

ELAN 3110: Children's Literature and Oral Language

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Office Hours: After class or by appointment

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Tue. 8:00-11:45

Aderhold 114

Required Texts:

Lynch-Brown, C. & Tomlinson, C. M. (2008). *Essentials of children's literature* (6th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Children's Literature

A key component of this course is reading and responding to a wide range of children's literature. We will discuss these requirements in detail on the first day of class. Possible outlets for obtaining children's literature are the Curriculum Materials Library, GIL Express, Athens-Clarke County Public Library, or the library media center in the school where you do your fieldwork. You may want to order longer books from an online bookseller or visit a local bookstore. Start locating books early in the semester. If you need assistance with this, please ask me.

Other required readings will be posted in WebCT.

Purpose and Goals

ELAN 3110 is the first in a two-course sequence of instruction in children's language and literacy development for Early Childhood Education majors at UGA. The primary focus of this course is children's literature, how it might be used in elementary classrooms, and what learning involving children's literature can look like. We will interact with a wide variety of children's texts and consider how they can support literacy in the elementary classroom. We will focus on oral language development, cultural responsiveness, and connecting children's literature with other literacy practices. We will also explore a number of tools for finding, selecting, and using children's literature.

The goals of this class are:

- To read and gain familiarity with a wide variety of children's literature
- To understand the multiple ways children's literature can support both the curriculum and personal reading
- To become familiar with criteria and resources for selecting children's literature for the elementary classroom
- To explore linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom
- To gain an understanding of ourselves as readers
- To respond to and discuss children's literature, the use of children's literature in the classroom, and related issues
- To participate in a community of readers through face-to-face and virtual means

Note: The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Course Requirements

Attendance, Participation and Oral Literacy

This class is designed as a community of readers and learners. Learning in this class will depend on the contributions of each member of the community. For this community to thrive, all of us need to be present, prepared, and participating. I do understand that health problems and other unforeseen issues may occasionally prevent you from being in class. If you will miss class, please let me know in advance. You are responsible for any material missed. More than one absence will result in a 5-point reduction in your final grade. Punctuality is also of critical importance. If lateness becomes a problem, I will request a conference with you.

A significant portion of class time will be devoted to discussing children's literature and course readings. While we each have individual comfort levels with class participation, it is expected that everyone will support the class community and their own learning by actively engaging in class discussions. There will be very little lecture in this class. It is essential that you have read, thought about and written about the assigned readings prior to class. Active participation is defined as:

- providing evidence that you have read the assigned materials
- engaging in thoughtful and reflective oral and written response to the readings
- working productively in small and large groups

The success of this class also depends on a trusting environment and the free exchange of ideas. Children's literature can be controversial at times. There may be topics and issues that come up in class that evoke a strong personal response or challenge your thinking. I encourage you to share different viewpoints on the topics that come up in class and online discussions. In this class, we must respect and listen to each other's ideas, and see differences as an opportunity to learn from one another.

As evident in the description above, we will make oral literacy a key part of our classroom environment through whole group and small group discussions. I encourage you to think beyond the borders of this class and contribute connections to other readings and experiences. Literacy classrooms must be, by definition, safe and nurturing spaces, and we will work together to create the kind of supportive learning environment in which written and oral communication can flourish.

Assignments

All written assignments should use 12-point Times New Roman font and be double-spaced, unless you need to make adjustments for creative purposes. All papers should be revised, proofread, and edited before they are turned in.

Responses to readings – 30 pts. – due Monday at noon each week we have class

Responding in writing to literature and academic texts can be a powerful way to reflect on important and difficult ideas and issues raised by those readings. Written responses will be used to set the stage for our classroom discussions. After completing the readings for each class, you will post a written response to the appropriate discussion board in WebCT no later than Monday at noon. For longer texts, three to four full paragraphs is a good guideline to keep in mind, although longer responses are acceptable if a topic or text is particularly engaging for you. For picture books and shorter texts, one or two substantive paragraphs are acceptable. Each response should include APA style citations for the texts you are discussing.

Your responses to picture books and other books that you find on your own should start with a one or two sentence summary. Please do not summarize the texts you choose to read from the lists on the syllabus, the textbook or the articles. I am most interested in elements of the texts that interest you both personally

and professionally. As a reader, what parts of the text evoked memories, or connected to other materials you have read? You might also comment on the plot, theme, setting, or language of the text, or any other aspect that you find interesting. I encourage you to discuss parts of the texts you find troubling or unsettling, as well as any questions you have.

In addition to your personal response, you may also have thoughts about the text as a professional. How does this text fit into your vision of your future classroom? Considering texts from both a personal and professional perspective is worthwhile. At times these perspectives may overlap, and at other times they may be in conflict. I encourage you to include elements of both in your responses.

During the semester, there will be two or three responses that take a more structured format. We will discuss these in class. Your responses should be posted to the appropriate WebCT discussion board by noon on Monday each week we have class. Please post your response as inline text, not as an attachment. Your responses will be posted to a small group discussion board. We will establish these groups during class. Read the postings of other members of your group before each week's class meeting. Responding to other people's posts is welcome, but not required. Bring a hard copy of your response to class each week, as well as the books you read.

Reading Autobiography – 10 points – Due 9/9

This is a short paper about your life as a reader (2 to 4 pages, double spaced, typed). You might organize this paper chronologically, categorically, or any other way you see fit. I encourage you to think openly about what you include as reading and texts. You might consider the following questions:

- What is your earliest memory of reading?
- When or how did you learn to read?
- What kinds of texts were present and / or valued in your environment?
- Who influenced your reading (positively or negatively) and how?
- How has reading impacted your everyday life, both past and present?

Keep in mind that what you did not read or did not like to read can also shape who you are as a reader in significant ways.

Author Study – 15 points – Due 10/7

Working alone or with a partner, choose a single children's literature author to study in depth. I will provide a list of suggested authors, but you are welcome to choose your own as well. We will sign up for authors on 9/9 to avoid duplication in choices.

Your written product will consist of 6 main parts, totaling 7 to 10 double-spaced pages in length.

- 1.) Rationale – Write a brief rationale for your choice of author. What contributed to your decision? Include any specifics on content, theme, writing style, illustrations, characters, past experience, or other factors in your decision-making.
- 2.) Author Biographical Information - Compose a brief biographical overview of your author's background. Include any information you find about how the writer started out, topics the writer tends to discuss in their writing, and awards or honors the writer has won.
- 3.) Bibliography – Provide a list of your author's major works, with descriptions of at least eight titles, complete with a brief summary and general description of the book (poetry, fiction, informational, grade level, etc.). Also, be mindful of the cultural diversity present (or absent) in the books you choose.
- 4.) Responses to books – Each member of the group will prepare a book talk on one of the author's texts, to be presented in class on 10/7. Each group member should also include a written response to the book they book talk (similar to the weekly WebCT posts) in the author study write up.
- 5.) Web resources – Find at least three online resources that relate directly to the author. Write a 2-3 sentence description of each site pointing to features that you find particularly useful.

6.) Classroom Applications – Discuss several ways the works of this author might be used in the classroom. Think creatively about applications and cross-curricular uses.

Separately, create a one to two page handout of your author study, highlighting the main points of the author biographical information, bibliography, web resources, and classroom applications. Post this handout to the appropriate WebCT discussion board.

On October 7, each group will give a 10-minute presentation of your work, during which each member of the group will give a book talk. We will discuss book talks in class.

Field Reports – 20 points – Due weekly during fieldwork

1.) Connected Lessons (7 points) – Teaching with children’s literature – Integrate children’s literature into your connected lessons and give me a copy. Use multiple formats and genres if at all possible. Write a 2 to 3 page (double-spaced) report describing how the lessons using children’s literature went and what you might change when you implement it again. Did you notice anything unexpected (i.e. children’s responses) with the literature you chose?

2.) Texts and Resources Survey (7 points) – Over the course of a week, observe the texts and resources that students use and have access to in your classroom and how the students use them. What kinds of materials are in the classroom library? How much time are they given to engage with children’s literature? How often do students go to the school library media center? What texts do they have access to in the school library media center? How much time do students spend reading independently? What kinds of materials do students select to read? What might be missing from the resources students have access to? Share your observations and reflections in a 2 to 3 page (double-spaced) discussion.

3.) Read Alouds (6 points) – Create two different read aloud experiences. One of these should be a whole class read aloud, the other with an individual student. Engage the student(s) in discussion with each read aloud. Describe the conversations that occurred, the child(ren)’s response to the book and your reflections on the experiences. How was each experience different? Also include your rationale for selecting each book in this 2 to 3 page paper.

Text set – 15 points – Due 12/2

For this assignment, you will create a text set relating to a topic in the curriculum. This text set should be comprised of 15 or more resources representing multiple genres, formats, and approaches to a topic. Start by selecting a topical standard from the curriculum. Then, using the resources and tools we have discussed this semester, select your texts.

The set should include the following:

- A book appropriate for a class read aloud (be sure to indicate this on your handout)
- A wide variety of formats, including print, visual, audio and digital texts (no more than two digital texts, please.)
- Genres including fiction, informational literature, and poetry
- Resources appropriate for a range of learning styles, cultures and reading levels

For the last class, bring in as many of these resources as you can, preferably all of them. We will display these sets in the classroom, and you will give a short (3 to 5 minute) overview of what you collected. I encourage you to be creative in your selections, and to keep the wide range of learners you will be working with in mind as you make your choices.

Also, create a two-page handout complete with the following:

- The complete curricular standard the text set is created around
- A full listing of all the resources you collected, cited in APA style, along with a two sentence description of each material and its potential use

Post your handout to the appropriate discussion board in WebCT.

In addition to your handout, please submit a 2 to 4 page reflection on the process of creating this set. Please include comments on the following, in addition to any other insights you discovered on the way: What steps did you go through in creating the set? What tools did you use and how helpful were they? What resources were easy to find? What resources were more difficult to find? What did you consider when making your selections? How does your collection address the wide variety of learners in your future classroom? What needs are left unmet?

Final Paper – Overall Course Reflection – 10 pts. – Due 12/9 at 5 p.m.

The final paper (5 to 7 pages, double-spaced) is intended to synthesize your thinking through the semester, drawing specifically on what you've read, written, and observed. You may use any of the readings, writings, and activities we have done this semester, as well as your fieldwork, for this assignment. Specifically, address your ideas for how you will use children's literature in your future classroom, how your thinking has changed or been reinforced by our work this semester, and areas for further personal growth and learning regarding children's literature. I encourage you to quote and reference readings and writings from throughout the course. Use APA style to cite all texts.

Policies and Other Information

Grading Policy

Assignments will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Evidence of thought and reflection
- Attention to and engagement with issues in the readings
- Completed according to assignment description
- Relevance to self as a teacher and learner
- Promptness
- Careful proofreading

Detailed rubrics for major assignments may be distributed in class. For late submissions, ten percent of the grade for the assignment will be deducted for each day the assignment is late. No work will be accepted three days after the due date. If I feel your work is not meeting the criteria for the class, I will request a conference with you. If you would like to discuss a grade you received on an assignment, contact me within one week of receiving the grade. Since much of the learning in class depends on active participation, I reserve the right to deduct up to five points from your final grade due to lack of participation.

Grading Scale:

A: 93-100 / A-: 90-92 / B+: 88-89 / B: 83-87 / B-: 80-82

C+: 78-79 / C: 73-77 / C-: 70-72 / D: 60-69 / F: below 60

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and require academic accommodations, please contact me individually as soon as possible. You may also speak with Disability Services at (706) 542-8719 to discuss the process for requesting accommodations.

Academic Honesty

Our class will strictly adhere to UGA's guidelines for academic honesty. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Guidelines can be found at http://www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/culture_honesty.htm. All students are responsible to inform themselves about these standards before performing any academic work.

Cell Phones – Please turn cell phones off during class.

Communication – Use WebCT email when contacting me about anything related to class. I will check WebCT for emails once or twice a day, and I will respond to you within 24 hours, except on weekends. You should check your WebCT account every day or two as well for updates and emails. If you have an urgent concern, email me at egfriese@uga.edu.

Additional Course Guidelines – We will develop additional guidelines and professional expectations on the first day of class.

Course Schedule

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
8/19	Getting Started Overview of Course Selecting Children's Literature	n/a	n/a
8/26	Picture Books Reading Aloud Book Signup Reader Response	Textbook Chapters 1 & 5 Apol (WebCT) Read 6 picture books: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Caldecott winners or honor books <u>and</u> • Choose 3 (total) from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -wordless books -alphabet books -concept books -counting books -pattern books -picture books for older readers 	Responses to readings Be ready to sign up for longer books today.
9/2	Culturally Diverse Literature Reading and Literature Discussing Literature Author Study Ideas	Textbook Chapters 2 & 11 Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</i> (Taylor) 	Responses to readings
9/9	Informational Literature Learning About Literature Author Study Signup	Textbook Chapters 3 & 10 Harvey (WebCT) Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 books of informational literature (one should be longer than a picture book) 	Responses to readings Reading autobiography due Be ready to sign up for your author study.
9/16	Poetry Plays	Textbook Chapters 4 & 12 Read 3 poetry books or collections <u>and</u> one of the following verse novels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Locomotion</i> (Woodson) • <i>Love that Dog</i> (Creech) 	Responses to readings Select a poem to read aloud
9/23	Biography Literature Circles how-to Creating a text set	Textbook Chapter 13 (see Chapter 10 for biography review) Ebbers (WebCT) Daniels (2) (WebCT) Read one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lincoln: A Photobiography</i> (Freedman) • <i>The Voice that Challenged a Nation</i> (Freedman) • 3 picture books biographies by David Adler 	Responses to readings Midcourse Feedback

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 picture book biographies by Jean Fritz • 2 biographies or collective biographies by Kathleen Krull • <i>Through My Eyes</i> (Bridges) and <i>Martin's Big Words</i> (Rappaport) 	
9/30	Traditional Literature Book talk how-to Gender Oral Language	Textbook Chapter 6 Reese (WebCT) McDaniel (WebCT) Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four picture books of traditional literature 	Responses to readings
10/7	Historical Fiction Literature Circles Author Study Presentations	Textbook Chapter 9 Stien & Beed (WebCT) Read one work of historical fiction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963</i> (Curtis) • <i>Fever 1793</i> (Anderson) • <i>Kira-Kira</i> (Kadohata) • <i>Number the Stars</i> (Lowry) • <i>The Fighting Ground</i> (Avi) • <i>The Midwife's Apprentice</i> (Cushman) 	Responses to readings (brief) Author study due Be ready to sign up for your text set.
10/13-11/7	Field work	Field work	Field assignments due weekly
11/11	Realistic Fiction Debrief from field work Gender and Sexuality Censorship	Textbook chapter 8 Stewig (WebCT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Misfits</i> (Howe) 	Responses to readings
11/18	New directions in children's literature: Digital libraries Graphic novels Alternative Formats Literature Circles	Yang (WebCT) Schmidt (WebCT) Read one of each of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a digital book • an audiobook • a graphic novel / text We will also read a text set, readings TBA.	Responses to readings
11/25	Fall Break		
12/2	Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature Circles	Textbook Chapter 7 Read one of the following works of science fiction / fantasy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Giver</i> (Lowry) • <i>The Power of Un</i> (Etchemendy) • <i>Among the Hidden</i> (Haddix) • <i>The Invention of Hugo Cabret</i> (Selznick) • <i>The City of Ember</i> (du Prau) • <i>Eragon</i> (Paolini) 	Responses to readings Text set due
12/9		Please complete the course evaluation.	Final reflection paper due – 5 p. m.