

Department of English & Writing Studies

**Children's Literature**  
**English 2033E (650)**  
Summer 2021

**Instructor:** Dr. Gabrielle Ceraldi  
**Email:** gceraldi@uwo.ca

**Delivery Type:** Online

Course Description

This course examines the development of literature for and about children from its roots in fairy tales, nursery rhymes, and nonsense literature. Animal stories, adventure tales, picture books, and domestic novels will be considered alongside visits to fantasy realms like Wonderland, Neverland, or Narnia. A central focus will be the assumptions about children and childhood that shape these texts, all produced by adults based on what they believe children enjoy, want, or need.

**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

Essay 1	Due by the end of Unit 8	2000 words	25%
Essay 2	Due by the end of Unit 18	3000 words	35%
Quizzes			5%
Participation			5%
Final exam			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.

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>

### Reading Schedule

If you are taking this course during the Fall/Winter term, then you should complete one unit for each full week of the term. During the Summer term, you should complete two units per week. For exact dates, please consult the Schedule, as well as the Course Information forum. The texts listed below may be purchased from the Western Bookstore; if you have access to these texts in a different edition, you may use whatever edition you have.

### 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
- "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
- "Ashputtle" – Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm
- "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

#### Unit 2: Revisionist Fairy Tales

Robert Munsch, *The Paper Bag Princess*

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

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

#### Unit 3: George MacDonald, *The Princess and the Goblin*

### Nonsense

#### Unit 4: *This Little Puffin*

Dennis Lee, *Alligator Pie*

#### 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 (these can also be found at

<http://www.nonsenselit.org/Lear/learwk.html>)

- "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*

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*

### **The Domestic Novel**

Unit 13: Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women*

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

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*

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

### **Fantasy**

Unit 19: J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

Unit 20: C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

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

Unit 22: Lois Lowry, *The Giver*

Unit 23: Neil Gaiman, *Coraline*

Unit 24: Roald Dahl, *Matilda*

### How to Proceed

For each unit in this course, you should begin by reading the assigned text(s) (listed above). When you have finished the book (or the stories/poems), you should click on the learning module for that unit (these can be found on the left-hand side of the course page on OWL). Within the learning module, you'll find a document containing notes on the assigned readings. These notes are designed to play the role that a lecture would play in an on-campus course.

At the end of the course notes for each unit, you will find several self-testing questions. These questions are designed to help you assess your grasp of the lecture material. In some cases, the answer can be found explicitly in the course notes; in other cases, the questions prompt you to think more deeply about the ideas presented in the notes.

You will also find several discussion questions listed below the self-testing questions. You should choose ONE question per week to respond to (this means you can choose one of the two assigned texts each week for your forum response); these can be found within the learning module, and all the forums are also available from the left-hand menu. The Participation mark of 5% will be based on your activity in the forums; in order to receive credit, your post must contain at least one quotation from the assigned text. The forum questions for the previous week will be locked shortly after that week ends.

Additional optional readings can be found at the end of each unit. For each unit, I have provided a link to a relevant article or website that provides additional information about the author and/or text. While these readings are not required, you may find them helpful, especially for books on which you are writing an essay. (If you use information from these sites, be sure to cite the source using MLA format!) Many of these articles contain controversial ideas; if you'd like to respond to or discuss these articles (or other issues arising from your reading), you can use the "Comment" button at the bottom of each learning module.

### **Marks for Forum Participation**

For full credit, you must post a total of 10 substantial posts (spread out over 10 different weeks). A substantial post is one in which you discuss something specific about the text at hand, using quotations and specific details from the text and commenting on their significance. There is no penalty for contributing less substantial posts (such as expressions of agreement with another student or general reflections about childhood and/or children's literature), but these posts do not count towards your grade. Since there are twelve weeks in the course, you may skip posting in a given week if circumstances arise such as illness or other conflicts; if you have circumstances that prevent you from posting for longer than a two-week period, you should seek academic consideration by contacting the academic counsellors in your dean's office.

### **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 Schedule document or the welcome message on the Course Information forum.) 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 the quiz. Your mark will be based on your best 10 quizzes (out of a total of 12); this is designed to address any situations that may arise where you are unable to complete a quiz due to illness or other circumstances, as the OWL does not allow me to extend the deadline for individual students. If an illness prevents you from completing several quizzes (3 or more), you should seek academic consideration through your home faculty.

### **Citing Sources**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a 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 offense (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). Any student who commits this or any other act of academic dishonesty will receive a grade of zero and a note will be placed on his or her academic record.

Here are some steps to follow to avoid plagiarism

- 1) Do as much work as possible *before* beginning your secondary research – read the novel(s), think of a thesis statement, sketch out your argument. Write down your own ideas before reading any criticism.
- 2) Develop a note-taking style that clearly indicates what ideas are your own and what ideas are taken from another source. You can use different coloured pens, cue cards, or any other method that helps you distinguish your own ideas from those of other critics.
- 3) Feel free to disagree with any critic you are reading – don't simply regurgitate somebody else's argument.
- 4) When you are incorporating someone else's ideas into your essay, acknowledge them within the essay itself using
  - a. quotations marks (whenever you have even part of a sentence that's the same as the original)
  - b. introductory tag phrases – i.e.                      According to John Smith...  
   As Smith points out...  
   Smith observes that...
  - c. a reference in parentheses that indicates the source of the idea (often just the page number, if you've already used a tag phrase)
- 5) Cite the source in full in your Works Cited list (see guidelines below).

## MLA Guidelines

Your essays should follow the MLA format:

- 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 (i.e. Surname 1).
- 3) Double space.
- 4) If you use a snappy, attention-grabbing title, follow it up with an informative sub-title that indicates your topic and the works you will be discussing (i.e. Touching Pitch: Moral Ambiguity in R. L. Stevenson's *Treasure Island*).
- 5) Titles of books should be *italicized*. Titles of short poems, articles, and short stories should be put in quotation marks. 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.
- 6) If the quotation is longer than four lines, do not use quotation marks; instead, indent the passage five spaces from the left (one tab) and continue to double space.
- 7) 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.
- 8) List all the works you have referred to in a Works Cited list at the end of your paper. Use the following format in your Works Cited list:

Author's last name, Author's first name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, date of publication.

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

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

## General Information

1. Essays must be submitted before 11:55 pm on the due date in order to count as on time. The accepted method of submission is to upload the essay to the Assignments tool on the OWL as a document or pdf. Any essays submitted after the due date will be penalized 1 mark per day. No essay will be accepted beyond three weeks after the due date. Email is not an accepted method of submission.
2. Requests for extensions will be handled according to the practices recommended by the university; these may evolve based on the COVID-19 pandemic, and if any changes do occur, I will post an announcement on the OWL. Currently, students can obtain academic consideration by either (a) submitting a Self-Reported Absence or (b) submitting appropriate documentation to the academic counsellor in their home faculty (see page 8 of this syllabus for more details). Please email me only after you have completed one of these two steps. Essays should be double-spaced in a 12-pt Times Roman font and they should follow MLA format (see guide above).
3. The final exam for this course will have an open-book "take-home" format. The questions will be posted on OWL 24 hours prior to the start of the scheduled exam time slot, and students must upload their answers to OWL prior to the end of that scheduled time slot. Please note that you may not use a Self-Reported Absence for final; anyone who is unable to write the exam must obtain permission for a special exam through academic counselling in their home faculty.

4. All grades, once assigned and/or posted, are final. While formal appeal processes do exist in the Department of English and Writing Studies, grades will not be changed after the fact in response to emailed requests and/or GPA requirements, nor will the weighting of assignments be altered for individual students.

### Grading Rubric

#### **THESIS**

- Is there a unifying idea in this paper?
- Is this idea specific, original, and argumentative?
- Is this idea explained clearly near the beginning of the paper?

#### **ARGUMENT**

- Does the material in this paper go beyond description to explore the implications and meaning of the text(s)?
- Have opposing ideas been acknowledged and given a convincing response?

#### **ORGANIZATION**

- Do paragraph breaks reflect a meaningful shift in topic?
- Does the opening sentence of each paragraph identify the central idea of that paragraph and its relationship to the thesis?

#### **USE OF SOURCES**

- Is there textual evidence to back up each claim in the paper?
- Is there an attention to detail (word choice, imagery, etc.) that adds intricacy to the argument?
- Are quotations integrated smoothly and cited correctly?

#### **STYLE**

- Is the writing style clear, concise, and readable, so that the focus falls on the ideas in the paper?
- Are sentences punctuated correctly?

A+ (90-100) = Excellent ("Yes, absolutely!" in all categories)

A (80-89) = Very Good ("Yes" in almost all categories)

B (70-79) = Good ("Yes" or "Somewhat" in all categories)

C (60-69) = Satisfactory ("Somewhat" in most categories OR "No" in one category)

D (50-59) = Poor ("No" in several categories)

F (49 or below) = Unsatisfactory (does not meet the requirements for the assignment)

### Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

### **Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are not met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see [Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#) and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

### **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

### **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](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.

### **Accessibility**

The final exam for this course is expected to take approximately 3 hours to complete, and students will be allotted more than 24 hours. Consequently, most students who typically require extra time accommodation will not need any special arrangement for this assessment. The quizzes are timed and will be 10 minutes in length. If you are a student with a disability and require extra time accommodation, please ensure your accommodations are active on the Accommodated Exams website <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/Accommodatedexamssignup/> and email me ([gceraldi@uwo.ca](mailto:gceraldi@uwo.ca)) to discuss how they will be implemented.

### **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.