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LRC 480
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN THE CLASSROOM
Fall 2007

Course Intent:

The purpose of this course is to give participants an opportunity to explore the many excellent books available for children; the authors, illustrators, and poets who write for children; and the resources available on children's literature. These experiences will provide a foundation for using children's literature in the classroom.

The primary learning intent of this course is to facilitate **your exploration of literature for children** in a way that is personally meaningful to you. Strategies for using literature will be experienced as we interact with books and each other rather than being the focus for the course. This course is primarily a survey course of children's literature and resource materials related to that literature, rather than a curriculum or methods course. Within the basic framework for the course, what you learn and how much you learn will depend on the choices you make during each class period and in your independent reading and projects

Our class experiences are based on the following beliefs about learning:

1. Learning is an active process.
We will immerse ourselves into reading and responding in various ways to many children's books.
2. Learning is a social process of collaborating with others.
We will explore our thinking about our reading through dialogue in small groups. There will be many opportunities for informal interaction and sharing about literature in small group and whole class experiences.
3. Learning occurs when we make connections to our own experiences.
We will respond to literature through making personal connections to our reading and then exploring and critically examining those responses in literature circles with other readers. Our focus will not be on a specific literary interpretation. We will make decisions about the books we read and the resources we develop based on our needs and experiences as individuals and as teachers and librarians.
4. Choice allows learners to connect to their experiences and feel ownership in the curriculum.
We will have choices in what we read, how we respond, and the specific focus of projects and small group activities.
5. Learning is reflective as well as active.
We will have many opportunities to reflect on what we are learning through writing, talking, and self-evaluations.
6. We live in a culturally diverse world.
We will explore literature from a multicultural and international orientation to expand our understanding of the cultural pluralism in children's lives and world.
7. Learning is a process of inquiry.
We will search out the questions that matter in our lives and develop strategies for exploring those questions and sharing our understandings with others.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES ON MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION (LRC)

The term "multicultural education" expresses the essential mission of the department and the university. Multicultural education is not just "about" certain subjects; it does not merely offer "perspectives" on education. It is an orientation to our purposes in education--and ultimately an orientation to life, one that values diversity of viewpoints and experiences and sees people as valuable contributors to the experience of school and society. Life in universities is a self-consciously multicultural. Learners bring a variety of linguistic and cognitive strengths from their families, communities and nations into the classroom; these strengths are resources to be appreciated. Education must expand on the linguistic and cognitive strengths that learners already possess and bring with them to the classroom, rather than ignore or try to replace them with others. Respect and appreciation for cultural and community knowledge means that universities serve the interest of education when they allow for an exchange of views, rather than rely exclusively on a transmission model of instruction. We recognize the existence of a variety of communities--each with its own voice and interests--both within and outside the university; a broad education offers the opportunity to hear and study as many of these voices as possible. Such an accommodation must include those communities which have traditionally been excluded or under-represented in the university. Recognition of the validity of these general principles is reflected in our courses, our relations with students, staff and other faculty members, and in the community life of LRC.

Reading Materials:

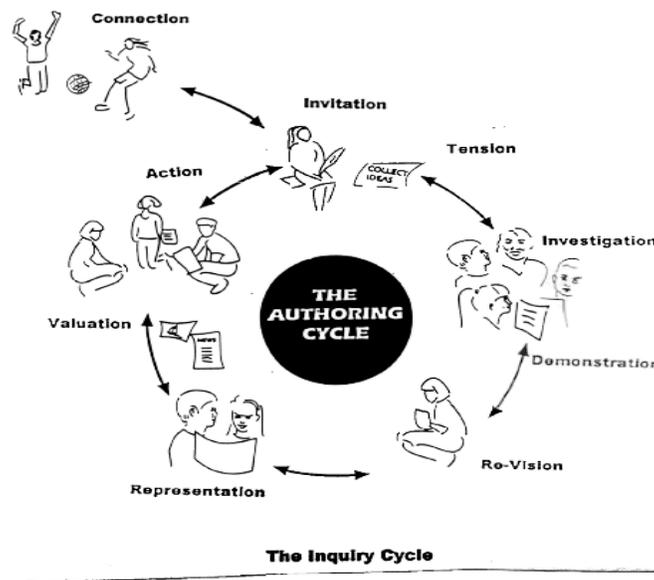
- 100 or more children's books.
- Lynch-Brown, Carol & Tomlinson, C. (2007). *Essentials of Children's Literature*, 6th ed.
- *Weedflower* (C. Kadohata), *Children of Topaz* (M. Tunnel), *Skellig* (D. Almond).
- Assigned articles and chapters on electronic reserve (lrc480)

Sources of children's books

- Room 104 paperback collection from which books may be checked out each week
- Tucson Public Library or school libraries
- University of Arizona Main Library (1st floor, to the left of the checkout desk)
- International Collection of Children's Literature (Room 104), during open reading hours

Curriculum Organization:

The Authoring Cycle curriculum will provide the organizational structure for our class participation.



Tentative Daily Time Blocks:

- 4:14-5:00 Read aloud, Introduction of class focus
Literature circles
5:00-5:30 Class Discussion
5:30-6:00 Browsing
6:00-6:30 Class Discussion/Project Groups
6:30-6:45 Sharing/Reflection/Announcements

LEARNING PROJECTS

Reading Record

Extensive and intensive reading of recent children's books is the primary focus of this course. Keep a reading record of the books you read. You can get suggestions for books to read from class sessions, the course text, or books from your school or library. This record should be in a format that you will find useful in your classroom. Your records will vary from brief annotations or categorizations to more extensive annotations and analysis of your reading. They will also vary by the books you read. Some books you may want to list while others will have more extensive annotations because these books are more significant for you. The major function of the record is for you to write down information you want for the future. You will need to decide what form your reading record will take - notecards, looseleaf notebook, computer data base, etc. You might create your own form where you record the books you read and develop categories to classify or rate the books. You need to decide what kinds of information you want to include in your record. The kinds of information included about books should include:

- 1) bibliographic information on the book (author, title, illustrator, publisher, date, number of pages)
- 2) type of genre and a short summary of the main plot and themes in the book
- 3) a description of the illustrations in picture books
- 4) your response to the book (comments on connections, strengths, or concerns)

Remember, you will be the person using this record in the classroom, so write down what you want to remember. You also need to decide if the record will be used only by you or also by students. Decide how you want the record organized. What system would be most helpful in quickly locating the books? You might organize by themes, authors, types of books (genre), or some other system.

The reading for this course should be done weekly. There may be some weeks when you read fewer books than others but this is not a project that you put off until it is due. This course is based on continuous reading of children's literature and you will greatly decrease your learning and participation in this class if you are not reading regularly throughout the course. Include poetry books in your reading record since poetry is so often overlooked in classrooms and libraries. Note that LRC 480 students are expected to read a minimum of 100 books in a combination of picture books, poetry books, informational books and chapter books (minimum of 15), reflecting a range of genres and age levels.

The reading record will be handed in on September 4, September 18, October 9, and November 20. The completed record and self-evaluation are due on December 4.

Literature Reflection Journal

The function of the literature reflection journal is to provide a place for you to reflect on the books you will be discussing in literature circles and to dialogue with us and another class member about your responses to these books. The focus of the journal is on personal response to reading, reflections on your learning and thinking, and dialogue with others about these responses and reflections. Occasionally you will be asked to respond to a professional article in your journal. Each week, make a minimum of one entry in your dialogue journal. One entry must always be a personal response to the book you are going to discuss in literature circles for that week, so that you are prepared to contribute to this discussion. You may include entries on another book(s) that you have read during that week and want to think more about. Write about your personal connections, thoughts, and questions on books you are reading. The focus on the log is not on writing a summary or a literary analysis of a book but responding to how the book connected to you personally. *Bring two copies of that entry with you to class, exchange one with another class member and hand in the other one to us.* Please type these responses and print out two copies to bring to class. Respond each week to the journal entry you receive and return to the class member at the next class session.

The reading to which you respond will primarily be children's books, but you can also respond to professional readings (articles, the textbook) or to experiences in our class or in a classroom or library. The purpose of these reflections is to give you a chance to think about the class sessions and your experiences with literature and make connections to children's experiences. In your reflections, write about what you are learning or thinking as well as questions and concerns.

Author/Illustrator/poet study and on-line library experience

As you read children's books, look for a poet, author, or illustrator who particularly intrigues you or to whom you feel a strong connection. Once you've found someone, gather a collection of that person's books and spend time reading and exploring those books. Locate information on that person through using the library reference materials. You will also be asked to complete an on-line library reference exercise as you prepare this study. *This exercise is due on September 25.* Read at least one or two books by this person to children and engage them in discussing or responding to this book(s) in some way.

Choose someone by September 25 and be ready to share with others on October 16. You will create a handout for other class members on that person's life and work and bring a display of that person's work.

Read Aloud Mini-Inquiries

This inquiry is designed to help you gain experience reading to a group of children twice during the semester. You can either

- read aloud to a group of 5 or more children and facilitate a literature discussion
- read aloud and discuss a book with children in a classroom setting

After each of your read aloud inquiries, write a description and a reflection of the experience using the Well Remembered Event (Carter) as a guide for thinking about this experience. *The read-aloud inquiries are due on September 18 and November 6.* If you are unable to find a place to read, please see me in advance to make arrangements for a place to conduct this inquiry.

Final Inquiry Project

This is an opportunity to explore a topic of your own interest and to dig deeply into a facet of children's literature that intrigues you. Choose a topic, issue, or question related to children's literature that interests you and examine how that idea is portrayed in children's literature and how children's and professional literature can inform you.

You can also choose to write and/or illustrate your own children's book. We will discuss this project in greater depth at mid-semester and you will be asked to select a topic and *submit a proposal on October 30. On December 4, you will present your project in class and turn in a self-evaluation.* Your presentation should include a visual display, a short experience to involve class members in the content of your project, and a handout for class members. You need to include at least 3 professional references as part of your inquiry project.

Other Class Engagements

- **Mapping Your Literacy Journey**

Our personal histories and literacy journeys affect our feelings and responses to literature and who we are as learners. What memories do you have of stories, books, reading, or literacy? Did your family tell stories? Were you read aloud to at school or home? How did you learn to read? Are there particular events, people, places, or feelings that stand out for you when you think about literacy? Create a map of your literacy journey, using art and words to portray that journey in some way. Choose one memory and type it as a one-page single-spaced short story or poem. Bring both to class on *August 28*.

- **Book Browsing**

Becoming familiar with many children's books during this course will be useful for you as you select literature to use in your methods courses, student teaching, and classroom teaching. You will have opportunities to browse many titles during class sessions. Develop a strategy for browsing and for quickly recording books you want to look at it more depth.

- **Personal Goals**

The purpose of the statement of goals is to provide you with decision-making related to what and how you learn within the course and with the evaluation of your learning. Read through the syllabus and think about:

What do you particularly want to accomplish during this course?

How will you go about reaching these goals?

Which of these learning experiences will be new for you?

What support will you need in reaching these goals?

This reflection is due on September 4. Keep a copy for your records, you will revise at mid-term.

- **Poetry Read-Aloud/Sharing**

Poetry is a genre that should be incorporated daily in classroom experiences. You will have an opportunity to select and share a poem with your classmates. Poems must relate to our class theme (journeys) or to the class topic for the day that you share. On the day you share, bring the book that contains the poem and a handout for classmates. The handout should include the poem, the bibliographic information for the book, and the reason for selecting the poem.

- **Personal text set**

As you read throughout the semester, keep track of the books with which you find a powerful personal connection in terms of your own life experiences and personal journey. *On the last day of class, December 11, you will gather these books to display along with a reflection on the connections each book has with your life.*

Children's Literature Resource Portfolio

The purpose of this portfolio is to gather and organize the resources from this class and your course projects -- resources on books, authors, illustrators, poets, poetry, and strategies for using literature in classrooms and/or libraries. In organizing your portfolio, think about how you will best be able to use this resource in your methods courses and in your teaching. Your portfolio should include outside resources that you feel will be helpful in using children's literature within your teaching. At the minimum, the portfolio should involve organizing handouts you receive from this class as well as other conferences and/or university classes into a format that is useful to you. So often the handouts received in courses or conferences go into stacks or files and never get used. This notebook is a chance for you to organize resources related to children's literature in a way that will be useful. Your resource portfolio can be in whatever form works best for you - a looseleaf notebook, file folders, or file box. *The notebook and self-evaluation will be due on December 4.*

Your portfolio should include:

Table of Contents	Course Syllabi	Reading Records
Reflection journals	Read aloud reflections	Handouts
Mid-term reflection	Class projects	Book lists
Final inquiry	Final reflection	Author/Illustrator information

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Class attendance and participation are essential to this course. This course has been designed as a highly experiential course involving book browsing, literature discussion groups, and class discussions. You cannot make up for absences by getting class notes or reading the text. Actively participate in class sharing times, literature circles, project groups, and responses. Participation in small groups and in responding to dialogue journals is essential. Active participation includes reading books for each week's literature circles and preparing for these discussions. In addition, each class member will participate in short engagements for class sessions.

More than one absence and/or chronic tardiness and leaving early will lower your grade for the class. If you must miss a class session, please provide a written note explaining your absence. Make arrangements to talk with me after our regular class session about your reasons for the absence and your plans for making up the work of the class you missed. Also immediately contact a class member to find out what you need to prepare for the next class session. *Late assignments will affect your final grade.* If you need accommodations due to a documented learning disability, please discuss your needs with the instructor early in the semester, well in advance of assignment due dates.

EVALUATION:

Self-evaluation and reflection are integral to the course. *On September 4, you will write your initial statement of goals for this semester.* For each project, you will turn in a self-evaluation in which you state your goals for that particular project and evaluate the process you went through in reaching those goals. I will add my evaluative comments based on your statement of goals. At mid-semester (*October 23*), you will revise your goals for the course and evaluate your learning at that point in the semester. At the end of the class, you will write an overall self-evaluation of your learning throughout the class.

Your final course grade will be based on your self-evaluations and my evaluations of your growth and learning, the quality of your work and projects, and your attendance, participation, and

preparation for class. The course requirements and experiences discussed in this syllabus are minimum standards for the course. Working hard and meeting course requirements qualifies as a B. Exceeding those requirements in a significant way qualifies as an A. Not meeting the requirements qualifies as a grade lower than a B. Absences, tardiness, leaving early, incomplete and/or late work will lower your final grade.

The Student Code of Conduct and Plagiarism

The College of Education expects you to abide by the College's standards of conduct as outlined in the Academic Code of Conduct which you received upon admittance to the teacher education program. Listed in the handbook under Prohibited Conduct is the issue of plagiarism, which is the representation of someone else's work as one's own. This includes the use of papers written by others as well as the use of another's words, ideas or information without acknowledgement. Plagiarized assignments will not be accepted by the instructor. Furthermore, a *Fitness to Teach* form will be submitted to the College of Education for any student who is caught plagiarizing any assignment in this course.

Tentative Schedule

August 21	Course Introduction Literacy connections	
August 28	Responding to Literature Journeys of Discovery	Chapter 1 and 2 Literacy journeys and story Literature circle book
September 4	Themes and Inquiries Journeys of Discovery	<i>Weedflower</i> and Article Journey artifacts/museum Personal course goals Reading Records
September 11	Cultural Issues	<i>Children of Topaz</i> Chapter 11
September 18	Authors and Illustrators	Author Biographies and article Notable authors and illustrators 1 st Read Aloud inquiry Reading Records
September 25	Award-winning Books	Caldecott and Newbery Award books & speeches On-line library modules due
October 2	Genre & Literary elements	<i>Skellig</i> Chapter 3
October 9	Picture Books Visual Elements	Chapter 5 Reading Records
October 16	Author/Illustrator/Poet Studies Traditional Literature	Author/Illustrator/Poet Sharing Chapter 6

October 23	Modern Fantasy	Literature Circle book Chapter 7 Mid-term reflection
October 30	Realistic Fiction	Literature Circle book Chapter 8 Inquiry project proposal
November 6	Historical Fiction	Literature Circle book Chapter 9 2 nd Read Aloud inquiry
November 13	Poetry and plays	Literature Circle book Chapter 4
November 20	Nonfiction	Literature Circle book Chapter 10 Reading Records
November 27	Curriculum Issues	Chapter 12 and 13
December 4	Sharing inquiry projects	Resource Portfolios Final Inquiry Projects
December 11	Final exam (in-class) Personal Text Sets	Final self-evaluation Course evaluation

Professional Opportunities

Throughout the semester you will receive information about various professional opportunities available for teachers and pre-service teachers. While these experiences are not required, they do provide you with an opportunity to enhance your professional knowledge and develop your resume. These experiences also offer you the prospect of building a network of support with practicing professionals.

September 15, Active Voices: Best Practices in the Teaching of Poetry. Workshop with Allan Wolf. Tucson Area Reading Council, 8:30-3:00, Pima Community College Downtown.

October 5-6, Bridging Cultures through Languages, Fall Conference and Second Language Teachers Symposium. Pima Community College, Downtown.- www.azlanguage.org

October 6, Reading the World for Intercultural Understanding, Tucson Teachers Applying Whole Language, 8:00-2:00, Van Horne Elementary School, Tucson- www.tucsontawl.org

October 13, Making Connections: Children, Parents and You. Southern Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children. University of Arizona.

October 26-27, Arizona Reading Association Fall Conference, Reading Rocks the World, Cactus Middle School, Casa Grande, AZ - Wwww.azreadingassoc.com

November 2-4, Children Between Worlds: Intercultural Relations in Books for Children and Young Adults, 7th IBBY Conference, Westward Look. www.usbby.org

December 1, "I read it but I don't get it": Comprehension Strategy Instruction with Nonfiction Text. Bob Wortman. 9:00-12:00, TMM Family Services Building, Tucson.