ENG 221 – Children’s Literature Spring 2020

Tentative syllabus

**Instructor Information and Availability:**

**Instructor**: Jane Walker

**Email**: walkerja@linnbenton.edu

**Office hours:** Tuesdays by Zoom or Skype from 10-12 pm

**Course Information:**

**CRN 40359**

**Class time:** Online

**Course Materials:**

* **Text:** Charlotte Huck’s Children’s Literature: A Brief Guide, 3rd edition, Kiefer and Tyson, McGraw/Hill, 2019
* **Two chapter books:**
1. *Charlotte’s Web* by E.B. White OR *The Wednesday Wars* by Gary Schmidt OR *The Giver* by Lois Lowry.
2. You have two choices for the second chapter book. Either you can just choose one of the books in #1 that you did not choose for the first 4 weeks OR you can pick a Newbery Award winner from the last 20 years. If you choose one of the books from #1, you will probably be able to order it from the bookstore. If you choose a Newbery, you will have to order it from somewhere like Amazon.

**Text website:** www.mhhe.com/kieferbriefle

**Course Description:**

Welcome to our children’s literature class! Prepare to immerse yourself in the world of children’s books! I have a great passion for children’s literature, and I am excited to share that with you this term. This class is appropriate for any student who has an interest in children’s literature and is fulfilling general education requirements or for students who are or will be working with children in a professional setting. Hopefully you will end the term with a greater appreciation of children’s literature as part of the mainstream of all great literature.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

* Identify the key characteristics of varied genres in children’s literature.
* Select, analyze, interpret, and evaluate children’s literature.
* Apply evaluation guidelines to children’s literature (from the textbook and from handouts)
* Analyze how visual elements in children’s books enhance, tell, and/or impact the story.
* Articulate how children’s literature reflects the human condition.

**“Reading makes immigrants of us all—it takes us away from home, but most importantly, it finds homes for us everywhere.” -----Hazel Rochman**

**Please note:** Succeeding in this class requires that you have college-level writing and reading skills (write at the WR121 level). If you have not yet taken WR121 (or aren’t taking it this term), please contact me asap.

**Required reading:**

* About one picture book per week (varied genres) (You might read many more than that.)
* Two chapter books (*Charlotte’s Web* **OR** *The Giver* **OR** T*he Wednesday Wars* in Weeks 1-5 and a second one in Weeks 6-10)
* Chapters 1-10 in your textbook

**Course Assignments:**

**Chapter Key Points (80 pts: 10 points each)**

Each day a chapter reading in your textbook is assigned, you also have a brief written assignment. You are to note at least 5 key points from that chapter and elaborate further on one of those key points. You will share your 5 Key Points with Jane in Moodle link.

**Forum Posts (100 pts: 5 points for your posting and 5 points for your response to another posting)**

Each week you will respond to one or more questions in the forum. You are also expected to respond to one of your forum group’s response.

**Weekly Writes (400 pts): (6 @ 50 pts each and 1 @ 100 pts)**

Every week you will get a weekly handout with the writing prompts for that week. These weekly writes are designed to help you reflect on and apply what you are learning during the term. While I expect to see thoughtful, analytical writing that integrates the textbook material, these weekly writes are still informal writings. Many weekly writes can be converted into entries for your annotated bibliography project, allowing you to work on your bibliography throughout the term. **You are allowed one “free” late weekly writes, and that must be handed in within one week of the original due date. Beyond that, all other late weekly writes earn only half credit.** You may rewrite ONE weekly write for a better grade during the term. You will share your weekly writes with Jane on Google Docs.

**Midterm (150 pts):**

This is a take-home midterm that includes three sections. The first section is literary analysis chart in which you will identify the major literary elements in your first chapter book (*Charlotte’s Web*, *The Wednesday Wars*, or *The Giver*). The next two smaller sections focus on interpretation and evaluation of your chosen book. The midterm must be uploaded into the Turnitin link (see Week Five).

**Capstone Project: Annotated Bibliography (270 pts)**

You will prepare an annotated bibliography of children’s picture books that covers the following six genres: traditional literature, modern fantasy, poetry, contemporary realistic fiction, historical fiction, and biography. You will also include a summary/analysis/response of one chapter book (the chapter book you choose to read for Weeks 6-10). I will hand out a detailed assignment guide for this project during Week 2. Make the commitment to start early on this project so you don’t have to deal with the stress of completing a major project in a short period of time at the end of the term. You will upload your Annotated Bibliography into Google Docs.

Total points = 1000: A = 900-1000, B = 800-899, C = 700-799, D = 600-699

**“No book is really worth reading at the age of ten that is not equally (and often far more) worth reading at the age of fifty . . . the only imaginative works we ought to grow out of are those which it would be better not to have read at all.”** ----C.S. Lewis, “On Stories,” Essays presented to Charles Williams

Tentative calendar for the term (assignments and due dates subject to change with notice) Please note the word “tentative.” I will do my best to keep to these due dates, but since is my first term going online with this class, I may need to adjust during the term.

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| **Week One: Entering the conversation about children’s literature and establishing some key terms** |
| **Focus for this week:*** How do we define children’s literature? What are its values?
* How do we analyze and evaluate children’s literature?
* What makes a “good” children’s book?
* **Forum post due on Tuesday, April 7th by noon.**
* **Response to another forum post due on Wednesday, April 8th by noon.**
* **Weekly Write #1 due on Friday, April 10th by midnight. Please post on Google Docs.**
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| **Week Two: Reviewing the history of children’s literature and looking at diversity in children’s lit** |
| **Focus for this week:*** Children’s literature through the ages
* Reader response
* Diversity in children’s books: looking at some key issues
* **Forum post due on Tuesday, April 14th by noon.**
* **Response to another forum post due on Wednesday, April 15th by noon.**
* **Read Chapters 1 and 2.** Focus primarily on Chapter 1 as this is a key chapter you will need to refer to throughout the term. You can skim through Chapter 2, which will be of special interest to those of you who are parents, who are currently working with children, or who are planning a career working with children. **Due on Tuesday, April 14th.**
* **5 (or more) key points from Chapter One due on Tuesday April 14th by noon. Please post in Moodle link.**
* **Weekly Write #2 due on Friday, April 17th by midnight. Please share on Google Docs.**

**\*\*I strongly suggest that you try to have at least the first two chapters of your first chapter book read for today, but at least have decided on a book. I will be checking in with you to see who is reading what.** |
| **Week Three: Illustration: the marriage of pictures and text** |
| **Focus for this week:*** How do pictures take a story “beyond its words”?
* What are the elements of design?
* What types of media do illustrators employ in children’s books?
* **Forum post due on Tuesday, April 21st by noon.**
* **Response to another forum post due on Wednesday, April 22nd by noon.**
* **Read Chapter 3. Due on Tuesday, April 21st**
* **5 (or more) key points from Chapter 3 due on Tuesday, April 21st by noon. Please post in Moodle link.**

**You would be wise to have read at least half of your first chapter book by now.** |
| **Week Four: Chapter book #1: *Charlotte’s Web* OR *The Giver* OR *The Wednesday Wars*** |
| **Focus for this week:*** Review of literary elements and devices
* Conversations about your chapter book with other students who read the same book.
* **Forum post due on Tuesday, April 28th by noon.**
* **Response to another TWO forum posts due on Wednesday, April 29th by noon.**
* **Weekly Write #3 due on Tuesday, April 28th by midnight. Please post in Google Docs.**
* **I would like to try Zoom groups this week, so make sure you have downloaded Zoom on your computer or device. The Zoom groups will likely happen on Thursday, April 23rd , but I will update you closer to the date.**
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| **Week Five: Traditional literature: Folktales, fables, epic and legendary heroes, myths and sacred stories, creation myths** |
| **Focus for this week:*** How do we define “traditional literature”?
* What is the origin of folk literature?
* What is the value of traditional tales in children’s literature?
* **Forum post due on Tuesday, May 5th by noon.**
* **Response to another forum post due on Wednesday, May 6th by noon.**
* **Read Chapter 4. Due on Tuesday, May 5 by noon.**
* **5 (or more) key points from Chapter 4 due on Tuesday, May 5th by noon. Please post in Moodle link.**
* **MIDTERM EXAM DUE on Friday, May 8th by midnight. Please upload into the Turnitin link.**
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| **Week Six: Modern Fantasy: Animal fantasy, the world of toys and dolls, eccentric characters, extraordinary worlds, magical powers, suspense and the supernatural, time-shift fantasy, imaginary realms, high fantasy, science fiction** |
| **Focus for this week:*** What are the key elements of fantasy books?
* Exploring five characteristics of children’s books: snugness, scariness, smallness, lightness, aliveness
* A second review of literary devices in children’s literature
* **Weekly Write #4 due on Monday, May 11th by noon. Please post in Google Docs.**
* **Read Chapter 5. Due on Tuesday, May 12th by noon.**
* **5 (or more) key points from Chapter 5 due on Tuesday, May 12th by noon. Please post in Moodle link.**
* **Forum post due on THURSDAY, May 14th by noon.**
* **Response to another forum post due on FRIDAY, May 15th by noon.**

**Week Seven: Poetry**  |
| **Focus for this week:*** What are the key elements of poetry?
* What are the diverse types of poetry books we see for children today?
* **Weekly Write #5 due on Monday, May 18th by noon. Please post in Google Docs.**
* **Forum post due on Tuesday, May 19th by noon.**
* **Response to another forum post due on Wednesday, May 20th.**
* **Read Chapter 6. Due on Tuesday, May 19th by noon.**
* **5 (or more) key points from Chapter 6 due on Tuesday, May 19th by noon. Please post in Moodle link.**
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| **Week Eight: Contemporary Realistic fiction and Historical fiction** |
| **Focus for this week:*** How “real” may a children’s book be?
* Bias and stereotyping
* Windows and mirrors and how that relates to realistic fiction
* What is the value of historical fiction?
* What forms does historical fiction take?
* **Weekly Write #6 due on Monday, May 25th by noon. Please post in Google Docs.**
* **Forum post due on Tuesday, May 26th by noon.**
* **Response to forum post due on Wednesday, May 27th  by noon.**
* **Second forum post due on Thursday, May 28th by noon.**
* **Response to second forum post due on Friday, May 29th by noon.**
* **Read Chapter 7 by Tuesday, May 26th by noon.**
* **5 (or more) key points from Chapter 7 due on Tuesday May 25th by noon. Please post in Moodle link.**
* **Read Chapter 8 by Thursday, May 28th by noon.**
* **5 (or more) key points from Chapter 8 due on Thursday, May 28th by noon. Please post in Moodle link.**
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| **Week Nine: Biography** |
| **Focus for this week:*** What are the types of children’s biographies?
* What criteria do we use to judge children’s biography?
* **Forum post due on Tuesday, June 2nd by noon.**
* **Response to another forum post due on Wednesday, June 3rd by noon.**
* **Read Chapter 10, Tuesday, June 2nd by noon.**
* **5 (or more) key points from Chapter 10 due on Tuesday, June 2nd by noon.**
* **Weekly Write #7 due on Friday, June 5th by midnight.**
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| **Week Ten: Finishing up the term and completing the Annotated Bibliography** |
| **This week, just focus on finishing your Annotated Bibliography. It is due on Friday, June 12th by noon.****I hope it has been a good term for you! I look forward to reading your Annotated Bibliographies.** |

“It is not enough simply to teach children to read; we have to give them something worth reading. Something that will stretch their imaginations–something that will help them make sense of their own lives and encourage them to reach out toward people whose lives are quite different from their own.” {Katherine Paterson, *The Spying Heart*, pp. 163-164}

**Please note:** Statements about College Policies (LBCC email and course communications, disability and access statement, statement of inclusion, Title IX reporting policy, LBCC comprehensive statement of nondiscrimination, public safefy/campus security), campus resources, and tips for success in this class (as well as behavior and expectations) will be posted in Moodle (Under “Additional syllabus statements”). Please take some time to review those statements.

**Changes to the syllabus**

I reserve the right to change the contents of this syllabus due to unforeseen circumstances. You will be given notice of relevant changes in class, through a Moodle announcement, or through LBCC email.