

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH & WRITING STUDIES
English 2033E (650): Children's Literature Online
Summer 2014

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Note: this is a preliminary course syllabus. The finalized version will be posted on OWL the first day of classes.

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.

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

READING SCHEDULE

You should complete two units for each full week of the Summer term.

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
- “The Chinese Red Riding Hoods” – Isabelle C. Chang
- “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

Also, read the Grimm brothers’ “Cinderella,” available at <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm021.html>

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
- “The Tale of the Handkerchief” – Emma Donoghue

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

Nonsense

Unit 4: *This Little Puffin*

Dennis Lee, *Alligator Pie*

Read Perry Nodelman, “The Nursery Rhymes of Mother Goose: A World Without Glasses” (coursepack)

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” (coursepack)

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*” (coursepack)

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 coursepack: 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*” (coursepack)

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

Read Perry Nodelman, “Text as Teacher: The Beginning of *Charlotte’s Web*” (coursepack)

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*

Read Alexandra Mullen, “Harry Potter’s Schooldays” (coursepack)

Unit 22: Lois Lowry, *The Giver*

Unit 23: Neil Gaiman, *Coraline*

Unit 24: Roald Dahl, *Matilda*

Assignments and Grade Distribution

Essay 1	Due May 23	1000 words	10%
Essay 2	Due June 13	1500 words	15%
Essay 3	Due July 11	2500 words	25%

Quizzes		5%
Participation		10%
Final exam	TBA (July examination period)	35%

NOTE: As in all courses in the Department of English, students must pass both the term work and the final examination in order to pass the course. Students whose term and final exam grades combine to result in a grade of 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. Your final grades are released by the Registrar's Office.

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 text(s), you should click on the learning module for that unit (these can be found on the left-hand menubar on the OWL course site). 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.

Assignments

Essay topics and further information about essay writing will be posted to OWL at the beginning of the course. Assignments must be submitted online.

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 at least a week 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 10 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.

University Policy on Academic Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 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 Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at

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

The full policy is set out here:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

This policy remains in place for all assignments, including those worth less than 10% of a student's final grade.

Please note: instructors are not permitted to review medical documentation; all requests for academic accommodation that include doctor's notes, etc., regardless of the total worth of the assignment to a student's final grade, must be submitted by the student directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean's office and not to the instructor. It will be the Dean's office that will determine if accommodation is warranted.

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.

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 section of the website or the Tests & Quizzes folder.) 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 10% 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. Post as many discussions and responses as you like.

I will be locking the discussion threads for each week so that the discussion stays on track. For example, the discussion thread for Units 1&2, which corresponds to the first full week of classes, will be locked on **Sunday, May 11 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. They may be helpful as review.

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 Academic Calendar for more information). 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.

Citing Sources and Plagiarism

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. This includes Internet sources. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. Further details of the University policy on academic offences can be found on pages 19-21 of the 2013 Academic Calendar .

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 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>).

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) quotation marks (whenever you have even part of a sentence that's the same as the original)
 - (b) signal 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 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.
- 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 underlined or *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. Use the following format for the entries in your Works Cited list:
 Author’s last name, Author’s first name. “Title of article or short story.” Title of Book.
 City of publication: 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/>

See the Guidelines for Properly Citing Sources (MLA style tips) on Western’s Department of English website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergrad/MLAstyletips.html> for more detailed information.

Further Information for Students

For English Department regulations governing Term Work, Exams, Faculty Office Hours, Academic Relief (appeals, petitions, complaints), and other matters, please consult “Information for Students“ on our Department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergrad/info-for-students.html>

University Policy on Prerequisites

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees.