



Course details

Course title

Literature: Contemporary British Fiction

Course code

Q00019812

Course date

Start: 15/01/25

End: 26/03/25

Number of classes

10 sessions

Timetable

Wed 15th Jan, 10:30 to 12:30

Wed 22nd Jan, 10:30 to 12:30

Wed 29th Jan, 10:30 to 12:30

Wed 5th Feb, 10:30 to 12:30

Wed 12th Feb, 10:30 to 12:30

Wed 26th Feb, 10:30 to 12:30

Wed 5th Mar, 10:30 to 12:30

Wed 12th Mar, 10:30 to 12:30

Wed 19th Mar, 10:30 to 12:30

Wed 26th Mar, 10:30 to 12:30

Branch

Richmond

Tutor

Stephen Smith

Fee range

Free to £84.00

How you'll learn

You'll join a small group of fellow learners for classes at the venue indicated. Some materials may be provided in our virtual learning environment.

Got it!

In venue

Venue

Duke Street Church

Quadrant Road

Richmond

TW9 1DH

Level of study

Beginners

Course overview

This course will consider and analyse the following authors and their texts. These are: *The Stranger's Child* - Alan Hollinghurst. *The Blue Flower* - Penelope Fitzgerald. *A Pale View of Hills* - Kazuo Ishiguro. *Last Orders* - Graham Swift. *On Chesil Beach* - Ian McEwan. These texts will provide a window into the different regions of Britain during the last fifty years, decades of major change in the social fabric and political nature of Britain, though several of our texts will trace these changes back to the earlier part of the twentieth century, and in doing so, we will encounter themes of identity, class and the decline of Empire. There will be much to prompt discussion and challenge our assumptions. This course is funded by Greater London Combined Authority.

Course description

Our first text, *The Stranger's Child* by Alan Hollinghurst will chart the life and afterlife of a fictional British poet of the Great War. We will explore issues surrounding literary biography and the right to privacy in what is a text of great lyrical beauty. Our second text, *The Blue Flower* by Penelope Fitzgerald also concerns a poet, the German Romantic Novalis. Here we will explore ideas relating to the ideal in a richly comic text. Our third text by Ishiguro is also historical, set in postwar Nagasaki and contemporary Britain. It will introduce us to themes of memory and legacy through an eldritch tale, which draws on Japanese ghost stories. Our fourth text is *Last Orders* by Graham Swift which is a mordantly funny modern pilgrimage. We will conclude with the Booker nominated *On Chesil Beach* by Ian McEwan. These texts will allow us to discover the breadth of subjects addressed by British fiction in the last half a century. Each will prompt us to reassess our views of identity constructed from memory and those myths which societies cultivate to explain

themselves. It goes without saying that these texts represent some of the strongest British writers to emerge in recent times. The course promises plenty of lively and stimulating discussions on Wednesday mornings in Richmond.

What financial support is available?

We don't want anything to stand in your way when it comes to bringing Adult learning within reach so if you need anything to support you to achieve your goals then speak to one of our education experts during your enrolment journey. Most of our courses are government funded but if you don't qualify or need alternative financial help to access them then let us know.

What other support is available?

All of our digital content, teaching and learning activities and assessments are designed to be accessible so if you need any additional support you can discuss this with the education experts during your enrolment journey and we will do all we can to make sure you have optimal access.

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