English 2907 YAO: Children’s Literature
2015-2016
WF 10:00-11:30 AM Simcoe Hall, Room 2019

Instructor: Dr. Lesley D. Clement
Office Hours: Tues. 2:30-4:00, Thurs. 4:00-5:30, Fri. 1:00-2:30, or by appointment
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You should check Desire2Learn (mycourselink) regularly for messages and postings.

Course Description: English 2907 is a historical and critical study of children’s literature. The course is structured for students to gain an understanding of different kinds of children’s literature – hero story, adventure story, fantasy (epic, domestic, animal), domestic realism, and school story – and their emergence from roots in mythology, epic, romance, fairy tales, and cautionary tales. Throughout the semester, we will study the assigned texts within their specific cultural contexts from the perspectives of childhood subjectivities/perceptions of childhood, visual literacy, and adaptations.

Course Objectives: You will gain a knowledge and understanding of the dominant influences, trends, issues, types, books, and figures in children’s literature. Through this knowledge and understanding, you will develop the vocabulary and insights to evaluate and debate the contribution of specific texts, classic through contemporary, in shaping their culture’s perception of children and childhood(s).

Required Texts:
Since we will be using the contextual and theoretical material in the Norton editions of Alice in Wonderland and Anne of Green Gables, it is essential that you have access to them. We will be discussing some of the texts as adaptations; therefore, you should read the original before viewing any film or other kind of version.
Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland (Norton Critical Edition)
E.B. White, Charlotte’s Web (HarperCollins)
Roald Dahl, Matilda (Puffin)
J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (Raincoast)
Markus Zusak, The Book Thief
Welwyn Wilton Katz, Beowulf (Groundwood)
Neil Gaiman, Coraline
Please see outline below and document posted in D2L (links and reserves) for other material that we will be discussing.

Assignments/Weighting (See D2L for detailed descriptions of each of the following):
Fall mid-term examination (in class, 14 October) (10%)
Essay on Alice books (1000-1200 words) (Nov. 11) (10%)
Christmas examination (during examination period) (15%)
Picturebook poster presentation (these will be scheduled in Jan.) (10%)
Adaptation project (including essay, 2500 words) (See dates and grade designation in D2L posting) (20%)
In-class activities and participation (10%)
Final exam (during examination period) (25%)
Always check D2L for lecture outlines and any announcements prior to coming to class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS DUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 16</td>
<td>Syllabus Introduction to Children’s Literature; Historical Overview</td>
<td>See reading list posted in D2L for links and reserves</td>
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<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td>Poetry: Religious Verse</td>
<td>Isaac Watts, Jane and Ann Taylor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 7</td>
<td>Poetry: Nursery Rhymes; the Opies</td>
<td>See reading list posted in D2L for links and reserves</td>
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<td>Oct. 9</td>
<td>Nonsense verse Abecedarian Books</td>
<td>Heinrich Hoffman, Edward Lear, Edward Gorey</td>
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<td>Oct. 14</td>
<td>Fall mid-term examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 16</td>
<td>Picturebooks</td>
<td>See reading list posted in D2L for links and reserves</td>
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<td>Oct. 23</td>
<td>Hero stories; <em>Beowulf</em></td>
<td>Welwyn Wilton Katz, <em>Beowulf</em></td>
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<td>Oct. 28 -Nov. 6</td>
<td>Fantasy; Carroll, <em>Alice in Wonderland</em></td>
<td>Lewis Carroll, <em>Alice in Wonderland</em> (assigned critical readings from the Norton edition are posted in D2L)</td>
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<td>Nov. 11-20</td>
<td>Domestic realism; Montgomery, <em>Anne of Green Gables</em></td>
<td><strong>Nov. 11: Essay due</strong> L.M. Montgomery, <em>Anne of Green Gables</em> (assigned critical readings from the Norton edition will be posted in D2L)</td>
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<td>Nov. 25-Dec. 4</td>
<td>Animal story; White, <em>Charlotte’s Web</em></td>
<td>E.B. White, <em>Charlotte’s Web</em></td>
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<td>Jan. 6, 8</td>
<td>Overview of semester Theories of Adaptations/spin-offs/transformations</td>
<td>Review for exam</td>
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<td>Jan. 13-29</td>
<td>Picturebook poster presentations</td>
<td><strong>Presentation schedule TBA</strong></td>
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<td>Feb. 3-12</td>
<td>School story; Dahl, <em>Matilda</em></td>
<td>Roald Dahl, <em>Matilda</em></td>
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<td>Mar. 4-11</td>
<td>Fear; Gaiman, <em>Coraline</em></td>
<td>Neil Gaiman, <em>Coraline</em></td>
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<td>Apr. 5</td>
<td>Review for exam</td>
<td><strong>April 5: Adaptation essay due</strong></td>
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Writing Assignments:
Detailed instructions for each of the Writing Assignments are or will be posted in D2L. See Course Expectations and Guidelines below.

Examinations: All examinations will be cumulative. See information posted in D2L.

Class participation (including unannounced activities):
Attendance will be taken in each class. Class participation, however, goes well beyond simply being present. It is expected that readings for each class will be completed in order to engage meaningfully in discussions generated by the professor and students. Unannounced activities (part of participation grade) cannot be done at another time.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES:

1. Essays (paper format) should be submitted to me personally at the beginning of class on the due date. Electronic copies (fax, email, drop box) will NOT be accepted unless the instructions indicate otherwise. Any extensions (maximum of 3 days) for extraordinary circumstances must be requested by email at least 3 days prior to the due date. Any assignments that are late, without an approved extension, will be downgraded 5 marks a day (this includes essays that are handed in after the class has begun or that are left on my office desk during class); as well, unapproved late essays will be assigned a grade only, with no comments. Unannounced activities (part of participation grade) cannot be done at another time. Please note that “rewrites” will NOT be permitted for any essay or assignment.

2. Following are reminders about classroom etiquette. You should arrive to class on time and, barring extraordinary circumstances, be prepared to remain in class for its duration. Wandering in and out during class is inappropriate as are chatting while others are talking, text messaging, and using a computer other than to take notes. All cell phones should be turned off and stored out of sight throughout the class.

3. Appointments, working hours, and holiday time should be arranged outside of course and final examination times. You should be prepared to attend all classes and the scheduled examinations (see below for university policy) unless unable to do so because of an emergency or serious illness. Attendance will have an effect on the mark that you receive for this course: it is impossible to fill in the gaps and understand the complexities and subtleties of the literature from the lecture outlines that will be posted regularly on D2L.

4. For both essays, use MLA format (margins, spacing, etc.). MLA documentation format must be used to acknowledge indebtedness to both primary and secondary sources for the poster presentation and for both essays. Following are several web sites that provide helpful information. http://write-site.athabascau.ca/mla-documentation-guide.php https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/

5. See below for a description of marking standards, copied from the English Department’s web site. An essay guilty of plagiarism will receive a failing grade. Also see below for university policy on cheating and plagiarism.

MARKING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE AND THEORY COURSES (https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/departments/english/marketing-standards)
Marks are a form of evaluation in a course, but they also represent communication between the instructor and the student. The number and letter grades given below are only the most basic form of such communication. They can give a general overview of how the student is performing, but they cannot identify the specific areas in which s/he is excelling, and those areas in which s/he needs to improve. Students should therefore always read carefully through all of the instructor's comments, referring to these marking standards and, when in doubt, contacting the instructor for further clarification. These standards refer specifically to the expository essay. Instructors will explain the criteria for other types of assignments in their courses.

**PAPERS IN LITERATURE AND THEORY COURSES ARE GRADED ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:**

**Content:** original insights and thinking expressed in sufficient depth and detail; demonstrated grasp of concepts and grappling with topic; relevant and persuasive evidence or support; sufficient quotation and explication of the primary text(s); appropriate use of secondary sources.

**Organization:** well-articulated focus (usually in a thesis statement); well-structured introduction and conclusion; paragraph unity and coherence throughout; appropriate use of signposting, topic sentences, and transitions to guide the reader through the paper.

**Style:** appropriate diction and language level; rhetorical flair; varied sentence structure; clear, concise prose; no overuse of passive voice; literary discussion kept in the present tense; development of writer's own voice appropriate to the genre of the academic essay.

**Mechanics:** correct spelling (including names and key terms), grammar, punctuation, syntax, word usage, proofreading, integration of quotation, and documentation; use of MLA style throughout.

**GRADE DESCRIPTIONS:**

**A+ (90-100%) Exceptional** An "A+" paper has distinctive ideas and content organized in a compelling and appropriate form. Where relevant, it intelligently engages with larger discourses, while still retaining its own position. The paper is strong in organization, and mechanics, with no errors in grammar or spelling, and its overall effect exceeds that of precision and correctness. In essence, an A+ paper is stylistically pleasing to read and displays evidence of a rare talent.

**A (80-89%) Excellent** An "A" paper is well-organized and persuasive, and uses direct reference to the text to prove a precise and interesting thesis. It is stylistically pleasing to read, and is strong in content, organization, and mechanics. Grammatical and spelling errors are virtually non-existent. Where relevant, it is situated in a larger critical discourse through judicious use of secondary sources, but does not allow those sources to overwhelm the author's own ideas. It moves beyond class discussion and shows an active engagement with the text.

**B (70-79%) Good** A "B" paper displays a generally coherent, well-organized argument. The thought, organization, and style are all effective, and the mechanical skills are strong. It displays some complexity in its argument, and, where relevant, refers to larger critical discourses. Quotations and references to primary and secondary sources are well integrated into the text, with proper documentation. Some problems with content, organization, style, or mechanics might prevent the paper from gaining an "A" grade, or the paper might have attempted less,
settling for a safe argument. Errors are, however, occasional, rather than chronic, and they do not obscure meaning.

**C (60-69%) SATISFACTORY** A "C" paper demonstrates an acceptable grasp of the subject matter, and an ability to construct an argument that engages with that subject in a moderately critical and analytical manner. It has a reasonably clear thesis, with proper paragraphs, though it might have problems with both, such as a thesis that is a simple summary of the structure of the argument, or paragraphs that lack unity and/or clear topic sentences. There is evidence of an effort to support points with quotations and references to the text, with reasonable attempts at documentation. Errors in content, style, organization, and/or mechanics are still relatively few, but occasionally serious, hampering, at times, the coherent presentation of ideas. However, any such errors will not be so serious or so chronic as to make the overall paper difficult to understand. More effort needs to be put into developing language and writing skills, or in attempting more sophisticated original thought.

**D (50-59%) MINIMAL PASS** A "D" paper represents a barely acceptable performance with some evidence of familiarity with the material, and of analytical skill. It might attempt to address moderately complex issues, but with only minimal success. It might be lacking a clearly focused argument, or it might present observation in place of argument. While it attempts to present textual evidence, it either does not properly integrate this material into the body of the essay, or it relies too heavily on irrelevant paraphrase and/or plot summation. It might synthesize ideas from secondary sources without contributing any of its own analysis. Problems with organization, style, content and/or mechanics make the overall ideas of the essay difficult to comprehend, or the argument difficult to follow from start to finish. Such papers demonstrate the need for concentrated efforts at improvement.

**E (40-49%) BORDERLINE FAIL** An "E" paper might have no clear thesis; it might present evidence that is scanty and/or irrelevant to the argument; or it might have serious problems with style, mechanics, organization and/or content that prevent the reader from following the main ideas from the beginning to the end.

**F (1-39%) FAILURE** An "F" paper demonstrates severe errors in mechanics, content, style, and/or organization that are unacceptable at the university level. It might be off topic, it might lack a thesis, it might lack clear and adequate paragraphs, and/or it might contain repeated and serious errors in grammar, sentence structure, and diction, such that the meaning is entirely obscured. It might also reveal significant misunderstanding of the course material.

**F (0%) ACADEMIC DISHONESTY** Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else's words and/or ideas. Not acknowledging your debt to the ideas of a secondary source, failing to use quotation marks when you are quoting directly, buying essays from essay banks, copying another student's work, or working together on an individual assignment, all constitute plagiarism. Resubmitting material you've submitted to another course is also academic dishonesty. All plagiarized work (in whole or in part) and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean, who is responsible for judging academic misconduct and imposing penalties. The minimum penalty for academic misconduct is a 0 on the assignment in question. It might also be subject to more severe academic penalties.
GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND REGULATIONS:

- Students in this course are expected to conform to the Code of Student Behaviour: https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/policies/student-related/code-of-student-behaviour-and-disciplinary-procedures

- Lakehead University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the course.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

The University takes a most serious view of offences against academic honesty such as plagiarism, cheating and impersonation. Penalties for dealing with such offences will be strictly enforced.

A copy of the "Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures" including sections on plagiarism and other forms of misconduct may be obtained from the Office of the Registrar.

The following rules shall govern the treatment of candidates who have been found guilty of attempting to obtain academic credit dishonestly.

(a) The minimum penalty for a candidate found guilty of plagiarism, or of cheating on any part of a course will be a zero for the work concerned.
(b) A candidate found guilty of cheating on a formal examination or a test, or of serious or repeated plagiarism, or of unofficially obtaining a copy of an examination paper before the examination is scheduled to be written, will receive zero for the course and may be expelled from the University.

Students disciplined under the Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures may appeal their case through the Judicial Panel.

Note: "Plagiarism" shall be deemed to include:
1. Plagiarism of ideas as where an idea of an author or speaker is incorporated into the body of an assignment as though it were the writer's idea, i.e. no credit is given the person through referencing or footnoting or endnoting.
2. Plagiarism of words occurs when phrases, sentences, tables or illustrations of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a writer's own, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on the format followed) are present but referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.
3. Plagiarism of ideas and words as where words and an idea(s) of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a written assignment as though they were the writer's own words and ideas, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on format followed) are present and no referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.

MISSED EXAMS:

Make-up examinations will only be given with written documentation from a healthcare practitioner using the official Student Health Certificate, available at https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/examination/medical-notes/node/10641

There will be no rescheduling of examinations to accommodate holiday travel or extracurricular activities. No one will be allowed to write examinations prior to the scheduled date.