

**Feedback from Participant —Customised Creative Writing Workshop by Verena Tay
for National Library Board (Singapore, 2012–2016)**

‘Food in Mind: Writing Creatively about Food and Human Relationships’ Workshop
(30 April 2016)

What aspects of this workshop benefitted you the most?

“1. Handouts that were given – very relevant & useful. 2. Being asked to submit a piece every week for discussion – kept the momentum going. 3. Asking us to develop more than one story.

Verena is a dedicated and inspiring teacher.”

~ Shamimah Mujtabah

“Ongoing feedback and discussion – to understand how to improve on work and what else to consider. Understanding how to develop a story from resource materials as guidance.”

~ Jerone Sim

“I benefitted from Verena’s critique of my story’s characters and her comments on my classmates’ writing. Verena is always pushing us to go deeper into the characters to reveal a more complete and profound story.”

~ Soh Gek Han

“The constructive feedback from the peers was helpful. I like how you threw questions at our scripts that helped tightened the writing.

I enjoyed the workshop as it forces everyone to a narrow subject, versus one that forces us to critique an unfamiliar genre like sci-fi or fantasy.

Thank you, Verena, for your guidance and making this workshop beneficial in my writing journey.”

~ Vicky Chong

“The reviews from weekly submissions helped shape my writing flow. Good handouts.

Interesting to write from another person’s perspective.

Enjoyed the writing process more. Brushed up on long forgotten disciplines like punctuation and structure.”

~ Angie Lim

“The format of writing and reviewing each week was very useful. It was the most important part of the learning process – to see what worked & what didn’t & try to fix it, then test again if the revision worked (for me).

~ Margaret Tang

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My Life, My Story: Memoir Writing Workshop (28 March 2016)

What aspects of this workshop benefitted you the most?

“Discussions in group. Your comments & pointers made on my drafts. I learnt a lot on what are ‘show’ and ‘tell’ (the difference).”

~ Jessie Seng

“Feedback from instructor and other participants – potential readers. How did my paper affect their senses, or not at all? Reading texts by others helped me to realize the different topics and experiences that could fall under non-fiction/memoir writing.

Listening to feedback about other people’s writing helped to trigger thoughts in me as well.”

~ Ng Guat Tin

“The discussions on improvements to the drafts.”

~ Tan Shook Fong

“The peer feedback & critique sessions. I’ve learned something about myself through this process/workshop.

The mixed groups with changes in group composition to do critique is good. Gives different perspectives & I learned very much from that.”

~ Kim Lee

“I like the tight time-frame to write, keeping me focused and on task. The handouts were also useful. Most helpful were the group feedback and comments. Have enjoyed reading each other’s life stories – warmed and touched by the human interest in each.”

~ Goh Keng Hoong

“Guideline & assists for memoir-writing from Verena. The handouts of reading materials. Feedback from participants. Blending discipline with own desire. Writing is rigorous – writing clearly for the readers. How to put ourselves in the story. Appreciate the course. Enjoyed the experience.”

~ Yeo Hock Yew

“Remind me to focus on a topic, not expect people to know what I am saying or referring to. Learn to structure my content into a flow. Verena’s generous insights to our writings. Very valuable!”

~ Deborah Conceicao-Loi

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“I love how you gave us sufficient guidance and the space to ‘grow’ my story. Thanks for showing me how a change in tense and point of view can give my story more impact, making it more immediate and real.

I really enjoyed myself and gained tremendous insights to the writing styles of others.”

~ Helen Tan

“When we critiqued each other’s work – feedback received. Personal critique given by Verena. Focus on one paragraph – look deeper. Group work done – bonding. Product – a more focused piece of writing.”

~ Anita Shekhu

“I benefitted from Verena’s insights & methods of getting us to feel what it means to reviews peers’ work and how this helps us with our own endeavours.

Peer reviews by so-called ‘lay’ classmates was an amazing idea.”

~ Dev Kuladева

“The group feedback sessions and the materials provided were very useful! Techniques shared by Verena, e.g. ‘adjectives’, ‘adverbs’, ‘describing a scene that supports your story’, ‘describes yourself from the other character’s perspective’. Verena makes me feel very comfortable & confident, even though there’s so much to learn.

I thoroughly enjoyed it, learned so much of myself, and reinforces my love for writing in a profound way. Thanks so much, Verena!”

~ Anthea Ong

“1. Structuring of memoir. 2. Critique and brainstorming. 3. Guest speakers.”

~ Kok Ah Wang

“To be able to get the readers’ point of view and see the stories from their angle instead of just my own point of view.”

~ Mei Lin

“The many finer points of memoir writing. The group critiques. Verena’s feedback. The handouts.”

~ Chong Fong Lin

“I find that I had benefitted a lot from all the workshops.

As a retired teacher, I will give you 9/10.”

~ Betty Frois

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My Life, My Story: Memoir Writing Workshop (6 April 2015)

What aspects of this workshop benefitted you the most?

“Learning more about memoir-writing (the craft), meeting the guest authors, and personally, finding clarity in why I want to write and the confidence to carry on.”

~ Anne Lim

“Learning how to write a story, like characterisation, plot, setting, tension/climax & resolution. Realising the arduous process of drafting & redrafting & editing countless versions of first ‘vomit. How to effectively use our voice to tell a story.”

~ Florence

“The prompts to start writing our memoir was a good start. I benefitted from the handouts you gave as well. Feedback was useful to our writings. The speakers made the workshop come alive.

The class makes a difference to the workshop and I benefitted from the peer reviews.”

~ Vicky Chong

“Everything. Including sharing from her own books (e.g. ‘The Car’). This is a useful workshop for those who are interested in memoir-writing, and should be organised for them.”

~ Teo Teow Koon

“Reading participants’ writing. Critique by everyone including the instructor.”

~ See Toh Choy Har

“The feedback from you. They are very encouraging. It is a very inspiring workshop.”

~ Audrey Tiang

“I like your effectiveness in answering questions.”

~ Albert Chan

“The writing process – the focus & flow, the transitions.”

~ Mary Yap Swi Neo

“Feedback on our writing. Difference between ‘show’ and ‘tell’. On the whole, this was an excellent workshop. I learnt a lot.”

~ Shamimah Mujtabah

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“1. The instructions/very focused & relevant notes. 2. The critique/feedback from both you & from the others.

Thanks very much for this series of very interesting workshops!”

~ Wong Swee Fong

Spinning Your Supernatural Yarn (29 September 2012)

What aspects of this workshop benefitted you the most?

“Guidance from Verena. How to work on the story, flow, transitions, objectives, character development, adding logic/reasoning, background to story, etc.”

~ Lynn Dresel

“Structure of horror story. Elements (character, setting). Understanding better reader’s perspective through discussion.”

~ Jerome Sim

“How to structure the story. How to move the plot. The questions to ask to develop the plot.
How to keep the audience’s interest.
She’s good.”

~ Gautami

“Being forced to actually write something! Feedback from participants and Verena was very useful.

Very enjoyable, thanks!”

~ Alex Mitchell

“Writing tips on crafting the plot of a story. Being required to hand in work-in-progress.
Being given feedback by the trainer as well as fellow participants. The individualised attention given to participants within the time constraint.”

~ Shirley Tham

“Writing feedback was welcome.
Glad I took part.”

~ Dean Lundquist

“The technical aspects especially – structuring, openings.”

~ Carena Chor