Fall 8-15-2003

ENG 3405-003: Children's Literature

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Recommended Citation
Kory, Fern, "ENG 3405-003: Children's Literature" (2003). Fall 2003. 120.
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English 3405: Children’s Literature  
MWF 12:00-12:50 in CH 3160

TEXTBOOK  Essentials of Children’s Literature, Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson (hereafter ECL)

ANTHOLOGY  Folk and Fairy Tales, ed. Hallett (hereafter FFT)

TRADE BOOKS

*Picture Books*
- Nappy Hair, Herron (illus. Cepeda)
- Amazing Grace, Hoffman (illus. Binch)
- Sam’s Cookie, Lindgren (illus. Eriksson)
- The True Story of the Three Little Pigs, Scieszka (illus. Smith)
- Where the Wild Things Are, Sendak
- Tuesday, Wiesner

*Novels (“Chapter Books”)*
- The Watsons Go to Birmingham, Curtis
- The Secret of the Old Clock, Keene (illus. Tandy) ~ optional extra credit reading
- Frog and Toad Together, Lobel
- Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone, Rowling (illus. Grandpré)
- Holes, Sachar
- Charlotte’s Web, White (illus. Williams)
- From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun, Woodson

Schedule of Readings and Assignments (tentative)

**Week 1 ~ August 25, 27, 29**
M  Introductions
W  Begin Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone or Holes
F  Continue Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone or Holes  
   *Note: Always bring books to class discussions of assigned readings*

**Week 2 ~ September (1), 3, 5**
M  Labor Day (NO Class Meeting)
W  “Learning about Children and their Literature” (ECL chapter 1; pages 1-22)
F  Finish Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone or Holes; Introduce Poetry Assignment

**Week 3 ~ September 8, (10), 12**
M  “Poetry” (ECL ch. 3; pp. 40-59)
W  Library Day (NO Class Meeting): Find a book and choose a poem
   *There is a list of recommended poets and books in our textbook (ECL 58-66).*
F  Bring a typed copy of the poem you selected, plus the book in which you found it
   Identify the type of poetry book and type of poem using the classifications in our textbook
Week 4 ~ September 15, 17, 19
M  Annotated Poem DUE (Draft) + xerox-ready version of the poem & its illustration
W  Evaluation of Poem DUE (Draft)
F  Nursery Rhymes (handout)

Week 5 ~ September 22, 24, 26 ~ Banned Books Week (get more info at www.ala.org)
M  Annotated Poem + Evaluation DUE (Revised Versions)
W  "Introduction" (FFT 12-20) + "Traditional Literature" (ECL 5: 93-102)
F  "Little Red Riding Hood" & "Little Red Cap" (FFT 25-30)

Week 6 ~ September 29; October 1, 3
M  "Story of Grandmother" (FFT 23) & "The Chinese Red Riding Hoods" (FFT 31)—and then the introduction to this section, "Loss of Innocence" (FFT 21-23)
W  "Cinderella, or The Little Glass Slipper" (FFT 53) + "Ashputtel" (FFT 59)
F  "Jack and the Beanstalk" (FFT 106) & "The Story of the Three Little Pigs" (handout)

Week 7 ~ October 6, 8, 10
M  "Illustration" (FFT 244) + The True Story of the Three Little Pigs
W  "Picture Books" (ECL 4:67-78) & “Learning About Books” (ECL 2: only pages 32-37); Read (and bring to class) all picture books: Sam’s Cookie, Where the Wild Things Are, Tuesday, Amazing Grace, Nappy Hair and The True Story of the Three Little Pigs
F  Re-view all picture books plus Frog & Toad Together. Make a list in which you rank these books in terms of audience, from youngest to oldest. Write up an explanation for your rankings, pointing to specific features that make each book more appropriate for younger or older readers. Bring all picture books to class.

Week 8 ~ October 13, 15, (17)
M  Re-view Where the Wild Things Are + Tuesday (both won the Caldecott Medal)
W  "Multicultural and International Literature" (ECL 10: 187-208) + Sam’s Cookie, Amazing Grace, and Nappy Hair
F  Fall Break (NO Class Meeting)

Week 9 ~ October 20, 22, 24
M  Bring self-selected picture book(s) to class + Amazing Grace and Nappy Hair
   (We will continue discussion of Multicultural Literature)
W  Responses to Self-Selected Picture Book DUE (Draft)
F  Outline/Plan or Draft Review Essay DUE
   (Sign up for individual conference appointments available all next week)

Week 10 ~ October 27, 29, 31
M  “Modern Fantasy” (ECL 6: 111-122) + Frog and Toad Together, Lobel
W  Begin Charlotte’s Web, White (1-41)
F  Continue Charlotte’s Web (42-112); Revised Picture Book Responses + Review DUE

Week 11 ~ November 3, 5, 7
M  Finish Charlotte’s Web (113-end)
W  “Historical Fiction” (ECL 8: 149-159)
F  Begin The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963, Curtis (1-85)
Week 12 ~ November 10, 12, 14
M Continue The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963 (86-168)
W Finish The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963 (169-210)
F "Realistic Fiction" (ECL 7: 129-140)

Week 13 ~ November 17, 19, 21 ~ Children’s Book Week (find more info at www.cbcbooks.org)
M Begin From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun, Woodson (1-64)
W Finish reading From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun (65-end)
F Continue discussion of From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun;
Group Project Topic Proposal & Bibliography DUE

~Thanksgiving Break (November 24-28)

Week 14 ~ December 1, 3, 5
M First Responses to Self-Selected Reading for Group Project DUE
W 2nd Responses to Self-Selected Reading(s) for Group Project DUE
F Response to Research DUE ~ MLA style in-text citations required
Group Presentation Outline DUE by end of class period

Week 15 ~ December 8, 10, 12
M Group Presentations
W Group Presentations
F Group Presentations; Prepare for Final Exam

Finals Week ~ December 16
T 12:30 – 2:30: Final Exam

GRADES
Your final course grade will be based on the percentage you earn of the 200 points possible.
Note: I may have to adjust these point values if we add, cancel, or revise any assignments.
Also, note that your Fairy Tale Picture Book Review Essay can be revised for a higher grade
and/or for submission to the Electronic Writing Portfolio.

Picture Book Responses + Review Essay = 60 (25 + 35)
Poem Introduction (Annotations/Response + Presentation/Handout) = 30 (15 + 15)
Self-Selected Reading Responses = 25
Group Project Presentation = 25
Log (includes all informal in- and out-of-class writing)
+ Participation (including attendance; see #2 below) = 35
Final Exam = 25

Grades are not curved. 91% (182 points) and above = A
81 – 90% (162-181 points) = B
71 – 80% (142-161 points) = C
61 - 70% (122-141 points) = D
60% (121 points) and below = F
ASSIGNMENTS AND OBJECTIVES

Objectives: By the end of this course, you should have a working knowledge of children's literature and lots of practice evaluating works in many of its various forms. If we do it right, you will also enjoy many of the readings and do some important thinking about children and literature.

Reading assignments include textbook chapters that describe the most common types of children's literature and introduce you to significant authors, works, and trends. We will also read "trade book" examples of works the following genre: poetry, fairy tale, picture book, and novel. These assigned readings will be supplemented by self-selected readings.

Writing assignments will include informal "responses" as well as formal reviews and essays. You will also make informal and formal oral presentations—individually and as part of a group—in addition to your oral participation in whole class discussions and small group work.

Here are brief descriptions of the major assignments . . .

Picture Book Review Essay ~ You will select and analyze a picture book that is not on our syllabus, evaluating how effectively its text and illustrations work together to present readers with a satisfying reading experience. You will choose your own audience for the review (teachers, literary critics, parents, etc.), focusing your review on the issues most relevant to this group.

Poetry Anthology ~ You will select a children's poem to contribute to our class poetry anthology and introduce the class to this poem in an oral presentation. You will choose a poem from a book in Booth Library’s Ballenger Teacher Center (or another reputable source) and create a one-page handout of the poem that includes any illustrations plus an MLA-style citation for the collection in which you found the poem. You will also “annotate” a copy of the poem (writing analytic comments in the margins) and write a response that summarizes your evaluation of it. Your grade for this assignment will include a score for your introduction (oral presentation + handout) plus a score for the analysis and evaluation of the poem in your annotation and response.

Self-Selected Reading & Group Project ~ Along with a group of like-minded folks, you will read a children’s novel in a specific genre (historical fiction, science fiction, ...), or one centered around a shared theme (death, sports,...) or issue (censorship, diversity...). Each groupie will read a different book and write informal responses to it plus a properly documented response to some researched information about the book and its author. The group will collaboratively organize a presentation to share their observations about this genre, theme, or issue with the class. You will get an individual grade for your written responses and a group grade for the oral presentation.

Log ~ This will consist of all ungraded homework or in-class writing related to our class readings. I will (usually) collect these writings, and then respond to them and return them to you at our next class meeting. When you get this writing back, you can respond to my comments in the margins or add any other second thoughts. Keep all of these ungraded writings in a two-pocket folder labeled "Reading Log." Put your name on top of the front cover. I'll collect this folder late in the semester and give it an overall grade based on completeness, length, and quality.

Final Exam Essay ~ This will consist of a single essay written in class during the final exam period. In your essay, you will discuss three works that you've read this semester.

Note: This is a "writing-intensive" course, which means that you can revise one paper to submit to the Electronic Writing Portfolio. The Fairy Tale Picture Book Review is the obvious candidate.
RESPONSIBILITIES AND POLICIES

1.) Keep in touch! Late work will be penalized unless we come to a clear understanding before the due date. If you are experiencing temporary difficulties, contact me as soon as possible so we can work something out.

2.) Attendance counts. Participation too. If you have more than five (5) un-excused absences, you will receive no participation points. Participation points will be awarded generously to people who come to class consistently, prepared to ask thoughtful questions and share their ideas with the rest of the class.

3.) Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else's words or ideas and using them in your own writing without giving written credit to their author. This is a serious academic offense, which could result in a failing grade for the plagiarized paper or this course—and might incur other university penalties as well. At the very least, any paper with serious citation problems will have to be revised before it can receive a grade. Tutors in the Writing Center (down the hall in CH 3110) can answer questions about how to document sources in any papers you write. Drop by or call (581-5929) to make an appointment if you want to work with a tutor at any point in the writing process, from brainstorming, researching, and planning to final editing and documentation. Writing Center hours are 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. + 6:00—9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday plus 9 a.m.—1 p.m. on Fridays.

4.) Formal essays should be double-spaced and typed/printed. Informal responses may be hand written. Both should use MLA-style documentation for citations.

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

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