

# Young Adult Novel Writing

This is a sample syllabus. Actual course topics and assignments may vary by instructor and class.

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## **Week 1**

What to write. Ideas. Tips for brainstorming hooks. Outlines. Plotting.

Assignment: Come up with book ideas, brainstorm hooks, and start your outline.

## **Week 2**

Addictive plotting. Plot and outline. The birth of a plot in three acts. Subplots.

Assignment: Submit your outline.

## **Week 3**

Point of view. What makes a novel YA? What is POV? Who tells the story? Is your YA POV working?

Assignment: Write 10-15 pages.

## **Week 4**

Characters we care about. Sketching out the major and minor characters.

Assignment: Develop a character checklist and write 10-15 pages.

## **Week 5**

Make them talk. Dialogue. Some rules to guide you. Examples of great dialogue.

Assignment: Write 10-15 pages of your manuscript.

## **Week 6**

What editors want. Imprints and publishing houses. The acquisition process. Important tools to educate yourself on the industry.

Assignment: Write 10-15 pages of your manuscript and research imprints.

## **Week 7**

Getting an agent (or not). Do you need an agent? Advances, commissions, copyrights, earning out, and other terms you need to know. How do you find an agent? Selecting an agent.

Assignment: Write 10-15 pages of your manuscript and a short cover letter to your dream agent.

## **Week 8**

Send out your work. Query packages. Cover letter, synopsis, sample pages, and proposals. Formatting tips.

Assignment: Write 10-15 pages of your manuscript.

## **Week 9**

Getting unstuck. Writer's block and tips for overcoming it.

Assignment: Write 10-15 pages of your manuscript.

## **Week 10**

Writing better. Improving your work. Mastering teen speak. Specificity and details. Going deep inside your characters' heads. Reaction follows action.

Assignment: Write 10-15 pages of your manuscript.

## **Week 11**

Q&A with a literary agent. Insider tips on finding and working with an agent, submissions, and the marketplace.

Assignment: Write 10-15 pages of your manuscript.

## **Week 12**

Making your manuscript better. Why and how to revise? Taking another look at characters, scenes, motivation. General revision tips.