Spring 1-15-2011

ENG 3406-001: Literature for Pre-Adolescents

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English 3406 (001): Spring 2010

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By appointment

English 3406: Literature for Pre-Adolescents  
MWF 11:00 - 11:50  
in Coleman Hall 3290

Textbook  
The Pleasures of Children's Literature, 3rd edition (2003), Nodelman & Reimer

Trade Books (in chronological order)
1911 Peter Pan, James Barrie  
1935 Little House on the Prairie, Laura Ingalls Wilder  
1964 Harriet the Spy, Louise Fitzhugh  
1987 The Goats, Brock Cole  
1999 Birchbark House, Louise Erdrich  
2002 Coraline, Neil Gaiman  
2003 Locomotion, Jacqueline Woodson  
2004 Becoming Naomi Leon, Pam Munoz Ryan  
2007 The Invention of Hugo Cabret, Brian Selznick  
2007 The Arrival, Shaun Tan  
2010 Borrowed Names: Poems about Laura Ingalls Wilder, Madame C. J. Walker, Marie Curie, and Their Daughters, Jeannine Atkins

OBJECTIVES

- Appreciate the range of classic & contemporary works for independent readers
- Develop understanding of the evolution of youth literature and awareness of the effects of the literary and social contexts in which specific works were produced
- Develop familiarity with terminology used to describe & evaluate youth literature
- Develop and apply criteria for evaluation that encompass literary and artistic quality, issues of ideology, cultural authority, reader appeal, rhetorical purpose, and pedagogical uses for youth literature, with special attention to the strategies by which authors and illustrators attempt to accommodate, manipulate and respond to the needs, interests, and desires of readers and gatekeepers
- Develop consciousness of different theories and approaches to reading, literature, and the relationship between young readers and youth literature
- Develop facility in using print and on-line resources available to professionals and scholars of youth literature in English, Education, and Library & Information Science
- Develop awareness of issues and controversies in youth literature and explore them from a variety of perspectives (professional, personal, political, practical)
- (Re-)Discover—and consciously re-consider—the many and varied pleasures available to readers of “children’s literature”
RESPONSIBILITIES AND POLICIES

1.) Keep in touch! Late work will be penalized unless we come to an understanding before the due date. If you are experiencing temporary difficulties, contact me as soon as possible. No late work or revisions will be accepted the last week of classes.

2.) Attendance counts. Participation too. If you have three (3) or more un-excused absences, you will lose half of the points available for "participation."

3.) To maximize your participation score—and your learning—you will need to show up consistently. Beyond that, you should prepare for class by doing assigned reading in an active, engaged way. Take notes; write out questions and observations; mark key passages with post-it notes. Treat WebCT posts as an opportunity to clarify your thinking by articulating—and testing—your ideas. In class, sit up and pay attention to what's going on; share your ideas, concerns and questions in group work and class discussion; respond thoughtfully and critically—respectfully and collegially—to other people's comments and questions. This is a collaborative learning experience, so your participation is the key to our success.

4.) Use MLA or APA style documentation for the Works Cited page (MLA) or References page (APA) and the parenthetical citations that refer readers to this list of sources. Use the latest MLA Handbook (7th edition) or APA Publication Manual (6th edition) or a reliable print or electronic guide with up-dated information and examples.

5.) Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else's phrasing, ideas or visuals and using them in your oral, written or visual work without identifying and giving credit to their source. This is a serious academic offense, and could result in a failing grade for the plagiarized assignment or this course, and might also incur other university penalties. At the very least, any work with problematic citations will have to be revised before it can receive a grade. Consultants in the Writing Center will be happy to work with you or answer questions about how to quote, paraphrase, summarize—and cite—your sources. You can drop in (CH3110) or call (581-5929) to make an appointment at any point in the writing process, from brainstorming, planning and drafting to final editing. The Writing Center is open Monday through Thursday 9 am – 3 & 6 – 9 pm, and from 9 am – 1 pm on Fridays.

6.) Students with documented disabilities need to contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) so we can work out appropriate accommodations.

7.) You must complete all major assignments to pass this course.

8.) Students seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts need to provide me with one of the yellow "Application for English Department Approval to Student Teach" forms available in a rack outside the office of Dr. Donna Binns (CH 3851).
**Tentative Schedule of Readings & Assignments**

**Note: FINAL EXAM is scheduled Tuesday, May 3 from 12:30 - 2:30**

**Week 1**

**January 10*, 12 & 14**  *ALA announces latest children's book awards*  
M  
**Introductions**  

*As soon as possible, please post an Introduction on WebCT*

**Notes: Posts should be on WebCT, where we can see them, before 9:00 a.m.**

*Always bring textbook or trade books to class discussions of assigned readings*

*Idea: Bring a copy of your post to class to help you remember what you said, and so you can make notes in the margins for extending or refining your ideas.*

**W** Begin *Peter Pan* (the first two chapters) + Read *The Pleasures of Children's Literature (PCL)* chapter 2 (pp. 14-28) “How to Read Children's Literature”; In your WebCT post, **quote and comment** on one line (or a short passage) from the novel and one from the textbook. Explain why you think these lines are important or interesting. And ask any questions you have about them.

Also, bookmark a passage in the first two chapters of *Peter Pan* that you find particularly opaque. We will discuss these passages using the concept of the “implied reader” introduced in the textbook. Details within passages of *Peter Pan* provide evidence that James Barrie's ideal readers would have specific “tastes and interests,” a “repertoire” that includes particular bits of “factual, cultural and literary knowledge,” and a certain level of skill, experience and sophistication as a reader to their reading of his book.

**F** Begin *Peter Pan* again (ch. 1 - 6); post on a passage from chapters 3-6.

**Week 2**

**January [17.]* 19 & 21**  
[M]  
**No class meeting: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**  
W  
**Continue Peter Pan** (ch. 7-11) + Read PCL 5 (pp. 79-99 only) “Common Assumptions about Childhood” and Post Response to prompt on WebCT

**F** Continue *Peter Pan*; Finish PCL 5 (pp. 100-105 only)

**Week 3**

**January 24, 26 & 28**  
M  
**Finish Peter Pan** (ch. 12-17) + Begin PCL 8 “Literature and Ideology” (pp. 151-160 only)

**W** Begin *The Goats*

**F** Continue *The Goats* + Read PCL 9 (pp. 184-215) “Children’s Literature as Repertoire”
Week 4  January 31; February 2 & 4
M  Finish *The Goats*
W  Begin *Locomotion*
F  Continue *Locomotion*

Week 5  February 7, 9 [& 11]
M  Finish Locomotion; Finish *PCL* 8 (pp. 165-180)
   [1st WebCT Score will reflect posts up to this point]
W  Begin *Little House on the Prairie* + Read two sections from *PCL* 4 "Strategies for Reading a Literary Text" (pp. 70-74 “Listening to Narrative Voice” + 75-77 “Story and Discourse”)
[F]  *No class meeting: Lincoln’s Birthday*

Week 6  February 14, 16 & 18
M  Continue *Little House on the Prairie*
W  Finish *Little House on the Prairie*
F  Begin *Birchbark House*

Week 7  February 21, 23 & 25
M  Continue *Birchbark House*
W  Finish *Birchbark House*
F  Mid-term Quest ~ Open Book. Bring an MLA or APA-style Works Cited or References page. You may also bring an outline or page of notes.

Week 8  February 28; March 2 & 4
M  Begin *The Arrival*
W  Begin *PCL* 12 (pp. 274-288) “Picture Books”; Continue *The Arrival*
F  Finish *PCL* 12 (pp. 288-299); Finish *The Arrival*

Week 9  March 7, 9 & 11
M  Begin *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*
W  Continue *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*
F  Finish *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*
   [2nd WebCT Score will reflect posts up to this point]

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Spring Break

Week 10  March 21, 23* & 25 *meet in the Ballenger Teacher Center Wednesday*
M  Read *PCL* 6 (pp. 108-127) “Children’s Literature in the Marketplace”; Research recent best sellers + award winners (details TBA)
W  *Meet in the Ballenger Teacher Center to select books for group project*
F  First post on self-selected book
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Events</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>March 28*, 30 &amp; April 1</td>
<td>*Lecture at ISU &lt;br&gt;M Second post on self-selected book &lt;br&gt;W Response to research &lt;br&gt;F Group presentation outline DUE</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>April 4, 6 &amp; 8</td>
<td>M Group presentations &lt;br&gt;W &quot; &lt;br&gt;F &quot;</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>April 11, 13 &amp; 15</td>
<td>M Begin <em>Harriet the Spy</em> &lt;br&gt;W Continue <em>Harriet the Spy</em> &lt;br&gt;F Finish <em>Harriet the Spy</em></td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>April 18, 20 &amp; [22]</td>
<td>M Begin <em>Coraline</em> &lt;br&gt;W Continue <em>Coraline</em> &lt;br&gt;[F] Finish <em>Coraline</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>April 25, 27 &amp; 29</td>
<td>M Begin <em>Becoming Naomi Leon</em> &lt;br&gt;W Continue <em>Becoming Naomi Leon</em> &lt;br&gt;F Finish <em>Becoming Naomi Leon</em> &lt;br&gt;[Final WebCT Score]</td>
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**FINAL EXAM** Tuesday, May 3 from 12:30 – 2:30

This is a "writing-intensive" course. You can revise one piece of writing for submission to the Electronic Writing Portfolio before the end of the semester. The mid-term quest is the obvious candidate.

**Literary Studies Podcast:** Consider subscribing to The Close Reading Cooperative, the free podcast produced here at Eastern. English courses require you to comment on both what texts "say" and how they say it. This podcast is a set of mini-lessons designed to give you the terms and concepts necessary to effectively articulate your observations about the literariness of the texts we read. Subscribe here: [http://www.eiu.edu/~english/podcast.php](http://www.eiu.edu/~english/podcast.php) or from EIU's iTunes page, click "Subscribe."
Brief descriptions of major assignments . . .

WebCT Posts (up to 450 points) ~ Three times this semester, you will receive a score for WebCT posts that reflects their quality and usefulness, as demonstrated by these qualities:
- attention to textual, narrative and visual details in analysis of literary works
- development of ideas-in-progress, spelled out as fully & precisely as possible
- use of terms and concepts introduced in lectures, class discussion, and readings
- recursiveness: exploration of connections between texts and willingness to reconsider and refine ideas as you accumulate experience and information
- completeness *late* posts will be penalized substantially, but deductions for missing posts have an even more devastating effect on your score, so "better late than never"

Mid-term Quest (up to 150 points) ~ You will compose an essay comparing two of the books we read, demonstrating mastery of key concepts introduced in our textbook and in lecture by applying them productively. You may bring your books plus an outline or page of notes and a typed works cited page, both of which you will turn in.

Individual Reading & Group Presentation (up to 150 points) ~ With a group of classmates, you will read and evaluate a set of texts that interests you. For example, each groupie could read a different novel by the same author, a book in a specific format (graphic novel, series book), a book centered around a theme (sports, dis/ability) or issue (books for boys, censorship), a best seller, a recent award winner or a classic fantasy. You will post individual responses to your book and information about it. Collaboratively, your group will organize a lively presentation to share your observations, conclusions and questions.

Final Exam Essay (150 points) ~ This will consist of an in-class essay exploring three works read during the semester (two since mid-term) in light of some overarching theme, issue, or literary strategy. Open Book; one page of notes/outline permitted. Bring Works Cited page.

GRADES
Course grades will be based on the percentage you earn of the 1000 points available.

*Note: I will adjust these point values if we add, cancel, or revise any assignments.

Web-CT Posts + informal writing assignments (150 + 150 + 150) = 45%
Mid-term Quest (150) = 15%
Group Presentation (150) = 15%
Final Exam Essay (150) = 15%
Participation, Leadership, Attendance (100) = 10%

The bottom line . . . grades are not curved: 91% & up = A; 81 - 90% = B; etc.