September 2007

Children's and Young Adults' Literature, Syllabus

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In this course, we will study authors, readers, illustrators and their illustrations, scholars and theories, awards, and reviewing media of children’s and YA literature. By the conclusion of our study, you will demonstrate an understanding of the history, traditions, and chief characteristics of literature written for and read by children and young adults, the leading authors, illustrators, and scholars of the genre. You will know the primary facts and points of view for a variety of issues in children’s and YA literature including genre distinctions, academic status, gender politics, and censorship. Throughout the course you will engage in critical thinking, analytical reading, discussion supported by research and textual evidence, and writing about children’s and young adult literature. You will be knowledgeable regarding a wide variety of resources for the study and analysis of children’s and YA literature and be proficient at using these resources for writing a thesis-driven research essay.

**Texts**

_Norton Anthology of Children’s Literature_, Paul Zipes et al, editors

http://www2.wwnorton.com/college/titles/english/nacl/contents.htm

- _The Outsiders_ by S. E. Hinton
  - Norton 093997538
- _Weetzie Bat_ by Francesca Lia Block
  - Puffin 014038572x
- _The Giver_ by Lois Lowry
  - Harper Trophy 0064408183
- _Ender’s Game_ by Orson Scott Card
  - Laurel Leaf 0440237688
- _Harry Potter_ by J. K. Rowling
  - Scholastic any one book
- _The Golden Compass_ by Philip Pullman
  - Ballantine 0345413350
- _Fallen Angels_ by Walter Dean Myers
  - Scholastic 0590409433
- _An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793_ by Jim Murphy
  - Clarion Books 0395776082
- _I Am Rembrandt’s Daughter_ by Lynn Cullen
  - Bloomsbury USA 1599900467
- _Al Capone Does My Shirts_ by Genifer Choldenko
  - Harpem Tempest 0142403709
- _Maus, A Survivor’s Tale: My Father Bleeds History_ by Art Spiegelman
  - Pantheon 0394747232

Select ONE of the following realism novels by October 2.

- _The Meaning of Consuelo_ by Judith Ortiz Cofer. (Americas Award)
  - Farrar, Straus, Giroux 0374205094
- _Ironman: A Novel_ by Chris Crutcher. (Edwards Award)
  - Harper Tempest 060598409
- _The Chocolate War_ by Robert Cormier. (Edwards Award)
  - Laurel Leaf 0440944597
- _Deliver Us from Evie_ by M. E. Kerr. (Edwards Award)
  - HarperTempest 0064471284
- _Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry_ by Mildred D. Taylor. (ALAN, Newbery Awards)
  - (in the Norton Anthology)
- _Running Out of Summer_ by Peter Morgan. (Local author, GSU Law student)
  - Cavendish 9789812612977
Calendar

Week 1
August 21 Introduction. Definition. Caldecott Awards
For next class: Read “Defining Children’s Literature” by Peter Hunt and
“Unknown Childhood by P.L. Travers. Begin your reading journal. Explore
the Norton Anthology of Children’s Literature website:
http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nacl/index.html; read the
syllabus carefully and send me an email (see directions at end of syllabus).

August 23 Ways of Reading, The Child Within, John Newbery and The Pretty Little
Pocket Book, Newbery Award
For next class: Read “What is a Picture Book?” by Uri Shulevitz and “How
Picture Books Work” by Perry Nodelman. Research next week’s guest
speaker and write out five questions you hope he might answer in his talk
about children’s books, their significance and ways of becoming a lifelong
reader.

Week 2
August 28 Guest Speaker, Dr. Carl Patton, President of Georgia State University
For next class: Norton: Alphabets pp. 1-31 and Picture Books pp. 1051-97
and C1-C32
Read any twenty children’s poems (Norton 1117-1291). Select one to read
to the class.

August 30 Children’s Nursery Rhymes, Verse, and Poetry
For next class: Write a brief essay 300-400 words about your memory of the
first book that you read or of a book being read to you. Read Norton:
Introduction to Fairy Tales 175-88.

August 1-Sept. 2 AJC Decatur Book Festival: Lynn Cullen, Judy Schachner, Chris Raschka,

Week 3
September 4 Library Research Instruction Location: Classroom 1 Library North
For next class: research and begin drafting Caldecott essay that is due Sept.
18

September 6 No class meeting--research and write Caldecott essay that is due Sept. 18
For next class: Read excerpts from Uses of Enchantment by Bruno
Bettelheim, The Ethics of Elfland by G. K. Chesterton, and from Tree and
Leaf by J. R. R. Tolkien. Read Norton: Perrault, “The Master Cat; or, Puss
in Boots” 185-89; LePrince de Beaumont, “Beauty and the Beast,” and
Grimms, “Hansel and Gretel” 199-214

Week 4
September 11 Fairy Tales
For next class: Norton: “Little Red Riding Hood” tales 338-386.
September 13  
**Fairy Tales**  

Week 5  
September 18  
**Fairy Tales**  
Caldecott essay due.  
For next class: Read Hinton, *The Outsiders*.

September 20  
**Realism—The Outsiders, Margaret A. Edwards Award**  
For next class: Read first half of Myers, *Fallen Angels*.

Week 6  
September 25  
**Historical Fiction—Fallen Angels, Edwards Award**  
For next class: complete *Fallen Angels*  

September 27  
**Fallen Angels**  
For next class: Read Lowry, *The Giver*  

Week 7  
October 2  
**Dystopias—The Giver, Edwards Award; Realism book selection due**  
For next class: Read Block, *Weetzie Bat*. Suggestions and topics for the midterm exam due tomorrow, Oct. 3.

October 4  
**Fantasy—Weetzie Bat, Edwards Award**  
For next class: Study for midterm.

Week 8  
October 9  
Midterm exam  
For next class: Read first half of your selected Realism Book.

October 11  
**Realism** Book choice  

Week 9  
October 15  
Midpoint of Semester, last day to Withdraw with a W.  
Senior Portfolios due.

October 16  
**Realism** book Discussion  
For next class: Read Norton: Introduction to Science Fiction, 897-904 and Heinlein *Podkayne of Mars: Her Life and Times*, Chapters I-III, 915-29.
October 18  
**Science Fiction**  
For next class: Read first half of Card, *Ender’s Game*  

Week 10  
October 23  
**Science Fiction**—*Ender’s Game*  
For next class: Description of research topic due. Complete *Ender’s Game*  

October 25  
*Ender’s Game*  
For next class: Read first half of Pullman, *The Golden Compass*  

Week 11  
October 30  
**Science Fiction / Fantasy**—*The Golden Compass*  
For next class: Complete *The Golden Compass*  

November 1  
*The Golden Compass*  
For next class: Read one volume of Rowling, *Harry Potter and ...* If you have read all seven volumes, select one of your favorites, and reread at least 100 pages in order to respond to the distributed questions and topics.  

Week 12  
November 6  
**Fantasy**—*Harry Potter*  
For next class: Norton: Introduction to the *Life Writing* section, 1485-90 and excerpts from *The Diary of Anne Frank*, 1516-38  

November 8  
**Nonfiction, Autobiography, Biography**  
For next class: Read Speigelman, *Maus, A Survivor’s Tale: My Father Bleeds History*  

Week 13  
November 13  
**Graphic Novel, Autobiography, Biography** *Maus I*  
Annotated bibliography due.  
For next class: Read Murphy, *An American Plague*  

November 15  
**Nonfiction, Orbis Pictus Award**—*An American Plague*  
For next class: Complete your research essay. Bring Norton Anthology to next class.  

Thanksgiving Week  
No Class  

Week 14  
November 27  
**Myth, Legend, Hero**  
Research Essay Due.  
For next class: Read Cullen, *I Am Rembrandt’s Daughter*
November 29

**Historical Fiction**—*I Am Rembrandt's Daughter*
For next class: Read first half of Choldenko, *Al Capone Does my Shirts*

Week 15

December 4

**Historical Fiction**—*Al Capone Does My Shirts*
For next class: Complete *Al Capone Does My Shirts*. Suggested questions and topics due tomorrow, Dec. 5

December 6

*Al Capone Does My Shirts*
For next class: Study for Final Exam.

December 11

Final Exam, 7:15-9:15

**Assignments**

1. **Reading Journal/Participation**  15 %  Every Class
   All **readings** completed such that you can participate meaningfully in discussions and written responses. You should keep a **reading journal** that indicates significant information about the genre, publication, author, themes, and context of each work. You should record in the journal significant passages (always noting the page number and reason for your selection). Record also key questions and ideas that you wish to discuss in class. Bring your journal to class every day. You will take class notes in this journal also. Your reading journal will be randomly checked at least three times during the semester. Journal and class participation—15 %.

2. **Caldecott Essay.**  20 %  September 18
   The Randolph Caldecott Medal is given annually to an artist for creating the most distinguished picture book of the year. The Medal is given by the Association of Library Service to Children (ALSC) of the American Library Association (ALA) and is named for Randolph Caldecott, a famous Victorian illustrator. The ALA/ALSC website lists the history, criteria, and winners at [http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsscholarships/literaryawds/caldecottmedal/caldecottmedal.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsscholarships/literaryawds/caldecottmedal/caldecottmedal.htm).

   Select one picture book that has received a Caldecott Medal or a Caldecott Honor Award to read, view, and research. Read your selected book and research other books by the artist, the other winners for that year, other Caldecott winners, the art and illustration of picture books and in general, children’s literature in general. You will need to study also the terms and criteria of the Medal. Use all of your research and study to explain why your selected book received its honor.

   You will not just describe the book, but will argue for the merits that contribute to the Medal. Your essay must be titled (something other than the book’s title) and should name in the narrative the book title and author, artist, year of the award. Include a Works Cited list at the conclusion of the essay that 3-5 pages of text in 12-point, Times New Roman font with 1-inch page margins. Any illustrations, photocopies of pictures, etc. may be included in addition to the 3-5 pages of text. The essay is due September 18.
3. Research Essay 25% November 27

All projects must emanate from the course study. Do not repeat a project you have already done. Your topic must be approved by me.

Basic components common to all research essays for this course:
1. A research topic or question that you seek to explore.
2. A thesis that you seek to prove.
3. An essay written according to MLA style and format.
4. Your essay will demonstrate an appropriate depth of inquiry, amount of research, care in effective communication, effectiveness in detail, proper grammar, syntax, and punctuation.
5. A Works Cited of 5 or more sources that vary in date of publication or origin, author, source, media (i.e. not all internet sources, not all journal articles, not all from 1950, not all by the same author). Let the Works Cited reflect the breadth and depth of your research.
6. 9-11 typed pages, not counting the Works Cited, double-spaced in 12-point font
7. Evidence of practical, creative, and academic intelligences (Successful Intelligence by Robert Sternberg).

Broad suggestions:
Read further — other titles by an author studied in class; criticism and scholarly debate on one text or author studied in class; other titles / authors of a particular genre of children’s or young adult literature; other titles / authors referred to in class as influence on or influenced by or of interest regarding a particular topic.

Possible topics that might be used for developing research questions to lead to a hypothesis and thesis — gender roles, the readers of children’s literature; the settings of children’s or young adult literature; library collections, censorship; censorship issues; the authoring or marketing of children’s or young adults’ literature; genre distinction; any of the genres (including poetry and all of its various sub-genres) of literature mentioned in class, in the readings, or in the anthology; any historical aspect or period of children’s or young adults’ literature; multicultural children’s or young adults’ literature; stereotypes in children’s or young adults’ literature; moral values/didacticism in children’s or young adults’ literature; reviewing of children’s or young adults’ literature; the childhood reading of a children’s or young adults’ author; the biography of or other works by a children’s or young adults’ author; adaptations of children’s or young adults’ literature to other media or for different audiences; illustrations or illustrators of children’s or young adults’ literature; the various editions or illustrations for different editions of a particular title; awards for children’s or young adults’ literature; children’s or young adults’ literature for other nationalities; thematic treatments.

General considerations — Choose a topic about which you feel passionate. Review the essays from class and the bibliographies at the end of the Norton Anthology. Review the resources in the Library Course Guide prepared by Ms. Rebecca Drummond: http://www.library.gsu.edu/research/liaison.asp?ldID=19&guideID=142. Two collections of essays and readings from which I have drawn the handouts, Only Connect and Sharing Literature, have suggestions for further study. Review the Norton website (introductions, timeline and other readings. Look at the available bibliographies in your area of interest. The websites listed on the
syllabus and on the Pullen library site should open lots of doors to for you. Start now to think and do your preview research so that you can choose wisely, for you will need to invest a fair amount of time and effort before you begin to write or produce. Initiate a discussion with me as soon as possible regarding your ideas and prospects.

Prepare a list of initial topics of interest prior to Ms. Drummond’s presentation in the library on September 4.

You should write a paragraph describing your research goals by October 23.

Hand in an annotated bibliography of at least five resources by November 13.

These interim deadlines are to assist you in meeting your goal of producing an excellent paper or project and so that I can give you assistance. The description and annotated bibliography (with my comments) must be handed in with your final paper on November 27.

4. Midterm 15% October 9

Short answer and well-developed paragraphs covering all materials prior to October 9. Suggested questions and topics from students for a study guide that are turned in by October 3 via email to pmchaney@gsu.edu will be distributed to all who contribute.

5. Final Exam 25% December 11

Short answer, well-developed paragraphs, and comparative essays covering all materials in the course. Suggested questions and topics from students for a study guide that are turned in by December 5 via email to pmchaney@gsu.edu will be distributed to all who contribute. 25 %

Summary of assignments: Grade Quality Points and Percentages

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>A 4.00</th>
<th>100-93%</th>
<th>A- 3.70</th>
<th>92-90%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading and reading journal</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>B+ 3.30</td>
<td>89-87%</td>
<td>B 3.00</td>
<td>86-83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caldecott Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>C+ 2.30</td>
<td>79-77%</td>
<td>C 2.00</td>
<td>76-73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Essay</td>
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<td>Midterm</td>
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<td>Final exam</td>
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Class Policies

This syllabus provides a general plan for the course. Deviations may be necessary.

Due dates are final; late work is not accepted except in RARE instances.

Familiarize yourself with the GSU Writing Studio, its website http://www.writingstudio.gsu.edu/, and services. See link at end of “For Students” to valuable handouts (including Annotated Bibliography) from the Agnes Scott College.

Plagiarism is representing someone else’s work as your own—in a summary, paraphrase, direct quotation, or effort. Plagiarism of any kind, to any degree, is unacceptable and may result in failure of the assignment or of the course. It is simple but aggravating, disappointing, and time-consuming for me to recognize work that is plagiarized. Please see your college handbook for university policies in regard to plagiarism (www.cas.gsu.edu/files/policies/files/AcademicHonesty.doc)
Attendance is imperative. You should plan to arrive on time to class to begin promptly at 7:15 pm and should stay for the entire class, until 8:30. If you already know that this is hardly feasible, make the necessary choices and changes now rather than later. Anyone with three absences prior to October 15 may be withdrawn from the course. If something, I assume an emergency, precludes you from attending class, please let me know as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to get notes and handouts from a classmate so met your fellow students now.

Senior Portfolios are due October 15 for English majors graduating December 2007. Consult the descriptions of portfolio requirements and English department advisors if you have questions.

Learning Outcomes for the English department can be provided upon request. They are located under Department Publications at http://english.gsu.edu/documents.php.

After reading this syllabus thoroughly, send me an email response (pmchaney@gsu.edu) from the email account that you intend to check frequently. Include the following information: your major and concentration and minor; names and times of other classes you are taking this semester; other responsibilities such as employment (number of hours), family/pet care, etc.; any questions that you have regarding the class, the assignments, the syllabus; reasons why you are taking this class and affirmation that you accept the responsibilities of the course. I will acknowledge your email, answer your questions, and take your address into my address book so that you will receive future messages appropriately.