

ENG 313: Teen and Children's Literature
MWF 11-11:50 CRN 31864 117 Fenton
Office hours: 238 PLC, MWF 9:30-10:30
Spring 2008
Co-Requisite: ENG 404 CRN 31878
"Intern Youth Learn"

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Fantasy, Realism, and Bodily Transformation

This course surveys children's literature from the 19th century to the present. We'll compare teen and children's literature to your internship experiences working with teens and children. We will ask how a literary work serves as a time capsule of its historical era, and we will explore the transformations of magic and bodies. We will also study the literature of poverty and disability, two realms of experience common among the teens and children you will mentor in your internship. In Part 3 of the course, works from the emerging field of disability studies will enrich our thinking.

English 404, your co-requisite internship, is 3-12 hours per week (1-4 credits), teaching and mentoring kids grades pre K-12 (your choice of age group). Sites range from the public schools to homeless shelters and detention centers. You should have received a site selection list from Taylor Donnelly, the course TA, after you enrolled in the class; you should make contact with a supervisor and start your placement by the second week of class at the latest, and preferably before then.

Participation: This class depends upon your active participation in the classroom and community. You must pass both ENG 313 and ENG 404 to pass either one. If problems interfere with your performance or attendance, please let me or Ms. Donnelly know immediately. We are no fans of mysterious disappearances.

Late Paper Policy: We accept only one late paper per term, so please use this option wisely. "On Time" means in class the day the paper is due. If you choose to turn in a paper late, you must notify Professor Wheeler ahead of time by phone, email, or in person, before the class session when the paper is due. Late papers are due the following class session, unless you arrange with Prof. Wheeler otherwise. We reserve the right to refuse an unnotified late paper or a second late paper.

Writing Assignments: Each assignment should appear in polished final-draft form. The care you take with your own writing reflects on you as literacy tutor and role model. A word to the wise: Take notes on your internship experiences when they are fresh, as you will use them in your writing assignments throughout the term.

Required and Recommended Books and Required Course Packet are for sale at UO Bookstore. It is OK to use a different edition from the bookstore copies, and also OK to use library copies instead of buying books.

ENGLISH 313 READING LIST

B=Book; P=Course Packet; CD=On ENG 313 Blackboard under "Course Documents"

- Part 1**
- P** Jack Zipes, Introduction to *Grimm's Fairy Tales*
 - P** The Brothers Grimm, "Cinderella" and "Snow White"
 - P** Diane Purkiss, Excerpt from *The Witch in History*

 - B** John Steptoe, *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*
 - B** L. Frank Baum, *The Wizard of Oz*
 - CD** Claudia Nelson, "Drying the Orphan's Tear"
 - CD** 313 Training Handout
 - CD** Ten Roads to Good Reading
 - B** David Levithan, *Boy Meets Boy*
 - B** Maurice Sendak, *Where the Wild Things Are*
- Part 2**
- B** Francisco Jimenez, *The Circuit*
 - B** Linda Sue Park, *A Single Shard*
- Part 3**
- CD** Simi Linton, excerpt from *Claiming Disability*
 - CD** Rosemarie Garland Thomson, excerpt from *Extraordinary Bodies*
 - B** Robert Munsch, *Zoom!*
 - B** Harriet McBryde Johnson, *Accidents of Nature*
 - B** Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*
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How to Read a Picture Book: For class discussion Friday Week 1.

The first principle: Picture books do not flow. The pictures are a series of isolated episodes. The illustrator picks and chooses which scenes from the story to show.

To analyze the grammar of the pictures themselves, start by "reading" the book without the words, then "read" the pictures again upside down.

1. What story do the pictures tell without the words?
2. What reader's knowledge does the book assume?
3. What do you notice most about the illustration style?
4. What emotional response does the book call forth?
5. What attitude does the book call forth towards the characters?
6. Do the words and pictures flow together or is there a tension or contradiction between them?
7. What do pictures reveal that words don't, and vice versa?
8. More generally, what's the relationship like between words and pictures in this book?

English 313 Discussion Questions for Wednesday Week 1 on Grimm's Fairy Tales and "The Witch in History"

Brothers Grimm:

1. In your opinion, why are there so many witches, evil stepmothers, and other female villains in fairy tales?
2. In his introduction Jack Zipes says the Grimms intended with these tales "to foster a sense of justice among the German people and to create pride in the folk tradition." Do you see these ideals reflected in "Cinderella" and "Snow White"?
3. What do bodily transformation, disability, and dwarfism signify in these tales?
4. Do you see any relationship between these fairy tales and reality shows?
5. What are Snow White's and Cinderella's narrative jobs in these stories--that is, how do their actions and experiences move the story along?
6. On pages xxx and xxxii of the introduction, Jack Zipes talks about the changes the Grimm Brothers made to the tales. Do you see any of these elements in "Cinderella" and "Snow White"?

Diane Purkiss, *The Witch in History*:

1. What is the thesis of each of the 3 sections from Purkiss' book in your packet?
2. On page 97 Purkiss writes that the figure of the witch breaches the protective space around bodies and violates the distinctions between nature vs. culture, inside vs. outside, pollution vs. purity. Can we find similar dynamics in "Cinderella" and "Snow White"?
3. Do the "leaky body" vs. the "contained body" show up in these 2 tales?
4. Purkiss discusses the Oedipal aspect of witch stories in terms of "the daughter's effort to free herself from the controlling Mother-Other." (99) In Freudian psychology, the Oedipal phase is a necessary part of healthy development. Do you see any Oedipal aspects to "Cinderella" and "Snow White"? Could these fairy tales be useful to children's psychological development?

Week	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Part 1: Magic Realism			
1	3/31 Introduction	4/2 Zipes intro to Grimms "Cinderella" and "Snow White" Purkiss, <i>The Witch in History</i> excerpt Discussion Questions	4/4 Step toe, <i>Mufaro's Beautiful..</i> "How 2 Read a Picture Bk"
2	4/7 <i>The Wizard of Oz</i> (1900) Nelson, "Orphan's Tear"	4/9 Read Training Handout & "Ten Roads"	4/11 Finish <i>The Wizard of Oz</i>
3	4/14 <i>Boy Meets Boy</i>	4/16 Discuss Final Project & Community Problem Solving	4/18 <i>Boy Meets Boy</i> <i>Where the Wild Things Are</i>
Part 2: Poverty			
4	4/21 <i>The Circuit</i>	4/23 The Culture of the Site	4/25 <i>The Circuit</i>
5	4/28 <i>A Single Shard</i>	4/30 Overcoming Narratives	5/2 <i>A Single Shard</i>
Part 3: Disability			
6	5/5 Linton, <i>Claiming Disability</i> Thomson	5/7 Forming Relationships	5/9 <i>Accidents of Nature</i> Robert Munsch, <i>Zoom!</i>
7	5/12 <i>Accidents of Nature</i>	5/14 Internships	5/16 Proposal & Biblio due Helen Keller movie
8	5/19 <i>Curious Incident</i> to p. 115	5/21 Internships	5/23 Finish <i>Curious Incident</i>
9	5/26 Memorial Day Holiday NO CLASS	5/28 Reflections on Internships	5/30 Final Project Presentations
10	6/2 Final Project Presentations	6/4 Final Project Presentations	6/6 Final Project due Final Project Presentations

ASSIGNMENTS

- 30% A. Wednesday Papers, due Wednesdays Weeks 1-9.
- 15% B. Proposal and Bibliography for Final Research Project, due Friday Week 7.
- 30% C. Final Research Project, due Friday Week 10.
- 15% D. Final Project Presentation, due Weeks 9-10.
- 10% E. Attendance.

A. Wednesday Papers, 2-5 paragraphs, due Wednesdays, Weeks 1-9.

Weekly typed responses to your reading and internship for this class.

A1. Week 1: Discussion Questions on Witches and Fairy Tales.

Included with your syllabus are Discussion Questions for Wednesday's class on the Brothers Grimm and on *The Witch in History*. For your first Wednesday Paper, please answer in writing Questions 2, 3, 4 and 6 on the Brothers Grimm and Questions 2 -4 on *The Witch in History*.

A2. Week 2: Orphans.

How would *The Wizard of Oz* be different if Dorothy's parents were alive? Why are there so many orphans in children's literature, from Cinderella to Harry Potter? Do you see belonging vs. outsider or newcomer status happening at your internship?

A3. Week 3: Community Problem Solving. Please see the Community Problem-Solving sheet on page 7 of this syllabus. Answer Question #1 and Questions 3-7 in writing. Come to class prepared to discuss this exercise in a small group. Then, please choose one of 3 topics: 1) Problem-solving; 2) Visions of community; or 3) Constructions of gender and/or sexuality. Discuss this topic in relation to your internship and in relation to one of the texts we've read this week.

A4. Week 4: The Culture of the Site. Reflect on the culture where you are doing your internship. You may ask very different questions from the ones that follow. These are intended only as guidelines. What can you tell about the site's goals and ideals? Do you think the site meets these goals? How do you adapt/fit in/stand out? What are your moments of greatest ease/discomfort there? Would you organize things similarly or differently? Does the culture of your site reflect concepts or realities in our wider local, regional, or national culture?

Compare and contrast *The Circuit's* representation of childhood with childhood or youth as you see it at your site. Again, these are guideline questions: Do you see any of the same issues of bilingualism, immigration, moving around, or poverty at your site? How does *The Circuit* converse with your previous ideas and knowledge about migrant worker families? If you knew little about American culture, what could you learn about it from this book? What relationships to nature and sense of place do you see in *The Circuit* and at your site?

A5. Week 5: Narratives of Overcoming. Please read pages 17-19 of the excerpt from Simi Linton's *Claiming Disability* that is on our Blackboard site. Could Linton's critique of the narrative of "overcoming a disability" apply to *A Single Shard's* story about "overcoming poverty"? *A Single Shard* highlights the theme of a youth finding his own niche in the world and his own creative talent. Do you see this theme at work in your internship?

A6. Week 6: Describe a relationship you're developing with a kid or adult at your site.

A7. Week 7: To Be Announced.

A8. Week 8: To be Announced.

A9. Week 9: Final Reflection. Please reflect on your internship experience as a whole. What did you learn from the parts of your internship that didn't go so well? What did you learn from the parts that did go well? Has your internship confirmed or changed your views? What will you take away with you from this experience? Has working with kids helped to shape, change, or confirm your social ethics?

B. Proposal and Bibliography for Final Research Project, approximately 3 pages, due Friday Week 7. This should include:

- B1.** A description of your Final Research Project, including 3 elements: a specific main question, an explanation why or for whom this question is important, and a "bold assertion" ("I will argue, design, develop, write, etc....")
- B2.** A description of the independent research you have done and still intend to do.
- B3.** An annotated bibliography that includes at least 4 secondary sources of your own discovery and a minimum of six entries total. You may include sources from the course bibliography if they are relevant. Start with a standard MLA bibliographic citation, then annotate the citation in the following format.
 - (1.) Name of author(s) and a brief description of the book, article, website, or interview .
 - (2.) A description of the use you will make of this work in your Final Research Project.

C. Final Research Project, 7-10 pages, due Friday Week 10.

(Page count may vary according to type of project chosen.)

A research paper or other research project that delves more deeply into authors, themes, or activities from this class. The project should include an (unannotated) bibliography of 6 or more items in MLA format. You may include sources from the course syllabus, but you must also do substantive independent research. You may focus on the literary aspect of the class, and/or on service learning, literacy, education, or community involvement. Listed below are 5 suggested types of projects. With the professor's approval, you are also welcome to design your own type of project.

C1. Community Problem-Solving Plan. Identify a problem at your site and/or in the community. Make a plan to solve it. Get as far as you can toward implementing your plan and actually solving the problem. Please see the Community Problem-Solving Dialogue included with this syllabus for guidance. This project would probably involve research, interviews, and dialogue with stakeholders on the issue. Your final plan should address the rival views that emerge among community members. The materials you turn in for this project would include a narrative describing how you identified the problem, your research, your action plan, a bibliography, and, where possible, information about the plan's implementation.

C2. Literary Research Paper. Analysis that delves deeper into the authors or themes explored in this class and/or your internship site. Your bibliography should contain at least 8 items. The bibliography can include works from the course syllabus, but it should also include a bare minimum of 4 sources of your own discovery. The sources should be a mix of secondary sources with more reading in teen or children's literature.

C3. Creative Writing. Write and illustrate a children's picture book, or write the first chapter of a middle reader "chapter book" or teen novel. As your work progresses, share your book with actual children or teens and respond to their feedback in your revisions. Children's librarians are another good source for feedback and mentorship. Your bibliography for this project would include books for young readers that taught or inspired you, interviews with children, teens, or relevant adults, and secondary sources on children's literature.

When you turn in your book or chapter, include with it a 1-2 page paper describing: the evolution of your ideas and plans; the process of creating a visual and physical book along with text; the feedback you got from kids and adults about your book and what you did with that feedback; other books and how they helped to inspire yours.

Important tip: start early to figure out the physical and artistic sides of creating a book. Some authors run through many formats before they find what works for them. Completing a single page may take a lot longer than you think.

C4. Website Design. Identify a need for information or activities and fill that need with a website or blog. Your website should be clear and easy to use and should provide links to other useful sites. Here are 3 examples of possible websites: 1.) There is always a need for websites that provide fun ways for children to retain reading or math knowledge over the summer. 2.) A website for young people with a particular disability, introducing them to disabled role models or children's books about their specific impairment. 3.) A website on nutrition that works well for low-income families who use computers at their school or public library but do not have computer access at home. Your final work turned in to class should include a narrative describing why your website is important and how it fills a gap in currently available websites, a list of other websites that taught or inspired you, other sources of information (including interviews with adults or children), a list of other websites that link to yours, and, of course, your website address.

C5. Lesson Plans. Two week's worth of lesson plans delving deeper into authors or themes explored in this class or at your internship site. Your research should include at least 4 secondary sources of your own discovery, as well as more reading in teen and children's literature. These lesson plans can be directed toward the audience and age group of your choice. They should take different learning styles into account, and if possible should address some aspect of state standards. If you can, try out aspects of this lesson plan with actual young people. Your final project should include a narrative description of your topic, the lesson plans themselves, the bibliography, and, where possible, discussion of your results if you actually taught part of your plan.

D. Final Project Presentation, Weeks 9-10.

The last 2 weeks of class will be a conference where students will show each other the work you have done. These presentations will vary greatly in format depending on the type of project involved. Formats will include: a "story time" where students read their picture books aloud; Poster sessions where you demonstrate your work visually; displays of websites; "teaching days" to showcase students' lesson plans; a panel of class presentations about your academic research and community problem-solving.

A Community Problem-Solving Dialogue

This exercise comes from the Community Literacy Center and Carnegie Mellon University, both in Pittsburgh, PA. At this program, college student mentors help youth learn new writing skills by talking and then writing about the youth's own lives and the daily problems they face and solve in their community. Please answer question 1 and questions 3-7 in writing. Then be prepared to do question 2's activity in a small group in class.

1. Please discuss an important problem involving young people that's on your mind.
2. In class: Each group member describes the problem they chose. Then the group should choose one story to explore first.
3. What's the story behind the story of this problem? What's the history or hidden logic beneath the surface of events? What motivates people's actions and views?
4. Does the "standard response" miss something important about the situation?
5. Rival Views: Examine the problem from all possible different points of view. How do kids see it vs. how do adults see it? How do different adults in the community see it? How do you and the student see it?
6. Options and Outcomes: Come up with different options for solving the problem and the pros and cons of each. What are the potential outcomes for each situation?
7. Create a plan for a solution!

