

Department of English & Writing Studies

Children's Literature
English 2033E (650)
Fall/Winter 2019-20

Instructor: Dr. Clarissa Suranyi
csuranyi@uwo.ca

University College 1424
(519) 661-2111 ext. 86212

Office Hours: by appointment only (telephone or in person)

Antirequisite: English 2730F/G (King's University College)

Please read the following information completely and carefully. You are responsible for it.

Welcome to Children's Literature Online! This course provides a survey of children's literature and an exploration of the texts from a number of different perspectives. The readings are from significant books written for children, selected primarily for literary quality. Some attention will be given to the historic evolution of children's literature as a separate class, but the principal aim of the course will be to consider the nature and development of the major genres: fairy tales, nonsense, adventure fiction, the domestic novel, fantasy, and animal stories. You should come away from this course with an enriched understanding of the variety of texts written for children and the variety of critical responses to them.

Important information about this online course:

This course demands as much time and effort from you as a conventional lecture-based university course in literature. You are expected to read the assigned work and to engage with the material, the instructor, and the other students in the course. You are required to participate in the course regularly, as you would in a regular classroom. This participation will take the form of active reading of course materials, asking questions of the instructor, and contributing to online discussions. All of this means that you must devote a minimum of ten hours per week to the course in order to keep up with the reading and complete the assignments. Assignments will be submitted online, so be sure to work out any technical problems quickly by contacting ITS at 519-661-3800.

This course is designed for OWL, which operates as an online classroom. Five percent of your grade depends on regular participation (more on participation below). You must have regular online access to do this; this access can be from home, from a computer lab on campus, or from a public library, but you must ensure that you have access to the internet on a regular and consistent basis. (This means that, in the event of a service interruption to your internet connection at home, you are expected to find another way to access the course materials.)

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, the successful student will be able to:

- Place individual texts in their context within the historical development of children's literature;
- Recognize and understand the features of genres such as the fairy tale, the cautionary tale, nonsense, adventure, domestic fiction, and fantasy;
- Display a knowledge of several classic children's novels, as well as more recent contributions to the genre;

- Analyze texts employing the skills of literary analysis, considering features such as narrative technique, symbolism, rhyme and rhythm, layout and illustrations, etc.;
- Understand the political, religious, moral, and philosophical underpinnings of the books on the course;
- Communicate ideas effectively in writing (through discussion posts and persuasive essays);
- Develop a specific, focused argument and support it with textual evidence.

Methods of Evaluation

Thesis/Outline for Essay 1	Due Sept. 27	(Worth 5% of Essay 1 mark)	
Essay 1	Due Nov. 1	1000 words	15%
Essay 2	Due Jan. 24	1500 words	20%
Essay 3	Due Mar. 13	2000 words	25%
Quizzes			5%
Participation		500 words	5%
Final exam	TBA (April Examination period)		30%

Please note: The Department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar through Student Center.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <https://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>.

How to Proceed:

Click on the Getting Started tab on the left-hand menu bar on our OWL course site, which explains how to proceed through the course. Always read the texts assigned for each unit before reading the lecture notes.

Quizzes:

By the end of every even-numbered unit, you will be required to complete a quiz containing ten multiple-choice questions testing your knowledge of the texts covered in those two units. (For exact due dates, consult the Calendar or the Tests & Quizzes folder on the OWL site.) The questions will focus on content rather than interpretation; if you have read the material, you should have no difficulty answering the questions. You may keep your books handy and consult them freely, but you will be limited to ten minutes to complete each quiz.

The Participation Grade and Discussions:

Your participation in the discussion forums on OWL is worth 5% of your grade. Discussion questions are posted at the end of the lecture notes for each unit as well as in the Forums. You may use these questions to get a discussion of a text started, although you may certainly raise other questions or issues not included in the questions. Once a discussion is posted, you may respond to it or raise another issue. Avoid using the Forums just to state whether you liked or disliked a text or to simply agree or disagree with a previous post. I will be checking the Forums at least three times a week, and I expect you to do likewise. Posting responses to questions without first reading your fellow students' responses is not discussion: it's a monologue, and it does not meet the criteria of this on-going assignment (the complete grading criteria for discussion postings can be found in the Learner Resources folder). You'll get the most out of this assignment by treating it as an academic conversation.

For the most part, the Forums are for students; however, I will interject if a student has posted a problematic reading or an error, if I want to emphasize a particular point or issue that has been raised, or if students seem to need some help to push their ideas further. I try to keep my interventions brief, so often they will take the form of a question stemming from the previous discussions.

I will be locking the discussion threads for each week so that the discussion stays on track. For example, the discussion forum for Unit 1, which corresponds to the first full week of classes, will be locked on **Sunday, Sept. 15 at 10:00 pm EDT**. I will lock the next week's discussion on the following Sunday, and so forth.

Self Tests:

At the end of the course notes for each unit, you will find several self-testing questions. These questions are designed to test your comprehension of the assigned reading and your grasp of the lecture material. If you have read the material, you should have no difficulty answering the questions. You may consult your books freely, of course, as these self-tests are for your own benefit.

Final Exam:

The final exam will be written in person at the approved exam centre that you selected when you registered for the course (see the [Distance Studies section of the Registrar's website](#)). It will not be an online exam. The final exam is scheduled by the Registrar. You must be prepared to write the exam on the dates assigned: do not make travel plans until the final exam schedule is posted.

Page Layout and Citation Styles:

Your essays must follow MLA format in both page layout and citation style. Here is some basic information:

- 1) In the top left-hand corner of the first page, put your name, the name of your professor, the name of the course, and the date.
- 2) Number your pages in the top right-hand corner.
- 3) Double space.
- 4) If you use a snappy, attention-grabbing title, follow it up with an informative subtitle that indicates your topic and the works you will be discussing (e.g. Touching Pitch: Moral Ambiguity in R.L. Stevenson's *Treasure Island*).
- 5) Titles of novels and other long works should be *italicized*. Titles of short poems, articles, and short stories should be in quotation marks.
- 6) Introduce quotations in your own words, identifying the speaker and context: i.e. Bettelheim argues that "The fairy tale ... confronts the child squarely with the basic human predicaments" (311). Use ellipses to indicate where you have omitted material.
- 7) If the quotation is longer than four lines, do not use quotation marks; instead, indent the passage ten spaces from the left and continue to double space.
- 8) For short quotations, indicate the page number(s) in parentheses after the quotation marks and before the end punctuation. For long, indented quotations, place the parentheses after the end punctuation. Do not use abbreviations such as p. or pp. or include the author's name if the identity of the author is clear from the context.
- 9) List all the works you have referred to in a Works Cited list at the end of your paper.

There is a useful online guide to MLA format at the following address:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Should you need more detailed information, the comprehensive *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* is available at Western Libraries.

Contacting your instructor

Email:

I am happy to communicate with students by e-mail, but there are two provisos. (1) I can't always answer emails instantly; please allow 24 hours for a response on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends. (2) I will respond to short emails only.

Students must check their UWO email regularly for messages pertinent to the course.

Messages sent from email providers such as yahoo, gmail or hotmail will not be answered, so please use your UWO email account for messages to your instructor. In addition, please ensure that your emails conform to the rudimentary standards of university discourse: emails should be written using correct grammar, complete sentences, and a professional tone. Rude or harassing emails, or emails from students requesting information readily available on the course outline, will not be answered.

Telephone:

Students wanting to engage in an extended conversation about the course work—discussions or questions about lecture material, essay or exam expectations or results, course readings, etc.—may e-mail me to set up a time that is convenient for both of us to have a telephone conversation. You can call me at a phone number I will give you, depending on where I am the day of the appointment. Please note that I cannot return long-distance calls.

In person:

Students who are in the London area and who would prefer to talk with me in person rather than by telephone or e-mail may e-mail me to set up a time that is convenient for both of us to meet at my office on campus.

Please do not hesitate to contact me to talk or ask questions about anything, including assignments, difficulties you are having with the course, suggestions for further reading, or clarification and expansion of issues raised in the readings or lecture notes. Unfortunately, most students wait until the last minute or until all hell is breaking loose before consulting their instructors. Please see me well ahead of deadlines and the onset of nervous breakdowns.

Assignments

Assignments must be submitted online through OWL. Go to the Assignments tab and click on the appropriate assignment to see the instructions/essay topics and to attach your assignments. Your papers will automatically be uploaded to Turnitin simultaneously. Check to ensure your paper has uploaded properly. It is your responsibility to ensure its delivery. I do not accept assignments by e-mail.

Late Penalty and Extensions:

Late essays will be penalized 2% per day, including weekends, unless the student has received an extension. Students must ask for extensions well in advance of the due date and offer a good reason for the extension (academic workload, job schedule conflicts, and vacations are not good reasons). No extension will be given to any student on the day the assignment is due. Papers received more than 7 days late will receive a grade of 0.

If you miss an exam or an essay due date, or if you require an extension at the last minute on medical or compassionate grounds, you must notify your academic counsellor immediately and follow the procedure below.

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Reading Schedule

You must complete one unit for each full week of the Fall/Winter term (except for the week of Dec 2-5, which corresponds to Unit 12 and is not a full week)

Fairy Tales

Unit 1: Introduction / Traditional Fairy Tales

Read the following fairy tales from *Folk and Fairy Tales*:

- "The Story of Grandmother" – Paul Delarue
- "Little Red Riding Hood" – Charles Perrault
- "Little Red Cap" – Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm
- "Lon Po Po: A Red-Riding Hood Story from China" – Ed Young
- "Sun, Moon, and Talia" – Giambattista Basile
- "The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood" – Charles Perrault
- "Brier Rose" – Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm
- "Cinderella: Or the Glass Slipper" – Charles Perrault
- "Cap o' Rushes" – Joseph Jacobs
- "Hansel and Gretel" – Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm
- "Snow White" – Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm
- "Rapunzel" – Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm
- "Jack and the Beanstalk" – Joseph Jacobs
- "Beauty and the Beast" – Madame Leprince de Beaumont
- "The Brave Little Tailor" – Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm
- "Puss in Boots" – Charles Perrault
- "Bluebeard" – Charles Perrault
- "Rumpelstiltskin" – Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm
- "The Goose Girl" – Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, available at <https://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm089.html>
- "Cinderella" – Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, available at <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm021.html>

Unit 2: Revisionist Fairy Tales

Robert Munsch, *The Paper Bag Princess*

Emma Donoghue, "The Tale of the Handkerchief" (available in Learner Resources folder on OWL course site)

Read the following stories from *Folk and Fairy Tales*:

- "The Company of Wolves" – Angela Carter
- "When the Clock Strikes" – Tanith Lee

Unit 3: Natalie Babbitt, *Tuck Everlasting*

Nonsense

Unit 4: Elizabeth Matterson, comp. *This Little Puffin*

Dennis Lee, *Alligator Pie*

Read Perry Nodelman, "The Nursery Rhymes of Mother Goose: A World Without Glasses" (Critical Readings)

Unit 5: Edward Lear, *The Complete Nonsense of Edward Lear*

Read the following poems and stories:

“Self-Portrait of the Laureate of Nonsense”

All limericks

“The Owl and the Pussy-Cat”

“The Jumblies”

“The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World”

“The Dong with the Luminous Nose”

“The Pobble Who Has No Toes”

Unit 6: Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*

Adventure

Unit 7: Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*

Unit 8: Beatrix Potter, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*

Read Jackie F. Eastman, “Beatrix Potter’s *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*: A Small Masterpiece” (Critical Readings)

Unit 9: J.M. Barrie, *Peter Pan*

Realism

Unit 10: E. Nesbit, *The Story of the Treasure Seekers*

Unit 11: John Boyne, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*

Unit 12: Louise Fitzhugh, *Harriet the Spy*

Read Lissa Paul, “Feminist Writer as Heroine in *Harriet the Spy*” (Critical Readings)

The Domestic Novel

Unit 13: Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women*

Unit 14: L.M. Montgomery, *Anne of Green Gables*

Read the following articles from the Critical Readings: Perry Nodelman, “Progressive Utopia, or How to Grow Up without Growing Up”; Susan Drain, “Community and the Individual in *Anne of Green Gables* The Meaning of Belonging”; Eve Kornfeld and Susan Jackson, “The Female Bildungsroman in Nineteenth-Century America: Parameters of a Vision”

Unit 15: Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

Unit 16: Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Little House on the Prairie*

Animals

Unit 17: Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows*

Read Jane Darcy, “The Representation of Nature in *The Wind in the Willows* and *The Secret Garden*” (Critical Readings)

Unit 18: E.B. White, *Charlotte's Web*

Read Perry Nodelman, “Text as Teacher: The Beginning of *Charlotte's Web*” (Critical Readings)

Fantasy

Unit 19: C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

Unit 20: Philippa Pearce, *Tom's Midnight Garden*

Unit 21: J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

Read Alexandra Mullen, “Harry Potter's Schooldays” (Critical Readings)

Unit 22: Lois Lowry, *The Giver*

Unit 23: Neil Gaiman, *Coraline*

Unit 24: Roald Dahl, *Matilda*