

English 3310: Children's Literature  
Spring 2011  
MWF: Irby 304, 9-9:50 a.m. and 11-11:50 a.m.

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*Instructor:* Dr. Sonya Fritz  
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*Office:* Irby 317 C  
*Office phone:* 450-5127 (however, I prefer email)  
*Office Hours:* MWF 10-11 a.m. and 2-4 p.m.

### Course description

This class will be conducted as a survey of children's literature primarily in the English tradition. We will examine various genres of children's literature, including prose, picture books, poetry, and films.

The goals of this course are to:

- improve our grasp of the complexities of children's literature by engaging in literary and cultural criticism as we read and analyze the texts selected
- consider how our chosen texts represent the child and childhood and how literature for children reflects the social or cultural contexts in which it was written
- study early specimens of literature for children in order to better understand the conventions, values, and anxieties that have shaped children's literature in the past and continue to inform contemporary texts
- develop practical critical thinking skills as we analyze the complex situations presented in literature and probe our texts for new meanings, both in class discussions and in writing assignments

- discuss issues of text selection for use in the elementary classroom, focusing primarily on the literature itself and its content rather than pedagogical methods. Students must keep in mind that this course, as an English rather than an Education course, is designed to benefit future teachers of children's literature by offering training primarily in literary analysis.

### Required texts and materials

- Goodnight Moon, Margaret Wise Brown
- Dr. Seuss's ABC, Theodore Geisel
- City by Numbers, Stephen Johnson
- Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!, Mo Willems
- Snowy Day, Ezra Jack Keats
- Chato's Kitchen, Gary Soto
- A Pocketful of Poems, Nikki Grimes
- The Mysteries of Harris Burdick, Chris Van Allsburg
- The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales, Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith
- Little House on the Prairie, Laura Ingalls Wilder
- Stuart Little, E.B. White
- James and the Giant Peach, Roald Dahl
- What Jamie Saw, Carolyn Coman
- Diary of a Wimpy Kid, Jeff Kinney
- Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear, Lensey Namioka
- Madlenka, Peter Sís
- Literature for Children: A Short Introduction, David L. Russell

Our required reading for the course also includes online texts of which you will not have to purchase hard copies. I will post files of the texts on myUCA for you to access.

You are also required to have:

- a UCA e-mail account that you check *daily*
- access to a good dictionary and a handbook with up-to-date information on MLA format
- opinions and insights that you develop and voice in class. The success of this course depends in large part on its members' willingness to seriously and actively engage the material and participate in discussions.

### Policies

Scholastic Dishonesty Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty. The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

Other University Policies. Please be sure to familiarize yourself with the policies outlined in the UCA Student Handbook, particularly those pertaining to sexual harassment and academics.

Authorized Absences. Students are required to come to class on time and to complete all assignments. Daily attendance will be taken via sign-in sheet ( I will call roll the first few class periods in order to learn students' names). You are responsible for providing evidence and/or appropriate documentation to substantiate "authorized absences." Excused absences can include illness requiring a doctor's visit, the serious illness of an immediate family member or illness of a dependent, the death of a relative, etc. Please direct any questions concerning what constitutes an excused absence to me. If you know in advance that you will miss a class, you are responsible for informing me. You are allowed three unexcused absences. Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in the deduction of two percentage points from your final grade. Please use your three absences wisely—they are not intended for those days when you feel like sleeping in, but rather for days when you cannot come to class but your absence is not excused. Nine or more absences, excused or otherwise, provide grounds for the student to be dropped from the course.

Keep in mind that absences due to illnesses that do not necessitate a doctor's visit (unless chronic, as documented by a doctor) or trips out of town for weddings or family vacations are not excused absences. Please also try to avoid scheduling routine medical check-ups, such as dental cleanings or yearly physicals, during class time—I will not excuse these absences.

Students who arrive to class after half of the class period (calculated by the duration of the class period in minutes) or more has passed will be counted absent and will not be allowed to sign the sign-in attendance sheet. Chronic tardiness may be penalized by counting each third tardy as an unexcused absence.

If you are absent on the day of an exam, you are responsible for contacting me as soon as possible to schedule the make-up exam. If your absence is excusable, you are responsible for providing documentation to substantiate this at the time of the make-up exam. Five late points will be deducted from the exam grade if the absence is not excused (i.e., you overslept). Five late points may also be deducted if you do not contact me in a timely manner to schedule the make-up exam, whether your absence is excused or not.

Students who miss class are responsible for obtaining information regarding missed class notes, material, and assignments. It is my policy to email students information regarding missed class notes only for excused absences and only when the student has sent a request via email specifying student name, course number and section, and class date(s) missed. I strongly recommend that students also talk with their classmates about what they have missed.

Classroom Behavior. Disruptive classroom behavior is defined as anything that would interfere with an instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program. *Please remember specifically* that you should silence or turn off all cell phones before class, and that all individuals and the opinions they express in class are to be treated with respect during class discussions.

Paper Format. Unless otherwise specified, *all* homework and assignments should be typed (letter-quality printing required) in 12-point Times New Roman font with one-inch margins and double-

spaced on white bond paper, according to MLA guidelines. Documentation must be provided in MLA format.

Late Papers. Assignments that are turned in late without an excused absence/absences are subject to a deduction of 3 points per day that they are late.

Appropriate Attribution. Any assignment that fails to include clear and appropriate attribution of sources will receive a grade of zero ("0").

Grades. Grades are not negotiable. Your final course grade will be based on your work in the course. If you are concerned about a grade, see me during office hours or make an appointment to meet with me.

Acknowledging Assistance. All drafts and supporting documents for papers and presentations must be your writing—that is, your own ideas and your own words. If you work with a tutor or get feedback on your work from a classmate or friend, you should plan on discussing your writing, but let the other person know that all writing must be your own. Any paper that shows evidence of assistance and fails to acknowledge that assistance will be considered a case of scholastic dishonesty and reported as such.

Handouts. The handouts used in this course are copyrighted. "Handouts" are all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to exams, assignment prompts, syllabi, in-class materials, worksheets and guides posted online, sample papers, and peer review worksheets. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy handouts unless I expressly grant permission.

E-mail, Phone, and Fax. I will not discuss grades on e-mail or over the phone and, unless otherwise specified, I will not accept assignments attached to e-mail messages. The English department will not accept papers or excuses for absences faxed to me.

## Students Needing Support Service

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Office of Disability Services, 450-3613.

## The University Writing Center

The UCA Writing Center, located in Thompson 109, offers students one-on-one tutoring and online assistance with their writing. For more information, see the web site: [www.uca.edu/writingcenter](http://www.uca.edu/writingcenter).

## Statements of the Professional Education Unit

Conceptual Framework. Faculty members involved in the preparation of professional educators, as well as professional education candidates, public school representatives, and members of the community share a vision for the Professional Education Unit at the University of Central Arkansas (UCA). This vision is one of Enhancing Educator Efficacy through Reflective Decision-Making.

The vision encompasses the development of candidates' abilities to examine problems, formulate options, consider decisions, and evaluate outcomes while embracing an awareness of and sensitivity to human diversity. The vision is achieved by candidates' acquisition of reflective decision-making skills through self-understanding, course work, and field and internship experiences.

Use of Technology. Candidates will demonstrate the basic academic skills of computer applications through the use of Microsoft Office and through accessing the Internet and email through class assignments.

Diversity. The entire course focuses on meeting the cognitive, social, and emotional needs of diverse learners. In addition to examining the influence of societal factors on learning, candidates will investigate elements of effective multicultural education and practices appropriate for students with varying learning styles, English language learners, and students with exceptionalities. (See course objectives)

Professional and Ethical Conduct Policy. Because the standards of the education profession exceed those addressed in other university or college polices, the COE Professional Education Unit has adopted a Professional and Ethical Conduct Policy to address those professional and ethical behaviors. In essence, this policy states that students must adhere to the prescribed professional and ethical standards of the profession for which they are preparing. The policy document provides a definition of professional and ethical misconduct, guidelines for reporting misconduct, and an appeal process. It is located on the "policies" link of the College of Education website.

#### Course Requirements and Grade Determination:

No extra credit will be offered in the class. Grades—including final averages—will not be rounded up, except in the case of 59.5/ 69.5/ 79.5/89.5.

Final grade values:

A	90-100	B	80-89
C	70-79	D	60-69
F	59 and below		

Throughout the semester, you will write one 4-5-page picture book analysis, complete one film adaptation project, give one formal in-class presentation, and take three exams. *All papers must be typed and submitted as a hard copy unless I instruct you otherwise.* More detailed descriptions of the papers will be given in class as the semester progresses. The exams will be objective, covering the material that we have discussed in class. They will include fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, identification, and paragraph-answer questions.

Exam #1	15%
Picture book analysis (4-5-page essay)	20%
Exam #2	15%
Presentation (given in class on an author from the selection sheet)	15%
Final exam	15%

Film adaptation project 20%

### Schedule of Reading, Assignments, and Paper Due Dates

This schedule is subject to change at the professor's discretion. The readings and assignments listed under each date are those that you will be expected to have completed *by that date*.

Friday, January 14: Introduction to course.

Monday, January 17: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—no class.

#### Historical contexts

Wednesday, January 19: "Sun, Moon, and Talia" by Giambattista Basile; "Sleeping Beauty" by Charles Perrault; "Beauty and the Beast" by Jeanne-Marie le Prince de Beaumont (file available on myUCA).

Friday, January 21: "The Story of Grandmother"; "Little Red Cap" by Johann and Wilhelm Grimm (file available on myUCA).

Monday, January 24: A Token for Children by James Janeway (file available on MyUCA); Russell pp. 6-12.

Wednesday, January 26: Der Struwwelpeter by Heinrich Hoffman (file available on MyUCA). (discuss presentation assignment; sign up for authors)

Friday, January 28: The Adventures of Two Dutch Dolls and a Golliwogg, Bertha Upton (file available on MyUCA).

#### Picture books

Monday, January 31: Introduction to picture books. Russell pp. 134-51.

Wednesday, February 2: Dr. Seuss's ABC, Theodore Geisel; Russell pp. 122-24.

Friday, February 4: City by Numbers, Stephen Johnson; Russell pp. 124-26.

Monday, February 7: Goodnight Moon, Margaret Wise Brown. (begin presentations)

Wednesday, February 9: Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!, Mo Willems.

Friday, February 11: Exam #1.

Monday, February 14: The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales, Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith.

### Multiculturalism in children's literature

Wednesday, February 16: *Snowy Day*, Ezra Jack Keats; Russell pp. 84-93.

Friday, February 18: *Chato's Kitchen*, Gary Soto.

Monday, February 21: *Chato's Kitchen*, continued; "Authentic Enough" by Susan Guevara (pdf file available on myUCA).

Wednesday, February 23: Introduction to poetry; Russell pp. 165-76.

Friday, February 25: *A Pocketful of Poems*, Nikki Grimes.

Monday, February 28: Picture book analysis paper workshop; bring three copies of your *complete* rough draft to class.

Wednesday, March 2: *Madlenka*, Peter Sís.

Friday, March 4: *Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear*, Lensey Namioka chs. 1-4. Picture book analysis due.

Monday, March 7: *Yang the Youngest*, chs. 5- end of novel.

Wednesday, March 9: Exam #2.

### Family life in children's literature

Friday, March 11: *Stuart Little*, chs. 1-9.

Monday, March 14: *Stuart Little*, chs. 10-15.

Wednesday, March 16: *Stuart Little* film. TBA reading of film adaptation—posted as a file on MyUCA.

Friday, March 18: *Stuart Little* film, continued.

Monday, March 21: Spring break, no class.

Wednesday, March 23: Spring break, no class.

Friday, March 25: Spring break, no class.

Monday, March 28: *Little House on the Prairie*, Laura Ingalls Wilder chs. 1-8; Russell pp. 245-50.

Wednesday, March 30: *Little House on the Prairie* chs. 9-17.

Friday, April 1: *Little House on the Prairie* chs. 18-end of novel.

Monday, April 4: James and the Giant Peach, chs. 1-21.

Wednesday, April 6: James and the Giant Peach, chs. 22-end of novel.

Friday, April 8: James and the Giant Peach film. TBA reading—posted as a file on MyUCA.

Monday, April 11: James and the Giant Peach film, continued

Wednesday, April 13: What Jamie Saw, Carolyn Coman chs.1-5; Russell pp. 93-97.

Friday, April 15: What Jamie Saw, chs.6-end of novel.

Monday, April 18: Diary of a Wimpy Kid pp. 76-150.

Wednesday, April 20: Diary of a Wimpy Kid pp. 151-end of novel.

Friday, April 22: Film adaptation project workshop; bring three copies of your *completed* rough draft to class.

Monday, April 25: The Mysteries of Harris Burdick, Chris Van Allsburg.

Wednesday, April 27: Film adaptation project due. Discussion of final exam.

Monday, May 2: Final exam for 11 a.m. class, 2-4 p.m.

Wednesday, May 4: Final exam for 9 a.m. class, 2-4 p.m.