Spring 1-15-2002

ENG 3405-001: Children's Literature

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INSTRUCTOR: John Kilgore. Office: 3331 Coleman Hall. Hours: TR 3:30-5, W 11-4. Other hours by arrangement. Phone: (217) 581-6313 (office); (217) 345-7395 (home). E-mail: cfjdk@eiu.edu. During registration (March-April), it might be best to call first before dropping by the office, as I will be having many advisement conferences. Please feel free to call my home at reasonable hours. When leaving voice mail at the office, include date and time of call, and do not trust voice mail for urgent messages—try me at home instead. I prefer that you NOT visit me with questions just before class begins; just after is fine.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Extensive assigned readings; two papers of about 1,000-1,250 words each (45%); oral report (ungraded); two hour exams (10 and 15%); final exam (20%); attendance and participation (10%). I reserve the right to depart somewhat from these percentages.

ORAL REPORTS. Will in most cases be 3-5 minute speeches in which you a) tell us a kid's joke or riddle; and b) report on some children's book that was important to you when you were younger. Avoid extensive plot-summary, but give us a vivid sense of the book and its impact on you. Relate your experience of this book to the course themes as appropriate.

PAPERS. Will come due on 2/26 and 4/18; see schedule below. These are to be analytical discussions of about 1,000-1250 words each, thoughtfully posed, rigorously developed and defended, written with great care. Detailed writing guidelines and suggested topics will be forthcoming. You are welcome to develop your own topics rather than writing on the suggested ones, but be sure to check with me first. If you're having trouble getting your paper started or written, I welcome conferences in advance of the due date. See me after class, or call.

All papers should be typewritten (or computer printed), double-spaced, and generally legible. Check the Writing Guidelines handout for other relevant information. You will have the chance to present the first paper to the class, reading all or part of it to us on the due date. I recommend exercising this option, as it can make the whole writing process more satisfying and educational for you.

EXAMS. Are scheduled for Tuesday, 2/5, Tuesday, 3/26, and (in finals week) Tuesday, 4/30. These are meant to ensure that you have done the readings carefully and have a good grasp of issues and concepts covered in class discussion. Essay questions will ask you to analyze concepts,
interpret passages, and demonstrate basic familiarity with works on the syllabus. Objective questions will ask you to identify authors, works, characters, and quotations. The best preparation will be to think hard about reading questions I will hand out from time to time. All three exams will be open-book, open-note; a portion of the final may be a take-home.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION. Will count approximately 10% of your grade in the course. From the second meeting on, I will be passing around an attendance sheet which you must sign. At the end of the term, I will assign a participation grade according to the following scale: 1 absence--A; 2 absences--B; 3 absences--C; 4 absences--D; 5 absences--F; more than 5--further, proportional percentage declines in your course grade (your attendance grade becomes a negative number). I will raise the basic grade a bit if I think your contributions to class discussion have been especially good.

Note that you have one "free" absence. Use this if you have to, but otherwise keep it as insurance. I will listen sympathetically to excuses, but I will not normally award attendance credit for any session which you have missed. An approved "excuse" entitles you to just one thing: the option of making up for the missed day by doing a significant extra assignment. See me in my office to make arrangements for make-ups, and check with me later to make sure the work has been duly credited. (Hint: It's easier just to be here. Honest.) Note: it is your responsibility to find and sign the attendance sheet at each session.

LATE WORK POLICY: I am willing to be somewhat flexible providing you have been in touch with me before the missed deadline. Otherwise late papers will be penalized one third grade (e.g., from "A" to "A-") or from "A-") to "B+") for each calendar day of lateness, weekends and holidays included; and they will receive no written commentary, but a letter grade only. Pick up the phone, dial my number, and save yourself from this demoralizing fate.

Please be aware that the penalty for plagiarism or cheating, which I trust I will not have to impose, is automatic failure of the course. See me if you have any questions about this policy.

I will be more than happy to make reasonable accommodations for any student with a documented disability. Please contact me if you will need such an accommodation; or call the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services, 581-6583.

KEYS TO SUCCESS IN THIS CLASS:

- Attend faithfully.
- Do ALL the reading, do it carefully, and do it EARLY. Papers and exams come thick and fast at the end of the term, and you need to make a head start now. Not all of the reading will be covered in class, but all or nearly all will be tested on exams.
- Start your papers early and work hard on them, writing multiple drafts. Get feedback from me, from the Writing Center, or from your classmates before handing in the final version.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Saltman, et al, eds., The Riverside Anthology of Children's Literature (A)
- Griffith and Frey, eds., Classics of Children's literature (C)
- Egoff, et al, eds., Only Connect (E)
- Scott O'Dell, Island of the Blue Dolphins
- Laura Ingalls Wilder, Little House on the Prairie
- Jack London, *Call of the Wild*

## SCHEDULE

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Note: Please complete the readings for each session **before** the class meets. As the course gets underway, try hard to READ AHEAD of the schedule. You will have a hard time keeping up at the end of the term if you do not make a head start on the longer readings. To keep track of changes, make a habit of bringing a printout of the syllabus to class with you, and check the posted online version periodically.

1) **January 8, 10**  
**Introduction**

Read pp. 1-9 and 15-20 in *A*.


Atwood, "There Was Once," E350.

Nursery rhymes: read through pp. 15-63 in *A*, paying special attention to the following (by number in text): 8 ("To market, to market"), 12 ("Humph, Dumpty"), 13 ("Ding, dong, bell"), 14 ("Little Jack Horner"), 18 ("Hey, diddle, diddle"), 19 ("Little Boy Blue"), 26 ("Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater"), 32 ("Wee Willie Winkie"), 33 ("A diller, a dollar"), 34 ("Jack and Jill"), 35 ("Diddle diddle dumpling"), 36 ("Georgie, Porgie"), 37 ("Rub-a-dub-dub"), 43 ("There was a crooked man"), 45 ("This Little Pig"), 49 ("Goosey, goosey gander"), 74 ("There was an old woman"), 76 ("The House that Jack Built"), 95 ("Thirty days hath September"), 106 ("Step on a crack"), 123 ("Jelly in the Dish"), 162 ("How much wood"), 163 ("Peter Piper").

**Handout: Meter and Prosody.**

2) **January 15, 17**  
**Nursery Rhymes and Nonsense**

Continue with nursery rhymes.

Nonsense poems: Introduction, pp. 64-68 in *A*, plus the following poems from pp. 69-87: 5 ("Limericks"), 7 ("Knitted Things"), 8 ("Long Gone"), 9 ("One bright day"), 16 ("Let's marry!"), 19 ("A horse and a flea and three blind mice"), 36 ("The Owl and the Pussy-Cat"), 43 ("The Story of Augustus Who Would Not Have Any Soup"), 46 ("Jabberwocky"), 49 ("The Walrus and the Carpenter").


3) **January 22, 24**  
**Fairy Tales**

**Note:** You will need to bring both anthologies to class while we are discussing fairy tales.

Read 245-252 in *A*.


4) **January 29, 31**  
**Fairy Tales**

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Children's Literature


5) February 5, 7  
Alice in Wonderland

Tuesday, February 5: Exam #1.  
Lewis Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, C425. [Read whole book in C, not just short excerpt in A!]

6) February 12, 14  
Alice in Wonderland; Little House on the Prairie

Wilder, Little House on the Prairie.  
Be working on first paper!

7) February 19, 21  
Little House; Poetry


8) February 26, 28  
Poetry; Adventures of Tom Sawyer

Tuesday, February 26: First Paper Due, may be presented in class.  
Twain, Adventures of Tom Sawyer, C389.

9) March 5, 7  
Adventures of Tom Sawyer

SPRING BREAK, MARCH 11-15

10) March 19, 21  
Kipling


11) March 26, 28  
Poetry

Exam #2, Tuesday  

12) April 2, 4  
Alcott, Little Women, C183.

13) April 9, 11  
London, Call of the Wild

14) April 16, 18  
O'Dell, Island of the Blue Dolphins

Paper #2 due, Thursday

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15) April 23, 25

Review and Catch-Up

Final Exam: Tuesday, April 30, 10:15-12:15