

# GIFT Summer School 2019

## Residential for Curious Minds - Years 7 to 13

at Grittleton House, Wiltshire

Sunday 4th August to Friday 9th August

GIFT, provider of internationally-renowned enrichment courses for more than 40 years, is running a Summer School for Years 7-13, and those educated at home aged 11 to 18.

The venue is Grittleton House near Chippenham in Wiltshire - dating from the 17th century, it is a building of historical significance and is Grade II listed on the English Heritage Register. There are acres of beautiful grounds for students to enjoy, plus converted stable buildings and even a clock tower to explore.

You choose one main course each day from a range of contrasting options. Each course is an opportunity to go into depth about something that you won't find on an everyday syllabus. There are leisurely breaks in which to enjoy the grounds and the company of new friends. Then there are early and late evening activities to allow you to try something different.

On Wednesday we will embark on a mystery field trip for the day - to explore somewhere or something in our surroundings...

During the rest of the year, many GIFTers keep in touch with one another, and we have alumni who are still friends 30 years on!

Financial support may be available for those otherwise unable to attend - see last page.

"I met other people like me, people bubbling out with ideas... my brain was stretched out to the limit of what I could understand."



## Flying High

In 1782 Joseph-Michel and Jacques-Étienne Montgolfier constructed a balloon whose bag was lifted by lighting a cauldron of paper beneath it, thus heating and rarefying the air it contained - the world's first hot-air balloon. In October 1783 Jacques-Étienne made the first (tethered) manned flight. In November the first manned free flight in a Montgolfier balloon occurred - a flight of 71/2 miles at 3,000 feet carrying Pilatre de Rozier and the Marquis d'Arlandes. In December of the same year Jacques Alexandre César Charles and Nicolas-Louis Robert, a French scientist and engineer respectively, became the first men to make a hydrogen balloon ascent. The rest is history. You will spend a day designing and making your own flying machines - from first principles to test flights: up, up and away!



## Pow!

In 110 AD, Trajan's column told the story of the emperor's victories in a series of pictures. More portable comic strips became popular in the 1930s, and there is now a rich history of comic strips with storylines and artistic styles as diverse as any other genre. In this course with professional artist and comic creator, Richy Chandler, you'll learn about visual storytelling from examples of the greats, and have the chance to bring your own characters to life. You don't have to be an ace artist to participate: words and story are just as important, and the miracle of comic strips is that the simplest stick persons can carry a story.



## Play in a Day

Devise, script, direct and perform a play in a day. This is an opportunity for actors and non-actors to bring your ideas to life. The pace will be hectic, and you'll have to take lots of decisions, so this is as much about creative and practical collaboration as the play itself.

## The Interpretation of Screams

Ever wondered why Little Hans was so afraid of horses? Perhaps you prefer to think about what Pavlov fed his dogs. In this course you will explore different aspects of psychology. You will have the chance to learn about famous experiments from all aspects of psychological history, from the courageous to the bizarre, to the downright unethical. Would you allow them to go ahead? What would you do if you were faced with the same challenges?







Jem Wakefield

### Vain Wisdom All and False Philosophy

Untruths can often be made to sound reasonable using clever, persuasive language. This is a "know your enemy" course about the dark arts of rhetoric, sophistry and logical fallacies, in which you will create your own deceptions and delusions so that you can better see through the ones you encounter.

### A Brief History of Games

Why do we play? This is a question that has puzzled psychologists for centuries. Play is an essential aspect of our daily routine but what is it about play that makes this so? In this project you'll address these questions whilst also learning about the types of game we indulge in and whether juxtaposing 'work' and 'play' is really necessary. You'll witness how games have changed, with special reference to the transition from tabletop to the virtual. You'll also have the opportunity to make a game and, time permitting, participate in one another's play design.

### The Illusion of Life

Long before moving images, cave painters depicted horses with multiple legs to convey the illusion of motion. Animation allows film makers to bring objects and characters to life by photographing or drawing objects one frame at a time. We will investigate some of the techniques and processes available to animators such as stop-motion capture, green screen and pixilation, with the aim of making short films. Please bring a digital camera or mobile phone, and a Windows PC laptop which is running Windows 7 or later which is essential due to the software we provide.

### Peeling Back the Skin (Year 9+)

What do the monsters of Poe, Shelley and Stoker tell us about their own fears? Who's Britain's Dracula? Who's your "lost Lenore"? Every age, knowingly or unknowingly, puts its fears on page and stage through some version of the Gothic. What anxieties do we grapple with today? Who are our monsters? What do they want and what makes them so terrifying? From the Gothic Novel to the modern tabloid and the world of immersive contemporary theatre, get ready to act, write and vilify.

### It's a Mystery

On 5th November 1872 the Mary Celeste left New York with a cargo of commercial alcohol, 8 crew, and 2 passengers. The ship was found abandoned on 4th December, drifting in the Atlantic Ocean. What made ten people leave a perfectly seaworthy ship containing a valuable cargo and enough food to last six months? The Court of Enquiry at the time was unable to draw any satisfactory conclusions and it has been a mystery ever since. Using the same evidence that was available to the court, can you come up with an answer?



## Game of Tones

The success of a pop song is neither purely coincidental nor entirely based on public relations and marketing. Those elements may play a part, but there's something in the very structure of music itself and the way it works in our brain while we listen to it that's more important. Listening to music always includes being able to recognize something and at the same time being pleasantly surprised. The better the mixture of 'old' and 'new', the more we enjoy a song. But what's the perfect mixture? Bring your instruments and voices and we'll play around with songs and produce our own blends and 'mash-ups' that explore the ideas and limits of surprise and recognition.



## Epoch Apollo

On Sunday December 22, 1968 the crew of Apollo 8 viewed the Earth for the first time from space on their way to orbit the Moon. Just over seven months later, two of the Apollo 11 crew successfully landed on the Moon and then returned safely to Earth on July 24, 1969. We will make a timeline of the Apollo 11 mission from launch at Cape Kennedy, Florida, to landing in the Sea of Tranquillity and safely returning to Earth via splash down in the Pacific Ocean. A journey of 953,054 miles in eight days, three hours, 18 min, 35 seconds. On your own journey through this extraordinary period of innovation, you'll learn about the science of space flight and what it took to make one of the most remarkable achievements of humanity possible.

## Stream Course

This is a course in freshwater ecology. What makes a stream? Come and find out how high, how long, how wide, how polluted, and how much life is present. Closely observe objectively living organisms in their natural surroundings and begin to understand all the complex relationships at work between the life in the stream and the stream in the living environment. Wellington boots and an extra towel will be a necessity!

## Short Short Stories

Rediscover the art of the short story, as it appears in literature, comics, film, and cartoons. This is an opportunity to engage in some creative thinking, to discover what is, in fact, the shortest short story and to explore and invent new styles, finding inspiration from, amongst other things, the area and objects around us.

## Smashing the Glass Ceiling

Women are less likely than men to rise to the top in the media, science, or the professions. They live longer than men do but earn less and own less. Why? Are men and women just different? Or is there something else going on? This project looks at the balance of power between the sexes in U.K. society. We'll look at evidence from economic and social history, learn about how feminism started (and how it's changed over the last 30 years), discuss what it means for men and women to be 'equal' and come up with a blueprint for the society of the future.





## Peripatetikoi

“Those given to walking about” - Aristotle’s school of philosophers in ancient Athens was named after the covered walkways where they met, and many philosophers have seen a connection between walking and thinking. Following in their footsteps, we will head out of Grittleton on two physical and intellectual journeys (one in the morning, one in the afternoon), exploring interesting questions, one of which will lead to another. Our feet will end up back where they started, but who knows where our heads will have been? Bring walking boots or sturdy shoes, a waterproof jacket, and be happy to walk several miles during the course of the day.

## Sleeve, Loop, & Baggy Shirt

Mesopotamia is often referred to as the Cradle of Civilization, and one of its children was mathematics - the universal language of understanding science, art and humanity. The birthplace of writing, the wheel, agriculture, the arch and many other innovations. Even our way of thinking about time itself can be traced back to this remarkable time and place. Why was the square wheel not invented (and when might one be handy)? A day of mathematical madness, pictographic writing and knot wrestling in an attempt to have fun with numbers.



## What’s the Problem?

Shakespeare – irrelevant, outdated, boring, jokes not funny . . . I don’t think so! In the early years of the 17th century, Shakespeare turned his back on the neat, predictable, all-loose-ends-tied-up-in-the-final-scene dramas he had written up to that point and produced, one after another, subversive, morally challenging, anti-establishment plays known as the ‘problem plays’. He didn’t use this term himself; it was coined later in an effort to label something new, diverse and too awkward to fit into a ready-made category.

Spend a day immersed in one of these plays, during which we’ll attempt to solve its problems, laugh at its jokes, unravel its complexities and find it a category if it needs one. Expect discussion, action, reflection and revelation.

## A New Angle on the Saxons

As (at the time of writing, anyway) Brexit pushes us metaphorically into the middle of Atlantic, a chance to look at the people from whom the very word, “English” derives. Just how different are the English and the Germans? What’s this got to do with the Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Friesians and Vikings? Who were they and where are they now? Invaders or forefathers? Friends or fiends? And why do Germans welcome the New Year with a black-and-white British comedy sketch? We’ll take a close look at the way the Germans and the English think, talk and write about each other. Welcome to 1,500 years of common history, languages, wars and prejudices.

## Develop Yourself

More photos are taken in a day than used to be taken in a year - but how many of them are any good? Reach beyond the ‘selfie’ looking at some simple things to do to take great images and then putting what we have learnt into practice. After being creative showing our inner self in an image we will be use objects placed in an image to surprise and amuse. A day of creativity and technique for the photographic sophist.



## Venue & Staff

Grittleton House dates back to 1660, with later additions completed in 1853. We'll be staying in the Stables and Tower buildings. You'll be staying in a room of four to six people of the same gender and about the same age. All rooms are ensuite except for a few which each have their own dedicated bathroom.

The staff at Grittleton House are used to dealing with all sorts of dietary requirements. All our staff are DBS checked. They are chosen because they have a passion for interesting topics that aren't normally on the curriculum, and because they have the right approach to work with keen, curious students in a more informal setting. Some are qualified teachers, and others are bringing their expertise from professional or academic settings.



## Schedule

It's a busy week, but there is plenty of time to relax as well. There are half hour breaks morning and afternoon, and an hour and a half for lunch in which you can enjoy the extensive grounds. There's more free time either side of dinner in the evening, and then we have a choice of early evening activities. There's usually a thinky option for people whose brains are still hungry, something relaxing, something fun and creative, and something else. In the late evening (after another break) we all get together – one evening is film night, on another we gather round a camp fire, and there's always something interesting happening.

On four of the days, most of your time is spent on a single project that you choose. On Wednesday, we take a coach offsite for a day trip to a place of interest, and for a bit of relaxation and a reminder of the outside world.



**“GIFT is a hard thing to describe. There isn’t a word good enough to say how friendly, fun and interesting it is, and yet somehow educational at the same”**

**“GIFT is a wonderful experience. You learn so many new talents and abilities and you make so many new and unexpected friends.”**

**All tuition, accommodation, meals, materials and evening activities are included** in the price of £549\*. A deposit of £80 secures your place. This can be paid online, via bank transfer, Paypal or even a cheque – all details are on the website. A sibling discount of £100 for the second child attending the same event from the same family is available.

\*GIFT is very fortunate in having the long-term support of a couple of charities that **can provide bursaries to cover part of the cost of attending** for families who would otherwise be unable to send their child. Please contact us for more information.

One of the findings of a recent OFSTED report about most able pupils was that only 1/3 of schools visited are using pupil premium for enrichment activities. Our courses are a great way to support such pupils and are especially helpful in raising their aspirations and connecting them with an extra peer group of very motivated youngsters.



Gift has been nurturing the brightest, most curious young people for 40 years, including students from overseas with a high level of competence in English.

### **Questions?**

**Ring 01245 830321**

**Email [enquiries@giftcourses.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@giftcourses.co.uk)**

**Or see the FAQs at:**

**[www.giftcourses.co.uk](http://www.giftcourses.co.uk)**



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