

Boston College Courses

College Writing

Intro college writing; focus on argumentative writing.

Writing Creative Nonfiction

Creative Nonfiction Writing Class

Friendship: Gift and Challenge

Creative Nonfiction Writing, with friendship theme

Food, Festivals, Famines & Farewells

Creative nonfiction food writing course

Our Families, Ourselves: Writing the Personal Essay

Creative nonfiction, with focus on memoir

Recommended Reading

The Natural by Bernard Malamud

This novel about the legendary Roy Hobbs takes the reader inside the game, exploring the highs and lows in the life of an American athlete, capturing the mythical essence of baseball. Other of Malamud's novels might be of greater literary significance, but this is my favorite.

Baseball and Philosophy: Thinking Outside the Batter's Box, Edited by Eric Bronson

This anthology contains thirty-one philosophical essays about baseball. Essays with titles such as "Should Cubs Fans Be Committed? What Bleacher Bums Have to Teach Us about the Nature of Faith" and "Baseball, Cheating, and Tradition: Would Kant Cork His Bat?" explore questions of truth, justice, American identity and human fulfillment.

Discipline and perseverance—the key qualities of a successful writer.

People who don't write for a living tend to romanticize writing and writers. They think talented writers have some kind of God-given internal Dictaphone; when they sit down at their desk, the truly talented writers simply turn up volume and voila, out comes a story, an essay, a novel. That image is reinforced by legends about people such as Jack Kerouac, who supposedly wrote *On the Road* in a single draft on a roll of linotype.

Don't we all wish?

The truth is, to succeed as a writer, two qualities are essential: discipline and perseverance. (Notice that I did not mention talent!) Discipline means sitting down at your desk, doing the work—whether you feel like it or not. Waiting for the so-called "muse" can be a hopeless proposition and, at best, produces sporadic periods of writing.

As with achieving success in any endeavor, perseverance separates the real from the want-to-be writer. Writing is a messy process, sometimes easy, sometimes not so easy, and sometimes hard. As a writer, you've got to be willing to wade through a jumble of ideas, working through various drafts until you discover the essential kernel that ties the story together. You've got to believe in yourself, even when it seems as though no one else does. And, above all, never give up.

Contact

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