

## Writing Assignments for *The Soul of Creative Writing*

These assignments were created by Nancy Jensen, author of the newly published book, *Window*, for her writing class. She was generous enough to share them with me and to let me provide them for teachers who would like to use *The Soul of Creative Writing* as a teaching vehicle.

1)

Before you begin, read pages 1-18 in *The Soul of Creative Writing*. Then, choose a prose passage (1-2 paragraphs) from any work you love and that you respond to musically. The work can be fiction or nonfiction. Using Richard Goodman's discussion as a guide, write a brief analysis articulating how the "music and meaning" (Goodman 8) have been coordinated. The analysis should be 1 ½ -2 pages, including the quoted passage.

2)

Searching the most recent assigned readings, find three word choices you find especially compelling. Using the points of Richard Goodman's "In Search of the Exact Word" as guides, discuss each of your chosen words in context, analyzing why you think the writer's choice is so effective-more effective than other ways of expressing the idea might have been.

3)

From anywhere in the recent assigned readings, find three words you either aren't familiar with or aren't sure you really know but which nonetheless seem particularly apt as the writers have used them. Using the *Oxford English Dictionary* (the 20 volume set, found in the reference section of the library), research the etymology of each of the three words and discuss how what you have learned enhances your understanding of how each word enhances the work in which it appears.

4)

Drawing on Richard Goodman's essay "Using the Techniques of Fiction to Make Your Creative Nonfiction Even More Creative," analyze the use of fictional elements in two of the recent assigned readings.

5)

Select a passage (1-2 paragraphs) from any one of the readings assigned up to this point in the semester. Choose a passage that you find especially compelling, moving, and memorable. Using Richard Goodman's essay "The Eminent Domain of Punctuation" as a guide, analyze the writer's decisions about punctuation in the selected passage. How do these choices in punctuation control the rhythm and pace of the passage, and, therefore, support subject and theme? Note: You must include the selected passage in your own writing. Typing out the passage will help you better understand the writer's choices.

6)

Read the introduction to "Maxims About Writing" (*The Soul of Creative Writing* 107-117), and then choose a maxim at random. Discuss how the maxim relates-or could relate-to your own writing. Consider how you might practice the maxim and, if you did, how doing so might have a positive impact on your writing.

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