

GIFT Easter School 2020

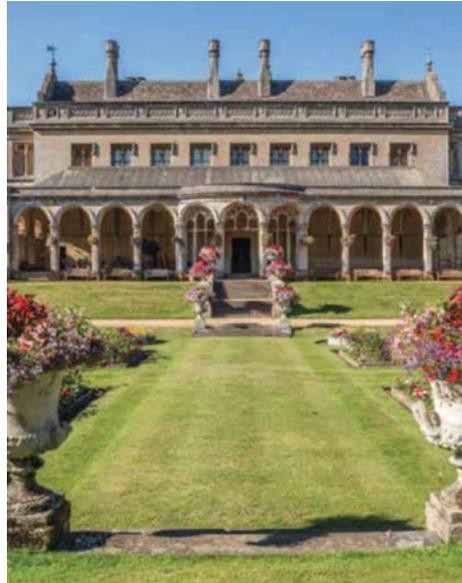
Residential for Curious Minds - Years 7 to 13
at Grittleton House, Wiltshire
Sunday 5th April to Friday 10th April

GIFT, provider of internationally-renowned enrichment courses for more than 40 years, is running an Easter School for Years 7-13, and those educated at home age 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.

Courses will include...

Whale-Juice and Moonshine (Monday)

To begin at the beginning... in Dylan Thomas' radio play, 'Under Milk Wood' is a feast for the ears. Members of his dystopian village, Llareggub, explore themes from love and time to death and the sheer exuberance of life. Thomas does not portray characters in the usual ways used in literature but in such a beautifully melodic snapshot of their lives, dreams and memories that as you listen to time passing, your mind will become a fishing boat bobbing sea of reflections. Then create and record your own radio plays, weaving in and out of the houses and minds of the inhabitants of somewhere in your imagination.

From Infinity and Beyond (Monday)

To study astronomy before 1931 meant to study the objects visible in the night sky with the naked eye or optical telescopes. At that time, no-one knew that radio frequency (RF) radiation is emitted by billions of extra-terrestrial sources, and that some of these reach the Earth's surface. Karl G. Jansky, a radio engineer, was studying radio frequency interference generated from thunderstorms, when he identified a radio signal, he called it "a steady hiss-type static of unknown origin". In 1933 he published his findings: the source of the radio waves was the Milky Way. At first his work was neglected, but in 1937 Grote Reber came upon Jansky's discoveries and built the prototype for the modern day radio telescope. Radio astronomy was born. The Sun and Jupiter are the most active radio sources in our solar system. We shall build a simple radio telescope and attempt to identify the sound of Jupiter's radio waves crashing on to the Earth!

Knots and Not-Knots (Tuesday)

Historical, spiritual and mathematical definitions have all been used in an attempt to define that which is a loop in free-space without self-intersections. Simple or complex manipulation of natural vegetation to form rope, used initially for the purpose of binding and latterly decoration, has occupied humankind for thousands of years. In an attempt to better understand nature, scientists and mathematicians began finding applications of knot theory to help solve problems in biology and chemistry, such as the folding of proteins and enzyme interactions. Our everyday language is littered with references to the use of knots: 'learn the ropes', 'let the cat out of the bag' are just two examples.

We will attempt our own definition of what is a knot, an 'un-knot', and a tangle. Investigate knot theory, and tie as many as possible of the 4,000 known knots and, who knows - even a knot not known to knotting?

Hail, herald of the Greeks! (Tuesday)

Classical Greek Theatre is recorded from the 5th Century BC. It's a testament to how excellent this genre is that it has lasted over two millennia. We will explore how the chorus and associated mask work, (acting and making) is the pivotal role in Greek Theatre. Working as a chorus is the ultimate acting experience requiring excellent scripts and precision unison acting. Sophocles, Euripides, Aeschylus and Aristophanes were masters of this theatre and there were annual competitions to see who was the most accomplished. Romp through comedies, weep through tragedies, write and star in your own Greek Drama Competition.

The Evergreen Blues (Thursday)

The Blues is a musical form which it is thought developed in the southern USA where African forms of music met European folk song. It is the direct ancestor of Rock 'n' Roll, and its musical DNA runs through to present day pop. At the heart of The Blues are a twelve-bar cycle, usually centred on the three major chords of a given key and a familiar rhyme structure of verses. One of the reasons The Blues always remains popular is that this basic structure makes it possible for musicians who have not previously played together to meet and play immediately, whatever their level of skill, and to set up a musical dialogue. That's what we'll do - so bring your instruments!



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.



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.

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 830 321
Email enquiries@giftcourses.co.uk
or see the FAQs at: www.giftcourses.co.uk

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.

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

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

A Dig Through Archaeology (Thursday)

Archaeology has a fascinating history of its own. Different theories of how archaeology should be done come in and out of fashion. It's a tug-of-war between those historians who focus on the human element, and those who think scientific techniques are what unlock the past. In the morning, you'll look at three key excavations that each used a different approach. In the afternoon, you'll design your own theoretical approaches and defend them, breaking new earth metaphorically, even though the mattocks are staying in the cupboard for this year!

Everything is Alive (Friday)

What would your hair say about you today? How might a block of Cheddar think about its existence? This course is about developing depth of character and story arcs through exploring a different narrative - that of an object. Avoiding clichés and putting a refreshing spin on the writer's axiom, "show don't tell", we will move through a range of writing activities to get those imaginative juices flowing. The end result will be unique story writing which could be from any perspective from Winston Churchill's false teeth to a divorcée's wedding ring.

Anarchy in the UK (Friday)

"Anarchist" is often a term of insult that brings up images of mindless mayhem. However, taken literally, it means, "without a chief", and over the centuries many experiments in living cooperatively have challenged mainstream society. "I can tell you that neither your political boss nor your employer, neither the capitalist nor the policeman will speak to you honestly about Anarchism," warns Alexander Berkman. Explore the options beyond capitalism and the control of the State.

Plus...

Improv Games Fast and curious, lots of laughs but also a great way to be fearless in front of others. **By Jupiter!** Explore the role religion played in Roman life, from art to politics to war to literature. **Body Building** Is the heart the best form of apparatus for pumping blood around the body? Design and build an organism from first principles using everyday materials. **What Did the Romans Ever Do for Art?** Try your hand at some Roman-style image-making. **A Victim of British Justice?** The case of Derek Bentley. We'll look at the circumstances and the legal situation at the time, and draw our own conclusions. **Playing the Fool** Use the physical theatre tools of clowning, commedia dell'arte and puppetry to crack the comedy code. **Rocketry** How far can you go? **Smoke and Mirrors** Explore the history of telegraphy from 300 B.C. to date. Make a code and send a signal via smoke and mirrors, flags and flashes, dots and dashes...

See our website for full course descriptions.

