CRS ####
CRITICALLY READING CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

Semester Year
Section: ###

Instructor: Dr. Thomas Crisp
Office: 536 COE
Email: tcrisp@gsu.edu
Office Hours: Days; Times

Class Sessions: Days; Times
Location (Face-to-Face): ### Building

Course Website:

COURSE OVERVIEW

Welcome to *Critical Reading of Children's and Young Adult Literature*. This course focuses on literary understandings, critical perspectives, and trends and issues related to the field of children's and young adult literature. As opposed to focusing on the pedagogical uses of texts, this course is grounded in thoughtful, intellectual discussions that challenge popular constructions of readers and authors, texts, and contexts. Because children's responses to texts are as varied as those of adults, participants are expected to focus on their own responses to the texts with which we engage (as opposed to attempting to predict how children—or any child—will respond). Readings include a range of texts written for children and young adults, from 19th Century serials through 21st Century multimodal texts, as well as scholarly texts about children's books and critical theory from perspectives grounded in the humanities, education, and library and information sciences. By the end of the semester, participants will better understand the complex ways in which readers interact with texts, how texts act on readers, how authors purposely (and unintentionally) shape their texts, how texts interact with one another, and how contexts influence readers, writers, and the act of reading.

This is primarily a discussion-based seminar and was planned to encourage dialogue and an exchange of views. Our course readings, activities, and projects are designed to help you explore and learn about the following **key ideas and course objectives**:

- Investigating multiple perspectives in reading and understanding children's and adolescent literature

- Establishing criteria for evaluating literature for children and adolescents

- Thinking critically about the ideologies and politics at work in the writing, publishing, marketing, and purchasing of children's books

- Exploring ways of eliciting meaningful, thoughtful, and creative responses to children's literature

- Formulating critical responses to multiple formats of popular children's literature

- Comparing texts and observing the ways in which texts interact, enlighten, and interrogate one another

FREQUENTLY REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS & LITERATURE

Children's and Young Adult Literature
(NOTE: Because I sometimes use "non-examples," I've obtained sets of certain books for classroom use; texts marked with an asterisk [*] below are provided to students, as to avoid supporting the purchase of these texts)

Alcott, L.M. (1868/2004). *Little women*. New York: Signet Classics.
*Alexie, S. (2007). *The absolutely true diary of a part-time Indian*. New York: Little, Brown, & Co.
Anderson, M.T. (2002). *Feed*. New York: Candlewick Press.
Barrie, J.M. (1902/2003). *Peter pan*. New York: Aladdin Classics.
Browne, A. (2001). *Voices in the park*. New York: DK Publishing.
Bruchac, J. (2001). *Heart of a chief*. New York: Puffin.
Carman, P. (2009). *Skeleton creek (Book One)*. New York: Scholastic.
Cline, E. (2011). *Ready player one.* New York: Crown.
*Coerr, E. (1979). *Sadako and the thousand paper cranes*. New York: Yearling Press
Gibson, M. B. (1894). Herm and I. *The Youth's Companion*, 203, 215, 227, 238, 253.
Giovanni, N. (2005). *Rosa*. New York: Henry Holt.
Hiaasen, C. (2002). *Hoot*. New York: Knopf Books for Young Readers.
Howe, J. (2005). *Totally Joe*. New York: Atheneum.
Klass, D. (1994). *California blue: A novel*. New York: Scholastic Press.
Littman, S. D. (2005). *Confessions of a closet Catholic*. New York: Dutton.
McKinley, R. (1997). *Rose daughter*. New York: Greenwillow Books.
McKinley, R. (1978). *Beauty*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
McKissack P. C., & McKissack, F. L. (1994). *Christmas in the big house, Christmas in the quarters*. New York: Scholastic.
Myers, W. D. (2005). *The beast*. New York: Scholastic.
Park, L. S. (2005). *Project mulberry*. New York: Yearling.
Pullinger, K, & Joseph, C. (n.d.). *Inanimate Alice*. Retrieved from: http://www.inanimatealice.com.
*Rinaldi, A. (1999). *My heart is on the ground: The diary of Nannie little rose, a Sioux girl*. New York: Scholastic Press.
Ryan, P. M. (2005). *Becoming Naomi leon*. New York: Scholastic.
*Sanchez, A. (2001). *Rainbow boys*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
Sendak, M. (1963). *Where the wild things are*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
Stork, F. X. (2009). *Marcelo in the real world*. New York: Scholastic.
Tan, S. (2007). *The arrival*. New York: Arthur A. Levine/Scholastic.
*Wilder, L. E. (1935/1991. *Little house on the prairie*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
Wong, J. S. (1996). *A suitcase of seaweed and other poems*. New York: Margaret K. McElderry.
Yang, G. L. (2006). *American born Chinese*. New York: First Second.
Zelinsky, P. (1997). *Rapunzel*. New York: Puffin Books.

Professional Publications

Atleo, M., Caldwell, N., Landis, B., Mendoza, J., Miranda, D., Reese, D., Rose, L., Slapin, B., & Smith, C. (1999). Fiction posing as truth: A critical review of Ann rinaldi's *My heart is on the ground: The diary of Nannie little rose, a Sioux girl. Rethinking Schools, 13* (4), 14-16.

Apol, L, Sakuma, A., Reynolds, T. M., & Rop, S. K. (2002). "When can we make paper cranes?": Examining pre-service teachers' resistance to critical readings of historical fiction. *Journal of Literacy Research, 34* (4), 429-464.

Bang, M. (2000). *Picture this: How pictures work*. New York: Chronicle Books.

Bettelheim, B. (1975). *The uses of enchantment: The meaning and importance of fairy tales*. New York: Random House.

Crisp, T. (2008). The trouble with *Rainbow boys. Children's Literature in Education, 39* (4), 237-261.

Golden, J. (2007). Literature into film (and back again): Another look at an old dog. *English Journal*, *97*(1), 24-30.

Hollindale, P. (1998). Ideology and the children's book. In P. Hunt (Ed.), *Literature for Children: Contemporary Criticism* (pp. 19-40). New York: Routledge.

Kidd, K. B. (2009). "Not censorship but selection": Censorship and/as prizing. *Children's Literature in Education, 40*, 197-216.

Kincaid, J. R. (2004). Producing erotic children. In S. Bruhm & N. Hurley (Eds.), *Curiouser: On the queerness of children* (pp. 3-16). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

MacLeod, A. S. (1998). Writing backward: Modern models in historical fiction. *The Horn Book Magazine, 74* (1), 26-33.

McGillis, R. (1996). The delights of impossibility: No children, no books, only theory. *Children's Literature Association Quarterly, 23* (4), 202-208.

Mohr, R. D. (2004). The pedophilia of everyday life. In S. Bruhm & N. Hurley (Eds.), *Curiouser: On the queerness of children* (pp. 17-30). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Rose, J. (1984/1993). *The case of Peter pan (Or the impossibility of children's fiction)*. Philadelphia, PA: The University of Pennsylvania Press.

Sipe, L. R. (1999). Children's response to literature: Author, text, reader, context. *Theory into Practice, 38* (3),120-129.

Sipe, L. R. (1998). How picture books work: A semiotically framed theory of text-picture relationships. *Children's Literature in Education, 29* (2), 97-108.

Sipe, L. R. (1998). Learning the language of picturebooks. *Journal of Children's Literature, 24* (2), 66-75.

Stephens, J. (1992). *Language and ideology in children's fiction*. New York: Longman.

Taxel, J. (2002). Children's literature at the turn of the century: Toward a political economy of the publishing industry. *Research in the Teaching of English, 37* (2), 145-197.

Tribunella, E. (2008). From kiddie lit to kiddie porn: The sexualization of children's literature. *Children's Literature Association Quarterly, 33* (2), 135-155.

Yenika-Agbaw, V. (1997). Taking children's literature seriously: reading for pleasure and social change. *Language Arts, 74*, 446-453.

Zipes, J. (1979/2002). *Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical theories of folk & fairy tales*. Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Submitting Assignments

Students are required to submit assignments electronically. All assignments are **due by noon on the day of the class session**. By this time you will need to submit your document as an attachment to the appropriate Blackboard drop box. The folders on Blackboard disappear *at noon*, so submitting your assignment at 11:59am on the day it is due may result in a rejected (and therefore *not submitted*) assignment by the time Blackboard processes your request.

Our course website on Blackboard (https://my.usf.edu/) includes a button marked "Assignments." Once you have "opened" this folder, select the appropriate assignment drop box, upload your essay, which should be titled(as a file on your hard drive) following this format:

Last Name.BriefAssignmentDescription.Section.

As an example, in submitting my third response paper, I would name my file: **Crisp.Response3.591**. Students are responsible for knowing how to access Blackboard as well as understanding the process of submitting assignments electronically.

Please note that all assignments* need to be *submitted in Microsoft Word (.doc) format.

I send feedback on papers in a timely fashion. In an ideal world, writing and receiving feedback would be exclusively about exchanging ideas. However, since this is a university course, assignments are graded. If you are concerned about your grade, pay attention to comments and questions I include in your paper and feel free to schedule an appointment to meet with me for clarification on the assignment. When meeting with me, be sure to have prepared specific questions and concerns as opposed to expecting me to reiterate my comments or explain to you why your paper received the grade it did – it is your responsibility to demonstrate that you have read and carefully considered my comments and feedback.

Grading and Assignments:

The final grade in this course will be based on the following:

> Response papers (seven @ five points each) – **35 points**
> Digital Text Project – **20 points**
> Final paper – **20 points**
> Attendance/Preparation/Participation – **25 points**
>
> **Total – 100 points**

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Response Papers – 5 Points Each (35 Points Total)
During this course, participants will compose a total of **seven** 2-3 page (typed, double-spaced, one-inch margins, Arial 11, Cambria 11, or Times New Roman 12-point font or similar) papers as responses to the "prompts" posed each week. The goal of these responses is to help further thinking about the topic(s) that will be addressed in class. When a response is due, each participant will submit his/her paper online (as described above) and will also be required to bring **four copies** of his/her paper for

members the class. At the start of class, members of the course will spend time reading and discussing what classmates have written.

Digital Text Project – 20 points
In this assignment, you will have the opportunity to express an idea or tell a story in a digital text that you create either singly, in pairs, or in groups of no more than three. On **DATE**, your Digital Text Project is due and we will have a Digital Text Celebration in which you present a project that demonstrates how critical literacy can be explored through multimodal composition. These projects must be in digital format and contain words, images, and sound. *All of the words must be your own, and all image and sound components must either be your own or in the public domain.* We will have workshops during the semester to learn about software options and the creative use of digital tools. Each composer or composing team will co-create with me a rubric; this rubric should reflect what you as a teacher, learner, and composer found most valuable in the assignment. This rubric will be used to evaluate and grade your project. More details about this assignment will be provided throughout the semester.

Final Position Paper – 20 points
For the final project in this course, participants will articulate (in writing) a comprehensive position statement (5-7 pages – typed, double-spaced, one-inch margins, Arial 11, Cambria 11, or Times New Roman 12-point font or similar) about the vision (s)he has for implementing critical reading in a classroom. Papers must include the ways critical reading would be used as an approach to children's literature (at whatever level or age). Each member of the course should use the response papers (s)he wrote (and read from others), the literature, the articles, notes, class conversations, and his/her own journey through the course as the basis for this paper. To ground the project in the perspectives we've explored in class, participants should include some well-thought and relevant citations from course readings.

Attendance/Preparation/Participation – 25 points
It is essential that you not only attend each class session (and be on time!), but that you are also prepared to be an active class participant. An important aspect of any classroom learning community is the active engagement of students and teachers around worthwhile content. Your contributions to class discussions and experiences are essential to your learning as well as to the health and learning of our own classroom community. It is your responsibility to attend all class sessions, prepared to be an active participant by having completed the assignments (i.e., readings, essays) prior to class. Additionally, you will be expected to raise relevant questions, make contributions that promote discussion, be sensitive to eliciting the ideas of others in the class, and actively engage in small group work. Your attendance, preparation, and participation will contribute **25 points** to your final grade.

For some people sharing their thoughts in a public forum feels "risky". However, part of developing as professionals involves sharing your ideas and engaging in the ideas of others. Think of this classroom as an environment in which to get your feet wet and begin taking such risks. I am also aware that 2.5 hours is an extended period of time in which to be focused in class. Please come ready to work hard and focus for the entire time class is

scheduled to meet. I, in turn, will do my best to plan classes that are engaging.

Again, attendance is expected at all class sessions. You will be responsible for all material covered in class. In the event of an absence, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate for notes and assignments. If an assignment is due on a day you are absent, you should email me the assignment prior to the time class meets. Because missing class means missing learning, this policy applies to both excused and unexcused absences. The instructor may use professional discretion in terms of how this policy is applied.

I recognize that situations may arise during the semester which prevent you from attending class (i.e.. illness, family or personal issues). Therefore, you are allowed one absence for whatever reason. This will not affect your grade. However, if you miss more than one class, your participation grade will be reduced by **ten points** for each additional absence. Three or more absences may result in a failing grade (0.0) for the course. Tardiness and early departure from class will be noted and documented and may also reduce your participation grade (two instances of tardiness or early departure equal one absence)

Grading Policy

The grading scale will be approximately as follows:

"A" (90-100 points): reflects exemplary work, knowledge, and skill in meeting the performance objectives – **participant went beyond requirements**, is analytical, reflective and professional in stance, and demonstrated a strong understanding of course content. 94-100 = "A"; 90-93 = "A-"

"B" (80-89 points): reflects good, **competent work**, knowledge, and skill in meeting the performance objectives. Participant demonstrates a good understanding of course content. 87-89 = "B+"; 84-86 = "B"; 80-83 = "B-"

"C" (70-79): reflects satisfactory/**adequate** work, knowledge, and skill in meeting the performance objectives; minimal requirements have been met successfully. Participant demonstrates a minimal understanding of course content. 77-79 = "C+"; 74-76 = "C"; 70-73 = "C-"

"D" (60-69): reflects inadequate work, knowledge, and skill in meeting the performance objectives; minimal requirements have generally been met. Participant demonstrates a minimal understanding of course content. 67-69 = "D+"; 64-66 = "D"; 60-63 = "D-"

Below 60: fails the course

Each assignment will be graded separately and the graded assignments will be combined to reach a final grade for this section. **At any point, any attendance deductions will be taken**. Please note, a grade of "A" is considered *exceptional* work, a grade of "B" is considered *strong* work and a "C" is considered to be *adequate* work. On rare occasions, a grade of "A+" may be awarded at instructor discretion to recognize especially outstanding work and contributions to the course.

Accessibility Statement

University statement: "Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which an accommodation is sought."

This class is designed with accessibility in mind, so I encourage you to talk with me if you have a disability so that we can address any issues that may arise. Your input on the accessibility of this class will be treated respectfully and will help me improve the class for future students.

Diversity

Diversity is an essential element of the goals and student outcomes of this course and the BSE program. Working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations and students with disabilities is an underlying theme of this course, and as such, we will be exploring the experiences, needs, and strengths students in elementary schools may bring to the classroom and how we as literacy teachers can build off these to support students' learning. Honoring diversity is also vital in our own class conversations, reflections, and assignments. As a class we will seek to empathize with and understand one another's perspectives. As members of the class, you are invited and encouraged to share your own perspectives and understandings as we explore literacy topics together.

Teaching Strategies

This class will use a variety of teaching strategies, including reflection, lecture, collaboration, and participation.

Technology

Technology is viewed as a tool for both learning and teaching in the area of literacy. The instructor, during class presentations and through planned seminars, will model this belief by including creative PowerPoints, online discussions, streaming video, hypermedia documents, and other digital texts as course content. Students are required to incorporate the use of technology into their teaching and coursework when appropriate and to commit to supporting P-5th grade students as they develop into responsible and creative digital citizens.

Hybrid Course

Most of our classes will meet face-to-face; however, **one time** this semester, our class will be held online. During these weeks, we will not meet on campus. Instead, you will your inquiries and course assignments will be completed using **desire2learn as a learning site**.

Withdrawal Date

Be advised that the last day to withdraw from a course with the possibility of receiving a "W" is Monday, October 14, 2013. Degree-seeking undergraduates who withdraw will be given a grade of PW (Pending Withdrawal). The grade of PW will automatically be changed to either W or WF depending on how many withdrawals the student has taken.

Professionalism

Professionalism as a pre-service teacher is of utmost importance. Your professionalism in this course is determined by the following descriptors:

- o *Dependability and Reliability:* shows responsible attendance; arrives on time and remains for entire class period; completes and submits assignments on time; is organized and prepared for class; providing evidence that assigned readings and any out-of-class experiences are completed prior to the start of class.
- o *Respect*: shows respect toward others (peers, instructors, guest speakers, etc.); handles frustrations, problems, differences of opinion that are inherent in any learning environment in mature ways; responds when appropriate and in an acceptable manner.
- o *Commitment*: takes assignments seriously and completes with initiative; demonstrates a commitment to learning and children rather than a grade; shows effort in class and on assignments; participates in oral/written/dramatic/artistic activities.
- o *Responsiveness*: seeks and values constructive criticism by others; utilizes suggestions for improvement; relates to others; uses common sense to think things through; shows patience with others; responding thoughtfully and reflectively to the readings; demonstrates evidence of listening to the ideas and contributions of others.
- o *Collaboration*: takes working with peers seriously; helps create a positive environment in the class; participates in class discussions by sharing diverse perspectives; is an active member of the learning community; shows a sense of humor; works together with peers toward a common goal or outcome.
- o *Open-mindedness*: willingly demonstrates flexibility when dealing with uncertainty and complexity in educational issues; shows patience when others describe their diverse opinions, asks insightful questions.
- o *Awareness*: models and facilitates critical thinking; is aware of current educational issues/agendas; demonstrates effective oral and written communication.
- o *Confidentiality*: reflects about children and classroom discussions in confidential and respectful ways; shares information only with those who need to know.
- o *Academic Honesty*: takes responsibility for producing independent work; credits others' work appropriately (see Georgia State University Policy on Academic Honesty—Section 409).
- o *Communication*: uses common sense during classroom discussions and interjections; maintains communication with peers and instructor about progress toward goals.

Cell Phones, Pagers, Etc.

When you enter, please turn off all forms of technology we are not using in class. If there is a legitimate reason you need to have access to your cellular phone or other electronic device (i.e., family emergency), please notify the instructor before class begins.

Note: Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State. Upon completing the course, please fill out the online course evaluation.

A Note on Scholarly Conventions:

The written work that you produce should be quality work, both in its content and form. The content of your written work should always reflect your careful and thoughtful consideration of the ideas we are exploring in the various readings and activities—and you should refer to these where this serves to support your ideas. This does not mean you need to write pages and pages for these assignments (in fact, points are deducted for assignments that are outside page limitations [when set]), but it does mean you should carefully craft what you write—be clear, succinct, and support what you say. Your work should be presented in an edited format (you have checked it for spelling and grammar, it has been proof-read, etc.). *Point deductions will be taken for excessive grammatical or spelling errors.* Proofreading important documents is part of professional behavior, and lax proofreading will impact your grade. I encourage you to have a colleague read your work and offer feedback before you turn it in. This isn't cheating; it's how writers write. All assignments must be submitted in ".doc," ".docx," or ".rtf" format. Assignments submitted in other formats will not be accepted and may receive a score of "0." Finally, all written assignments should be done in a either Times New Roman (12 pt.) or Cambria (11 pt.) font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins on all sides. If you need to alter size, format, or font for expressive purposes, please check with me before doing so.

Also, remember to use pseudonyms in all your work referring to children or schools.

Teacher Think Tanks

This semester, you will be working in Teacher Think Tanks, small groups of **five or six** colleagues supporting each other as you explore notions of literac(ies) in the 21st century. You will form these groups before the second class and will continue in them throughout the semester. All of your projects and assignments in this class in some way will involve your Teacher Think Tank colleagues, so it is crucial that everyone approach this course ready to be committed and accountable to their peers.

Universal Design for Learning Focus

This class has been designed with the philosophy that instruction should be as accessible as possible to as many students as possible. One way to do this is through flexibility. Therefore, you will find that you have some flexibility in this class, primarily in the focus of your class projects and in the form in which you choose to represent your thinking.