

THE VOICE

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Snakes in the Grass of Meaning When Words Subtract from Experience

Homemade is Better Cedar Plank Salmon

The Comanche Rulers of the Plains

Plus:
Worth a Thousand Words
Where to Begin with Classic Lit.
and much more!



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The Voice Magazine
www.voicemagazine.org
301 Energy Square
10109 – 106 ST NW
Edmonton AB
T5J 3L7

Email
voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher
AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief
Jodi Campbell

Managing Editor
Karl Low

Regular Contributors
Barb Godin, Natalia Iwanek,
Barbara Lehtiniemi, Angela
Pappas, Jason Sullivan,
Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu,
and others

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



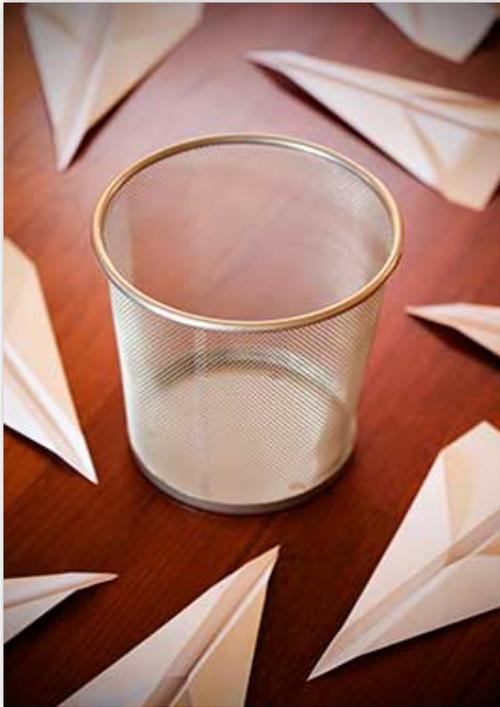
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No kidding! We also do the [twitter](#) thing once in a while if you're into that.

Editorial

Worth a Thousand Words

Karl Low



Last week, one of our featured stories sported the image of a notebook displaying goals for 2020 wiped out by quarantine. The article goes on to look at changes that the pandemic has caused, with special attention being brought to education and social stratification.

A few astute readers noted that the image incorrectly spelled the word “quarantine” as “qurantine,” and questioned whether that was intentional or not. In truth, the image is simply a stock image, as most of the images used in *The Voice Magazine* are, and so whether that was the intent of the photographer, I don’t know.

It wasn’t, however, my intent at the time, though once it was brought to my attention, I realized it could be. After all, the article itself was talking about how education would change in the era of the pandemic, and while I’m sure almost all of us here are proponents of distance education, there remain concerns about organizations and institutions that are just getting started with it under these conditions, and what the results of having to rush into a new system might be.

What this brings to light for me, however, is how re-interpreting mistakes can lead us to further insights. Too often we get caught up in our mistakes, at least, I certainly do. Self-blame and doubt can take up a significant portion of a person’s day, if they’re not careful. To this day, I still inwardly cringe when, at some inopportune moment, I’ll remember something I did long ago that caused me or those around me some significant problems, or was simply being rude to someone who didn’t deserve it because of other things affecting my mood at the time. I don’t think I’m alone in having those moments, at least, I certainly hope not.

But maybe we should not see the point of those moments is as being to make us silently guilty, as to present us an opportunity to compare how we are today with how we were. If nothing else, an old mistake can be a memory of how you’ve grown since. The very fact that those moments can instill discomfort suggests that some growth has occurred at least. So if you take nothing else from this issue, perhaps take from it the knowledge that the parts of your past that cause you pain are the parts you’ve grown from. Growing pains takes on a whole new meaning in that light.

But some other things you can take from this issue include a look at classic foreign books, a consideration of how our communication to each other works, by necessity, as a means of limiting our ability to truly understand each other, a look at what back to school used to bring with it, with a pair of old articles pointed out in the *Vintage Voice*. (Comparing the concerns then to those of today is sort of interesting in itself; how things change.) Also this issue, fellow student Alek Golijanin brings one of his passions to us, looking at the history of indigenous peoples’ here in North America. In this case, specifically the Comanche tribes. Plus, of course, advice, scholarships, events, recipes, and more!

Enjoy the read!

Fly on the Wall Snakes in the Grass of Meaning

Jason Sullivan

When Words Subtract from Experience



Rural AU life affords the opportunity to embark on a nature walk—the better to wake up and get those study juices flowing. So, when I stepped near a rattlesnake this morning and heard its distinct cackling rattle before seeing its coiled body, that really got my brain’s pulse pumping. As the snake scrambled leglessly to flee it turned to look sidelong at me with a cold, sibilant, gaze. She seemed to say ‘I’m ok and you’re ok, but you’re in my bubble of mindful sanctity!’ Words struggle to express the sublime feelings of awe and terror in that moment. Certainly, the statement ‘I saw a rattlesnake’ pales in comparison to the experience itself.

Philosophers from ancient Greece forward have pondered how we can truly mean what we say and how we might, through language, apprehend the essence of a person, place, or thing. Naturally to be focused on the task, expressing our learning through the written word, seems to provide our best chance of success. Unlike when “doomscrolling” through the weeds and chaff of social media, our AU focus can be as sterling and

acute as we want, if only we could find a good study nook where we can sink our mind’s mandibles into our coursework. Yet, even when fully keyed in on our learning, our inspiration can be prompted or stymied, directed or derailed, or appear and disappear in dizzying dialectical fashion. Our interactions uncoil in squiggles and diagonals as we devour raw and seemingly-unadulterated facts while learning about the interpretations they suggest. To expect the unexpected is to be ready to learn.

Yet, even when we think we know our course material backwards and forward and are ready for an exam, there’s still cracks and fissures where ambiguities lurk. What we speak and write about wriggles and squirms and generally resists an easy grip. There’s rarely a simple answer in university studies, and the essence of a topic is not necessarily even reducible to words and descriptions. Socrates noted that “there is no definition of the primary elements—so to speak—out of which we and everything else are composed; for everything that exists in its own right can only be named, no other determination is possible, neither that it is nor that it is not...But what exists in its own right has to be...named without any other determination” (Socrates in Wittgenstein, 21).

The angle of nomenclature provides a meaningful definition of a situation that simultaneously twists and restricts reality according to the limits of language. Within the alphabet there are countless words and each glide into discursive forms like camouflaged snakes. Words are often incommensurate with the objects of their attention, however. “What shape must the sample of a colour green be?” is irrelevant to the colour itself just as saying ‘I saw a rattler’ fails to convey the

actual experience of being startled out of my quiescent—soporific, perhaps—state of mind (Wittgenstein, 35).

Brevity is the Soul of Wittgenstein) But Can We Speak the Truth of a Moment?

Slither forward to the 20th century and we find Ludwig Wittgenstein lurking in hedgerows of language and asking what words can really convey. His famous assertion is “whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must remain silent”. Yet silence is compliance and boredom! He addresses these discursive limitations: “philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language” (Wittgenstein, 47). The rules of logic, when applied to language, suggest a mode of approach to meaning that limits even as it describes. Language, for Wittgenstein, is like a game with too many rules or too much anal-neurosis on the part of its participants: “in philosophy we often compare the use of words with game and calculi which have fixed rules, but cannot say that someone who is using language must be playing such a game” (Wittgenstein, 38).

Poetry in motion is the stuff of life, just as are the certainties of routines and study schedules. Balance allows us to avoid becoming either too regimented or too flighty. Wittgenstein illustrates how we can decide how to see each moment of our existence as either a game with rules or a game refereed by whimsy: “we can easily imagine people amusing themselves in a field by playing with a ball so as to start various existing games, but playing many without finishing them and in between throwing the ball aimlessly into the air, chasing one another with the ball and bombarding one another for a joke and so on. And now someone says ‘The whole time they are playing a ball-game and following definite rules at every throw’” (Wittgenstein, 39). Language suggests the import of rigid meanings to the ambiguities of lived experience.

My rattler encounter could merely demonstrate the rules of engagement with a mortal danger, but it can also be a reminder to enjoy the sheer thrill of being shocked out of the complacency of consciousness as I took my morning constitutional. Language fails to apprehend the moment when I literally jumped. And yet, a series of instructions shortly rushed into my mind as I, remembering my forestry training of ‘stop, drop eyes, and roll them around to sight the exact location of the rattler’, surveyed the scene and backed away. Rules and words apply to some, though not all, of a given situation. Likewise, disciplinary assumptions capture some, if not all, of a given social reality.

What About Reality: Words as Objective Reframers

A strange and almost magical thing happens when we speak or write about an experience: the more we say about our feelings the more the original moment is erased and replaced with mere words. Wittgenstein illustrates: “It is precisely characteristic of a name that it is defined by means of the demonstrative expression ‘That is N’ (or ‘That is Called ‘N’)...This is connected with the conception of naming as, so to speak, an occult process. Naming appears as a queer connexion (sic) of a word with an object. And you really get such a queer connexion when the philosopher tries to bring out the relation between name and thing by staring at an object in front of him and repeating a name or even the word ‘this’ innumerable times. For philosophical problems arise when language goes on holiday. And here we may indeed fancy naming to be some remarkable act of mind, as it were a baptism of an object” (Wittgenstein, 19). We name a thing or an event to domesticate it for digestion by our self and others; yet, crucially, to own and name something with words is not the same as to own and name something as experience. Language limits the feeling of the moment not unlike a boa constrictor that squeezes life’s air, life’s inspiration, out of its victim.

We’re all trapped by words unless we remember their limits. “The most we can say” says Wittgenstein, “is that we construct ideal languages. But here the word ‘ideal’ is liable to mislead,

for it sounds as if these languages were better, more perfect, than our everyday language; and as if it took the logician to shew (sic) people at last what a proper sentence looked like” (Wittgenstein, 38). Sometimes there really are ‘no words’ for a unique experience and other times words fail us in expressing the feelings and meanings imparted by life.

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Jason Hazel-rah Sullivan is a Masters of Integrated Studies student who loves engaging in discourse while working in the sunny orchards and forests of the Okanagan.

Where to Begin with Classic Literature In Translation

Faye Lilley

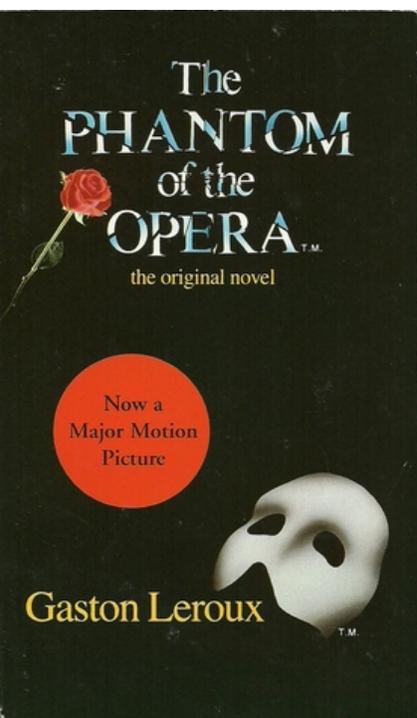
Last month, I wrote [an article](#) recommending seven classics by British authors as good places to start reading classic literature. Don’t worry; there won’t be an exam! I do hope you felt inspired to pick up one or two of those wonderful novels and enjoy them.

Now here are seven classics not originally written in English. I am a firm believer in reading classic literature from every part of the world and getting to know other cultures through what they read, but it can be difficult to know where to start. Everyone knows that Russian classics such as *War and Peace* and French classics such as *Les Miserables* are long and dense, and you are not alone if they have intimidated you into avoiding Russian and French literature altogether. (They are utterly amazing, though, and I promise that reading them isn’t as unattainable as you may think!) However, the books I have chosen for this list are shorter, relatively easy to read, and downright fun.

The Phantom of the Opera, by Gaston Leroux

I know what you’re thinking. “Isn’t that a musical?” Yes, it’s a fantastic musical. But the book the musical is based on is just as fantastic and has the added bonuses of extra characters (The Persian being cut out of the story in the musical is a travesty), higher stakes (Raoul isn’t told to “hold up your hand to the level of your eyes” for nothing), and the conviction that the entire thing actually happened (Leroux swears in the Prologue that he did his research and it’s a true story, and he makes you believe it). I’m a huge fan of French literature, so huge that it’s my minor here at Athabasca, and I always recommend *The Phantom of the Opera* to anyone who wants to read French literature but doesn’t know where to start.

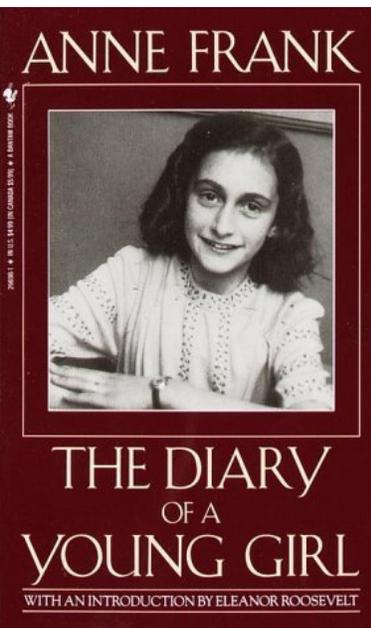
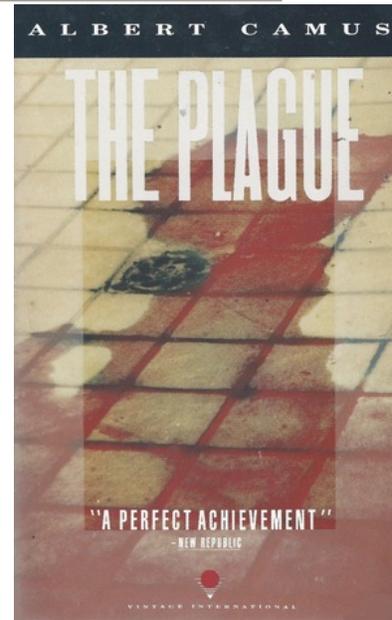
Synopsis: Christine Daae is just a background dancer at a French opera house, until a mysterious voice begins giving her singing lessons and arranging events at the opera house, often quite violently, to raise her status to diva. Is this disembodied voice really the Angel of Music that her late father promised to send her from Heaven when he died? Or is it a Phantom that haunts the opera house? Originally published in French in 1909; translated by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos.



***The Plague*, by Albert Camus**

It may seem a little bit on-the-nose to recommend a book about a plague during a pandemic, but I would have recommended this book whether we could all relate to it on that level or not. It is one of the most gripping and beautifully written books I have ever read; in a review I wrote for this book shortly after reading it, I described it as “agonizingly beautiful.” I read it quite a few years ago, but those who have read it in the time of COVID-19 have marvelled at Camus’ insight into the way human beings behave during a lengthy quarantine. However, it is chiefly a story about the resilience of the human spirit.

Synopsis: An outbreak of the bubonic plague in a North African town brings out the best and the worst in the town’s inhabitants. Originally published in French in 1949; translated by Stuart Gilbert.



***The Diary of a Young Girl*, by Anne Frank**

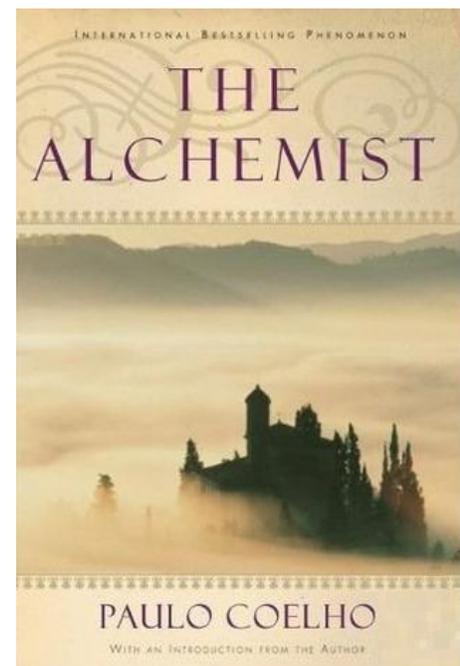
It may seem strange to include a nonfiction title in this list, and one written by a child at that, but this is a life-changing, must-read book. I’m sure you know the story of Anne Frank, but have you read it in her own words? She was an eloquent young lady who deserved to have a voice in this world and to be remembered for generations. With all the current political unrest and most of us having experienced lockdown (to a less drastic degree), this book may move you now in ways it couldn’t have done just months ago.

Synopsis: While hidden away with her family in a secret annex during the Nazi occupation of Holland, a young Jewish girl with big dreams of being a writer keeps a diary of her hopes and fears, her experiences and perceptions, her joys and sorrows. Originally published in German in 1947; translated by B.M. Mooyart-Doubleday.

***The Alchemist*, by Paulo Coelho**

I don’t usually consider books less than fifty years old to be classics, but for *The Alchemist* I will make an exception. This book was destined to be a classic from the moment it was published. It is disappointingly short, but packed full of philosophical and spiritual insights and wisdom that will blow your mind with their effortless simplicity. However, if you read it as a novel, you will probably wonder what all the fuss is about. The story is an allegory, almost a fairy tale, and should be read with that in mind.

Synopsis: Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy, sets off on a quest for treasure and meets many interesting characters along the way who guide him on his path to his true destiny and the fulfillment of his dream. Originally published in Portuguese in 1988; translated by Alan R. Clarke.





One Hundred Years of Solitude, by Gabriel García Márquez

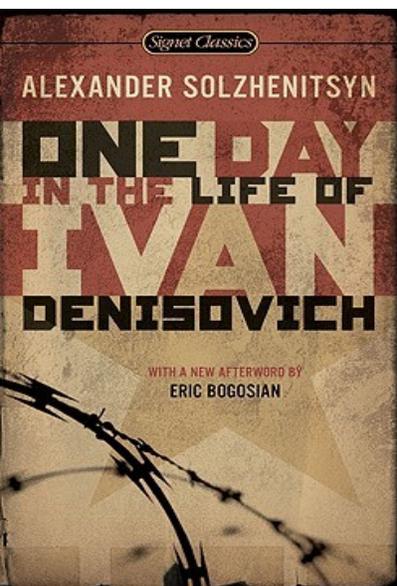
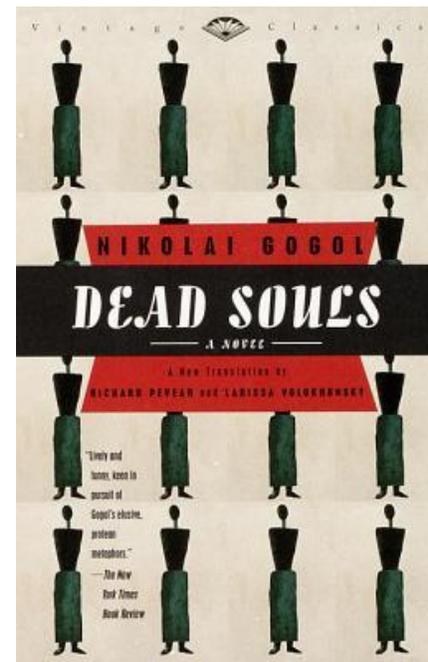
This book was my introduction to magical realism (a fiction genre in which strange, supernatural elements are added to otherwise realistic settings), and I'm here to say that it should be yours, too. Don't be fooled by the title; the "solitude" here is mostly geographical (a town cut off from the cultural progress of the rest of the world) and perhaps metaphorical. This novel is full of colourful characters and entertaining storylines, and, while at times the similar names of some of the characters can be a bit confusing, it is well worth the effort. This book is considered one of the greatest literary masterpieces of the world for a reason.

Synopsis: Macondo is a utopian city almost frozen in time by its isolation from the rest of the world, until the day that the railroad arrives. The story follows one family through multiple cyclical generations as the world begins to intrude on Macondo. Originally published in Spanish in 1967; translated by Gregory Rabassa.

Dead Souls, by Nikolai Gogol

This is another book in the category of "don't judge a book by its title." Believe it or not, *Dead Souls* is a comedy! It comments on and satirizes the Russian practice of landowners buying and selling the "souls" of serfs who farmed their land, and it does so with more wit and humour than one typically expects from a Russian classic. Unfortunately, the second part of this novel was never completed, but that shouldn't deter you from reading and enjoying the first part. This book is a perfect introduction to the wonderful world of Russian literature.

Synopsis: A mysterious man named Chichikov arrives in a small town and attempts to buy the names of dead serfs, "dead souls," from landowners who are tired of paying taxes on serfs who have not yet officially been declared dead by the census takers. But what use could they possibly be to him? Originally published in Russian in 1842; translated by Robert A. Maguire.



One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

If you feel you're ready to dip your toes into the deeper, darker side of Russian literature, this would be a good place to start. It's short, which is rare for Russian classics, but packs a powerful punch. Solzhenitsyn wrote this book shortly after being released from a Russian gulag, or forced-labour prison camp, and his vivid and engaging writing brought awareness, criticism, and ultimately the end of the gulag system.

Synopsis: An in-depth account of 24 hours in the life of an inmate of one of Stalin's forced-labour camps. Originally published in Russian in 1962; translated by H.T. Willetts.

Faye is a writer, literature nerd, and TV addict who rarely sets foot in the real world. Thanks to AU, she is overcoming health-related obstacles and pursuing her lifelong dream of an English degree.

Homemade is Better Cedar Plank Salmon

Chef Corey



I have wanted to do a cedar plank recipe for a while, and, recently, I finally got to make it. I enjoy writing recipes because I feel pressure to make them before I write and make sure I get some pictures, it gives us at least a couple suppers for the week.

For this recipe I used thawed, pre-packed fillets—fresh is always going to be superior to previously frozen—but sometimes we need to use what we have around. If you are feeling chef-like, buy a side of salmon from your local grocer or seafood supplier. There is a particular member's only grocery store that tends to have high-quality products, sometimes a life-time supply of it, and you go in trying to buy one thing and spend \$500 and forget the stuff you went in for, but its high quality. If, however, you know someone who operates a seafood store, go there.

Support your local businesses, and these entrepreneurs are the backbone of our communities, and more likely to support community events. While the large retailers will make money no matter what, the community business is engrained in your area and wants to support your hockey, soccer, tennis, running,

ringette, Pickleball, badminton, or tennis team. It gets them more exposure, and they often employ people from your community. The big stores do too, and many of them give millions of dollars to charities or unique organizations, so I'm not knocking them, but they'll survive without your \$50 a week.

So, what makes salmon particularly complementary to cedar? Honestly, nothing. You can put any fish on a cedar plank, and it'll taste good. The cedar adds a very slight smoke flavour; as you grill it, the wood smoke adds a little flavour. If you have a smoker, cedar with some mesquite mixed with cherry, alder, or apple is a great flavour. The mesquite is a strong flavour, and the cherry, alder, or apple are milder; combining them with the cedar will be a great smoke taste. I'd go heavier on the mild woods, and lighter on the mesquite, a 3:1 or 4:1 mild to mesquite would be nice. You won't need much either fish cooks quickly and overcooks even faster!

You'll know its ready for your plate when the salmon starts to flake easily; salmon is a heartier species, you can get away with cooking it to medium doneness. It certainly should not be cooked until its hard as a rock. It is medium when it starts to turn white at the top of the meat and separates quite easily, if it's still





½ cup fresh dill (optional)

very bright pink in the middle, it's raw, give it another 5 minutes if the rest looks right. On my grill, the total cook time was 25 – 30 minutes; cooking times in your oven, grill, or heat box for food might be different, so make sure you pay attention to the signs of being done. Once you've hit that point, cover it with foil, give it at least 5 minutes to rest, this gives you time to open that 2017 Bordeaux you bought that you were excited to try!

Next week, I'll give you a garden special with our huge zucchini's.

Cedar Plank Salmon

Ingredients

4 – 6 salmon fillets approx. 5oz
 1 – 2 Cedar planks
 1 TBSP – Kosher Salt
 2 Tsp - Pepper ground or Lemon pepper (optional)

Directions

1. Soak your cedar planks in cold water, make sure they are submerged as best as you can get. The bottoms need to soak for sure.
2. Turn on your grill and set it to medium heat, and let it warm up.
3. If your salmon is a full side, cut it into as many equal portions as you can about 3 – 4" each. It's okay if some are slightly longer than others.
4. If its skin-on, then place the skin-side down.
5. Salt and pepper each piece; both sides if skinless. For an added flavour punch, get some lemon pepper and use it instead of regular pepper.
6. If you also happen to be growing dill, grab a bunch and place it on top.
7. Cook for about 15 minutes, then check on the fish. If its starting turn slightly white that's good, you might see some white on the sides, that's okay. Its protein coagulating on the side.
8. Check it every 5 minutes from here. Once it starts to separate easily and it looks almost dull pink in the middle, remove it from the grill and tin foil it for 5 – 10 minutes.
9. Throw away the dill, and enjoy!



Chef Corey is a student in business management who first graduated from NAIT's Culinary Arts Program in 2007



The Comanches Rulers of the Plains

Alek Golijanin



There are around 50 tribes of indigenous peoples across Canada and over 500 federally recognized tribes across The United States of America. While I find all indigenous peoples' history fascinating, the tribe that sticks out the most to me are the Comanches. The Comanches are a lesser known tribe, known for their ferocity, and during the early settler days it was the Comanches who were recognized as the rulers of the Plains.

What Made the Historical Comanches Unique

It was the discovery of horses, which Spanish settlers had left behind, that changed the Comanches trajectory and propelled them to apex status. Prior to the introduction of horses, the Comanche were a tribe of hunter-gatherer people, having little military power and in a constant migration. They would go on to dominate horsemanship by becoming expert breeders and trainers, capturing horses from the wild and from people they conquered. Horses allowed the Comanche to hunt larger animals like the buffalo, which eventually became their main source of materials.

The historical Comanche men were arguably the most formidable warriors the Americas have ever known, and their archery skills are a thing of legend. While their empire was without a single ruler or central location, they managed to keep American, Spanish, and French colonizers from making territorial advances. The term "Comanche Moon" was another name given for a full moon because that was when Comanches would carry out their raids since it allowed them to see better at night. The warrior philosophy was instilled in boys at an early age. It was common for them to be trained by their fathers and grandfathers on how to ride a horse and use a bow and arrows. While their fathers were out hunting or raiding, their grandfathers would share their own stories and Comanche beliefs. Only after a youth had successfully hunted a buffalo would he be allowed to go and wage war.

The Comanche women were responsible for everyday life such as foraging and camp sites. They were also just as tough as the men. It was common for Comanche women to give birth during travels, resting minimally before catching up with their group and continuing their travels. It was also the women who supervised prisoners that the Comanche would take during raids, and they could be just as vicious as the male warriors.

How Comanches Helped Win WW2

The Comanches played a significant role in WW2 and helped win battles for the Allies. During WW2 the Germans were constantly deciphering sensitive information until the introduction of Comanche "Code Talkers." This group comprised of 17 Comanches that were members of the US Army and who spoke a language nobody in the western world was familiar with. This allowed the Allies to get the upper hand in key battles including D-Day.

Key Takeaways

I recall reading a passage where one person tells a Texas ranger how he had come across a tribe of 1,000 Comanche and how the ranger responded to him by saying that if a 1,000 Comanche tribe had existed, they would have taken Washington, DC.

In the end, the downfall of the Comanches was the invention of the Colt revolver. Up until that point, Texas rangers had struggled to win during their battles against Comanche warriors who could fire more arrows in the amount of time it took the Ranger to fire multiple shots, and the Comanche warriors would also use their horses as shield, tilting sideways as the horse galloped full speed.

I remember seeing an episode of *Deadliest Warrior: Comanches vs Mongols*, where a group of experts determined that the Comanches would have been victorious over Mongols, and the Mongols are recognized as having one of the largest empires in history.

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Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

Following What's Hot around AU's Social Media Sites.



AthaU Facebook Group

Katherine wonders if there is an RN to BN group and, finding none (but loads of interest,) creates a group herself: www.facebook.com/groups/338660473937374. Cheryl is struggling to find motivation to complete her final three courses; dozens of encouraging responses flood in.

Other posts include exam failure, history course suggestions, the graduation process, and the infamous love-it-or-hate-it course PHIL 252.

reddit

One student seeks a more active forum for course chats; suggestions include the AU student app or the Facebook group. Another student expresses frustration at the delayed responses from AU during the pandemic; much head-nodding on this one.

Twitter

[@AthabascaU](https://twitter.com/AthabascaU) tweets: "Navigate your educational journey from start to finish, while maintaining your mental health along the way. Bookmark this page: t.co/iWbCC44Snp."

[@austudentsunion](https://twitter.com/austudentsunion) tweets: "Your AUSU VPEX Stacey Hutchings has an impassioned plea for [#AthabascaU](https://twitter.com/AthabascaU) students. She is training to be a champion, and needs your help!! Find out why (and learn more about our Virtual Student Socials) in our August Executive Vlog! [#trivianight](https://twitter.com/trivianight) t.co/MsKd5iwDpR."

The Creative Spark

Four Questions to Ask When Revising Your Story

Marie Well



The pot bubbles over when mixed with ways to improve your story. You can take your story from bland to boss with just a few strokes. Need a story makeover? Answer a handful of tough questions, and you've got a story worthy of the silver screen. Here are four questions you could ask yourself when revising your story.

Question #1: How do you write a good theme?

“What's your book's theme? You may have written the novel without a theme in mind, but now that the draft is complete, you can identify it The theme may be a moral – a message your reader walks away with, the lesson absorbed. Keep it to a simple statement, such as: Love conquers all. Good triumphs over evil. Who dares, wins” (Hall, 2016, 15%).

Many themes exist: habits trump intelligence; success begins with showing up; thinking big means starting small; boredom comes with academic success; process, not outcome, matters most.

But theme “could also be two virtuous values warring in the [main character's] mind. She holds both dear and tries to pursue them at the same time, but has to make tough decisions and sacrifice one for the other. This type of theme is based on the [main character's] inner conflict and works especially well in heart-wrenching novels and works with emotional depth. Here are examples: Honour versus loyalty” (Hall, 2016, 17%).

Another warring value could be unconditional love versus responsibility. Or it could be humour versus couth. Or it could be innocence versus perceptiveness. There are many warring strengths, each battle a potential theme for your story or life.

Rayne Hall (2016) says, “Ideally, every scene should contribute to the theme, even if it's only in a small way. For example, if your theme is ‘honour versus loyalty’, you could tweak every scene so someone behaves either honourably or honestly in some way” (15%).

Don't we view the world like that? When we focus on something, we see it everywhere. The person who buys a Mercedes zeroes in on all Mercedes. The person who buys a Gucci handbag notices other Gucci handbags. The same happens to our main character. When honour and loyalty are key values, our main character hyper focuses on them. So, give every scene a taste of either of those values.

Question #2: What does it mean to go to the dark side?

“Consider your [main character's] deeply held values, beliefs and principles. What would she never do?” (Hall, 2016, 17%).

Maybe your main character would never steal. Or she would never swear, or never kill, or never beat her child. Whatever you choose, make your main character firm in her values.

But, Rayne Hall (2016) asks, “What would have to happen to make her do the one thing she thinks she would never do? Obviously, these have to be unforeseen, drastic circumstances. Make them happen in your novel. If your moral main character would never prostitute herself, put her in a situation where her children are starving, and the only way to put food on the table is to accept a wealthy man’s offer for a night” (18%).

I just read a story about a guy who planned to make his last robbery to feed his child. The guy thought the house was empty, but it wasn't. During the robbery, he wound up stabbing two innocent women. But this guy never before would've committed murder. So, take heed: never step into the dark side. One step could become a sprint into immoral territory, and sooner than a flash, a nightmare of vices could swallow you.

And as soon as the [main character] (mentioned earlier) prostitutes herself, trauma erupts. Breaching values leads to escalating heartache—great for fiction; heart wrenching in real life.

“The [main character] forced to act against her deeply held values gives the readers a compelling story they cannot forget” (18%), says Rayne Hall (2016).

Question #3: How does literature represent disability?

“Readers root for characters with disability. Could your [main character] be physically disabled? If this doesn't work for the plot, perhaps one of the [main character's] allies could have a handicap. If possible, write about what you know. Choose a disability you're familiar with, either because you live it or because someone you know well does” (Hall, 2016, 20%).

What if your hero gets stricken with severe anxiety, but needs to earn a degree to win the conditional love of her folks? Or what if your hero has a chronic condition, unable to get out of bed, but also unable to earn enough to eat? Or what if your hero has a leg amputated, but weighs 500 pounds, with no family willing to care for him?

Rayne Hall (2016) advises, “Make the disability part of the plot. How does it hamper the character's pursuits? What if she needs to make a quick getaway – but can't in her wheelchair?” (20%).

On the flipside, “readers cheer when a character uses a disability to advantage. Think of situations where you could make this happen as part of the plot” (Hall, 2016, 20%).

As an example, Lisa tends to get super friendly during her spells of anxiety. As she runs from her tormentor into a grocery store, her anxiety-riddled big smile convinces the store owner to let her into a private washroom, where she hides.

As another example, Rick is bedridden with chronic disease, barely able to afford food. He makes videos of his story and launches them on YouTube. As a result, he gets approached by a film producer to capture his story on the silver screen. And that's when his life takes a sharp turn for the better.

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

2020 AUSU By-election Voting Period

Aug 25 to 31

www.ausu.org/governance/elections/
Visit above link for more information

2020 AUSU By-election Election Results Announcement

Thurs, Sept 3

www.ausu.org/governance/elections/
Visit above link for more information

All events are free unless otherwise noted

Question #4: Why do authors use animals as characters?

According to Rayne Hall (2016), “Readers like animal characters. Could your main character have an animal sidekick? What kind of animal is it? This could be a ‘normal’ pet like a dog, cat or horse, or something unusual, such as a goat, ferret or camel Develop the animal as a real character, with likes, dislikes, interests and habits” (12%).

Rayne Hall (2016) claims, “The animal needs to play an active role in the plot. What if the villain kidnaps or threatens the animal to blackmail the [main character]? What if something unusual about the animal’s behaviour alerts the [main character] to an unseen danger? What if the villain attacks the [main character], and the animal leaps into the fight?” (12%).

Or what if the race horse gives you an escape from an oncoming assailant? And what if the horse is faster and more durable than the assailant's getaway car? And what if the horse kicks the assailant in the side of the head? You see, animals can contribute much to the welfare of a hero.

So, now you've asked four tough questions. You might discover that crutches come in handy when someone buds in line. Or a poodle works wonders when facing a robber. Or you'd never eat an alive animal unless you were forced into the military. Whatever touch-ups you make, your stories will shock and shine like a million-dollar makeover.

Reference

Hall, Raynee. (2016). *Novel Revision Prompts*. [Kindle Unlimited]. Retrieved from amazon.ca.



Scholars, Start Your Business

The Secret to Becoming a High-Roller Sales Star

Marie Well



So, you're a student curious about starting a business? Well, to succeed in business, you need to learn how to sell. And you've got a great salesperson within you. How do I know? Because we've all got selling potential.

Author Steve Mariotti has a four-step strategy for gaining rabid fans, and I'm going to break it down further for how it applies directly to you as a student, starting your business.

Finding a Sales Lead

Three ways exist for collecting your leads: (1) promotional responses, (2) referrals, and (3) cold calls. Let's examine these three in more depth:

First, “promotional responses: You get sales leads when potential customers fill out surveys or website forms” (Mariotti, 2014, 30%).

Use freebies to lure people into filling out your website or email subscriber form. These freebies can come in the shape of white papers, pdfs, videos, free trials, or even coupons. But everybody's giving away freebies, right? So, how can you stand out?

Well, you can opt to make a free email course over one week, loaded with insights. As an AU student you already have some ideas of what works to help people learn on their own. Or you could give a sneak preview of your white paper, also loaded with insights. But where do you get these insights? To get deep insights, you need to access as much diverse materials on the topic as possible. In other words, find as many different sources on the topic. Invest in your knowledge to discover top-notch insights. And as an AU student, you've got access to a whole library of journals and other top-notch information. Use it!

The second way is referrals. "When a person provides contact information for someone else who may be interested in your product or service, this is called a referral" (Mariotti, 2014, 30%).

You could offer your clients incentives for bringing you referrals. These incentives could include a one-time discount for both the referrer and the referred. Or you could offer a cash reward for each referral, or a one-month free membership. But cash is tight when starting out, isn't it? If so, politely ask your clients for referrals without any promise of incentives. You might be surprised at what simply asking can bring.

Third are cold calls. "When a salesperson contacts someone he or she does not know, and without prior notice, it is called a cold call" (Mariotti, 2014, 30%).

Cold calls work best when you've got a list. But how do you get a list? This is where those referrals come in to play. Or you could buy a list online or use a list gathered from one of your local library databases. Or you could use a business directory if you plan to sell to businesses. You could also align with a charity, giving it a percentage of sales in exchange for access to their phone list.

Qualifying the Sales Lead

Steve Mariotti (2014) says, "Keep in mind that not every sales lead turns into a prospect. To avoid wasting time pursuing leads that have little chance of becoming prospects, you need to evaluate each lead and decide whether you should pursue it. This process is called 'qualifying the lead.'" (30%).

To qualify your leads, "before making an appointment for a sales call, find out the answer to these questions first:

- Is this person in my market?
- Does this person need my product?
- Can this person afford it? If the answer to any of these questions is no, it may be a waste of time to make a sales call" (Mariotti, 2014, 30%).

But don't ditch a lead the minute they don't buy your service. I know a site on how to control social anxiety that sent out angry emails to prospects who didn't buy within a few weeks. Had the emails maintained a positive tone, they might've converted more prospects into customers. Sometimes the time window is longer for certain prospects to convert.

Making the Sales Call

"Once you have determined which sales leads make good prospects, it's time to go on some sales calls. Before going to a sales call:" (Mariotti, 2014, 30%).

First, "set up an appointment" (Mariotti, 2014, 30%). Aim to make 80 sales calls (or more) in one day with the intention of setting up appointments. Make your calls preferably in the morning. Make your pitch one minute or less in length, as attention spans tend to wane after a minute.

Second, “learn about the prospect. If you are visiting a company, go through its website and read everything from the ‘about’ section” (Mariotti, 2014, 30%). Also, read something new and exciting about the company in the media releases or blog on the site. The more you have to discuss, especially in the beginning chitchat, the better.

Third, “know your product or service. The more knowledgeable you are about what you are selling, the more confident and relaxed you will likely be during sales calls” (Mariotti, 2014, 30%). Try to emphasize the benefits of your products. Figure out the answers to your customer's question, “What's in it for me?” For instance, you might sell flashlights that run on both solar power and regular batteries. Your benefit might be, “Never find yourself stuck in the dark.”

Fourth, “develop an overall selling strategy. Consider the aspects of your product or service that will appeal most to the prospect. Try to anticipate what questions or objections the prospect may have, and come up with answers” (Mariotti, 2014, 30%).

If your customers on Facebook or Google reviews rate you low on some aspect, address that issue. Chances are, prospects may have the same gripes. But never let complaints accumulate. Adjust your operations to fix that error. Your solution may end up as part of your winning sales strategy.

Fifth, “practice your presentation” (Mariotti, 2014, 30%). When selling, use a loud, not soft voice. Louder voices get more sales.

Closing the Sale and Following Up

“The sale is considered “closed” once payment is received. But your interaction with the customer should not end there. This is the beginning of your long-term relationship!” (Mariotti, 2014, 31%).

Send out birthday cards. Or follow-up with a thank you card. A friend of mine got a mailed invitation from a car dealership for a phone call after she bought one of their cars. My friend ended up talking to a dealer for an hour. She was so excited, she debated calling again soon. That's the kind of loyalty you want from your customers. Sadly, my friend got the brush off from the dealer after the second call. Perhaps if the dealer had brushed off my friend with a promise of a gift, perhaps a discounted upsell, my friend would've wound up a raving fan—and the company would've made another sale. There is so much you can do to turn your customers into best friends.

“Follow up to make sure that the entire selling process met his or her expectations. A happy customer will lead to additional sales and plenty of referrals. Make sure your new customer is inspired to talk up your business” (Mariotti, 2014, 31%).

So, now you know the secret to becoming a high-roller sales star: You've got prospects turned rabid fans. And these fans will continue to buy from you, their new best friend.

References

Mariotti, Steve. (1996, 2000, 2014). *The Young Entrepreneur's Guide to Starting and Running a Business*. New York, NY: Currency. [Kindle Unlimited]. Retrieved from amazon.ca.



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of The Voice Magazine.

As parents ramp up to Back-to-School season—2020 style—we glance back at what our writers looked forward to, way back when.

Remember when we only worried about the common cold? Writer Katie D'Souza presents some ideas of how to keep kids in optimal health as they go back to school. "Did you know that one teaspoon of sugar (the amount that's in an oatmeal cookie or a single chocolate mint) can lower immunity for up to five hours?" Health Matters—Back-to-School Illness, September 21, 2012.

Back to Nature schoolyards. Zoe Dalton presents the case for student-focused schoolground naturalization projects. "What better way to tighten a community's ties than to bring to fruition a child's description of paradise – plants, sand and flowers, a pond and a river by the school?" Nature Notes—From the Backyard to the Biosphere; Schoolgrounds for the Future, September 4, 2002.

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: AES Scholarship

Sponsored by: AES Engineering

Deadline: October 5, 2020

Potential payout: \$500

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be high school seniors or students attending a post-secondary educational facility, in any area of study.

What's required: An email with contact and school information, along with a 500-1000 word essay describing your life as you look back on it 30 years from now.

Tips: Read the scholarship criteria carefully for information on elements your essay should contain.

Where to get info: aesengineers.com/scholarships.php





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Secret Wedding

Dear Barb:

My parents divorced many years ago. I lived with my mom while growing up, but I am now married with kids of my own. My mom has dated throughout my life but never lived with anyone or remarried until recently.

She met George a few years ago and has kept their relationship fairly private. The few times I have seen George I found him to be pleasant. He has a son and daughter who I have never met. I don't think he is very close to his children.

My mom and I are close, and my kids love their grandma, which would explain why I was shocked when I found out my mom and George got married.

They did not tell anyone they were getting married except for my aunt and uncle who were their witnesses. George's kids were not invited either. When my mom told me they got married, I freaked. When she saw my reaction, she seemed confused. She said they just wanted a small ceremony and didn't want to make a big fuss about it. I haven't spoken to my mom since the wedding. I am so hurt, I can't get over it. I cannot understand why my mom would do something like that. Do you think I'm overreacting?

Looking forward to your response, Kristen.

Hi Kristen:

Thanks for sharing. There are many reasons why people choose to elope rather than have a traditional wedding. One reason is finances, another may be the details involved in planning a wedding and deciding

who to invite and who not to invite, especially when divorce is involved. Perhaps, since George is not close to his children, he felt they wouldn't want to come to the wedding, and so him and your mother felt it would be easier not to invite any children or family members.

Whether this is right or wrong, doesn't really matter, it was their choice. It doesn't appear to be done out of spite or anger, but possibly they wanted to keep the celebration low key. I don't think you should hold this against your mom. On the other hand, if they had invited George's children or other family members and excluded you, that would pose a problem and would be difficult for you to get over. My advice would be to accept the situation and move forward with your relationship with your mother and your new stepdad. Don't let this become a wedge in your relationship with your mom. Best of luck in the future.

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.



Poet Maeve
Friends who Understand

Wanda Waterman



The information on this page is provided by the AU Students' Union. The Voice does not create this content. Contact AUSU at services@ausu.org with any questions about this article.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Aug 12-31:** [AUSU By-election Campaign Period](#)
- **Aug 25-31:** [AUSU By-election](#)
- **Aug 31:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Sep](#)
- **Sept 3:** [AUSU By-Election Results Announced](#)
- **Sept 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Oct 1](#)
- **Sept 15:** [Sept degree requirements deadline](#)

Time to VOTE in the AUSU By-Election

Ballots for the AUSU by-election have been emailed to all AU undergraduate students! Check your inbox, open your ballot, and choose the students that will represent YOU on student council. There are 8 candidates for 4 open council seats.

The voting period runs from August 25th to 31st, 2020.

Why Should You Vote?

Your vote matters, no matter where you live or how involved you are with your Students' Union. AUSU council guides and directs your students' union in its mandate to provide services, support, and advocacy for AU students and is part of creating an online AU student community. The students YOU elect to council represent AU students at the institutional, provincial, and federal levels, and provide a voice to students when important decisions regarding your education are being made.

Find out more about the candidates:

- Check out candidate biographies [HERE](#).
- Ask candidates questions in the [FORUMS](#).
- Check out the interviews in The Voice [HERE](#).

Be the first to find out the results – come to our [Election Results Meeting](#) on September 3!

Make sure to VOTE by AUG 31!



Vote Now!
Student Council
By-Election

AUSU Executive Vlog

Your AUSU VP External and Student Affairs, Stacey Hutchings, has an impassioned plea for Athabasca University students. She needs your help to beat a reigning champion!

Find out why and learn more about our NEW monthly AUSU Virtual Student Socials in the latest Executive Vlog!

Watch the Vlog online [here](#).



Enter to Win \$100!

Have you filled out any AUSU [Peer Course Reviews](#) yet? Complete a review by August 31, 2020 to enter our first prize draw for a \$100 Amazon Gift Card (3 available).

AUSU's new Peer Course Reviews were developed to provide students with a confidential way to rate their course experience at AU, and to provide feedback for fellow students!

Prize recipients will be chosen randomly from all peer course reviews filled out by August 31, 2020.

Fill out a course review [here](#).



CLASSIFIEDS

Classifieds are free for AU students!
Contact voice@voicemagazine.org for more information.

THE VOICE

301 Energy Square - 10109 – 106 St NW - Edmonton AB - T5J 3L7
Ph: 855.497.7003

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Editor-In-Chief Jodi Campbell
Managing Editor Karl Low

Regular Columnists Barb Godin, Natalia Iwanek, Barbara Lehtiniemi,
Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu and others!

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