect a reader.
- Writing exercise.
- Writing assignment.



### Session 3: Storyline

- Learn how to brainstorm
- Explore ideas from different angles and perspectives as they begin to formulate a basic storyline that includes multiple problems and various possibilities for endings.
- Writing assignment in class.

**Take-Home Tasks:** Consider the basic elements of your story. Explore several problems your character will encounter and at least two possibilities for endings. Be prepared to explain and defend your ideas to the class.

### Session 4: Plot

- Present your basic storyline for the class to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the different elements contained in the story, pushing the writer to explore new possibilities.
- Writing exercise in class.

**Take-Home Tasks:** After presenting your storyline in class, you will consider suggestions from the class and strengthen your story line.

## Session 5: Character/Voice

- Learn how to create multi-dimensional characters using both physical and behavioral traits. They will consider the voice and perspective of the narrator.
- Learn how to create authentic dialog.
- Writing exercise.
- Writing assignment.

## Session 6: The First Draft

- Formulate your ideas into a rough draft of your story, making decisions on your story's elements: voice, motive, obstacle(s), setting(s), and plot.
- Options and approaches for the elements of a story will be further discussed and explored.

**Take-Home Tasks:** You will continue writing your first draft at home.





### **Session 7 & 8: The Writer's Ear**

- Read aloud your first draft
- Learn how to listen for problems in your writing.
- The class will make suggestions and discuss the storyline and elements of the story as each is read. Hearing problems in others' writing helps a writer develop a trained ear for their own struggles.

**Take-Home Tasks:** After reading out loud your first draft in class you will write a second draft of your story or chapter applying the suggestions that were helpful from class.

### **Sessions 9 & 10: Rewriting and Story Editing**

- Discussion on what is essential in a story.
- Learn how to discern what your overall story needs.
- Examine the story's pace and sequence of events in the storyline.
- Writing assignment in class.

**Take-Home Tasks:** Continue reworking your story, applying the suggestions you found helpful from the professor and the other students.

### **Session 11: Line Editing**

- As each student's storyline evolves and strengthens, the discussion will turn to examining each line and how to make every word and sentence powerful and essential.
- The Professor will demonstrate line editing by using a segment of each student's story in front of the class.

**Take-Home Tasks:** Apply the suggestions you feel will improve your story and use what you have learned to edit the rest of your story.

### **Session 12: Final Draft**

- Read your reworked stories aloud, this time listening for details, phrasing, cadence, and sentence structure.
- Begin exploring titles for your story.

**Take-Home Tasks:** Complete your final draft.

# WHAT WILL students learn?

## Fundamentals of Storytelling:

Understanding character, setting, plot, and conflict to weave compelling narratives.

## Creative Expression:

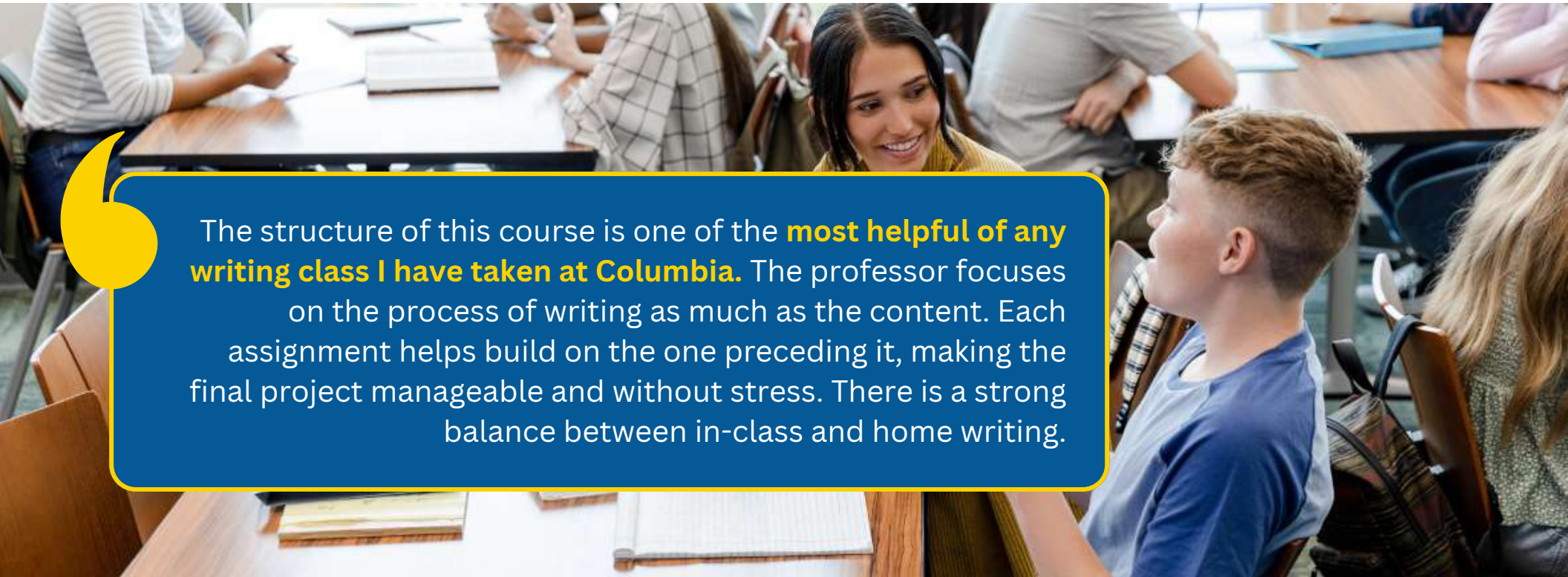
Encouraging free thought and innovation to tell stories that resonate and captivate.

## Structuring Stories:

Organizing thoughts and ideas into a cohesive structure, ensuring clarity and flow.

## Writing Skills:

Enhancing grammar, vocabulary, and language use for clear and engaging storytelling.



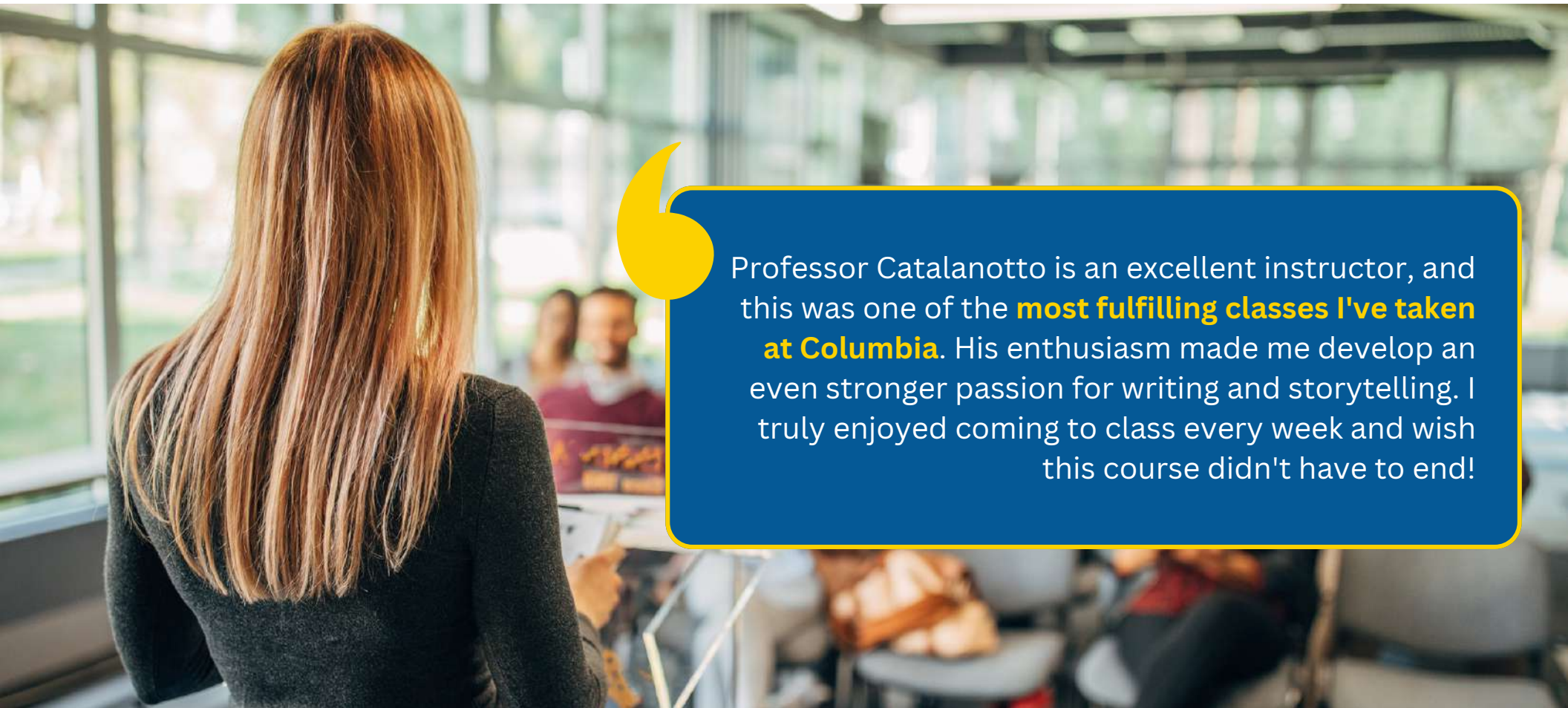
The structure of this course is one of the **most helpful of any writing class I have taken at Columbia**. The professor focuses on the process of writing as much as the content. Each assignment helps build on the one preceding it, making the final project manageable and without stress. There is a strong balance between in-class and home writing.

## FINAL DAY: YOUR STORY EMERGES

After twelve sessions, each student will present their story. Crafted during our workshop, these stories are personal triumphs. They reveal each young writer's journey and imagination.

## PRESENT YOUR TALE

On this day, students will stand before peers and mentors to share their crafted narratives. This moment is not just a presentation but a celebration of individual creativity and effort.



Professor Catalanotto is an excellent instructor, and this was one of the **most fulfilling classes I've taken at Columbia**. His enthusiasm made me develop an even stronger passion for writing and storytelling. I truly enjoyed coming to class every week and wish this course didn't have to end!

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Professor Peter Catalanotto






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