The Reading Picturebooks course I have offered at the University of Georgia serves as a semester-long investigation of picturebooks as literary, artistic, and social texts. We celebrate the pleasures of picturebooks as engaging, entertaining, and informative texts while also taking a critical look at not only their composition but also their placement in individuals’ hands and larger community as a whole.

Throughout a sixteen-week semester, we focus on the synergistic relationships between written and iconic narratives. We hone in the various types of and approaches to picturebooks; investigate children’s book creators as individuals, artists, and social activists; as well as explore our own capacities to evaluate, integrate, and create picturebooks for personal and academic use. Additionally, we explore the various ways in which children respond to picturebooks. Simply put, we revel in the possibilities of picturebooks.

Virtual or in-person workshops with noted children’s literature artists, the inclusion of an “artist-in-residence,” holding class in a local independent bookstore, as well as integrating attendance at children’s literature conferences into the course all augment this holistic approach to picturebooks and the ways in which picturebooks are part and parcel of life.

**OVERVIEW**

**A SAMPLING OF SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITIES**

- Weekly Artistic Studio/Workshops with our local “artist-in-residence” from the School of Art
- Illustrator Gallery “Opening Night” (Illustrator or Authorstrator showcase)
- Critically analyzing picturebooks
- Creating and sharing individual picturebooks
- Designing reading and writing instructional activities involving picturebooks for an online magazine, Literacyhead
- Designing picturebook text sets based on artistic media and the social issues that are often depicted through different artistic media
- Museum Walks (Connecting Art and Picturebooks)
- Pre/Post Analysis of picturebooks or Bookstore “Scavenger Hunts”

**STUDENTS’ RESPONSES**

- **This is the kind of class that you go home thinking about at night. I found myself talking about this class to friends that could care less about illustrations but I wanted them to care because I was so excited about what I was learning.**

- **I am excited that I can now do a more thorough, not to mention balanced, reading of picturebooks with my students. Also, they will greatly benefit from learning to read and interpret illustrations because it will add to their reading comprehension.**
CLA Master Class 2013
Reading Picturebooks: A Graduate Level Course

A Few Key Readings

- Various articles

A Few Supplemental Readings

- Various articles