

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
ENG 112A, Sections 01 & 02, The Literature of Childhood Experience, Spring 2012

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Office Hours: M 1.30-3.00 and by appointment
Class Days/Time: MW 9.00-10.15; 10.30-11.45
Classroom: Engineering 232

Course Description

English 112A is an upper division course designed to introduce the literature of childhood experience to adult readers. Although children are the central characters and the targeted readers, writers of this genre still structure their works using the same complex literary devices and themes found in adult literature. We will therefore apply standard literary techniques in analyzing the readings for this class.

The readings have been chosen keeping in mind several factors including quality of writing, relevance or appropriateness of ideas, complexity of treatment, as well as cultural and ethnic diversity. But the fundamental character of these readings is their literary merit ñ they are children's literature, not just children's books. Thus, many of the works we will study are considered to be classics not only because children enjoy them but also because they are rich in the themes and situations that make children's literature distinct and important: polarities between security at home and adventure abroad, between the need for belonging, love, approval and the desire for independence, between the temptation to keep things unchanged and the challenge of changing and growing up, between the sobering constraints of reality and the liberating power of fantasy. These books then invite serious contemplation of important issues through sustained imaginative ventures that display variety, originality, beauty and craft. While the assigned readings are all chapter books, students will have opportunities to become familiar with picture books, fairy tales, and folk tales as well.

The course is designed to meet the subject matter requirement for those considering a teaching credential. The information and curriculum approaches we will explore should be helpful for elementary, middle, and/or secondary levels of instruction. Nevertheless, this is a literature, not an educational methodology course.

English Department Student Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of Children's literature;
2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to Children's Literature;
3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and the nature of the subject;
4. Develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively;
5. Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

Required Texts/Readings

Course pack (available at Maple Press, 481 E. San Carlos; ph: 297-1000)

Babbitt, Natalie. *Tuck Everlasting*

Ellis, Deborah. *The Breadwinner*

Jimenez, Francisco. *The Circuit*

Konigsburg, E.L. *The View from Saturday*

Lowry, Lois. *Number the Stars*

Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*

White, E.B. *Charlotte's Web*

Yep, Lawrence. *Dragonwings*

Classroom Protocol

Attendance & Participation: Regular attendance and active participation in class discussions are extremely important. Please arrive on time and stay for the entire class. You are responsible for all materials assigned, presented and discussed. You are encouraged to take notes in class, but you should have studied the materials before class begins. Poor attendance/participation will have negative effects on your final grade.

Since most classes will be based on group discussions, presentations and workshops it is crucial for you to keep up with the readings and take an active as well as thoughtful role in

all classroom activities. Your questions, comments, insights, and interpretations are valuable no matter how outlandish they may seem. So do speak up!

Conferencing: I encourage you to visit me in my office whenever you need to discuss something, whether it is an assignment or any other difficulty you may be having with the structure and format of the class. I am completely open to criticism and suggestions because the only way I can fix things is if I know what is wrong.

Submitting work: All quizzes and the final book project will be submitted in class; the midterm and bibliography will be submitted on canvas; please do not email assignments to me unless I ask you to do so.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. [Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html) . [Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/) . Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Assignments/requirements: (more details to be provided in class and in handouts)

1. **Quizzes:** You will take 3 in-class quizzes on the dates indicated in the schedule; these quizzes will ask for factual as well as brief interpretive responses. Please bring a blue exam booklet for each quiz. (SLO 1 & 2)
2. **Exams:** There will be an essay type take-home midterm exam and a short answer in-class final exam on the dates indicated in the schedule. (SLO 2 & 3)
3. **Annotated Bibliography:** You will prepare an annotated bibliography of **one** of the following: (a) 6 books from a particular non-fiction genre such as biography, travelogue, memoir etc. (b) 6 non-fiction middle readers on a special subject such as insects, magic, volcanoes, dinosaurs etc. (c) 6 books of poetry for children. This must be typed following the format provided and submitted on the date indicated in the schedule. You will also be asked to give a brief presentation on any one book included in your annotated bibliography. (SLO 2 & 4)
4. **Book Project:** Working in groups, you will produce (write, illustrate, bind etc) your own children's book. This should be an extremely enjoyable and challenging project on which you will be working through the semester. (SLO 3 & 4)
5. **Presentation & participation:** In addition to regular participation in class activities, occasionally you may be asked to make short oral presentations individually or in groups. (SLO 1 & 5)

Grading:

3 Quizzes	30%
Take home Midterm	15%
In-class Final	10%
Annotated Bibliography	10%
Book Project	25%
Participation & Presentation	10%

Note: Unless you have received prior permission from me, assignments will be graded one letter grade lower for each late day. No work will be accepted beyond one week late. In-class work including presentations cannot be made up.

In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of ideas conveyed. In other words, your grade will depend not only on what you say but also on how (well) you say it. All student writing should therefore be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

The “**A**” essay will be well organized and well developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student’s ability to use language effectively and construct sentences distinguished by syntactic complexity and variety. Such essays will be essentially free of grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors.

The “**B**” essay will demonstrate competence in the same categories as the “**A**” essay. The chief difference is that the “**B**” essay will show some descriptably slight weaknesses in one of those categories. It may slight one of the assigned tasks, show less facility of expression, or contain some minor grammatical, mechanical, or usage flaws.

The “**C**” essay will complete all tasks set by the assignment, but show weakness in fundamentals (usually development), with barely enough specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. The sentence construction may be less mature, and the use of language less effective and correct than the “**B**” essay.

The “**D**” essay will neglect one of the assigned tasks and be noticeably superficial in its treatment of the assignment—that is, too simplistic or short. The essay may reveal some problems in development, with insufficient specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. It will contain grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

The “**F**” essay will demonstrate a striking underdevelopment of ideas and insufficient or unfocused organization. It will contain serious grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the SJSU Catalog (“The Grading System”). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A= excellent; B= above average; C= average; D= below average; F= failure. Courses graded according to the A, B, C, No Credit system shall follow the same pattern.

University Policies

Academic integrity

Students should know that the University's [Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf).

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for [Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html).

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

Learning Assistance Resource Center

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. [The LARC website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/).

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. [The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/).

Peer Mentor Center

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop –in basis, no reservation required. The Peer Mentor Center website is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/>

Tentative Schedule

1/26	M	Introduction; preview course pack	
1/28	W	Picture books; Fable	
2/02	M	Picture books: Fantasy; Discuss Bibliography	
2/04	W	Fairy Tales	
2/09	M	Fairy Tales	
2/11	W	Charlotte's Web	
2/16	M	Charlotte's Web	
2/18	W	Discuss Book project & form groups; preview quiz	
2/23	M	Quiz # 1; Book project group lists due	
2/25	W	Tuck Everlasting	
3/02	M	Tuck Everlasting;	
3/04	W	Harry Potter	
3/09	M	Harry Potter	
3/11	W	Quiz # 2	
3/16	M	Annotated Bibliography Due on Canvas; presentations	
3/18	W	Annotated Bibliography: presentations continued	
3/23	M	Spring Break	
3/25	W	Spring Break	
3/30	M	Dragonwings (video: Carved in Silence)	
4/01	W	Dragonwings	
4/06	M	Dragonwings Take-home Midterm Given	
4/08	W	Number the Stars	
4/13	M	Number the Stars	
4/15	M	Take-home Midterm Due on Canvas; Work on Book Project	
4/20	M	The Breadwinner	
4/22	W	The Breadwinner	
4/27	M	Quiz # 3	
4/29	W	The Circuit	
5/04	M	The Circuit	
5/06	W	The View from Saturday	
5/11	M	The View from Saturday	
5/13	W	Sharing Book Projects	
5/19	T	10.00-11.30	Final Exam for 10.30-11.45 class
5/20	W	8.00-9.30	Final Exam for 9.00-10.15 class