

Education Department

Syllabus FYS

What Can You Learn from a Children's Book?

Instructor: Pat Cunningham
Office: Tribble Hall A8
Class Meeting: T, Th 12:00-1:15, Tribble A-3
Office Hours: Monday 12:00-2:00; Thursday 1:30-3:00;
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Ask most people what they think of books written for children and they will tell you they are mostly simple stories intended to amuse and entertain or informational books intended to build knowledge. In reality, all the major issues and topics can be explored through literature intended for children. United States history comes alive as children learn about the beginnings of our country, the westward expansion or the Vietnam War in historical fiction with children as the main characters. Global awareness is raised as children read stories about children who live all over the world. Issues such as civil rights, woman's rights, disabilities and protecting the environment are powerfully presented in stories and biographies that help children clarify their own beliefs and values. This course will require students to explore at least 50 books written for children and determine what can be learned from these books.

Goals:

- To think about major historical topics, societal issues and personal values through the lens of books for children.
- To sharpen critical thinking skills through discussion of these topics and issues and how they are presented for an audience of children.
- To hone writing skills, particularly the ability to clearly present and support ideas using examples from children's books.

Texts: There is no required text for this course but students will use resources such as the following to locate appropriate children's books

Understanding Diversity Through Novels and Picture Books by Elizabeth Knowles and Martha Smith

Teaching U.S. History Through Children's Literature: From the Colonial Period to World War II by Wanda Miller

Teaching U.S. History Through Children's Literature: Post World War II by Wanda Miller

Discovering World Geography with Books Kids Love by Nancy Chicola and Eleanor B.

English

Great Books for Boys by Kathleen Odean

Great Books for Girls by Kathleen Odean

In addition, students will read at least 50 children's books which address the particular values, issues and topics they choose to focus on.

Tentative Daily Schedule and Assignments

All assignments should follow the guidelines given in class. Submit all assignments to FYS blackboard by 11:00 AM on the day they are due. Bring a printed copy of reflection/assignment to class.

Thursday, Jan. 14

Course Orientation, Objectives, Personal Reading Histories

Tuesday, Jan. 19

Short Paper Personal Reading History due

Thursday, Jan. 21

Assignment _____

Tuesday, Jan. 26

Assignment _____

Thursday, Jan. 28

Short Paper My One Best Book (or author) due

Tuesday, Feb. 2

Assignment _____

Tuesday, Feb. 9

Assignment _____

Thursday, Feb. 11

Assignment _____

Tuesday, Feb. 16

Historical/Geographical/Cultural Paper Due

Thursday, Feb. 18

Assignment _____

Tuesday, Feb. 23

Assignment _____

Tuesday, March 2

Assignment _____

Thursday, March 4

Assignment _____

Tuesday, March 16

Assignment _____

Thursday, March 18

Assignment _____

Tuesday, March 23

Assignment _____

Thursday, March 25

Issues/Values Presentations (PowerPoint) Due

Tuesday, March 30

Assignment _____

Thursday, April 1

Assignment _____

Tuesday, April 6

Assignment _____

Thursday, April 8

Assignment _____

Tuesday, April 13

Assignment _____

Thursday, April 15

Assignment _____

Tuesday, April 20

Assignment _____

Thursday, April 22

Assignment _____

Thursday, April 29 **Double Class 11:00-1:15 TOP TEN Presentations**

Grades:

Grades will be determined by an accumulation of points:

- Attendance and participation (No unexcused absences or late arrivals) 30 points
- Five Short Papers (5 points each) 25 points
- Historical/Geographical Cultural Paper 20 points
- Issues/Values Presentation 20 points
- Top Ten Books Presentation/Paper 20 points
- Bonus points for Persuading others your books are best 1-10

A = 110-115 A- = 107-109 B+ = 104-106 B = 101-103 B- = 98-100 C+ = 95-97