

Fall 8-15-2018

ENG 3405-002: Children's Literature

Ann Brownson
Eastern Illinois University

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office: Coleman Hall 3562

(mailbox in CH3155)

→ e-mail: aebrownson@eiu.edu

Office Hours: TU 12:00-2:00, TH 3:00-4:00

& by appointment ← !

phone: 217-549-0150

English 3405: Children's Literature

TTh 2:00-3:15

Coleman Hall 3170

TEXTBOOK

From Cover to Cover: Evaluating & Reviewing Children's Books, Horning

TRADE BOOKS

Easy Readers & Transition Books

Frog and Toad Together (1972) Arnold Lobel

Sam's Cookie (1982) Barbro Lindgren/illus. Eva Eriksson

We Are in a Book! (2010) Mo Willems

Picture Books

The Snowy Day (1962) Ezra Jack Keats

Where the Wild Things Are (1963) Maurice Sendak

Knuffle Bunny (2004) Mo Willems

The Lion and the Mouse (2009) Jerry Pinkney

Down, Down, Down (2009) Steve Jenkins

This Is Not My Hat (2012) Jon Klassen

Last Stop on Market Street (2015) Matt de la Peña/illus. Christian Robinson

Chapter Books

Charlotte's Web (1952) E.B. White/illus. Garth Williams

Locomotion (2003) Jacqueline Woodson

El Deafo (2014) Cece Bell/colorist David Lasky

→ PLUS a variety of self-selected books

Course Overview

"Children's literature" is usually defined as books for children from birth to age twelve. It is thus a text set defined by its audience. We will begin by looking at books in their most distinctive formats (board book, easy reader, picture book) and go on from there. But we will always be looking at the *whole* book – from cover to cover – considering the choices made by its creators to accommodate its intended audience and achieve their goals as authors and artists. We will also consider the important point made by the author of *Reading Picture Books with Children*, who said that "meaning doesn't exist in the book or in the reader, but in the space between them" (Lambert 73).

Work Cited

Lambert, Megan Dowd. *Reading Picture Books With Children*. Foreword Chris Raschka, Charlesbridge, 2015.

Learning Goals

- Appreciation of the **range** of classic and contemporary books created and published for children
- Awareness of **historical developments** related to this literature and understanding of the varied **social and cultural contexts** in which it has been produced
- Familiarity with the common **genre** and sub-genre of youth literature within the broad categories of fiction & non-fiction (aka information books), fantasy & realism
- Familiarity with characteristics of the distinctive **formats** of children's literature (board book, easy reader, picture book) and books for children in traditional (novel), emerging (graphic narrative), or hybrid formats (picture book app)
- Understanding of the **terminology** used by professionals to describe, discuss, and evaluate children's literature in these varied genre and formats
- Awareness of the role played by **design elements** (size, shape, layout, font) and features of **paratexts** (cover, title page, endpapers, etc.) in books for young people
- Understanding of the interaction of **oral, visual, and textual elements** in works of children's literature in different genre and formats
- Attentiveness to the **strategies** used by authors and illustrators to accommodate the abilities, schema, interests, identities, and desires of their intended audiences
- Development and application of **criteria for evaluation** of children's literature that takes into account its literary qualities, reader appeal, ideology, cultural authority, rhetorical purposes, and potential uses (instruction, entertainment)
- Experience **analyzing** and **evaluating** children's literature for a variety of **audiences** in a variety of written and oral forms
- Productive use of the print and electronic **resources** available to teachers, librarians, scholars and others who analyze or evaluate children's literature. These include reference books; articles in review journals, professional magazines and scholarly journals; books; and the kidlitosphere (blogs)
- Exploration of **issues** and **controversies** in youth literature from a variety of perspectives: professional, personal, political, practical, philosophical

Any personal, academic, or professional goals you want to add

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Brief Descriptions of Major Assignments

Review Essay ~ A multi-faceted evaluation (approx. 1000 words) of a children's book (assignment sheet to come)

Note: You can revise the Review Essay for a new grade.

It can also be submitted to the **Electronic Writing Portfolio (EWP)**.

You might also submit this essay in Spring 2018 to the **Louise Murray Award**—for writing *about* children's literature or creative writing *for* children by undergraduate English or Education majors & minors.

D2L Posts ~ Scores for D2L posts will reflect their quality and usefulness as demonstrated by these qualities:

- analysis of features of specific pages or passages in the context of the whole book
- attention to specific visual, textual, and oral features that contribute to readers' understanding of "story" (character, setting, plot, theme), information, or content in other genre/formats (such as verse)
- development of your ideas-in-progress, spelled out as fully as possible and explored thoughtfully
- willingness to practice applying terms and concepts introduced in lectures and assigned readings
- "recursiveness" – evidence that you are making *connections* between texts and concepts and re-considering or refining ideas about children's literature as you accumulate experience and information
- **completeness** **late* posts will be penalized if they are significantly late, but deductions for *missing* posts could have a **devastating** effect on your score, so on time is best but "better late than never"

Presentations ~ You will give two short (6 minute) analytic "book talk" presentations in which you highlight key features of self-selected books in specific formats and genre using the document camera and/or slideware.

The 360° presentation is an overview of the varied sources of context information available to enhance our appreciation of a particular book/author/illustrator. Assignment requires an annotated bibliography of sources.

Final Exam ~ This will consist of an essay written in class during the final exam period in which you discuss three works of children's literature that you read this semester in relation to a particular theme or issue.

Participation ~ This includes your honest and informed contributions to class discussion and the productive effort you put into group work. In both cases, our goal is to create an atmosphere in which people are comfortable *saying* what they think and *thinking* about what is being said. You can help create this atmosphere by answering and asking questions during class discussion and group work, and by responding thoughtfully to other people's comments and responses. By voicing your questions and concerns you make it possible for each of us to clarify our ideas about children's literature, which is what we are here for.

Attendance is obviously a prerequisite for participation, so if you have more than three (3) un-excused absences, you will lose up to 50 of these points (half a letter grade).

I also appreciate hearing from you if you need to miss a class meeting due to illness, a university event or other reason, so please let me know as soon as you can about these excused absences.

GRADES (I will adjust these point values if I add, cancel, or significantly revise any assignments)

D2L Posts scored at mid-term + final (100 + 150)	250
Book Talks (100 + 100)	200
360° Presentation (100) + annotated bibliography (50)	150
Review Essay (which can be revised for a new grade)	200
Final Exam Essay	150
Participation (50)	50

The Bottom Line...

Your final grade will reflect the percentage you earn of the **1000** points possible

A = 91% (910+ points); B = 81 – 90% (810+); C = 71 – 80% (710+); D = 61 - 70% (610+); F = below 60%

Unit 1: Board Books, Easy Readers, and Transition Books**Week 1 August 21 and 23**

T Introductions

What is Children's Literature?

A quick trip to the Ballenger Teachers Center (I hope you brought your Panthercard!)

Please post a personal introduction on D2L(under "Getting Started" in CONTENT) before our next class meeting. We are interested in knowing anything that you'd care to share about your academic or professional goals. And of course, it would be useful to know how much experience with children's literature or child readers you bring to class. Anything else you care to tell us about yourself (hobby, accomplishment, fun fact?) Any activities, events, opportunities, or organizations you want to advocate for or advertise?

Also for Thursday: Browse Horn Book Magazine (insert 3 sticky notes); Read and Annotate "What Makes a Good Board Book?"

->Always bring assigned readings to class for discussion

Th Bring *Sam's Cookie* to class.

D2L Discussion Post before Tuesday's class

Your Board Book (in Board Books & Easy Readers MODULE)

For the title of your discussion post, use Title of Your Book (Author/Illustrator) #Hashtag

For example:

Sam's Cookie (Lindgren/Ericksson) #ToddlerDrama

(If author also illustrator just list name once)

For example: The Very Hungry Caterpillar (Carle) #SoManyConcepts

PROMPT

For the title of your discussion post, use Title of Your Book (Author/Illustrator) #Hashtag

For example: Sam's Cookie (Lindgren/Ericksson) #ToddlerDrama

- 1.. Explain why you chose this board book. Describe your first impressions of it.
2. Describe this book using the terms, concepts, and classifications provided by Viki Ash in "What Makes a Good Board Book?" Comment on the focus of the text (concepts or stories), the medium of illustrations (photos or drawings), the mood (soothing or stimulating), and the relationship of the intended audience to the book's content (familiar or unexpected). Provide description of the features you are discussing (are the photos in black and white or in color? When possible, provide specific examples (after the caterpillar eats, the next page tells the reader that he is "still hungry").
3. Then offer an evaluation of this book using some of the criteria for success laid out by Viki Ash at the beginning of the essay. Explain how this book might help grown-ups and children achieve some or all of these goals:
 - Nurture a love of books and reading
 - Provide sensory stimulation in support of brain development
 - Develop language
 - Impart knowledge of the world and how it works
 - Create a joyful and loving connection between babies/toddlers and their grownups
4. Ask any questions you have about your book and/or explain concerns you have about the overall quality or value of this book. Would you recommend it? Why?

Week 2 August 28 and 30

- T Finish up Board Books
Read *We Are in a Book* and *Frog and Toad Together*
Prior to class read "Easy Readers and Transition Books (Ch. 6) in *From Cover to Cover* (hereafter FC2C) and D2L post "Easy Readers".
Read self-selected Easy Reader; for Thursday D2L post "Your Easy Reader: Format, Design & Content"
- Th Discuss Format, Design and Content in your Easy Readers

Week 3 September 4 and 6

- T Researching Easy Readers; prior to class D2L post "Googling Your Easy Reader (or Board Book)"
- Th Review of Reviews: prior to class D2L post "Review of Reviews & Resources"

Unit 2: Picture Books

Week 4 September 11 and 13

- T Begin "Picture Books" in FC2C (Words) and + selected Picture Books
- Th Continue "Picture Books" in FC2C (Pictures & Design) + selected Picture Books

Week 5 September 18 and 20

- T Readings about Picture Books
- Th Read "Information Books"(Chapter 2) in FC2C + *Down, Down, Down (Jenkins)*
D2L Reflection DUE

Week 6 September 25 and 27

- T Begin Picture Book Talks
- Th Continue Book Talks

Week 7 October 2 and 4

- T Finish Book Talks; Begin *Locomotion*
- Th Finish *Locomotion*

Week 8 October 9 and 11

- T Begin *Charlotte's Web* (ch 1-5)
- Th *Charlotte's Web* (ch 6-14)

End of Unit 3: Novels

Week 9 October 16 and 18

- T Finish *Charlotte's Web* (ch 15-end); Begin *El Deafo* (ch 1-2)

Th *El Deafo* (ch. 3-10)

Week 10 October 23 and 25

T *El Deafo* (ch. 11-21)

Th **Meet in the BTC**

Browse graphic narratives in the BTC, then discover read-alike
"intertexts" in the e-classroom

Draft Intertexts Essay Topic Proposal DUE

Unit 4: Intertexts & Projects

Week 11 October 30; November 1

T **Meet in the Booth Library 4th floor e-classroom**

Read Self-selected Intertext(s); D2L Post

In Class: Work on Annotated Bibliography of 360° Presentation Sources

360° Presentation Topic Proposal DUE; Revised Intertexts Essay Topic Proposal DUE

Th Continue Reading Intertext(s)

Annotated Bibliography DUE in Dropbox by 5 pm

Week 12 November 6 and 8

Meet in Booth Library 4th floor e-classroom all week

T Continue Reading Intertext(s); D2L Post: Intertext Essay Progress Report ← Last D2L post

In Class: Work on 360° Presentation

Th **Meet in the Booth Library 4th floor e-classroom**

In Class: Work on 360° Presentation or Intertext Essay

Week 13 November 13 and 15 → Bring Draft Intertext Essay to individual conference M/T

T Begin 360° Presentations

Th 360° Presentations

Intertext Essay DUE in Dropbox by 5pm Friday, November 16

Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 November 27 and 29

T 360° Presentations

Th Topic Proposal Reflective Essay DUE

360° Presentations

Week 15 December 4 and 6

T Book Talks

Th Book Talks
 Media Book Talks DUE on D2L
 Bring Outline for Reflective Essay to class

Finals Week

Monday 10 December **12:30-2:30** Reflective Essay DUE at end of class period