

Fall 8-15-2011

ENG 3405-002: Children'S Literature

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ENG 3405, Fall 2011

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English 3405 (02): **Children's Literature**

MWF in Coleman Hall 3290

11:00 – 11:50

TEXTBOOK *Essentials of Children's Literature (ECL)* 7th ed., Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson

ANTHOLOGY *Folk and Fairy Tales (FFT)*, 4th ed, Hallett & Karasek

TRADE BOOKS**Picture Books**

Nappy Hair, Herron (illus. Cepeda)
Amazing Grace, Hoffman (illus. Binch)
My People, Hughes (illus. Smith)
Sam's Cookie, Lindgren (illus. Eriksson)
Tar Beach, Ringgold
The True Story of the Three Little Pigs, Scieszka (illus. Smith)
Where the Wild Things Are, Sendak
Tuesday, Wiesner
Knuffle Bunny, Willems
 + self-selected "Read Aloud" (for Review Essay)

Chapter Books

The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963, Curtis
Ella Enchanted, Levine [extra credit]
Frog and Toad Together, Lobel
Charlotte's Web, White (illus. Williams)
 + self-selected book of poems or work of non-fiction (for Book Talk)
 + self-selected "New Arrival"

Tentative Schedule of Readings & Assignments**Week 1 ~ August 22, 24, 26**

M Introductions + In-class Writing: Remembering Reading

Please post a personal Introduction on WebCT before our next class meeting.

Who are you? How are you? What experiences with child readers and children's literature do you bring to class? Anything else you'd like to tell us (hobby, fun fact) or advertise (teams or clubs)?

W Read—and bring to class—the picture book *Knuffle Bunny*.

In fact, you should always bring books & hand-outs to class for discussion of assigned readings!

Also read "Teaching New Readers to Love Books" (handout) by Robin Smith. Then read it *again*, this time "annotating" the essay by *highlighting* specific passages (1-2 per page) and *commenting* in the margins, labeling key moments at different stages of Smith's development as a reader and a teacher, comparing those to key experiences in *your* development, by asking questions or commenting on Smith's beliefs about child readers and children's literature, and the choices she makes in practice as a teacher of "new readers."

- F Read the section on "Reading Aloud by Teachers" in the textbook (ECL chapter 13, pages 280-283); Compose a formal response (350 word minimum) to **one assertion** made by Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson in this section and **one statement** about reading from Robin Smith's essay. To what extent does your own experience support—or complicate—each of these ideas about children, reading, or children's literature? Introduce and respond to specific lines from the essay and the textbook using appropriate signal phrases, quotation marks, and in-text citations plus a References or Works Cited page. Develop and illustrate your ideas using specific, detailed examples from your own experience. (For tips on using MLA or APA-style citations, see handouts.) Print a copy of this response to class: I will collect these in class.

Week 2 ~ August 29 & 31, September 2

- M Print, Read & Annotate "Have Book Bag, Will Travel" (link on WebCT) by Flowers & Burns; Read *Where the Wild Things Are*—first silently, then aloud. We will discuss this classic picture book read aloud in relation to specific points made by Flowers & Burns, Smith ("Teaching New Readers to Love Books"), and Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson (in *Essentials of Children's Literature*) about the characteristics of a good read aloud, the benefits of reading aloud, and how to read aloud effectively. So, on a note card or post-it (one per source), quote a specific point (followed by in-text citation) and briefly summarize your response to it. Use the notecards or post-its to bookmark pages in *Where the Wild Things Are* we could discuss in relation to these points.
- W **Meet in the Ballenger Teacher Center at Booth Library ~ Bring your Library Card!** Look over your copy of *Horn Book* magazine. Check out the ads and features; read some reviews (in the back of the magazine). Mark a review or another feature that caught your eye. In class, we will get information and advice from the Ballenger Teacher Center librarians, and you will have time to choose two picture books you might use for the Read Aloud Review Essay. Revised Formal Response (from last Friday) DUE
- F Re-read both of the books you might review—first silently and then out loud. In a WebCT post, briefly **summarize** and **describe** each book. Then **explain** what features make it a good read-aloud and note any potential **problems, challenges** or **opportunities**. Bring both books to class.

Week 3 ~ September [5], 7, 9

- [M] **Labor Day** ~ no classes
*Extra Credit (up to 10 points): Evaluate a Review Journal ~ Due in class on Wednesday
- W Read *ECL* 2: pp. 20-30 *only*. Bookmark a passage you have something to say about. Browse *ECL* Appendix B: "Professional Resources" (333-335). Bring self-selected read aloud.
- F **Meet in the Ballenger Teacher Center (BTC)**
On WebCT, post a list of the most significant features of your book, and spell out any questions you have about its overall quality or effectiveness as a read aloud for a specific audience. During class time in the BTC, you will be introduced to authoritative print & electronic resources used by librarians, teachers, critics and scholars who work with children's literature, and you'll print out a selection of reviews so you can see what professional critics had to say about your book.

Week 4 ~ September 12, 14, 16

- M Annotate and respond to reviews of your book from *NoveList*, the *Children's Literature Comprehensive Database*, or a print resource (e.g. *Children's Literature Review*). Make special note of **adjectives** used to describe the illustrations; Read *ECL* 5: "Picture Books" (pp. 81-101) + "Guide to Illustrations" (pp. 88+). Bring questions + observations about the way the illustrations in your picture book extend or complicate the story and contribute to its overall effect or impact.
- W Read "Design Matters" (web link); in a WebCT post, describe the design and visual style of your book. Analyze the effect of at least specific choices made by the illustrator and designer.

- F Draft and post an introductory paragraph for your Review Essay; Bring a copy to class.
Read and annotate "To Get a Little More of the Picture" by Karla Kushkin (web link)

Week 5 ~ September 19, 21, 23

We will discuss your Review Essay-in-Progress at a Conference Appointment this week

- M Bring Draft of Review Essay to class
- W Read "Modern Fantasy" (ECL 7: 130-140); Re-read *Where the Wild Things Are*; Read *Tuesday, Tar Beach* and *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*; In your post, identify and discuss any fantastic elements in the illustrations and text of your book. What is the effect of specific choices made by the author, illustrator or designer on the meaning or impact of the story at particular points in the story (on particular pages) and overall? If your book is not a fantasy and does not have any fantastic elements, write about one of the other books we will be talking about today. (If you're not sure, write about that, using specific examples to explain what makes this a hard call.)
- F Read "Realistic Fiction" (ECL 8: 147-158); Re-read *Knuffle Bunny*; Read *Sam's Cookie*, *Amazing Grace*, *My People*, and *Nappy Hair*; In a post, identify and discuss "realistic" features of your book, and compare the version of reality it presents to that portrayed in one of the other books.

Week 6 ~ September 26, 28, 30 (Banned Books Week)

Read Aloud Review Essay DUE this week (one week after your conference appointment)

- M Read *Frog & Toad Together*, with special attention to the chapter assigned to your group;
Read "Censorship" (ECL 12: 271-275 only)
- W Read ECL 1: 12-14 only. Re-view all picture books plus *Frog & Toad Together*. Make a list of *all nine* books, plus your read aloud, putting them in (approximate) age level order, starting with the one targeted at the youngest readers. For each book, make some notes pointing to specific features that make it work for child readers at a particular stage of their development as readers; also note features that make this book suitable—in different ways—for readers at different stages.
- F Read and annotate "Reading under the Midnight Sun: Implications of Worldview" (handout);
Read introductory matter and statistics related to "Books by and about People of Color" (web link)

Week 7 ~ October 3, 5, 7

- M Read "The Faces in Picture Books" by Susan Dove Lempke (handout); Before class, complete library exercise (handout); In your WebCT post summarize and comment on the results.
- W Read "Literature for a Diverse Society" (ECL 11: 213-232) and mark passages to discuss;
Re-Read *Sam's Cookie*, *Amazing Grace*, *Tar Beach* and *My People*
- F Re-Read *Nappy Hair*; Annotate *Horn Book* editorial "'Now why's he got to come back to that?'" by Roger Sutton (web-link) and the article "Never Too Nappy" by Michelle Martin (web-link); Browse ECL Appendix "Awards" (pp. 309-332) + Web Links to recent award winners

Week 8 ~ October 10, 12, [14]

- M ***Meet in the Ballenger Teacher Center (Bring Library Card)***; Read "Non-Fiction" (ECL 10: 194-204), including recommended book list at end of chapter) + the *Horn Book* essay "What Makes a Good Science Book" or "What Makes a Good Dinosaur Book" (web links)
- W Read two works of non-fiction, one biography or history/social science + one on a science topic;
Post an evaluation of one of them. Bring your book to class.

Mid-term WebCT Score (up to 150 points) will cover posts up to this point.
Reflective WebCT post DUE on-line before class Monday

F **Fall Break ~ no classes**

Week 9 ~ October 17, 19, [21]

M **Meet in the Ballenger Teacher Center (Bring Library Card)**; Read the section on Poetry from "Poetry and Plays" (ECL 4: 55-74 only)

W Read two books of poetry, one anthology + one specialized collection; Post Evaluation of one

[F] *No class meeting* (I'll be at a Writing Center conference): Work on Book Talk Outline for Monday

Week 10 ~ October 24, 26, 28

M Outline of 5-minute Book Talk (Poetry or Non-fiction) DUE: bring Book with Examples marked; Begin *Charlotte's Web* (chapters 1-3)

W Read ECL 3: "Learning about Literature" (pp. 33-50); (Re-)Read chapters 1 – 5 in *Charlotte's Web* + Post analysis of one passage from assigned chapter; Begin Book Talks (3)

F Continue *Charlotte's Web*; Post today or Monday; Book Talks (3);

Week 11 ~ October 31; November 2, 4

M Finish *Charlotte's Web*; Book Talks (2)

W Read "Traditional Literature" (ECL 6: 114-123) + Tales in the "Brain over Brawn" section of in *Folk and Fairy Tales* (FFT 204-219); Book Talks (3)

F Read "The Story of the Three Pigs" by Jacobs (FFT 289-291); Read "What Makes a Good Three Pigs" (web link); Re-read *The True Story of the Three Pigs*; Book Talks (3)

Week 12 ~ November 7, 9, 11

M Read "Introduction" (FFT 15-25) + selected stories in the "Cinderella" section of *Folk and Fairy Tales* (FFT 94-117 only) + the Grimm Brothers' "Ashputtel" (handout); Post a comparison of two tales. What do they have in common? What difference do the differences make?; Book Talks (2)

W **Meet in the BTC (Bring Library Card)**

You will check out picture book versions of fairy tales (preferably one in *FFT*) and select one to share on Friday; We'll also look at "New Arrivals" (novels) to read next week

[note: optional Extra Credit reading of *Ella Enchanted* DUE by the Wednesday after break]

F (Re-)read version of fairy tale in *FFT* + picture book version; Mark 2 pages where details of text and illustration interpret or adapt the story in interesting ways; Bring self-selected New Arrival(s); Book Talks (3)

Week 13 ~ November 14, 16, [18]

M Begin reading self-selected New Arrival; Post (1st impressions with two examples); Book Talks (3)

W Continue New Arrival; Post analysis of two passages today or Friday; Finish Book Talks (3)

[F] *No class meeting* (I'll be at the NCTE Convention in Chicago)

Finish reading New Arrival; Print & Annotate professional reviews from CLCD and/or NoveList

Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 ~ November 28, 30; December 2

M Post a response to reviews of your book and explain why you think it is or is not a "good book" for kids; Bring a copy of your post, your book, and the annotated professional reviews to class.

- W Begin *The Watsons Go to Birmingham~1963* (chapters 1-2); Post today, next Monday or next Wednesday on a passage in one of the chapters assigned for that day.
- F Read "Learning about Children and their Literature" (ECL chapter 1: pages 3-14). Post response to **one assertion** made by Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson and **one research finding** quoted, paraphrased or summarized by them in chapter one (something from one of the tables on pp. 8, 9, 11 or 12), considering whether your personal or professional experience at this point in the semester supports—or complicates—these ideas about children, reading, and children's literature. Introduce and quote specific lines from the textbook (using signal phrases, quotation marks, and in-text citations appropriately). Develop and illustrate your ideas using specific examples from your own childhood reading experiences or from your reading this semester.

Week 15 ~ December 5, 7, 9

M Continue *The Watsons Go to Birmingham~1963*
Post Final Quest Topic

W Finish *The Watsons Go to Birmingham~1963*

F Read "Historical Fiction" (ECL 9: pp. 166-181)

Your second WebCT score (up to 150 points) will include all posts since the end of Week 8

Final Exam Schedule

Wednesday December 14, **10:15 – 12:15**

Brief Descriptions of Major Assignments

Read Aloud Review Essay ~ A multi-faceted formal evaluation of a picture book (approx. 1000 words)

You can revise the Read Aloud Review Essay for submission to the **Electronic Writing Portfolio (EWP)**.

This essay is also eligible for the **Louise Murray Award**, which honors writing *about* children's literature as well as literature written *for* children by undergraduate English or Education majors & minors. Submissions of creative and critical writing are solicited each Spring.

WebCT Posts ~ At least twice during the semester, you will receive a score for your WebCT posts that reflects their quality and usefulness as demonstrated by these qualities:

- attention to specific textual, narrative and visual details from the literary works you are analyzing
- development of ideas-in-progress, which are spelled out as fully and precisely as possible
- use of terms and concepts introduced in lectures, class discussion, and readings
- evidence of "recursiveness," evidence that you are looking back while you are moving forward, that you are making *connections* between texts read earlier in the semester, and re-considering and refining your ideas about children's literature as you accumulate experience and information
- **completeness** **late* posts will be penalized significantly if they are significantly late, but deductions for *missing* posts will have an even more devastating effect on your score, so it's "better late than never"

Want to know how you are doing? Come see me during office hours or make an appointment.

Book Talk ~ Each member of the class will make a short (5 minute) informational presentation about a book of poetry or an information book. The document camera will be available for projecting examples.

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, in collaboration with classmates, *thinking* about what they have just said. You help create this atmosphere by making an effort to answer and ask questions during class discussion and group work, and by responding thoughtfully to other people's comments and responses. This is a collaborative learning experience, so it is not impolite to disagree. By voicing your questions and concerns you make it possible for each of us to complicate and clarify our own ideas about children's literature, which is what we are here for. You can also contribute to this atmosphere in non-verbal ways, by keeping your attention on the conversation taking place in *this* room. Attendance is obviously a prerequisite for participation, so if you have more than three (3) un-excused absences, you will lose up to 50 points (half a letter grade) over the course of the semester. If you need to miss a class meeting due to illness, a university event or other reason, please let me know as soon as possible.

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

Read Aloud Review Essay (which can be <i>revised</i> within 2 weeks of grading)	250
WebCT Posts scored at mid-term + final (150 + 150)	300
Book Talk	150
Final Exam	150
Participation (75 +75): active (Q & A, collaboration, preparation) & passive (attendance)	150

The Bottom Line...

Grades are not curved. 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 609

RESPONSIBILITIES AND POLICIES

- 1.) Keep in touch! **Late work** may be penalized if we do not come to an understanding *before* the due date. If you are experiencing temporary difficulties, contact me as soon as possible. **No late work or extra credit will be accepted during the last week of classes.** Reminder: if you have more than three (3) *un-excused absences*, you lose 50 points from participation.
- 2.) You may use either **MLA or APA** style for the layout of your paper and the format of documentation on your Works Cited (MLA) or References (APA) page and the in-text citations that refer readers to this list. Be sure you are using the latest versions of the *MLA Handbook* (7th edition) and the *Publication Manual* (6th ed.) or a reliable print or electronic guide with up-dated information and examples.
- 3.) **Plagiarism** is a serious academic offense and a serious breach of professional ethics. You are plagiarizing if you take all or part of *someone else's* wording, ideas, or visuals and use them in your own written work or oral presentation without identifying and giving credit to the source. This semester you will have multiple opportunities to practice using proper citation methods as you add your voice to the conversation about youth literature that is taking place in magazines, journals, blogs, newspapers, etc.

Because the devil is in the details, I will not assign a grade for a specific assignment (or this class) until you have fixed any improperly formatted citations and reworked unsuccessful paraphrases. Until the documentation is right, there is a zero in the grade book. For more serious problems related to missing or misleading documentation of ideas, visuals or wording, you could receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or this course, and other university penalties imposed by the Office of Student Standards. I report all cases of plagiarism.

If you want help with documentation, a **Writing Center** consultant would be happy to help you figure out how to quote, paraphrase, summarize, integrate and cite primary and secondary sources. Or you might just like to talk to someone about your writing-in-progress. Either way, you can drop by the Writing Center (**Coleman Hall 3110**) or call for an appointment (**581.5929**) at any point in the process, from brainstorming, planning and drafting, revision, to final editing. (Advice: Bring the assignment sheet and your sources as well as your paper-in-progress.)

Writing Center Hours: Monday - Thursday 9 am – 3 pm + 6 pm – 9 pm
Fridays 9 am – 1 pm

- 4.) Students with **documented disabilities** should contact the Office of Disability Services (581.6583) as soon as possible so we can work out appropriate accommodations.
- 5.) You must complete all major assignments in order to pass this course.
- 6.) As soon as possible, English majors seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts should provide each of their English professors with the yellow form: "Application for English Department Approval to Student Teach." These are available in a rack outside the office of Dr. Donna Binns (CH 3851).

Learning Goals

- Awareness and appreciation of the broad **range** of classic and contemporary works written or published specifically for children
- Awareness of **historical developments** related to this literature and understanding of the varied **social contexts** in which it has been produced
- Understanding of the **terminology** used to describe and evaluate it
- Familiarity with characteristics of the **genre** of children's literature: fiction and non-fiction, fantasy and realism, and major sub-genre such as historical fiction
- Familiarity with conventions of the distinctive **formats** in which writers and illustrators of children's literature work, including picture book, transition book (aka "chapter book" or "easy reader"), and graphic novel
- Awareness of the interaction of **oral, literary, visual** and **narrative elements** in works of children's literature in different genre and formats
- 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, etc.)
- Attentiveness to the **strategies** by which authors and illustrators attempt to accommodate the developing abilities, interests, identities and desires of their intended audiences
- Experience identifying and using some of the many print and electronic **resources** available to scholars and professionals in the various fields that work with youth literature, such as English Studies, Education, and Library & Information Science. These include review journals, reference books, web-sites and blogs, scholarly books and journals in relevant disciplines.
- Experience **analyzing** and **evaluating** children's literature in a variety of oral and written **forms** for a variety of **audiences**
- Exploration of **issues** and **controversies** in youth literature from a variety of perspectives: professional, personal, political, practical, philosophical
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