

Children's Literature

Instructor Name Phone: Prof. Katrina Millan

Office Location: School of English Studies

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description: In this course we will investigate the history of children's literature, with special attention paid to themes and morals and their development over time. We will interrogate popular children's literature from the past and the present to discover which societal values are being propagated and how they are being disseminated to a young audience. We will study literature from across spectrums of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, ability and culture, in order to gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of experiences that may differ from our own, and in order to understand why representation matters in books specifically targeted toward children. Lastly, we will discuss the pedagogical implications of our findings and put them into practice. Get ready to get creative!

Instructional Methods:

The methods of this course include, but are not limited to, class discussion, reading assignments, writing assignments, short quizzes, small group work, audio-visual presentations, demonstrations and lecture.

Required Reading Materials:

In addition to these materials, you will also be required to read various picture books and handouts

Textbook Title: Folk and Fairy Tales, 5th edition

Author: Martin Hallett and Barbara Karasek

ISBN: 9781554813650

Publisher: Broadview

Textbook Title: Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens and Peter and Wendy

Author: J.M. Barrie, Peter Hollingdale

ISBN: 9780199537846

Publisher: Oxford University Press

Textbook Title: Where the Wild Things Are

Author: Maurice Sendak

ISBN: 9780064431781

Publisher: HarperCollins Publishers

Textbook Title: El Deafo

Author: Cece Bell

ISBN: 9781419712173

Publisher: Amulet Books

Textbook Title: Coraline

Author: Neil Gaiman, Dave McKean (Illustrator)

ISBN: 9780061139376

Publisher: HarperCollins Publishers

Textbook Title: Haroun and the Sea of Stories
Author: Salman Rushdie
ISBN: 9780140157376
Publisher: Penguin Publishing Group

Textbook Title: Brown Girl Dreaming
Author: Jacqueline Woodson
ISBN: 9780399252518
Publisher: Penguin Young Readers Group

Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change with notification

1/24: Welcome: Introductions and syllabus review

In-class reading and discussion of “Zal and Rudabeh,” “Rapunzel,” and “Perennially Popular” –
PDFs provided

1/28: Fairy Tales:

Cinderella (43), Ashputtle (48), Vasilisa the Beautiful (57), Disney Revisited (452)

1/31: Fairy Tales:

The Little Mermaid (146), Beauty and the Beast (128)

2/4: Fairy Tales:

Screening of Disney movie and discussion of the changing nature of children’s media, Q&A about
lesson plan project

2/7: Fairy Tales:

Further discussion of fairy tales and children’s media, **Last day to submit Journal #1**

2/11: Peter and Wendy:

Chapters 1-6

2/14: Peter and Wendy

Chapters 7-10, and “Preparing Boys for War” (PDF)

2/18 NO CLASS

2/21: Peter and Wendy

Chapter 11-end

2/25: Peter and Wendy:

Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens (full), **Last day to submit Journal #2**

2/28: Workshopping for Midterm Projects

3/4: Picture Books:

And Tango Makes Three, Where the Wild Things Are, and "Frightening the Children..." (PDF), **Last day to submit Journal #3**

3/7: Mid-Semester check-in:

Midterm Project Due, Further discussion of children's picture books in preparation for final project, and group work aimed at assessing strengths and weaknesses and targeting areas for improvement

3/11 and 3/14: NO CLASS

3/18: Coraline:

Chapters 1-4

3/21: Coraline:

Chapters 5-8

3/25: Coraline:

Chapters 9-end, **Last day to submit Journal #4**

3/28: El Deafo:

Pages 1-84

4/1: El Deafo

Pages 85-166

4/4: El Deafo

Pages 167-end, **Last day to submit Journal #5**

4/8: Haroun and the Sea of Stories

Chapters 1-3

4/11: Haroun and the Sea of Stories

Chapters 4-6

4/15: Haroun and the Sea of Stories

Chapters 7-9, and "Fairy Tale Politics" (PDF)

4/18: Haroun and the Sea of Stories

Chapters 10-end, **Last day to submit Journal #6**

4/22: Workshopping for Final Projects

4/25: Brown Girl Dreaming

Pp.1-87

4/29: Brown Girl Dreaming

Pp.88-178

5/2: Brown Girl Dreaming
Pp.179-263

5/6: Brown Girl Dreaming
Pp.264-end, **Last day to submit Journal #7**

5/8: **Final Project Due:**
Presentations

5/9: Presentations

5/13: Presentations

Assessment:

- Much of this class will center around discussion, and it is expected that you attend each class prepared and having completed the reading. There will be short quizzes administered to test your knowledge of the material. These constitute 10% of your final grade.
- There will be a midterm project that requires you to design several classroom activities around a piece of children's literature. *
- You must submit four 300-500-word journal entries throughout the course. There will be at least six opportunities to do so. If you chose to submit more than four, the four with the highest grades will be counted toward your final grade. These *must* be written in MLA format.
- There will be a final project that requires you to write and illustrate an original picture book, which you will then present to the class. *
- Participation is very important in this class and will constitute 10% of your final grade. You are expected to join in discussion; I will be taking note of those who do.

* More information will be provided on individual assignment sheets

Grades

Journal Entries – 40%

Quizzes – 10%

Midterm Project – 20%

Final Project – 20%

Participation – 10%

Policies

Technology

Cell phones, laptops, and tablets will not be permitted. If you are warned about using your phone/laptop/tablet more than once, your participation grade for the day will be a failing one and you may be counted as absent.

Attendance

You are expected to attend every class, except in cases of illness or emergency. The foundation of this class will be the discussion we have together; the more voices we have participating, the more interesting and fun the class will be. It is for this reason, among others, that **I take attendance very seriously.**

- If you miss 3 classes, you will lose 1/2 letter grade
- If you miss 4 classes, you will lose 1 letter grade
- If you miss 5 classes, you will lose 1 1/2 letter grade
- If you miss 6 classes, you will automatically fail the class

Repeated tardiness will also negatively impact your grade.

If you miss either the first or second half of class, you will accrue 1/2 of an absence.

You are responsible for the completion of the work assigned whether you are in class or not. Please refer to the syllabus and consider reaching out to a peer for notes on class discussion.

Assignments

- Assignments must be handed in when they are due. I will subtract half a letter grade for each day an assignment is late, including days on which we do not have class, regardless of circumstance. **It is your responsibility to know when assignments are due.**

- **Revision is the key to becoming a better writer.** *Pending my approval*, you will have the opportunity to revise each assignment during a one-week period after I have given you a grade. I do not allow revisions on late work.

- It is critical that you complete each reading assignment before our class sessions. **Be sure you bring the text we are reading to each class session.** We will often refer to certain passages and you must be able to read along.