ENG 3405-002: Children's Literature

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ENG 3405
Fall 2015
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**Please don’t contact me via D2L, as I often don’t receive those emails.

Course Description:
This course will introduce you to the exciting world of literature for children (focus will center on infants through fifth/sixth grade students) as well as provide you with a variety of critical tools for reading, discussing, and writing about the literature. Through readings, film, lecture, and discussions (both in small and large groups) we will develop our multicultural and social justice awareness, our ability to write and perform thoughtful, insightful prose, and our ability to read texts for both their literary merit and aesthetic value.

Learning Goals:

- Awareness of and excitement for a wide variety of children’s literature and elements of story.

- Awareness of historical developments related to this literature and understanding of the varied social contexts in which it has been produced.

- 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.

- Awareness of the interaction of oral, literary, visual and narrative elements in works of children’s literature in different genre and formats.

- Experience with literature-related activities that may be used with children.

- Exploration of cultural relevancy in pedagogy along with multiculturalism and social justice, to include such topics as intersections of race, place, gender, class, age, and (dis)ability in local and global contexts.

- Experience analyzing and evaluating children’s literature in a variety of oral and written forms for a variety of 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.
Required Texts:
*Literature and the Child, 7th edition*, Galda, Cullinan, & Sipe (Textbook)
*Out of My Mind*, Draper
*Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key*, Gantos
*Out of the Dust*, Hesse
*The Red Book*, Lehman
*Remember: The Journey to School Integration*, Morrison
*Yummy: Tales of a Southside Shorty*, Neri
*Esperanza Rising*, Ryan
*Holes*, Sachar
*Where the Wild Things Are*, Sendak
*Brown Girl Dreaming*, Woodson
*Handouts will also be distributed throughout the semester*

Special Needs:
Students with documented disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services (581.6583) as soon as possible so we can work out appropriate accommodations.

Cell Phones:
Please put your cell phone on silent or vibrate during class time.

Plagiarism:
Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—“The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work” (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

The Student Success Center:
Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

The Writing Center:
I encourage you to use EIU’s Writing Center located at 3110 Coleman Hall. This free service provides one-to-one conferences with writing center consultants who can help you with brainstorming, organizing, developing support, and documenting your papers.

The writing center is open to help any student from any major at any stage of his or her writing process, and its system of one-to-one conferences demonstrates value and respect
for individual writers, all of whom can benefit from feedback about their works in progress.

To schedule an appointment, you can drop by the center (3110 Coleman Hall) or you can call 581-5929. The writing center is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. On Friday hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Course Guidelines and Expectations:**

1. As this is an interactive course, participation is required. You help create this atmosphere by making an effort to answer and ask questions during class discussion and group work, and by responding thoughtfully and respectfully to other people’s comments and responses. Disrespect of me and/or your fellow classmates, along with coming to class unprepared will not be tolerated. You will be asked to leave AND marked absent for the class period. Participation is worth **25 points** of your grade and includes self-directed discussion, questions posed during class, ability to answer questions indicative of close textual reading, and being alert during class sessions (i.e., no cell phone activity, sleeping, disruptive conversations, or use of laptops/Ipads/tablets, etc for anything other than work for my class). Points will be deducted for behaviors indicative of anything other than full participation. This is a collaborative learning experience, so constructive criticism and open discussion is encouraged. Attendance is obviously a prerequisite for participation, so if you have more than three (3) un-excused absences, you will lose 5 points **per class session you miss.**

2. Absences will only be excused when the following conditions are met: a) Circumstances that can be documented on paper (illness, police accident report, university events, etc) b) I receive notification PRIOR to the class that you will be unable to attend. If there is an assignment due the day you will be absent, please email it to me Prior to the start of class. In the same manner, I expect each student to be on time to class. If you happen to be tardy, please do not disrupt the class. If you are over 10 minutes late to class with no prior notification, you will be marked absent.

3. You are expected to have **ALL** assignments prepared to turn in on the due date. All assignments should be typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 pt. font. Please proofread and edit all papers. **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS ACCEPTED OR MAKE-UP WORK PROVIDED** unless you are in compliance with the extreme circumstances section above. Do not put extra space between paragraphs. Student information (name, class title, assignment) is single-spaced, in the top left-hand corner of your paper. Additionally, you are expected to bring the proper supplies with you to class each session, including the text we’re reading.

**Caveat:**

In the event that class participation begins to fade, I reserve the right to distribute a pop quiz over the readings and/or class lectures. The quiz will be worth 10 points and will be taken from the final project.
Assignments:

1. “Back in the day” narrative (5 points possible)

Choose one of the following three writing prompts to develop a 2-page narrative about an experience from your childhood:

-“I’ll never forget the day…”

-Think about your first crush/love. “I wonder what ever happened to…”

-“If my mother/father ever found out about…”

This is not an essay, but rather a story in which the listener feels a part of your childhood experience. We will share these in class. **DUE August 31st**

2. Book Pairings and Papers (30 points- 15 points a piece) Four of the books have been paired: *Esperanza Rising* with *Out of the Dust* (**Paper DUE September 23rd**), and *Out of my mind* with *Joey Pigza Swallowed The Key* (**Paper Due December 2nd**). A total of two papers (thematic and reaction) have to be written for the pairings. For each pairing, you only turn in one paper. For example, if you choose to do a thematic analysis of the first book pairing, the second paper (for the second book pairing) must be a reaction piece. At the end of each of your papers, you must include if you would use these books in your own teaching and/or make recommendations for teachers to use them. Why/Why not? If you are not interested in the field of education, you must make recommendations for readers of children’s literature. **Each paper must be no less than 3 FULL pages. These papers are NOT summaries. Do not retell the texts. Present your argument within the first paragraph and develop it throughout.**

Thematic Analysis: For this paper you need to choose a theme from the texts and carry out that theme throughout the body of the paper. The theme needs to be clearly identified in the first paragraph. You may choose more than one theme.

Critical Reaction Paper: In this analysis, you are to provide a critical examination of your thoughts. That is, if you choose to discuss likes/dislikes, your rationale for disliking the texts should be clear and well-supported using textual evidence, direct experience with students surrounding topics addressed in the texts, and/or other books that you would have chosen for students to read in the genre. Remember, I am not endorsing any text as “stellar” or necessary for your teaching. I am, however, providing you with literature that is indicative of various multicultural and pedagogical occurrences in schools and communities. YOU need to be able to take a stand for or against them.

3.”Connecting the Dots” (30 points) For this assignment, you will create a personal narrative project inspired by *Brown Girl Dreaming*. More details to come. **DUE October 23rd**
4. **Teaching for Social Justice (45 points)** Create a teaching unit on a social justice topic (e.g., discrimination, racial profiling, bullying, etc) derived from *Yummy: Tales of a Southside Shorty* and *Holes*. You will need to support your topic with supplemental teaching using 4 picture books/novels of your choice from different genres. You **must** also include references to at least 2 current events. For example, with bullying, you may choose *The Recess Queen* as a book of poetry, *The Soccer Bully* for sports, and current events on bullying transgender youth. You do NOT have to have prior experience with developing teaching units for this assignment. **Your unit Must include:**

- A unit rationale (Why this topic/themes/genre?)
- Grade level, setting/culture, timeline (e.g., 3rd grade, Midwestern city, underserved public school, 2 week lesson plan)
- Goals and objectives of unit (What is the take away? What should students get out of this plan?) **Yummy and Holes should be used to inform the unit. The additional texts may be more helpful to the actual unit, but your topic must be informed/inspired by the novels.**
- TWO DETAILED major assignments for students to complete that fit within the parameters of their grade level. These assignments need to be culturally relevant and incorporate the texts you’ve chosen and should reflect your teaching of the social justice topic. You may choose to develop in-class and/or homework assignments. Specificity is key to this assignment. Make sure you cover any background information students will need.
- ONE DETAILED creative assignment that reflects students’ ability to move from awareness to activism with social justice using the specified themes. It isn’t enough to have students make posters that state a need to end discrimination; they need an action plan. If the posters are the set-up, what’s the follow-up? How will you make anti-discrimination an ongoing part of your classroom culture? For example, in your plan, you could state that students and parents will participate in monthly activities in various cultural settings (soup kitchens, community centers, children’s hospitals, etc) to discuss the effects of discrimination in these settings and write reports on their findings. These students will then become student leaders for next year’s class to take similar trips. The point is to make action a major part of the awareness process.
- A letter to parents detailing the purpose/benefit of these assignments, background information of texts, any assistance you’ll need from them, etc.
- Finally, you need to create a bibliography using MLA format of the books and current events you’ve chosen. **DUE November 30th**

4. **“Our Very First Picture Book!” FINAL GROUP PROJECT (75 points)**

The final project is an exploration of international children’s literature. Each group will be assigned one of the following: South Africa, Caribbean (Haiti, Cuba, Dominican Republic), Australia, Middle East (Iran, Iraq, Israel), and Mexico. Your assignment is to create an ORIGINAL picture book story that appropriately reflects the location you’re assigned. Your story must include:
• The elements of books as well as the criteria for picture books, i.e., the story must have a plot, characters, setting, etc. The illustrations don’t have to look professional. There should, however, be some use of color unless black and white is maintained throughout the piece.

• A title and intended age range/grade level for your story

• Specified genre of children’s literature must be established and maintained. That is, if you are choosing contemporary realistic fiction, for example, there must be a clear connection to your age range/grade level. Characters must face and resolve incidents that could happen in everyday life. You can’t begin with children and introduce a dragon midway through the story. Maintain consistency in genre writing.

• Regional and culturally relevant information. The setting and character names must be authentic. Your story should have enough culturally relevant information such that if a student from Israel, for example, were sitting in our class, she would feel you’ve adequately described her country. Don’t create a generic story and try to fit Israel into it. Do your research. Move beyond typical story lines and challenge yourselves to learn more about the location you’ve been assigned, with the hope that your work will teach students about an area of the world they’d never explored.

• Create an award for the picture book. It cannot be any of the existing awards. Be sure to tell if it’s being received for literary or artistic merit and make sure the description is highlighted throughout the book. For example, if your award is for a creative literary interpretation of a particular Israeli tradition, your story should explicitly highlight the tradition in a unique way.

• An annotated bibliography (MLA or APA format) of at least 5 to 7 picture books used in your research. This can be turned in a separate format from your book (e.g., typed). Each annotation should be an Original 3-4 sentence summary of the texts. Do Not copy and paste summaries from online sources. **For 3 of the annotations you must also respond to reviews from NoveList, the Children’s Literature Comprehensive Database, or a print resource (e.g. Children’s Literature Review).

The only guideline for the layout of your picture book is that it cannot be turned in on notebook paper. Construction paper, lineless paper, poster boards, etc are acceptable. This project is a visual summation of all you’ve learned this quarter, so tap into your creativity!

**Finally**, please include an INDIVIDUAL 2 page letter to me about the process of working on this project. Think about the following questions: What did I learn about myself while working with a group? Was this project beneficial? Why or why not? What did I learn about my particular cultural group that I didn’t know before this project?
**The breakdown of the 75 points is as follows: 45 points for original story/culturally relevant information, 20 points for illustrations, and 10 points for your individual letter. You will be placed in groups during the first few weeks of the semester. No more than 5 students to a group. Make sure each group member puts the same amount of effort and time into the preparation of the project. Please inform me if this does not occur. Points will be deducted from individuals who don’t put forth equal amounts of effort into the completion of this project. I will allot class time to work on the projects, and will meet with groups throughout the semester to discuss progression, answer questions, etc. On the last day of class, each group will have 15 minutes to present and answer questions. The International Children’s Digital Library http://childrensbooks.about.com/library/weekly/aaicdl.html, www.wowlit.org, www.ibby.org, and www.childrenslibrary.org are very useful websites for exploring international children’s literature. DUE December 11**

**Tentative Schedule of Readings and Assignments:**
**Please be prepared for potential changes to the schedule.**

**August 2015: Introduction to Children’s Lit/Historical Fiction**
24th (M) First Class: Introduction to course and one another. **Assignment:** Complete The Red Book
26th (W) Ages and Stages, Part One
28th (F) Ages and Stage, Part Two
**Assignment:** Read pages 6-10 in textbook (Beginning at “Defining Literature for Children and Adolescents”)
**Assignment:** Complete Back in the Day Narrative
31st (M) Share Back in the Day Narratives

**September 2015: History and Awards/ Historical Fiction/Rise of the Picture Book**
2nd (W) Discussion of Final Projects-get in groups
4th (F) First meeting with groups about final projects (preliminary ideas, topics, roles)
7th (M) Labor Day-No School
9th (W) Discussion of Awards with Examples.
**Assignment:** Read pages 10-18 in textbook (Beginning at “Children’s and Adolescent Literature Today and Tomorrow and Ending at “Current Trends”)
11th (F) Discussion of reading/ begin conversation of historical fiction
14th (M) Visit Library for resources and group work on final project
**Assignment:** Read pages 255-260 in textbook Chapter 8 (Ending at “A Close Look at Crispin: The Cross of Lead”) and Finish Esperanza Rising
16th (W) Discussion of Esperanza Rising in Literature Circles/ Watch clip on Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
**Assignment:** Complete Out of the Dust
18th (F) Finish discussion of Esperanza Rising
**Assignment:** Complete Out of the Dust
21st (M) Class Discussion/small group activity
23rd (W) Paper One DUE/Group activity on both texts
**Assignment:** Complete handout on Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
25th (F) In-class discussion of CRP
28th (M) In-class discussion of Teaching for Social Justice project
30th (W) Discussion of the Picture book/Discussion of Lesson Plan and Final Project Progression

Assignment: Read pages 55-72 (Beginning of Chapter Three and Ending at the Wild Things Are)

October 2015: Illustrations in Picture Books/Historical Fiction, cont./Begin culturally relevant pedagogy and the graphic novel
2nd (F) Discuss readings and examine illustrations in picture books
Assignment: **Bring in your favorite picture book

5th (M) Sharing our picture books

7th (W) Historical Fiction Movie (TBD)
9th (F) Finish Movie
Assignment: Read Brown Girl Dreaming pgs1-169 (complete “gifted” and end there)

12th (M) No class--keep reading

14th (W) Discuss reading/Class activity/Discuss “Connecting The Dots” assignment

16th (F) Fall Break-NO SCHOOL
Assignment: Complete Brown Girl Dreaming And Remember: The Journey to School integration

19th (M) Discuss texts and assignment

21st (W) In-class work day to discuss assignment and final conversation of novel

23rd (F) “Connecting the Dots” assignment DUE
Assignment: Read pages174-191 Chapter Five Folklore

26th (M) Discussion of folklore, fables, and fantasy
Assignment: Complete handout on culturally relevant pedagogy

28th (W) Visit Library for Group Work
Assignment: Complete Yummy

30th (F) Discussion of handout and Yummy
Assignment: Complete Holes

November 2015: CRP/Contemporary Realistic Fiction
2nd (M) Discuss novel and class activity

4th (W) Discuss social justice project

6th (F) Visit Library for research on project

9th (M) Banned Books/Censorship Movie (TBD)

11th (W) Finish Movie

13th (F) Discussion of film and banned/censored books/Final discussion of Social Justice project
Assignment: Complete Out of My Mind

16th (M) Discussion of First half of text in Literature Circles

18th (W) Discussion of Second half of text in Literature Circles
Assignment: Complete Joey Pigza

18th (F) Discuss novel

23rd-27th Thanksgiving Break

30th (M) Social Justice Project DUE
December 2015:
2nd (W) Book pairing Paper #2 DUE/Final Project Progression discussion
4th (F) Meet in Library for work on final project and group conferences
7th (M) Group conferences, cont.
9th (W) Final class discussions
11th (F) Final Project DUE in class

Evaluation:
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<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Back in the Day”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Connecting The Dots”</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Justice Project</td>
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<td>Book Pairings and Papers</td>
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<td><strong>Total (total)</strong></td>
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Grading:
190-200=A  189-180=B  179-170=C  169-160=D  160 or below=F

**Dr. Smith’s Advice**
If at any point throughout the semester you are confused or unclear about the expectations of the course, course material, a grade you’ve received, or any other matters, I strongly encourage you to come talk with me during office hours. It is my hope that all students succeed in this course, but I can only help if I’m aware of a problem.