

Students find a novel way to work as team

Group set challenge to produce a book from scratch in just a week

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WRITING a novel is normally a labour of love: a significant emotional investment involving months and even years of dedication and hard work.

Writing one from scratch in a week? Unheard of.
But that is the challenge that faced nine Strode's College students this week as part of a workshop led by Royal Holloway, University of London.

Starting on Monday, they were given one day to plan, two days to write and a day-and-a-half to proof read with the finished book due to be sent to the printers today (Friday).

The workshop, called Project TooManyCooks, is the brainchild of computer science research assistant Joe Reddington.

He said: "This is about artefact-based learning - learning by co-operating and creating as a group and then being able to hold in your hands something that is

special, that is yours, and that you are proud of making - and we hope that this workshop has put a structure into place that allows the students to do this."

Working with Doug Cowie, lecturer in creative writing at Royal Holloway, they devised a workshop that would challenge the students' writing abilities but also require team work. Dr Yvonne Skipper, a research assistant from the university's psychology department, was also on hand to evaluate the students' teamwork

throughout the project.
Karen Griffiths, head of English at Royal Holloway, said: "A lot of our students aspire to move into journalism and the creative arts, and this has given them a very real sense of writing under pressure and the chance to create something they can be proud of."

Students at the university in Egham were invited to enter a short story competition, with the nine participants of Project TooManyCooks selected as winners.



Students at Strode's College took part in a challenge to write a novel in a week. Picture: Darren Pepe. Ref: H1123988