

[Eric Miller](#)'s 8-session **Story Composition Workshop** in Chennai Storytelling Festival 2024.

Via Zoom. Free. People are welcome to join any or all of the 8 sessions.

To register for CSF 2024, please see www.storytellinginstitute.org/CSF2024.html

This Story Composition Workshop is being held in honor of Professor George Pierce Baker's "Workshop 47" (Playwrighting) Course, Harvard University, 1905-1924; and "Playwrighting" Course, Yale University, 1925-1933, On the 100th year anniversary of Professor Baker's shift from Harvard to Yale.

George Pierce Baker played a leading role in the development of USA theatre. Through his courses at Harvard and Yale, he gave encouragement, intellectual and creative stimulation, and technical assistance to many who would go on to be the greatest figures in 20th century USA theatre" (paraphrased from this [source](#)).

Story Composition Workshop timings

9pm-10pm, India time.

10:30am-11:30am, Canada-USA Eastern time

7:30am-8:30am, Canada-USA West Coast time

Program:

- 1 **Friday 2nd Feb. Introduction to Story Composition (Making-up Stories).**
Participants' Life Stories.
Themes in Participants' Life Stories.

- 2 **Saturday 3rd Feb. Where do Stories Come From?**
Dreams (during sleep), Dreams (hopes), Current events, ideas, etc. Relevance (the relation of a story to conditions of the current time and place). From idea to story. Personification (for example, having a character represent an idea). Metaphors. What is the central interest of the story? What do you want audience members to think about? Is there a point to the story that you, the story creator, want to get across? Story-making activities: [Active Imagination](#). [Question-based Story-making](#). [Additional creativity activities](#).

- 3 **Friday 9th Feb. Dramatic Structure.**
Dramatic tension, suspense, foreshadowing. An inciting incident. Theories of story: Problem and solution. "What does a character want?" "[The Well-made Play](#)" (conflict, climax, and result). [Three-act structure](#). Joseph Campbell's "[The Hero's Journey](#)". Theodora Goss' "[The Fairytale Heroine's Journey](#)". Vladimir Propp's "[Loss and Reformulation of Togetherness](#)". Aristotle's "[Catharsis](#)". Action (actions speak more loudly than words. However, speaking words can also be an action). Emotion. Is a narrator needed? Time lapse – continuous vs different times. Flashbacks. Exposition (background.) Playing with stories (adding and subtracting characters and events). Changing ways a scene ends).

- 4 **Saturday 10th Feb. Characters and Characterisation.**
Purpose, motivation. Characters manifesting themselves gradually, vs characters developing, growing, and transforming. Characters' *wants* (external, driving the plot) vs. *needs* (internal, finding and fulfilling oneself). Carl Jung: Individuation (self-knowledge and integration of the various aspects of oneself; and achieving clarity regarding one's relationship with ideologies, social movements, and the cosmos.) Dialogue. Hero and heroine. Anti-hero. Uses of a chorus. It is not Ideas, but rather characters (in situations and) feeling emotions that drive a story and hold the attention of observers. Where the emotions go, the thinking mind follows. Role-playing with story characters: having imaginary conversations with characters in one's memory or imagination.

- 5 **Friday 16th Feb.**
Looking at Participants' favorite stories, and stories created by Participants.

- 6 **Saturday 17th Feb.**
Looking at "[The Tempest](#)", by William Shakespeare.

- 7 **Friday 23rd Feb.**
Looking at "[The Epic of the Anklet](#)" ("Silappathikaram"), by Prince Ilango Adigal.
Also, please see [here](#).

- 8 **Saturday 24th Feb.**
Looking at "[Words from the Forest](#)", by Eric Miller.