

Spring 2012, LAE 3005: Children's Literature

Instructor: Dr. Ruth McKoy Lowery

Course Overview:

The purpose of this course is to provide you with the theoretical knowledge and practical experience for designing an elementary school curriculum for a classroom focused on social justice themes and where instruction is based on children's literature. Literature is an authentic resource that can be the foundation of a literacy (reading/writing/speaking/listening/viewing) program, as well as a major resource for other curriculum areas. In this course, which uses a genre approach to literature study, you will learn how to select high quality children's literature that can serve classrooms with diverse student populations. You will also learn how to plan for a literature studies curriculum, integrate technology in your curriculum, meet the needs of ELL (English language learners) students, and assess your own and children's critical responses to literature.

Course Objectives:

1. You will grow in your capability to critically read, analyze, and respond to literature.
2. You will demonstrate your ability to select high quality current, multicultural literature in a wide variety of genres to share with a diverse student population.
3. You will demonstrate your understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of a critical reader response approach to analyzing and teaching literature.
4. You will use a wide variety of print, Internet and technological resources to find out information about children's books, authors, illustrators, and curriculum applications.
5. You will demonstrate your mastery of the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAP) through the Educator Assessment System (EAS) tasks developed in this course.

Primary Methods of Instruction:

The primary methods of instruction in this course will be lecture and discussion, small group discussion, individual inquiry assignments, and cooperative learning.

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation when requesting accommodation. If you have a need for accommodations due to disabilities, please meet with me during office hours.

Required Course Materials:

1. Lynch-Brown, C., Tomlinson, C.M., & Short, K. G. (2011). *Essentials of Children's Literature* (7th Ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
2. Two novels for which you will sign up in class.
3. Notebook for weekly assignments

ESOL (ELL) Performance Standards

Assignments in this class will meet ESOL Performance Standards 2, 3, 4, 15, & 18. As you read across the genres be sure to keep a running list of books that can be used to strengthen your ELL learning. Indicate ESOL with the standard number for each book that you determine might be used in a classroom to help meet that standard. Be sure to include a sample of all ESOL standards for this class on your list.

Standard 2: Recognize the major differences and similarities between the different cultural groups in the U. S.

Standard 3: Identify, expose, and reexamine cultural stereotypes relating to LEP and non-LEP students.

Standard 4: Use knowledge of the cultural characteristics of Florida's LEP populations to enhance instruction.

Standard 15: Evaluate, select, and employ appropriate instructional materials, media, and technology for ESOL at the elementary school level.

Standard 18: Create a positive classroom environment to accommodate the various learning styles and cultural backgrounds of students.

Educator Assessment System (EAS) Requirement

The State of Florida requires all entry-level educators to master the knowledge, skills and dispositions of 12 Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAPs). In this course we cover several of those FEAPs, paying particular attention to your mastery of those practices that are assessed by indicators as listed below.

FEAP Indicators:

- 4.1: The educator knows and identifies strategies, materials, and technologies to develop all PreK-12 students' creative and critical thinking.
- 4.2: The educator designs activities that develop all PreK-12 students' critical and creative thinking.
- 5.2: The educator demonstrates a repertoire of teaching techniques and strategies, including materials selection, to effectively instruct all PreK-12 students.
- 5.3: The educator shows sensitivity, acceptance, and value of all PreK-12 students from diverse backgrounds (race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language, and special needs).

Your mastery of these indicators will be measured by your work throughout this course, including the - Literature for Diverse Students assignment. To pass this course, you must have a rating of “**Met**” or “**Met with Weakness.**” **No exceptions will be made to this rule, even if you do not plan to teach after graduation.** Students will receive a “**Not Met**” rating for incomplete assignments related to the FEAPs. Students who fail the course must repeat it at a later date.

Questions guiding our inquiries into the world of children's literature:

The quality of the book, authors, and illustrators:

- What makes quality literature in each genre?
- What are the literary elements for each genre?
- Who are outstanding authors and illustrators in each genre?
- What artistic media are used to illustrate children's books?
- How do the artistic elements impact the contribution of illustrations to the overall quality of the book?
- What awards are given to children's book authors and illustrators and why?
- What resources exist to find quality literature to support the curriculum?

The theories:

- How can teachers help students generate high levels of response to literature?

How can teachers help students to critically analyze literature?
What is the difference between efferent and aesthetic reading?
What is the difference between a comprehension model, a reader response model, and a critical theory response model of reading instruction?
What is a transactional theory of reading?

The diversity perspective:

What ideological assumptions are uncovered through an in-depth analysis of the literature?
How do author/illustrator intentions and reader assumptions influence readings of and responses to literature?
Whose perspective is given in the book? What other perspectives are there?
Who is in a position of power, and who takes direction?
What subtle stereotypes are portrayed in the book?
How do we select books that represent the diverse populations evident in schools today?

Immigrants in literature:

Who are the acknowledged immigrant groups in America?
Who are recent immigrant groups (1980- present)?
What are the push and pull factors that bring immigrants to America?
What are the images portrayed about immigrant groups in public media?
How are immigrant groups portrayed in children's literature?

The curriculum:

What is a literature studies curriculum, and how does it operate in a classroom?
What is a literature in the content areas curriculum, and how does it operate in a classroom?
How can literature be used to build reading, writing, speaking, viewing, and thinking skills, and how can teachers get students to think about literature like writers and literary critics?
How can teachers conduct effective book discussions encompassing literary elements for each genre as well as critical social issues?
How can children's literature support a social justice curriculum?

Reading Assignments and Procedures

Reading Assignments

- Note that for all assignments in this class you must read and share children's books published from **1999 – 2012** unless otherwise noted in an assignment.
- Use the Children's Literature Comprehensive Database (CLCD)-**available online in the public library or UF Education Library**- to help in determining good book selections.
- The Alachua County Public Library website is <http://www.acld.lib.fl.us/>

Quizzes:

We will have 10 chapter quizzes over the course of the semester. Quizzes will cover assigned readings from our textbook. Each quiz will be administered at the start of class and you will have 5 minutes to complete it. **If you are absent or tardy on the day of a quiz, you will not have the opportunity to take it and those points will be lost.**

Schedule of Class Assignments

Essentials Text Chapter Requirements: Be sure to read the designated chapter in preparation for class each week. List some important highlights of the chapters (highlight, post-it or

notebook). What questions do you have? Be prepared to discuss chapter in class. Keep notes for your individual study needs. **Online submissions should be done before class each week.**

Introduction to course and syllabus review

History of Children's Literature

Literature circles, Illustrator, & Poet sign-up

****Early reading self-reflection discussion (Be prepared for this informal discussion. See directions below).**

Reading Identity: Think about your early development as a reader. Interview your family members on your early reading experiences and reflect upon your life as a reader inside and outside of school environments. Explore why you are the reader or non-reader that you are today.

Cultural Identity: Think about your views regarding diversity. As a public school teacher you will teach children from many different kinds of families. Reflect upon your own experiences with diverse kinds of people. Specifically examine experiences you have had with individuals of different: Culture, Ethnicity, Regional backgrounds, Religion, Gender, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Disabilities, Age, Social class, Family structure.

Read Chapters 1, 2, & 3 (Essentials)

List some important highlights of chapters 1, 2 & 3. Be prepared to discuss chapters.

Book Discussion: Bring in sample books you enjoyed reading as a child (board books, interactive books etc.). Also bring in at least one "fun" book you have read in the last 5 years.

Read Chapter 4: Poetry (Essentials)

Poetry Assignment: Sign up in class for a children's poet and bring samples of the poet's work to class. Compile a short biography of the poet including his/her web site if available. Be prepared to read or perform one of this poet's poems in class. What do you find interesting about this poet's work? What types of poems does the poet create? Would you be able to create a similar poem? Prepare and present a one-page handout where you include the short biography, a poem excerpt, your description and reaction to the poet's work and a list of websites (poet's site/blog and/or other interesting and useful poetry sites). **Submit a copy of your handout electronically before class.**

Read Chapter 5: Picture Books (Essentials)

Picture Book Assignments: 1. (Illustrator Assignment): Find information on your selected illustrator. Find and read three of the illustrator's books. Bring the books to class and share the information in class. Use the Internet or library reference materials to find information about the illustrator (e.g. illustrator website) and how the individual creates illustrations. What questions do you have for the illustrator? Contact the illustrator if possible to ask about his/her work. At least two of the illustrator's books should be published in the last 10 years. Create a one-page slide to present your illustrator to the class. **Submit a copy of your slide electronically.**

2. Bring a Caldecott medal winner or Honor book from in the last 20 years for class discussion.

Read Chapter 10: Informational Books (Essentials)

Nonfiction Assignment: Find an informational book that has won the Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Medal <http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/sibertmedal> or the Orbis Pictus Award (NCTE) <http://www.ncte.org/about/awards/sect/elem/106877.htm>. Find a fictional book that relates to the same theme or topic in your nonfiction book. Provide a short summary and include the characteristics of each book. Explain why each fits in its respective genre. You may seek additional information from the web or other sources to support your findings. Prepare and present a one-page handout for your classmates and instructor where you provide a short summary of each book and include the important characteristics

(similarities/differences; fiction/nonfiction) and how you might use them in your classroom. **Submit a copy of your handout electronically.**

Read Chapter 8: Realistic Fiction (*Essentials*)

****Literature Circles Book Discussion****

Realistic Fiction Book Titles: (Choose one title)

1. Applegate, Katherine. (2007). *Home of the Brave*.
2. Ellis, Deborah (2003). *Parvana's Journey*.
3. Gifaldi, David. (2008). *Listening for Crickets*.
4. Grimes, Nikki. (2006). *The Road to Paris*.
5. Kwasney, Michelle D. (2008). *Itch*.
6. Lord, Cynthia. (2006). *Rules*.
7. O'Connor, Barbara. (2007). *How to Steal a Dog*.
8. Ryan, Pam Munoz. (2005). *Becoming Naomi Leon*.

Read Chapter 9: Historical Fiction and Biography (*Essentials*)

Historical Fiction Assignment: Find and read three historical fiction picture books or one novel. Search the Internet and/or other published documents for information on the event or topic. **Create a chart about how accurately and completely this book tells the story of the actual historical event (e.g. websites and citations).** Include a short summary and the historical elements for each book. Provide personal as well as critical responses. In class you will present your book(s) and share information about the historic topic. **Submit a copy electronically.**

Mid-term Examination

*****Due: Midpoint Check of Literature Response Notebook *****

Read Chapter 6: Traditional Literature (*Essentials*)

Traditional Literature Assignment: Bring in two different versions (from two different cultures) of the same folktale. Examine the cultural content of these books including mention of clothing, food, education, economics, government, religious or other celebrations, gender roles, social roles, or any other cultural content you find in the books. **Prepare and present a Venn diagram or other medium highlighting the similarities and differences between the two books.** Submit a copy of your Venn diagram electronically.

Read Chapter 7: Modern Fantasy (*Essentials*)

****Literature Circles Book Discussion****

Fantasy Book Titles:

1. Appelt, Kathi. (2008). *The underneath*
2. DiCamillo, Kate (2003) *The tale of Despereaux*
3. Ferris, Jean (2002) *Once Upon a Marigold*
4. Gaiman, Neil (2008) *The Graveyard Book*
5. Lin, Grace. (2009). *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*
6. Martin, Ann M. and Laura Godwin (2000) *Doll People*
7. Mass, Wendy. (2009). *11 Birthdays*
8. Stanly, Diane. (2006). *Bella at Midnight*

Read Chapter 11: Literature for a Diverse Society (*Essentials*)

Diverse Society Assignment: Choose at least three books representing a minority culture, a disability and a bilingual or other type of book representing a child who speaks a language other than English (see *Coretta Scott King award*, *Pura Belpre award*, etc.). **Prepare**

