



# ELA Virtual Learning

# **Creative Writing**

April 20, 2020



# Creative Writing

## Lesson: Mon., April 20

**Objective/Learning Target:** Students will learn to write more effectively about landscape/setting.



## Creative Writing

**Watch:** [Daisy Johnson on \*Fen\*](#), her debut story collection. As you do, take notes in your journal, paying particular attention to what she says about landscape.



## Creative Writing

**Reflect:** After watching [Daisy Johnson discuss](#) her work, write in your journal for several minutes about what you learned. What does she mention about choosing a landscape for her stories or novel? Why is a decision like this important? What effect might a landscape or setting have on the meaning or interpretation of your work?



## Creative Writing

**Listen:** Daisy Johnson's stories in *Fen* take place in the Fens or Fenlands, a marshy plain near the eastern coast of England. Listen to the first few minutes of her story "[The Lighthouse Keeper](#)" from that collection. As you do, record in your journal the details that stand out to you and make the setting feel specific/concrete. List as many as you can, but aim for 7-10 in all.



## Creative Writing

**Reflect:** What makes the setting seem especially vivid or real?

## Creative Writing

### Model:

- crusted rocks
- fish came cresting up
- narrow-bellied when it came to curse her
- eyes...lolloped...round as marbles
- shoals of sardines
- storm was unbuckling itself somewhere
- the beach was a spit of sand
- water-cleansed seal skulls

## Creative Writing

### Setting/Landscape:

- specific / concrete detail (convincing)
- creates atmosphere through vivid description
- forms part of the conflict
- reveals character(s)
- develops theme
- can sometimes be considered its own character
  - “man vs. nature” plots





## Creative Writing

**Practice:** In today’s video, Johnson says that she chose the Fens as the setting for her stories because she knows it so well, and in Creative Writing it is often advised that you should “write about what you know.” Today, compose a paragraph in Google Docs that introduces a setting you know intimately. Use your senses!



## Creative Writing

**Model:** The light changed as the sun set behind them, the shadows of the fort's walls angling a vaguely star-shaped shadow across the rolling verdure below. Maybe three miles in the distance, the landscape on the opposite side of the Hudson seemed painterly in the dying light, at least in the shopping-mall gallery kind of way—the hazy yellow and pink texture of the trees, the depth and length of their shadows illustrating the gentle rise and fall in elevation. In the middle of it all, a sinuous cloud casted its girth across the treetops, swallowing them whole: a collision of sentiment, apocalypse.



## Creative Writing

**Additional Practice:** Listen to the rest of the story and pay special attention to how Johnson uses landscape to create atmosphere, reveal character, or develop theme.



## Creative Writing

### **Additional Resources/Practice:**

[Top Tips on Creating Setting](#) by Jess Butterworth

[Review of Daisy Johnson's \*Fen\*](#) from the Kenyon Review