

ENGL 377 Field School I—The Wordsworth Circle (Instructor: Michelle Levy)

This course focuses on the Wordsworths (brother and sister, William and Dorothy) and S. T. Coleridge, writers who immortalized the English Lakes and played an important role in ensuring that its natural and cultural heritage was preserved. On campus, students will have access to (and conduct preliminary research on) the print editions of their writing held in the Wordsworth Collection in SFU Library's Special Collections and Rare Books. They will also be introduced to the Lake District Collection, allowing them to study our library's rich collection of guidebooks, engravings, and topographical descriptions of the Lake District. Students will engage in bibliographical workshops and will prepare an exhibit of rare books and maps for display in the Library. This advanced research will allow them to make the most of our time in Grasmere.

In the Lake District, we will be based in Grasmere, the home of the Wordsworths from 1799 until 1813: it was there that Dorothy wrote her famous "Grasmere Journals" and William wrote his most famous poems, revolutionizing poetry with his "experiments" with language, his devotion to the natural world, and his sympathetic representations of those displaced by economic and political upheavals. But Wordsworth did not live and write alone—his most famous collaborator was S.T. Coleridge, also one of Britain's most beloved poets. We will be based at Glenthorne, a guest house that is just a short walk from Dove Cottage, the Wordsworths' residence (now a museum and research centre containing the world's largest collection of the Wordsworths' manuscripts and rare printed materials, as well as extensive artifacts and art related to the family and the region). This proximity to Dove Cottage, as well as to the surpassing beauty of the surrounding lakes and mountains will afford students an unparalleled opportunity for an intensive study of the lives and writing of the Wordsworths and their circle in the environment that inspired them.

The aim of this advanced course is to deepen students' understanding of the Wordsworths in relation to the environment in which they lived and wrote. Students will visit the homes of the Wordsworths (Dove Cottage, Allan Bank, where they lived from 1808-1811, and Rydal Mount, home of the Wordsworths from 1813-1850), and take excursions in the local area, on foot, to visit the locations represented in their writing (including many of the local fells (Helm Crag), Lakes (Grasmere, Rydal, Windermere), and Tarns (Easedale).

In addition to being steeped in the natural environment that inspired the Wordsworths (and countless other authors and artists), students will be involved in working closely with the curator and staff of the Trust on a project to closely describe a Museum or Library artifact. This will be a unique experience available only to students of SFU and made possible through a partnership with the Wordsworth Trust. As part of this partnership, students will have multiple hands-on sessions in the library with the curator of the Trust. They will also be among the first to experience the newly renovated and enlarged Wordsworth Museum, opening spring 2020.

From Grasmere's central position in the Lake District, we are well-situated to visit other sites. We will have a one-day excursion, to visit Hawkshead Grammar School (attended by Wordsworth) and Brantwood, home of the author and naturalist John Ruskin (near Coniston). These sites will allow discussions about the conservation of heritage and natural sites, issues that were first raised by the Wordsworths over two hundred years ago.