

Education 465-4  
Children's Literature

Regular Semester, 1986  
Tuesdays, 5:30 - 9:20

Instructor: Lissa Paul  
Location: MPX 7600

=====

OBJECTIVES

When a child comes to you and says: "This is the best book I ever read. Do you have any more like it?" how do you know what kind of book that child is looking for. This course is about finding out what that question means, and how to go about answering it.

OUTLINE OF TOPICS

A child who has been moved so deeply by a book that he or she wants another just like it, has clearly found something very powerful in the story--something not likely answered by novel-study, back-of-the-book questions or comprehension-test questions.

As someone sharing books with children, you can discover what kind of story that child is after: a home story, a jack-the-giant-killer story, an adventure story, a mother-and-daughter story, whatever. To do that, you need two skills: an understanding of what kind of question the child is asking; and a broad knowledge of stories.

This course is not about decoding, and not about making honey projects out of Winnie-the-Pooh stories. It is about children's literature as literature. Historical, educational, psychological and philosophical contexts of children's literature will be explored so that in the end, you can be your own literary critic--someone who engages easily in what Aidan Chambers calls "booktalk."

The course moves in roughly chronological fashion: first, a brief history of children and children's literature; then through oral tradition (myth and fairytale); and into the relationships between children's literature and literacy (including picture books and poetry as well as prose fiction). Topics include those which constitute literary discourse: genre, heroes and heroines, time and space, epiphanies, secret stories and so forth.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Classes consist of a mix of lectures, seminars, group discussions, films and other audio-visual material. Storytellers, and other people involved with children's literature will be invited to class as well. Attendance and participation are required in class, and completion of readings, and written assignments. For thirty minutes at the end of each class, each student will be required to make a journal entry synthesizing the content of the class. This will be handed in for part of the final grade. Two essays and one oral presentation will also be required during the semester.

The grade breakdown is as follows:

Essay 1	25%
Essay 2	25%
Journal	25%
Seminar and Class Participation	25%

EDUCATION 465, BOOK LIST:

Frances Hodgson Burnett, The Secret Garden (Puffin)  
John Bunnningham, Would you rather . . . (Collier)  
Aidan Chambers, The Present Takers (Magnet)  
Beverly Cleary, Dear Mr. Henshaw (Dell)  
Brian Doyle, Angel Square (Groundwood)  
Penelope Farmer, Charlotte Sometimes (Puffin)  
Florence Parry Heide, The Shrinking of Treehorn (Puffin)  
Russel Hoban, Bread and Jam for Francis (Scholastic)  
Heinrich Hoffmann, Struwelpeter (Piccolo)  
Ted Hugh, The Iron Man (Faber)  
Poetry in the Making (Faber)  
Pat Hutchins, Rosie's Walk (Collier)  
Eugene Ionesco, Story Number Two (Harlin Quist)  
Randall Jarrell, The Bat-Poet (Collier)  
E.L. Konigsberg, Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley and me, Elizabeth (Collier)  
Ursula LeGuin, The Wizard of Earthsea (Puffin)  
Janet Lunn, The Root Cellar (Penguin)  
Margaret Mahy, The Changeover (Magnet)  
Robert Munsch, The Paperbag Princess (Annick)  
Phillipa Pearce, Tom's Midnight Garden (Puffin)  
Christina Rossetti, Goblin Market (Dover)  
Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, The Little Prince (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)

(Please note these are all paperbacks, approximately \$1.50 ea)