

ENG 2280: CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Class: Section 02 CRN# 46416 or 03 CRN# 46416
TR 1:40-2:55 (Section 3) or TR 3:05-4:20 (Section 2)
Classroom: Section 3 - Holt 207, Section 2 - Holt 204
Prerequisite: one lower level course in written communication in English

Instructor: Meghann Meeusen

Contact Information:

meghann-meeusen@utc.edu, 586-651-0289

I prefer email as the method to contact me with inquiries regarding class, and I check for messages regularly. Please only use my private phone for dire emergencies, and keep in mind I am not typically available to answer.

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 12pm-1:30pm, Lupton Library 309

I am also available outside of these times by appointment.

TEXT REQUIREMENTS

Required Book List

Gail Carson Levine, *Ella Enchanted*

Kate DiCamillo, *The Tale of Despereaux*

Barry Deutsch, *Hereville: How Mirka Got Her Sword*

Neil Gaiman, *Coraline*

JM Barrie, *Peter Pan*

Lenore Look, *Alvin Ho: Allergic to Babies, Burglars, and Other Bumps in the Night*

Margarita Engle, *Firefly Letters*

Kadir Nelson, *Heart and Soul*

Christopher Paul Curtis, *Mighty Miss Malone*

Shaun Tan, *The Arrival*

The following picture books are required, but are also on reserve at Lupton Library (and can be read in a shorter period). If you have a copy, please bring it to class, but doing so is not required.

Lane Smith, *Science Verse*

Brian Floca, *Locomotive*

Maurice Sendak, *Where the Wild Things Are*

Edward Gorey, *Gashlycrumb Tinies*

Required Class Materials (should have each day of class)

- Composition Notebook (hard cover, bound pages—not spiral/binder)
- Glue Sticks and Post-It Notes

Please bring a paper or digital copy of all books to class each day during the week they are assigned. This is an important element of actively participating in class discussion, and thus doing so is considered part of participation grades.

In all cases, any edition/version of a text is acceptable, including digital texts. Listening to books via audio is also encouraged, although a hard copy is necessary for class. Finally, printing is required for the submission of several assignments, so please make sure you consistently have the means by which to do so.

COURSE CONTENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A survey and evaluation of some of the best literature for children, with special attention to literature for preschool and elementary school years.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn to identify the social, cultural, and ideological messages presented in texts and identify what books and other media composed for children reflect about contemporary society.
- Students will interrogate how scholars and teachers think, write and speak about literary texts, producing examples of this unique literary approach and articulating the defining characteristics of such literary discourse in its various forms.
- Students will investigate the common and conflicting trends in how scholars and teachers think about texts with particular attention to analysis and interpretation.
- Students will demonstrate and reflect on their own use of purposeful writing techniques and rhetorical strategies as fitting within the conventions of scholarly writing and other forms of writing about literature.
- Students will prepare for future studies in literature by building foundational skills in literary analysis, criticism and technique.
- Students will explore and articulate explicit and implicit ideologies, studying texts in terms of their social context with special attention to intertextuality, historical basing and position within contemporary culture.

- Students will build knowledge about foundational topics, concepts, theories and approaches to children's texts.
- Students will develop a language with which to discuss children's texts built on contemporary theoretical perspectives.

ASSIGNMENTS & STUDENT WORK

Daybook- 20%

The daybook is one of the most significant ways of engaging with course material this semester, kept in the form of a composition notebook. It is my hope that students will take this daybook with them everywhere, and they must bring it to class each day with a glue stick. Anything can go in it--random thoughts, more developed musings, things you want to remember, poems, pictures, mementos, etc., as well as assignments we do in class. At the end of the semester, students will turn in a portfolio that will demonstrate the depth of work they have done in the daybook throughout the semester, collecting work in a folder by selecting and photocopying entries. Students will include entries that demonstrate roles they have enacted throughout the semester, such as questioner, creative thinker, analytic thinker, and reviser, as well as significant moments of learning and meaning.

Reading Quizzes and Learning Artifacts- 20%

As the foundation of this course is the study of literature, students should complete all readings in their entirety by assigned due dates and prepare to discuss these texts fully in the classroom setting. To demonstrate their thoughtful reading, students will complete short unannounced quizzes at the beginning of class throughout the semester. Quizzes will not focus on detail identification, but rather students will be asked to make connections in short answers that rely upon careful reading for completion. These quizzes cannot be made up in the event of absence.

Additionally, students may be asked to bring a particular item or short piece of writing that can demonstrate learning or research into a particular text or idea related to the week's reading. These required "learning artifacts" will be announced at least one class in advance.

Participation- 10%

Students are expected to actively participate in the course, sharing their ideas and contributing to the classroom community in thoughtful, prepared ways. This participation should include: vocal contributions to large and small group discussions, preparation for class including completing all readings and bringing

assigned books/daybook to class, and active listening during all activities and lecture. Verbal participation is a significant portion of the overall participation.

Individual Project Analysis and Proposal- 10%

Several weeks before the major project is due, students will turn in a piece of short analytical writing explaining the interpretation and research drive thesis that will act as the basis of the major project, including supporting evidence and at least four critical sources. In addition, students will complete a short questionnaire describing their research into the particular type of project they will complete. Students will have the choice to receive written or verbal feedback on their analysis and proposal, and they are encouraged to schedule a conference outside of class with the instructor to receive feedback on their planning documents.

Individual Writing Project- 25%

Scholars and teachers who study literature write in a variety of ways, utilizing numerous approaches and multiple genres. This project asks students to choose their own approach to writing about literature, purposefully and thoughtfully selecting and creating a project that will demonstrate their understanding of the unique ways that scholars and teachers think about literary texts. Suggested genres (types of projects) will be provided, and this project also includes a rationale.

While topics are student selected, they must reflect an understanding of an important or unique aspect of children's literature, with particular attention to trends, patterns, related critical theory, or historical significance. Students should base their projects on a text or texts considered children's literature, including at least one book we have not read together in class. If a student has previously taken ENG 2290, he/she must select a genre/topic divergent from previous assignments.

Final Exam- 15%

Students may use their daybook to complete the final exam, which will include quote, term, and concept identification, asking students to recall major themes and ideas from the semester. It will also include an essay section requiring students to interrogate their own critical thinking activities and the ways that scholars think and write about literature. Please bring a bluebook to the final exam.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

90%-100% A	exceptional, outstanding work
80%-89% B	strong, thoughtful work
70%-79% C	average, complete work
60%-69% D	problematic, sloppy work
59% F	incomplete, careless work

ATTENDANCE AND LATE WORK

As active participants in an academic community, students must attend class every day. Furthermore, regular attendance is necessary for successful completion of all major assignments. Students may miss up to three total days with no penalty. After the third absence, 3% will be deducted from the final grade for each additional absence. Attendance will be completed via a sign in sheet, and it is students' responsibility to sign in each day to receive credit. There is no system of excused versus unexcused absences, and students need not bring any documentation to account for missed class. All absences, regardless of reason, count as an absence, as does failure to sign in. There will be no exceptions to this policy without a university sanctioned directive.

If a student must be absent, he/she is responsible for all missed content, including turning in assignments on their given due date. Please demonstrate professionalism by arriving to class on time. Additionally, it is a personal pet peeve of mine when students pack up their belongings before I have dismissed them, as it is extraordinarily distracting during a time when I typically announce important summary points or assignment requirements for the next class. Please do not begin preparations to leave the classroom until class has officially ended. Finally, any health conditions that prevent students from regular attendance should be discussed with me at the beginning of the semester.

I do not accept late work. Although I reserve the right to make exceptions to this policy, this is rare and is only possible after a meeting with me. If you foresee a problem completing an assignment on time, please speak to me at least 48 hours in advance, at which time I am far more open to making arrangements.

OTHER PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

Student Conduct: As adults in the academic community, a respectful and appropriate behavior code is expected at all times. However, should this behavior code be broken by a disruptive or disrespectful student, he/she may be asked to remove him/herself from class for the day. For information on specific behavior expectations, please see the UTC Student Conduct Code.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism: Students are responsible for making themselves aware of and understanding the policies and procedures found in the Student Code of Conduct, including those policies regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Although plagiarism comes in many forms, students are expected above all to produce their own work in an ethical and honest way. Additionally, issues of correct citation and use of resources are crucial to both work as a student and development as a writer, and students are expected to consider carefully these tenets in the production of all class texts. Students should consult with the instructor if they are

uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment.

Students engaging in any level of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will have to meet with the instructor outside of class to discuss academic penalty based on the severity of the offense, which can include a failing grade on the assignment or a failing grade in the entire course.

ADA STATEMENT: If you are a student with a disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) and think that you might need special assistance or a special accommodation in this class or any other class, call the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 425-4006 or come by the office, 102 Frist Hall
<http://www.utc.edu/disability-resource-center/>.

If you find that personal problems, career indecision, study and time management difficulties, etc. are adversely affecting your successful progress at UTC, please contact the Counseling and Career Planning Center at 425-4438 or
<http://www.utc.edu/counseling-personal-development-center/index.php> .

Writing Center: The Writing Center at UTC is a free service offered to all members of the University community. The Center is staffed by peer tutors, graduate students, and English instructors, and offers various services to writers, including tutorials, workshops, and access to resources. Please visit the Writing Center in Holt 119.

UTC E-mail: To enhance student services, the University will use your UTC email address (firstname-lastname@mocs.utc.edu) for communications. See <http://www.utc.edu/> for your exact address. Please check your UTC email on a regular basis. If you have problems with accessing your email account, contact the Help Desk at 423/425-4000.

Computers in the Classroom: Although I encourage students to use personal computers in the classroom, once class begins, every student should be actively engaged in class content. Electronic readers may be used for class texts when available as long as the format remains reasonably similar AND students bring the text on their laptop computer or an electronic reader to class.