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# C&I 316.01: Children's Literature and Critical Reading

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Children's Literature and Critical Reading  
Curriculum and Instruction 316  
Spring, 2002

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Office Hours: Tues., Thurs. 11:00-12:00 a.m., Mon. 1:00-2:00 p.m.; others by appointment only.

Class Times: Tuesdays/Thursdays 8:00-9:30, 9:30-11:00

I. Purposes of Children's Literature and Critical Reading are:

1. to introduce students to an extensive variety of children's literature including classic, contemporary, and multicultural titles across the genres;
2. to develop in students an understanding of the elements of and evaluation criteria for artistic and literary style;
3. to familiarize students with major authors and illustrators and with award winning titles and authors/illustrators for the broadest base of the literature of childhood and give students a chance to compare and contrast different works, authors, and genres of children's literature;
4. to provide opportunities for students to respond to children's literature in a multitude of formats that are appropriate for different learning styles and developmental stages of children;
5. to identify trends and issues in children's literature and how they affect writing, publishing and teaching of the literature;
6. to foster in students a lifelong appreciation of the value of literature in the life of a child and in the whole language elementary classroom;
7. to give an opportunity for students to read extensively in children's literature, learning how to guide children to respond to literature in a variety of ways;
8. to explore the evaluative criteria and selection tools and other professional materials for children's literature applicable across curriculum language arts as well as other curriculum specific topics;
9. to promote the use and value of children's literature for personal and academic reasons.
10. to create enthusiastic, versatile, skillful, and critical readers of children's literature.

II. Learning Objectives:

Students will

1. enjoy reading a variety of genres of literature and sharing some of their reading with their peers through such activities as storytelling, creative drama, choral and oral readings, and expressive writing assignments.
2. become familiar with the characteristics of folklore, fantasy and science fiction, historical fiction, contemporary realistic fiction, picture books, non-fiction and biography, poetry, and multicultural literature so that they can respond accordingly to genre and quality as well as strategies for guiding students to responses.
3. become familiar with leading authors/illustrators of each of the above genres for a range of materials to use with students in K-8 settings.
4. use selective criteria to determine literature appropriate to specific grade level needs and for the widest possible application within a curriculum to meet the interests of the students and the goals of the lessons including balancing the selections, identifying stereotypes, and other criteria.
5. develop a multi-media approach to the teaching of literature for a specific subject area or topic or theme.
6. respond to literature in a variety of formats and determine formats most appropriate for use in K-8 classrooms including how to adapt materials, instruction and assessment to promote the most effective learning through children's literature.
7. learn to use "thinking" questions and "open-ended" questions as a tool for teaching with children's literature to address all levels of thinking skills and to experience different learning strategies.
8. learn and use literary and artistic elements with specific whole class titles as part of the selection criteria.
9. match developmental needs of children with examples of children's literature.

10. demonstrate growth in understanding of children's literature in written and oral communications utilizing a professional approach to literacy skills.
11. show an awareness of diverse cultures and their past and present contributions to classrooms.
12. be able to manage a classroom of diverse students while pursuing literacy skills.
13. build a portfolio of titles and authors and illustrators of children's literature while beginning to build a personal library of children's literature and professional books.
14. be knowledgeable of many Internet sites that aid in the study of children's literature as well as selection tools with reviews and comments about the use of children's literature in K-8 settings.

### III. Course content:

1. Definition and characteristics of children's literature
2. Developmental needs of children
3. Whole language applications to the elementary classroom
4. Evaluation, selection of literature for children
5. Trends and issues in children's literature
6. Reader's portfolio of responses to genre samples that tie the literature to the everyday world
7. Genre studies including value, selection criteria, and notable authors and illustrators for picture books, traditional literature, nonfiction and information books, historical fiction, realistic fiction, science fiction/fantasy, poetry, and multicultural literature
8. Responses to literature that may be applied with a whole-language approach to literature
9. Modeling of teaching units, techniques, objectives, and assessment using children's literature that promote lifelong learning and enjoyment
10. Justification/rationale for selections of literature for use in a classroom that help alleviate censorship problems
11. Application of literary and artistic characteristics and elements to examples of children's literature
12. Reading of a sampling of award winners

### IV. Rationale:

The catalog description of C&I 316 includes an introduction to the use of children's literature in the elementary classroom and library media center. To this end, handling, assessing, and valuing many titles and authors and illustrators of children's literature become imperative. With the movement in elementary teaching toward the whole language approach to teaching and the research that supports using literature at the center of the curriculum, prospective teachers and teacher librarians need a knowledge of as broad a range as possible of titles, authors, illustrators, and teaching applications/methods for children's literature. The specific purpose of having students become aware of as many children's authors, titles, and illustrators as possible during this course means students will be able to use these resources in subsequent pre-service and graduate Education classes and will have these resources for their beginning teaching careers.

### V. **Required children's literature texts:**

Darigan, D., Tunnell, M., & Jacobs, J. (2002). *Children's literature: Engaging teachers and children in good books*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

#### **Required children's books:**

- Bridges, R. (1999). *Through my eyes*. New York: Scholastic.
- Carle, E. (1977). *The grouchy ladybug*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Creech, S. (1994). *Walk two moons*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Fleischman, P. (1988). *Joyful noise: Poems for two voices*. Illus. by E. Beddows. New York: HarperCollins.
- Henkes, K. (1991). *Chrysanthemum*. New York: Mulberry Books.
- Lowry, L. (1993). *The giver*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Polacco, P. (1994). *Pink and Say*. New York: Philomel Books.
- Thomasm, K. (1997). *The truth about Sacajawea*. Jackson, WY: Grandview Publishing.

### **Recommended writing resource:**

*Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). (2001). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

### **Bibliography of recent books on children's literature:**

In addition to the required text and children's books, students will need to use and become familiar with a bibliography of materials available at the Missoula Public Library and the Mansfield Library on the University of Montana campus. Selected titles from those sources include:

- Barstow, B. & J. Riggle. (Compilers). (1989). *Beyond picture books: A guide to first readers*. New York: Bowker.
- Beetz, K. H. & S. Niemeyer. (1989). *Beacham's guide to literature for young adults*. New York: Beacham Publishers.
- Children's catalog*. (1991). Bronx, NY: H.W. Wilson, Company.
- Donavin, D. P. (1992). *Best of the best for children: Books, magazines, videos, audio, software, toys, travel*. Chicago, IL: American Library Association.
- Dreyer, S. (Ed.). (1985). *The bookfinder: A guide to children's literature about the needs and problems of youth aged 2-15*. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.
- Freeman, E. & B. Lehman. (2001). *Global perspectives in children's literature*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Gillespie, J. (Ed.). (1990). *Best books for children: Preschool through the middle grades*. New York: Bowker.
- Gillespie, J. (Ed.). (1990). *Best books for junior high*. New York: Bowker.
- Hillman, J. (1999). *Discovering children's literature* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Kiefer, B. (1995). *The potential of picturebooks: From visual literacy to aesthetic understanding*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Lima, C. W. (Compiler). (1989). *A to zoo: Subject access to children's picture books*. New York: Bowker.
- Lynch-Brown, C. & C. M. Tomlison. (1999). *Essential of children's literature* (3rd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Lukens, R. J. (1999). *A critical handbook of children's literature* (6th ed.). New York: Longman.
- May, J. P. (1995). *Children's literature & critical theory*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mikkelsen, N. (2000). *Words and pictures: Lessons in children's literature and literacies*. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Norton, D. E. (2001). *Multicultural children's literature: Through the eyes of many children*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Norton, D. E. (2002). *Through the eyes of a child*, (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Peterson, C. S. & A. D. Fenton. (1992). *Reference books for children*. Metuchen, NY: Scarecrow Press.
- Pratt, L. & J. J. Beaty. (1999). *Transcultural children's literature*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Rasinski, T. V. & C. S. Gillespie. (1992). *Sensitive issues: An annotated guide to children's literature K-6*. New York: Oryx Press.
- Savage, J. (2000). *For the love of literature: Children & books in the elementary years*. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Stoodt-Hill, B.D. & L. B. Amspaugh-Corson. (2001). *Children's literature: Discovery for a lifetime*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Vandergrift, K. (1990). *Children's literature: Theory, research, and teaching*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.
- VanMeter, V. (1990). *American history for children and young adults: An annotated bibliographic index*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.
- Winkel, L.. (Ed.). (1990). *Elementary school library collection*. Williamsport, PA: Brodart Company.

Winters, C. J. & G. D. Schmidt. (2001). *Edging the boundaries of children's literature*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Journals and other publications appropriate for use in selecting and evaluating children's literature: (Some may be available only at the Missoula Public Library, at school libraries, or through interlibrary loan at Mansfield.)

ALAN Review  
Book Links: Connecting Books, Libraries, and Classrooms  
Book Report  
Booklist  
The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books  
The Children's Literature Association Quarterly  
Children's Literature in Education  
The Dragon Lode  
The Horn Book Guide to Children's and Young Adult Books  
The Horn Book Magazine  
The Journal of Children's Literature  
JOYS (Journal of Youth Services in Libraries)  
Language Arts  
The Lion and the Unicorn  
The New Advocate: For Those Involved with Young People and Their Literature.  
The Reading Teacher  
School Library Journal: The Magazine of Children's, Young Adult, and School Librarians  
Teacher-Librarian  
VOYA: Voices of Youth Advocates

Internet Resources and addresses change frequently. However, one of the best resources for children's literature with many connections to other sites is the following address:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/index.html>

The textbook website at [www.prenhall.com/darigan](http://www.prenhall.com/darigan) gives much help in reading and understanding the text. Much of the website is integrated into the lessons found in your book.

Numerous readings related to the content of this course are available on the web. Visit the various links from the addresses above, but explore for yourselves the many sites available from the web. Careful evaluation of a web site is extremely important, so we will be discussing the evaluation process for web site use.

#### VI. Teaching-Learning Strategies and Instructional Methods:

include practicing, modeling, and participating in the following classroom activities: reading and responding to children's literature through writing, speaking, listening and viewing; researching and writing about the selection, evaluation, and responses to literature; discussion and lecture, individual, small and large group interactions with literature and peers that promote lifelong learning and enjoyment and understanding of the human experience; keeping personal response journals; working together through dialogue journals and group activities; taking critical stances about children's literature; assignments of units, papers, and group activities; creative dramatics; hands-on use of trade books and their evaluations; and other effective teaching techniques that promote thinking and learning.

Required assignments:

**Samples** of assignments are given below, however, others will be discussed and handouts given throughout the semester.

1. Participation in class discussions which shows careful and thoughtful reading of your assignments is a given. Activities in class also reflect your preparation for learning. Missing class means you miss participating in class. Therefore, class participation grades (including quizzes or work completed in class) cannot be made up. This is automatically recorded as a missing grade of 0.

2. You are expected to keep a journal of your examinations of examples of children's literature. Read as many books for children as possible. Explore CD's, videos, and other media for children that reflect literacy as well. Visit bookstores, libraries, any place that will help you see what and how children

are responding to children's literature. Response journals will be collected two times during the semester. You will be asked to respond in writing during class two times during the semester to essay questions about any trade book you have read for this class. The professor may select 1-3 titles from your journal about which you will need to respond.

3. Group projects vary depending on the class members. Earlier group projects included curriculum units, rationales for selections, genre presentations, etc. Since teachers need to work collaboratively in school settings, this group project calls for many examples of give and take from all of us. Group projects may be conducted using the Internet available at the School of Education (Carolyn Lott) web site.

4. Essay assignments result from class discussions and needs. The essay, however, is very important and should be viewed as an example of your professional skills. Writing as a professional teacher means you have several audiences who can sometimes be very critical of your writing skills. Always use your best professional writing skills for this and all class work.

5. You will be preparing and presenting presentations of children's books to students in preK-8 classrooms. Reading and presenting samples of the literature prepares you to be a better teacher in all curriculum areas.

5. Other daily assignments and class activities may be given. This class requires extensive reading and reflection. Please pace yourself so work does not become a burden at deadlines.

6. All written work completed outside class time must be word-processed.

7. Mid-term and final examinations are scheduled for the computer labs. **You are required to use the word processor for the examinations.**

8. Some of you may need some help with any or all of these assignments and requirements in this class. The writing lab operated by University College is available in LA109, 243-2275. Please check for hours. Students Tutoring Students (STS), part of the retention program for the University, is also available in the Lommasson Building, UC Wing. Please check with Tami Breske at 243-2565 or 243-2294. STS charges \$4.50 per hour for tutoring. Additionally, Education Opportunity Program provides tutors for English. Be sure to check for qualifications to apply at 243-5032 in Corbin Hall.

#### VII. Materials:

The nature of this course requires that you bring a variety of materials with you to class, including your Darigan, Tunnell, and Jacobs textbook. Most every class session you will need examples of children's literature that you have read to demonstrate points you have studied and wish to make in class. Therefore, you will be using many of the following materials for this class:

- Texts and sample genre selections
- Bibliographies of available materials
- Research on evaluation, selection, and application of children's literature
- Multi-media productions of selected children's literature
- Samples of quality selections of titles and authors
- Multiple handouts on notable authors, trends and issues, and teaching ideas
- Group-generated and individual presentations
- Internet resources on authors, titles, and teaching strategies
- Professional materials from all media to aid in using children's literature across the curriculum

#### VIII. Evaluation

An on-going assessment of the work and participation of each student throughout the semester will determine the end of term evaluation. Evaluation criteria for each assignment will be shared as the specific assignments are given. All students must attend and participate in class. Participation in class discussions, which shows careful and thoughtful reading of your assignments, is assumed. Activities in class also reflect your preparation for learning. Missing class means you miss participation in class. Therefore, class participation grades (including quizzes or work completed in class) cannot be made up. Such missing work is automatically recorded as a "0." A daily attendance sheet will be passed during each class; it is your responsibility to sign it each day.

All students must turn in assignments **on time or points will be subtracted**. Points earned for **in-class assignments (which cannot be made up)**, journals, group projects, papers, exams, and all other assignments will be averaged as follows:

Reading journals	30%	
Outside class essay		15%
Examinations (2)	25%	
Group project	15%	
Other (daily participation assignments, homework, etc.)	15%	

Grades will be assigned as follows:

90-100% = A
80-89% = B
70-79% = C
60-69% = D
Below 60 = F

IX. Other pertinent information:

1. On September 5, 2002 C&I 316 will meet at the Missoula Public Library. You will need to be present and in the library itself by 8:10 a.m. or by 9:30 since Karen Riherd, children's librarian, will be presenting and will need to start on time. You will also have an assignment to complete in the Missoula Public Library when Karen finishes. Attendance will be taken as usual.
2. Last official day to add or drop this class via Cyberbear is September 23.
3. Final examination times are as follows:  
Sec. 01, 8-9:30 10-12, Thursday, 12/19  
Sec. 02, 8:30-11:00 10-12, Wednesday, 12/18
4. This class requires much reading and thinking about pieces of literature written specifically for students in pre K-8 grades. At any time you may discuss with me the purposes and goals behind assignments or the way assignments are designed. I look forward to our learning together about children's literature.
5. Again, all written assignments completed outside class must be word-processed.