

## Creative Writing Courses

### Study of Fiction

Through an intensely focused study of a variety of short fiction, this course provides students with opportunities to sharpen their skills in close reading and in critiquing the ideas and forms of the short story genre. Additionally, through a variety of experiential and generative activities, the students are able to discover, refine, and revise their own narrative voices.

Students in this course are required to read their own original work at Writes of Passage, attend one Sunday WordPlay event, and submit at least one original piece to the Milken Literary Journal, as well as to an assortment of outside journals

This UC-approved course is one of the English core options for Milken juniors and seniors.

### Study of Poetry

The structure of this course mirrors that of Study of Fiction, but takes poetry as its focus. It combines an intense academic analysis of canonized poems with opportunities for students to experiment and create original poetry.

This UC-approved course is one of the English core options for Milken juniors and seniors.

Both courses are also offered at the Honors level.



### Melody Mansfield, Director of the Creative Writing Program

Ms. Mansfield has been working with Milken students for more than a decade, helping them find and refine their writing voices. She assumed the role of Writes of Passage faculty facilitator in 2000, and has been developing other student writing forums (UC-approved

courses, Sunday WordPlay program, Spotlight Poet, Evening of Celebration, Advanced Independent Study opportunities) ever since.

With a BA, MA, and MFA in Writing, Ms. Mansfield taught at the university/college level for six years before coming to Milken. Her first novel was published in 1996 by Faber and Faber, Inc. and earned favorable reviews from The New York Times Book Review, Booklist, and others. She has since written two additional novels and a short story collection. A number of her academic articles have appeared in scholarly journals and text books; most recently she presented one of her pedagogical techniques ("Student Led Discussions") at the CAIS (California Association of Independent Schools) Conference, and published an overview of this technique in their journal.

Many of Ms. Mansfield's former writing students have gone on to become published authors themselves. But even more importantly, the skills and confidence gained through the Creative Writing Program have enabled a wide variety of students to succeed in an even broader variety of careers.

Ms. Mansfield is grateful to the Milken administration and community for providing such a supportive atmosphere for both writing and teaching, and for joining her in honoring the voices of our emerging student writers who continue to enrich us with the power of their words.

**MILKEN**  
COMMUNITY  
HIGH SCHOOL

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*"There is an ecstasy  
in paying attention."*

*— Anne Lamott, Bird by Bird*

Milken Community High School

# Creative Writing Program

Melody Mansfield, Director



## Advanced Study of Fiction and Poetry

For those students wishing to take their writing skills to the next level, this Independent Study course builds on the concepts and terminology mastered in the Study of Fiction and/or Study of Poetry courses. Along with reading the works of professional writers and analyzing their techniques on a more advanced level, this course will require students to engage much more intensively in both generating and “workshopping” their own original fiction and poetry.

## Creative Writing Club

### Writes of Passage

Founded in 1999 by the late Dr. Laurie Bottoms, Writes of Passage is a monthly forum for student writers. Any Milken student with a passion for writing is invited to sign up to read, or to simply come and listen. This club has steadily grown in scope and popularity and now includes a Spotlight Poet program to honor the words and writing process of one student writer each month. We also host an annual Evening of Celebration to allow family and friends to share in the accomplishments of these very talented and enthusiastic students.



## Creative Writing Student Publication

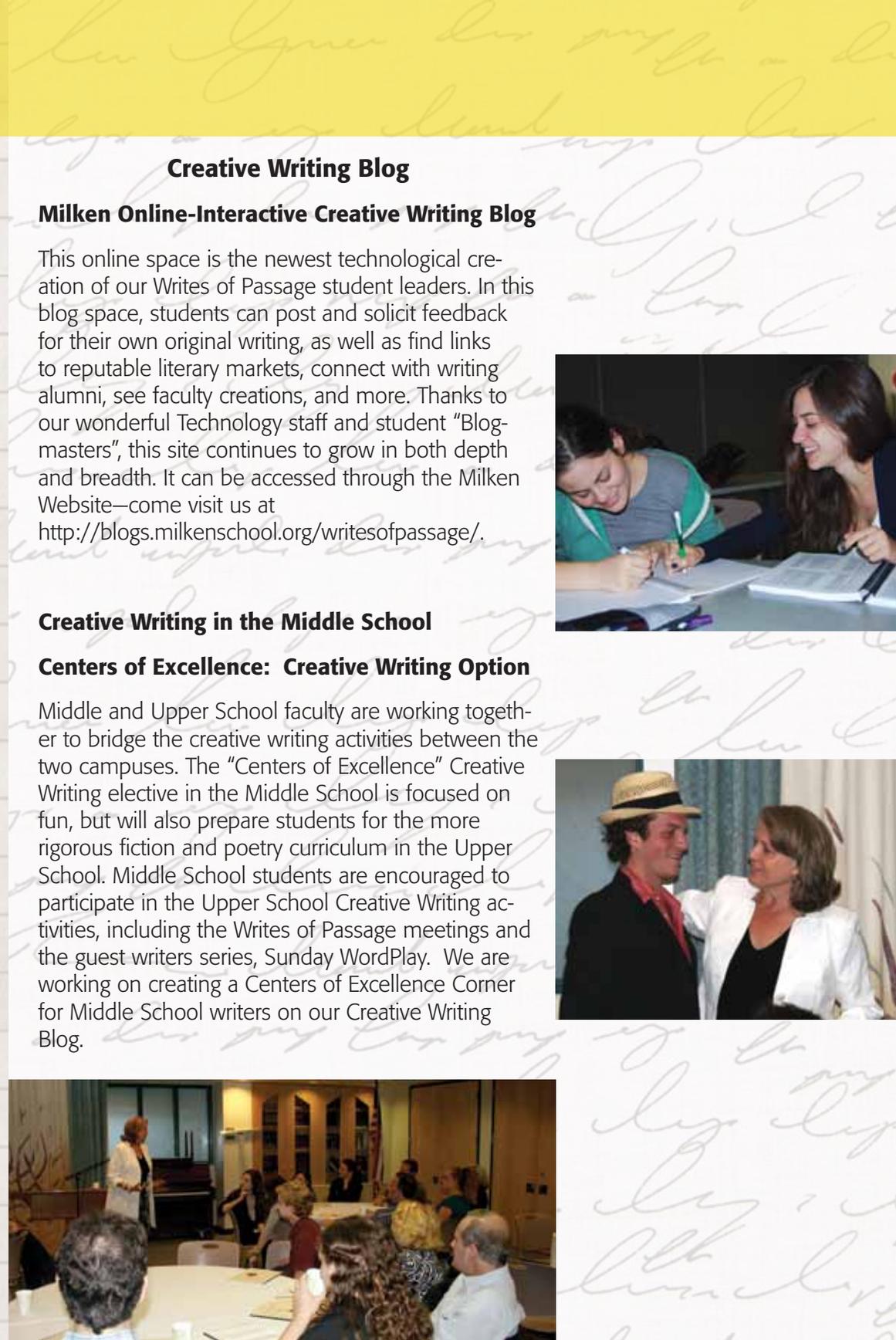
### Milken Community High School Literary Journal

Because seeing one’s name in print is another (of the many) pleasures of writing, we publish an annual journal of student writing. The production of this beautifully bound journal is supervised by Ms. Jane St. Clair, but students screen the submissions, plan the layout, and gain a wealth of experience in evaluating, editing, and meeting deadlines. The result is a journal we are proud to distribute to everyone in the Milken community.

## Creative Writing Guest Author Series

### Sunday WordPlay

Sunday WordPlay is a Sunday afternoon event series in which notable professional writers are invited to discuss and share their own writing experiences with our students. This “wordplay” might include lectures, readings, workshops, drama games, writing experiments, or any number of experiential and/or writing activities. Past guests have included Leo Cabranes-Grant, the winner of the Playwriting Competition from Puerto Rico’s Institute of Culture; Diane Lefer, the recipient of the prestigious Mary McCarthy Prize for fiction; Dan Jaffe, editor of *With Signs and Wonders*, *An International Anthology of Jewish Fabulist Fiction*, and Mary Clyde, recipient of the coveted Flannery O’Connor Prize for short fiction.



## Creative Writing Blog

### Milken Online-Interactive Creative Writing Blog

This online space is the newest technological creation of our Writes of Passage student leaders. In this blog space, students can post and solicit feedback for their own original writing, as well as find links to reputable literary markets, connect with writing alumni, see faculty creations, and more. Thanks to our wonderful Technology staff and student “Blog-masters”, this site continues to grow in both depth and breadth. It can be accessed through the Milken Website—come visit us at <http://blogs.milken.school.org/writesofpassage/>.

## Creative Writing in the Middle School

### Centers of Excellence: Creative Writing Option

Middle and Upper School faculty are working together to bridge the creative writing activities between the two campuses. The “Centers of Excellence” Creative Writing elective in the Middle School is focused on fun, but will also prepare students for the more rigorous fiction and poetry curriculum in the Upper School. Middle School students are encouraged to participate in the Upper School Creative Writing activities, including the Writes of Passage meetings and the guest writers series, Sunday WordPlay. We are working on creating a Centers of Excellence Corner for Middle School writers on our Creative Writing Blog.

