

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES (UC 115)



CLC 2130G: *International Children's Literature (The Children's Novel)*¹
(Former **CLC 130F/G**)
Winter (2nd semester) 2009-10

Instructor: Agnes Herra (aherra@uwo.ca)²

Office hours: by appointment

Time / Location: Monday 10:30-12 TC 202 / Wednesday 10:30-12 TC 342

Course Content and Aims

This is a survey of the children's novel as a genre from the 19th century on. We will consider works of pure fantasy, as well as realistic works. CLC 2130F/G will cover literature meant for younger audiences and teenagers. We will analyze the techniques and themes that appear in children's novels from a number of European countries. All works will be available in **English translation**. The course aims to achieve the following:

- show the emergence of childhood as a concept worthy of adult attention
- demonstrate the formation of children's literature as a separate genre corresponding to various notions of childhood
- analyze the way in which the view of the child has evolved from the late 17th century to today
- deal with various controversies pertaining to what is deemed suitable in writing for children
- reflect on the tension existing between didacticism and diversion in children's literature
- investigate the differences between norms inherent in literature for adults and children's texts
- illustrate, on the one hand, the tendency to simplify the world and, on the other hand, the willingness to tackle complex themes in children's literature.
- explore the key themes of the genre, e.g., the value of home, parental constraints, growing up, the need for independence, basic fears, wishes vs. reality, gender roles, fantasy etc.

Learning Outcomes

It is expected that, upon the completion of this course, the students will have:

- acquired the knowledge of various major works for young people from outside the English-speaking realm
- understood common trends in certain novels with respect to changing values, gender roles, mythological patterns, child-parent relationships, the difficulties of maturation, identity-formation and the human capacity for fantasy, as well as other issues
- grasped the way in which writing for young people reflects social development over time
- evaluated the discrepancy between the real child and the child as imagined by adults given that children's literature is not written by children
- appreciated the need to approach literary works in the context of contemporary literary norms
- gained insight into the differences between various authors' respective conceptions of what constitutes "interesting" subject-matter in children's writing, e.g., does a children's story absolutely need a "bad guy"?
- improved their ability to express themselves on these and other related topics orally (through in-class presentations) and in writing (through essays and exams).



¹ Also former CLC 191F/G if taken in 2002/03. Former numbers are antirequisites for all courses.

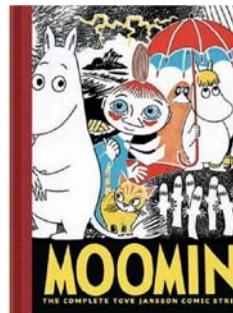
² Supervisor: Vlad Tumanov (vtumanov@uwo.ca)

Course Requirements

Attendance.....	7%
Oral presentation or shorter essay.....	15%
Midterm (early March: in class)	15%
Main essay (3,000 words) ³	33%
Final Exam (3 hrs.).....	30%

Texts in Sequence (available at the UWO bookstore)

1. Collodi, Carlo. *The Adventures of Pinocchio*. (Italy)
2. Spyri, Johanna. *Heidi*. (Switzerland)
3. Jansson, Tove. *Finn Family Moomintroll*. (Finland)
4. Lindgren, Astrid. *Pippi Longstocking*. (Sweden)
5. Ende, Michael. *The Neverending Story*. (Germany)
6. Funke, Cornelia. *The Thief Lord*. (Germany)



Films will be shown frequently in class.

Definition of Plagiarism

*Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see Scholastic Offense Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's **verbatim** or **paraphrased** text in one's own written work without immediate reference. Verbatim text must be surrounded by quotation marks or indented if it is longer than four lines. A reference must follow right after borrowed material (usually the author's name and page number). Without immediate reference to borrowed material, a list of sources at the end of a written assignment does not protect a writer against the possible charge of plagiarism. The University of Western Ontario uses a plagiarism-checking site called Turnitin.com.*

Absenteeism

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

- [Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness](#)⁴
- [Downloadable Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#)⁵

N.B. E-mail will be used extensively for communication with the students. Please make sure your UWO account is in order.



³ Essays are due any time before the end of classes (April 7, 2010).

⁴ https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_accommodations_link_for_OOR.pdf

⁵ <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf>



Course Schedule (Each class = 75 minutes)

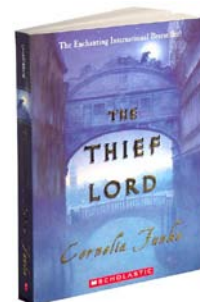
Introduction (\pm 2 classes)	Jan. 4, 6
Carlo Collodi. <i>The Adventures of Pinocchio</i> (\pm 4 classes)	Jan. 11, 13, 18, 20
Presentation 1: Versions of <i>Pinocchio</i>	Jan. 25
Johanna Spyri. <i>Heidi</i> (\pm 3 classes)	Jan. 25, 27, Feb. 1
Tove Jansson. <i>Finn Family Moomintroll</i> (\pm 3 classes)	Feb. 3, 8, 10
Midterm (50 minutes)	Feb. 22
Presentation 2: Girl Novels	Feb. 24
Astrid Lindgren. <i>Pippi Longstocking.</i> (\pm 3 classes)	Feb. 24, March 1, 3
Presentation 3: Tove Jansson novel(s)	March 8
Presentation 4: Astrid Lindgren novel(s)	March 8
Michael Ende. <i>The Neverending Story</i> (\pm 5 classes)	March 10, 15, 17, 22, 24
Cornelia Funke. <i>The Thief Lord</i>	March 29, 31, Apr. 5
Presentation 5: Michael Ende's <i>Momo</i>	Apr. 7
Presentation 6: Cornelia Funke's <i>Inkheart</i>	Apr. 7

N.B. The schedule for works covered in class is approximate.

The presentation schedule is firm. Film excerpts will be shown at various times.

Presentation Topics and Format:

- 20 minutes (1-3 presenters [if more than one, then the grade is shared]⁶)
- 1 work per topic: **researched**; brief plot summary; characters; themes; structure; analysis; historical background; hand in list of references



N.B. Here is a link to [Cornell Notes](#): an excellent note-taking method for lectures.

⁶ One person can speak for all or presenters can take turns.