

Kathy G. Short

Office: Education 453, 621-9340, shortk@u.arizona.edu

Office Hours: Tues, 12:00-2:00 p.m. and other days by appt.

LRC 586
Reading the World through Children's and Adolescent Literature
Spring 2015

This course focuses on global children's and adolescent literature and the issues that surround this literature. We will begin by examining our understandings of our cultural identities, definitions of global literature, and reading globally. We will explore the global literature that is available in the United States as well as the international literature published around the world for children and adolescents. We will examine the trends and the sociopolitical and pedagogical issues that surround this literature and discuss ways to engage with global literature to build intercultural understandings and global perspectives.

Within this course, our goal is to form a community of readers in which diverse, even opposing, readings of books are welcomed. Our focus is not on whether individual interpretations are "right" but on critiquing the cultural worlds of books and our own culturally situated responses to books through inquiring into how our differing understandings are socially and culturally constructed. Your participation in discussions and engagements is crucial to the success of the course.

Course objectives include:

- Becoming acquainted with global literature for children and adolescents published and distributed in the United States and international literature published outside of the United States.
- Understanding the role of global literature in providing multiple perspectives on cultural, social and political values and in encouraging intercultural understandings and global perspectives.
- Developing critical insights into the sociopolitical issues and trends related to global literature in different parts of the world.
- Gaining familiarity with the historical trends in publication and with the major awards in the field of global literature for young people.
- Developing the ability to review and critically evaluate global literature using literary and cultural criteria.
- Becoming familiar with the lives and works of major international authors and illustrators
- Using the reference sources related to global literature for young people.

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

- Learning is an active process. We will immerse ourselves in reading, writing, talking, and responding to professional readings and to adolescent and children's literature.
- Learning is a social process of collaborating with others. We will explore our thinking about our reading and experiences through dialogue.
- Learning occurs as we make connections to our own experiences and as we explore tensions with our current beliefs. Responses to our readings will focus on connections to our lives and teaching experiences. We will also identify and explore tensions with our current beliefs and past experiences to interrogate our values. We will explore the tensions that arise from exploring alternative and oppositional interpretations of literature.
- Choice allows learners to connect to their experiences and feel ownership in their learning. We will have choices in the books we read, our responses to readings, and the specific focus of the final project.
- Learning is reflective as well as active. We will have many opportunities to reflect on what we are learning through writing, talking, sketching, and self-evaluations

- Learning occurs in a culturally diverse world with many ways of knowing. We will read professional and children's literature that reflects diversity in experiences and ways of expressing those experiences. We will also explore the range of interpretations of literature that arise from our differing cultural and social experiences.
- Learning is a process of inquiry. As learners we need to search out the questions that matter in our lives and to develop strategies for exploring those questions and sharing our understandings with others.

Course Structure:

The following time blocks will be part of the course but the weekly schedule will depend on the particular class focus and on how we as a class negotiate our use of time.

Literature discussions of children's/adolescent literature
 Presentations and demonstrations
 Whole class/small group discussions of professional readings and issues
 Inquiry groups
 Sharing and Reflection

Course Readings:

Articles and chapters on D2L
 Children's and adolescent literature for literature circles
Reading the World, the Globe, and the Cosmos, Suzanne S. Choo
Never Fall Down, Patricia McCormick
 Books available in Worlds of Words in Education 453 (open 9-5, M-F, 9-1, Saturday)

Learning Experiences and Course Projects:

1. Participation and attendance

Attend class regularly and participate in discussions, sharing, small groups, written responses, and class activities. An essential aspect of participation is to read and prepare for discussions of the literature and the professional readings and to engage in research to prepare for the class focus. Preparation and participation in class is significant, not only for your learning, but for the learning of others.

More than one absence and/or chronic tardiness will lower your grade for the course. If you absolutely must miss a class session, leave a message for me in advance by email or in the LRC office (621-1311). Contact a class member so that you are fully prepared for the next class. Meet with me at the next class session to determine how you will make up the work for the class you missed.

2. Response Journal

The purpose of the journal is to reflect on your readings of the literature and the professional articles and chapters which we discuss in class. Record your understandings, questions, and connections to these readings. Write about your response, not summaries of the readings. The journal is a vehicle to reflect on important and difficult ideas and issues raised by our reading. You will hand in your journal each week. Use a loose leaf notebook for your journal.

Respond to the book(s) which we are discussing in literature circles. Your response may include comments about the connections and feelings the book evokes, your thinking about the author's construction of the plot, setting, themes, or characters (including their national, racial, gender or class identities), or reflections on social and political issues in the book. Reflect on your response to the book.

In responding to the professional readings, you can respond to the articles/chapters by focusing on ideas or issues you found interesting or provocative that go across the readings. Or you can respond to one of

the articles/chapters of particular interest to you or to an idea that catches your attention.

3. Literature Reading Record

You will be browsing and reading many children's and adolescent books throughout the course. Devise some type of record keeping system so that you are able to keep track of the books you read for later use. This system is for your use so the format and extensiveness of the record is your decision. Think about the kinds of information that you would want available for later use.

4. Research the Literature of a Specific Global Culture

Work with a partner to research children's and adolescent literature within a specific cultural group. Gather a collection of books that are representative of what is being published and distributed in the U.S. that is set within this culture. Look broadly to identify what is currently available and then examine this collection to determine what types of books are and are not being published. Choose a smaller group of these books, 7-10, to evaluate based on the issues discussed in class sessions on global literature. If you have access to books that are published in that particular culture/language, compare what is available in the U.S. with what is published within that culture or country.

a. Website Exploration

Explore the websites and complete the matrix of document the content of each website. Identify titles of interest to you for personal or professional reasons but also books related to the specific global culture that you are interested in researching. **Due Feb. 17**

b. Annotated Bibliography of Books on a Specific Global Culture

Prepare an annotated bibliography of 7-10 books that reflect the range of types of books available on this culture. Include a short introduction to your bibliography that explains how the books were selected, how they fit together, and any particular issues that emerged from your analysis. In your annotations, include bibliographic information, concise summaries, and brief comments on the literary quality and cultural authenticity of the books. Also include a list of the major authors/illustrators/poets you have identified for this particular cultural group. Prepare a handout and display of books to share with class members on **March 10**. Also write a reflection on the issues that emerged from your analysis of this collection of books along with a description of why you chose this particular culture and of your process of research

c. Critical Review of a Global Book

Choose one book from your set to analyze in depth and to write a review based on the submission criteria for WOW Review (wowlit.org). Choose a book that is a recent publication. For this review, research the background of the author and/or illustrator, access reviews on the book (see the Comprehensive Children's Literature Database), and evaluate the book on issues of cultural authenticity. You can also choose to do this review on a book related to your final project instead of the annotated bibliography. This review is due on **April 7**.

5. Participation in the Tucson Festival of Books – March 15-16, 2015

Some of the authors and illustrators speaking at the festival write and illustrate global literature – Monica Brown, Carmen Agra Deedy, Yumi Heo, Bagram Ibatoulline, Cynthia Kadhota, Leon Nolis/James Deem, P & J Voelkel, Eugene Yelchin, Margy Knight Burns. Others write books reflecting cultural diversity in the U.S. – Austin Aslan, Karen Bao, Larry Dane Brimner, Howard Bryant, Cynthia Kadhota, Claudia Martinez, Marilyn Nelson, S. D. Nelson, Isabel Quintero, Jason Reynolds, Pam Muñoz Ryan, René Saldaña, Jr. Rita Williams-Garcia, Jacqueline Woodson. Many of them are directly addressing how issues of culture interweave throughout their life and writing in their sessions. You can either choose to attend sessions as a participant or volunteer to host an author but plan to attend one of the two days of the festival. You can also receive a professional development certificate if that is significant for you. We

will discuss the various options in class. In addition, there is a small mini-conference on Thursday, March 13, 4-7:30 that you can attend with Eugene Yelchin and Jon Agee. Attendance at the festival will replace a class session later in the semester.

Books by the authors and illustrators appearing at the festival are on reserve in Worlds of Words. Take some time to browse their work before the festival and/or read books by authors who intrigue you. On **March 24**, reflect on your interactions with authors and illustrators at the festival and the influence on your understandings of culturally diverse literature.

6. Inquiry Project

Choose a question or issue of concern to you in relation to global children's and adolescent literature. Once you have chosen a particular question, decide on how you will conduct your inquiry to explore that question or issue. You can research through professional readings, children's books, discussions, interviews, observations, and/or work with students. You can choose to do your inquiry project alone or with others. The only limitations are that your project should relate to global issues in children's/adolescent literature and is on a question that matters to you.

Options for your project include:

- an indepth critical analysis of a set of books from a particular country or cultural group
- an issue (e.g. translation, censorship, stereotypes, cultural authenticity)
- an author or theme relevant to our focus on global cultures and intercultural understanding
- responses of children, adolescents, or adults to a particular set of global books.
- awards given to international literature or to literature within a particular country
- write your own piece of literature that is based in a specific cultural experience
- your proposal.

A project proposal will be due **March 31**. On this proposal, describe your project in as much detail as possible, including your rationale for undertaking the project, your theoretical framework, your methods of researching your question or issue, etc. Your project will be due on **May 10**. The inquiry projects will be presented to other class members during the final on **May 10**.

7. Personal Text Set as a Global Citizen

Create a personal text set of 5-10 books that reflect your intercultural connections as a global citizen - your sense of place within the world, particularly highlighting difference. Bring the books on **May 10**

8. Evaluation

For each major project, you will turn in a self-evaluation stating your goals for that project and evaluating your process in reaching those goals. I will add my evaluative comments based on your goals. You will also write a mid-term evaluation of your learning and the course that includes your goals for the rest of the semester as well as a final self-evaluation at the end of the semester.

Your final grade will be based holistically on both your and our evaluation of your growth and learning, the quality of your written work, and your attendance, participation, and preparation for class sessions. While you can negotiate the ways in which you define and complete class projects, you must complete all of these projects to fulfill course requirements and your final grade for the course will be based on the thoughtfulness and quality of this work with a B reflecting the completion of all course projects at a satisfactory level. Incompletes will not be given for the course except in extreme situations and only with prior approval by the instructor.

Tentative Schedule of Class Sessions

- January 20 Introduction to the class.
Locating ourselves as global and cultural
- January 27 Locating the Cultural Self
Timeline or flow chart of cultural growth
Journal - Cultural Artifacts Reflection and literature circle reflection
Literature Circle book – your own cultural location
Articles on culture (Ford, Gonzalez)
- February 3 Reading Globally
Research a global author (life, books, cultural location) and create an overview
Literature circle – the author whom you selected for research
Complete the Cultural Location assignment
Read C. 11 (Short, 2013) and Choo, C. 1
- February 10 Culturally Situated Response
Read professional articles (Lewis, Thein/Beach/Parks, Leland)
Lit circle – *Never Fall Down, A Song for Cambodia*
- February 17 Issues in Reading Globally: Locating, Accessing and Availability
Web site matrix on accessibility
Lit circle: Read one or two books related to selected global culture
- February 21 Issues in Reading Globally: Cultural Authenticity and Authorship
C. 1, Short & Fox, Yenika-Agbaw, Woodson
Lit Circle – *Homeless Bird, Keeping Corner*
Bring global cultures books/list to share with a partner
- March 3 Issues in Reading Globally: Focalization
Lit Circle-*When My Name was Keoko, So Far from the Bamboo Grove*
Articles – Yenika-Agbaw, Barker
Bring global cultures books/list to share with a partner
- March 10 Issues in Reading Globally: Evaluating a Collection of Global Literature
Lit Circle – *Breaking Stalin's Nose*
Annotated Bib and reflection due along with a handout and display
Midterm
- March 13-16 Tucson Festival of Books – Cultural Location of Authors
Attend several sessions with authors who write or illustrate literature reflecting diverse cultural perspectives.
- Spring Break

- March 24 Issues in Reading Globally: Cultural/Historical Representation in Literature
 Lit circle – *Shades of Gray*, *The Family Romanov*, *Arcady's Goal*, or *Bomb*
 Articles (Brett & Tan, Page) and TED Talk – The Dangers of a Single Story
 Reflection on author/illustrator interactions from the festival
 Read critical book reviews from WOW Review
- March 31 Issues in Reading Globally: Translation
 Lit Circle: Batchelder award winner
 Articles ((Lathey, Hirano, Eithne)
 Final inquiry proposal
- April 7 Pairing Informational/Fictional Texts for Global Understanding
 Lit Circle – Paired texts
 Articles (Colman, Thomas & Short)
 Critical Book Review due
- April 14 Approaches to Teaching Literature: Nation and World
 Choo, Chapters 2 and 3
- April 21 Approaches to Teaching Literature: Global
 Choo, Chapter 4
 Short (2009)
- April 28 Approaches to Teaching Literature: Cosmopolitan
 Choo, Chapters 5 and 6
 Personal global text set
- May 5 No Class
- May 10 Final
 Projects and final reflections due
 Project Presentations

TLS Position Statement on Social Justice (3/25/2014)

The members of the TLSS community are committed to providing equal opportunity and nurturing an academic climate dedicated to social justice. Injustice takes many forms. Oppressive acts are sometimes overt, but most are subtle, and are difficult to document. These hidden forms of discrimination are identified in the literature as microaggressions, often resulting from unexamined attitudes and beliefs. Macroaggressions are expressions of both the overt and systemic forms of injustice.

Our commitment to social justice reflects an orientation to our goals and practices in education and ultimately, an orientation to life that values a diversity and inclusion of viewpoints and experiences of all people as valuable contributors to the experience of schooling and society. This stance recognizes that individuals bring a variety of linguistic, social, and cognitive strengths from their families and communities into the classroom; we view these strengths as assets.

- We value and honor human diversity.
- We recognize that all relationships include dynamics of power. We are committed to relating to each other with conscious awareness and sensitivity to these power dynamics.
- We pledge to contribute to expanding the linguistic and cognitive strengths that learners possess and bring with them to the classroom.
- We understand that systemic policies, traditions, and laws along with personal beliefs, experiences and attitudes affect personal relationships and equitable treatment and opportunity for all.
- We strive to provide a context where we all have the venue, the opportunity, and the confidence to express our experiences and that these experiences will be heard constructively, critically, and with sensitivity.
- Hence, we are not color blind. We will not erase who someone is in the name of equality, nor deny the historical, material and emotional impacts of racialized and gendered identities, and colonial legacies.

We stand alongside and speak out with our colleagues, staff, students, and community members when any of us or others experience micro- or macroaggressions. We recognize that those of us who enjoy privileged status due to our racialized, gendered, heteronormative, or otherwise privileged aspects of our identities may be unaware of the ways this privileged status marginalizes others. We pledge to listen to our colleagues, students, staff, and community members when any of us make efforts to remain diligent in maintaining awareness of micro, macro aggressions, and raise our awareness around issues of invisibility, marginalization, normativity, power, and privilege.

We view these goals as both crucial and ambitious. The entrenched nature of oppression requires both institutional restructuring and new social discourses. Therefore, our stance on disrupting existing and persisting inequities requires attention to micro and macro level interactions. Every interaction is an opportunity for disrupting processes of marginalization, whether overt or subtle, both through person-to-person exchange and through resisting oppressive structures and systems. We commit to holding one other and ourselves accountable, through our research and practice, to rejecting entrenched inequalities, and to cultivating new discourses as groundwork for imagining new social worlds.