

**TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY**  
**School of Library and Information Studies**  
**LS 5603/20-21**  
**LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS**  
**Graduate Course Syllabus**  
**Summer 2012**

**INSTRUCTOR**

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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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Generally Wednesdays (11am-3pm) during the summer session; please call to confirm availability and to make an appointment before coming to campus. I will also be available at professional events, including the annual conference of the American Library Association in Anaheim (6/22-6/25).  
Email address: [svardell@twu.edu](mailto:svardell@twu.edu)  
Instructor web site: <http://sylviavardell.com>  
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**CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Survey of literature and reference materials for children and young adults.  
Emphasis on reading interests, professional evaluation, educational uses, and readers' advisory.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. To become widely acquainted with the vast amount of literature available to children and young adults.
2. To be able to evaluate critically the books children and young adults read by using specific criteria for each genre.
3. To be cognizant of the joys and values literature can bring to children and young adults.
4. To become familiar with the lives and works of major authors and illustrators who create books for children and young adults.
5. To generate various learning activities designed to bring children and young adults together with books.

6. To be able to match children and young adults with appropriate reading and guide their choices, and utilizing knowledge of child development and reading levels/interests in our multi-ethnic society today.
7. To become familiar with and able to evaluate basic print (and online) reference sources available to children and young adults.
8. To be acquainted with and to realize the importance of expressed child-reading interests in the creation of lifetime readers.
9. To enjoy literature for children and young adults.

**Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Demonstrate a knowledge of children's literature, periodicals, audiovisual materials, electronic media, and other materials that contribute to a diverse, current, and relevant children's and young adult collection
2. Implement criteria for evaluating and analyzing the content and artistic merit of materials for children and young adults in all genres and formats using appropriate critical language and analytical frameworks
3. Identify, select and synthesize critical commentary from reputable reference sources guiding selection and literary criticism to support the discussion and analysis of literature for young people
4. Plan varied learning activities, motivational strategies, and/or library programs to guide the development of young readers based on appropriate reading materials and the needs and interests of children and young adults
5. Contribute substantively to the scholarly discussion of current issues in the field of literature for children and young adults with a focus on objectively analyzing personal response and offering professional contextual critique
6. Contribute to the field of children's literature at large by developing an appropriate service learning project relevant for promoting reading and literary appreciation in children and young adults in the real world

Each of the above student learning outcomes must be performed at an appropriate level as stated in each course assignment requirements, grading scale or rubric.

**COURSE MATERIALS  
REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

Vardell, Sylvia M. 2008. CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN ACTION. Libraries Unlimited. Paperback: ISBN13: 9781591585572 Hardback: ISBN13: 9781591586579

**GENERAL POLICIES**

**1. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Honesty in completing assignments is essential to the mission of the University and to the development of the personal integrity of students. In submitting graded assignments, students affirm that they have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance, and that they have abided by all other provisions of the Code of Conduct in the TWU Student Handbook. Cheating, plagiarism,

fabrication or other kinds of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in appropriate sanctions that may include failing an assignment, failing the class, or being suspended or expelled. Suspected cases in this course may be reported to Student Life. The specific disciplinary process for academic dishonesty is found in the TWU Student Handbook. The TWU library link, "Avoiding Plagiarism," will aid students in completing their assignments with integrity.

In an effort to ensure the integrity of the academic process, Texas Woman's University vigorously affirms the importance of academic honesty as defined by the Student Handbook. Therefore, in an effort to detect and prevent plagiarism, faculty members at Texas Woman's University may now use a tool called Turnitin to compare a student's work with multiple sources. It then reports a percentage of similarity and provides links to those specific sources. The tool itself does not determine whether or not a paper has been plagiarized. Instead, that judgment must be made by the individual faculty member. All required assignments in this course may be checked for plagiarism using Turnitin.com

## 2. ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

**Disability Support Policy Statement:** If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you must register with the office of Disability Support Services (CFO 106, 940-898-3835, [dss@twu.edu](mailto:dss@twu.edu)) in order to obtain the required official notification of your accommodation needs. Please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss approved accommodations and how my course requirements and activities may impact your ability to fully participate.

## 3. STUDENT INFORMATION ACCESS

In accordance with Legislative House Bill 1922, an individual is entitled to: request to be informed about the information collected about them; receive and review their information; and correct any incorrect information. Disclosure of your social security number may be required in order to obtain information at Texas Woman's University. Your social security number will be used as a unique number to identify you. Any further disclosure of your social security number will be governed by the Public Information Act (Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code).

## 4. ENROLL IN THE SLIS STUDENT LISTSERV: CASSANDRA

TWU SLIS makes good use of a free listserv or electronic mailing list for sharing information with students. This is called "Cassandra" and it is free to all TWU SLIS students. Sign up for it via the SLIS intranet page found on <http://www.twu.edu/library-studies/discussion-lists.asp> Cassandra will help you keep up with announcements about upcoming courses, final portfolio requirements, graduation deadlines, and the like. It is really essential.

## 5. SLIS COMMUNICATION POLICY

Given the important role of communication in instructional quality, SLIS faculty will respond to course-related voice mail or email within 4 business days and will return or give an update on course assignments within 3 working weeks of the due date.

## 6. PORTFOLIO PREPARATION

At the end of your MLS program, you will be preparing a professional portfolio as part of your graduation requirements. This contains a variety of required items. Thus, I encourage you to save the assignments you complete in each course you take, so you will have plenty to choose from for your portfolio. You might consider using something you produce in this course to showcase your hard work and talent, your professional focus and goals. Contact your advisor at the beginning of your final semester to begin that process.

## 7. TIME COMMITMENT

This course is a 3-credit class, which means students should expect to devote a minimum of 9 hours per week to the class; in some weeks, more time may be required for successful performance.

## COURSE POLICIES

1. LATE POLICY. There are specific deadlines for ALL assignments, usually just before midnight Central Time on designated dates. Be careful of waiting until the last minute, as this may be peak access time for others if you are posting on Blackboard or on your blog. You can always turn work in EARLY. Complete all assignments by the due date and time posted. You might want to print off your work to document the day and time stamp in case it is not received or accessible on time. **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.** Check the Watercooler discussion forum and your email regularly for general updates about deadlines, feedback, and assignments, too.

ONE FINAL CAUTION: Be sure to doublecheck your blog URL that you have posted on Blackboard. You might even have a friend or classmate try to access your blog independently. Many a student has posted the wrong URL or a dead link and lost points because their assignments were not visible after the deadline has passed. Be sure your reviews are posted by each deadline. It is your responsibility to be sure your link is live and correct in time for each module deadline.

2. VACATION/TRAVEL POLICY. In the online environment it is possible to participate in our course from any physical location as long as you have Internet access. Thus, you may choose to travel during the semester while enrolled in this class and that is your prerogative. However, it is your responsibility to plan for course access while traveling, or complete work in advance, or skip the assignment and forego the grade points altogether should you decide to be "absent" from the course. The course schedule and deadlines are set from the very beginning of the semester and it is the student's responsibility to plan

accordingly by submitting work, taking quizzes, posting in the discussion forum, etc. according to the class schedule.

3. SAVING AND DOCUMENTING YOUR WORK. It is also generally recommended that students maintain copies of all work submitted. I urge you to compose and save all written assignments using your favorite word processing software, THEN go online to post them (by copying and pasting) or to email them (as required). It can be very frustrating to compose a lengthy email message, for example, and then to lose it due to some technical glitch. For email assignments you can also cc a copy of the assignment to yourself at your own email address.

4. COURSE CHANGES AND COMMUNICATION. The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus and/or course schedule, as deemed necessary. Students will be notified of any and all changes. Check the discussion forums and your email regularly. Deadlines may be changed, assignments refined, etc. Email and Blackboard is how new information is usually communicated. Read it. As your instructor, I promise to try to respond to all emails within 48 hours, unless I have previously announced my absence. However, if I have not responded to your email, it may mean that I have not received it at all due to a technical glitch. Please resend your email and/or use the telephone to contact me. And be sure your current email address is listed for you in the Blackboard course site. Then KEEP that same email address. If your email address changes during the semester, change the listing of your email address on Blackboard in the "Personal Information" area IMMEDIATELY. This is critical to success in this course.

5. COPYRIGHT. I have worked hard to create all these documents and gather all this information for this course. If you should use or adapt this to share with colleagues and others in any format, please give me credit for my words by citing my name and your source. This is a professional courtesy as well as the law. And I promise I will do the same. I will credit you by name for any work you produce and seek your permission before sharing it. Thank you for your consideration in return.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHIC FORMAT. For all written work requiring a bibliography, please follow the standard Chicago Style Manual (CMS) format required for all professional writing in the School of Library and Information Studies.

#### 7. EMAIL PROTOCOL

\*Please identify your emails by name and course in the subject line and/or the body of the message. I teach multiple courses, so I may not know which course you're referring to. Put your name on all attachments and assignments please, or you may not get credit for your work.

\*You will receive mail replies or receipts (acknowledgement of your email with a response to follow) from me for EVERY email question or assignment you send

me. If you do NOT hear from me within 48 hours, I probably did not receive your email. Please resend your message.

\*Use the Blackboard discussion forum for general questions and comments. But for urgent or time-sensitive matters, please email me directly at [svardell@twu.edu](mailto:svardell@twu.edu)

\*Be sure to use a respectful tone and language in every email and posting, and always remember that email is ultimately a public venue and can be read by anyone anywhere.

## **GRADING SCALE**

All work for this course is to be edited and executed with care and professionalism. Final course grades are based on the accumulation of points for each assignment, with a maximum of 1000 points possible. Students, therefore, also have some control over what they may choose to do or not to do, depending on the final grade each student desires. However, if you are serious about earning an A, you need to plan to do ALL the assignments, and to do your very best on every one. The final grading scale for total points is rather rigorous, as follows:

930-1000 points = A

850-929 points = B

770-849 points = C

700-769 points = D

Below 700 = F

I recognize that many other professors use the more traditional grading scale of 90-100 = A, 80-90 = B. But after more than 25 years of teaching at the university level, I have found a narrower scale to be a better match for my graduate courses reflecting the effort required for excellence in graduate level work. With grading guidelines and personal feedback provided for each assignment, you will receive a great deal of support to enable your success.

## **OVERVIEW OF MAJOR COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS**

**1. ONLINE DISCUSSION 120 POINTS (20 points per Module)**

**2. BOOK REVIEWS 450 POINTS (25 points per book)**

**3. QUIZZES 240 POINTS (40 points per quiz)**

**4. MIDTERM PROJECT (190 points)**

**SEE COURSE SCHEDULE FOR DEADLINES AND DATES.**

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

### **1. ONLINE DISCUSSION**

This course meets totally online; therefore, you must participate actively in the student-led online discussion of the assigned reading(s) and posted "lecture notes" (available in the "Lectures" area) in the course Discussion Forum. This includes posting three times for each module discussion online, on different days, not all in one hour to receive full credit. The idea is to encourage interaction,

which occurs over time. **NO LATE POSTINGS TO THE DISCUSSION FORUMS WILL BE ALLOWED AFTER EACH MODULE DEADLINE.** We'll consider our reading of assigned chapters and children's/YA books. We will also share information about relevant web sites, analysis of recent articles, relevant commentary from external listservs, programming ideas, etc. for each module.

These should all be thoughtful and substantive postings. A few more than three postings is fine in each module if the discussion is lively and interesting, but please avoid posting multiple times-- it becomes overwhelming for all of us. Feel free to use email or instant messaging if you want to dialogue with fellow students further. In addition, you may initiate a thread or respond to the postings of others—either or both is acceptable. (See also the assignment guidelines. You will find these online in the Assignments area of the course.)

## **2. BOOK REVIEWS and BLOG**

You will be reading several titles of children's and young adult literature this semester, including featured authors, focus titles, etc. assigned for each module. For each book, you will prepare a brief response in the form of a written book review which will be posted on your own blog. You'll create a blog that houses your reviews for this class, but also offers a "service" for the reading community at large. For each book review you will include the five following components:

- a. Bibliographic data (Be sure to cite the author, title, illustrator (if there is one), publisher, publication date, and ISBN number for each book.)
- b. Brief plot summary (maximum one paragraph)
- c. Critical analysis with specific literary considerations pertinent to each genre (this is the "heart" of your review)
- d. Awards won (if any) and review excerpt(s) (from *Horn Book*, *School Library Journal*, *Booklist*, etc.)
- e. Connections (related books, enrichment activities, children's responses, etc.)

\*These should be coherent, polished, well-organized sentences and paragraphs. Quality of writing IS a factor in this assignment.

You can use a free blog site service of your choosing, but after much trial and error with previous students, I highly recommend <http://blogspot.com>. It's the easiest, most intuitive, and most user-friendly. But you are welcome to use any blog tool you prefer. Ideally, this will become a tool you can use in the future in your work with children, families, and books. However, for the purposes of this course, do not worry about graphics or other bells and whistles, just get your content posted. There is a special discussion forum set up for posting the URL or address of your blog site once it is set up. If you have a pre-established blog site, you may simply add to it for this course. Just be sure the links and labels for THIS course are all very clear and specific to THIS course. **NO DUPLICATION OF BOOKS IS ALLOWED ACROSS COURSES. NO LATE REVIEWS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** (See schedule for assigned dates for each book. See also the

assignment guidelines. You will find these online in the Assignments area of the course.)

For one example literature-related blog site, see my blog devoted to poetry for children: <http://poetryforchildren.blogspot.com/> (It's not a book review blog, but it will give you an idea of what a literature-focused blog can be like.) As you prepare your reviews for your blog, you'll find guidance in evaluating the literary quality of your books and writing your "critical analysis" by looking in each chapter of the textbook where criteria and examples are provided. In the Assignments area of our Blackboard course site there are also sample book reviews and "worksheets" for evaluating books in each genre that may be helpful as you hone your skills in seriously evaluating the quality of children's books.

### **3. QUIZZES**

Each genre will conclude with a brief quiz. Each quiz will be a timed, objective measure of assigned textbook and online readings. It is required that each student takes his/her own quiz without the benefit of notes or help of any kind as a matter of honor. Each quiz will be administered over the Internet at the course site at Blackboard at the end of each genre study. You may take them at your convenience, but each module quiz must be completed by the specified deadline. **YOU MAY NOT TAKE THE QUIZ AFTER THE GENRE DEADLINE. NO LATE QUIZZES ARE ALLOWED.** There are six quizzes, one for each Genre module. There is also a Pre-Quiz you can take just to practice taking a test online. Taking the Pre-Quiz is optional and has no point value.

### **4. MIDTERM PROJECT**

The Midterm Project is in lieu of the standard final exam and enables you to apply your knowledge of children's literature with an authentic "service" project with real world value in the spirit of TWU's "I-Serve: Learning By Doing" emphasis of the institutional Quality Enhancement Plan. We'll be focusing on creating a poetry resource that will be posted by your instructor on a collaborative blog site. You have a choice of creating a Reader's Guide or Digital Trailer for a selected poetry title from a designated list. You will sign up for your choice of book and project as soon as possible from a designated list posted in the Midterm Project discussion forum. You may choose to create **EITHER** a Readers Guide **OR** a Digital Trailer for one book. When your project is complete, you'll post it in the Discussion Forum and I will then transfer it to our special blog. More details are provided in the Schedule and in the Discussion Forum.

#### **a. Readers Guide**

You will create a readers guide for one selected book of poetry from a list of possible titles. It will include the following components:

Complete bibliographic citation for book

Recommended age levels

1. Summary of book
2. Review excerpts/awards for book (with sources cited)
3. Questions to ask before reading book



at least 3

4. Suggestions for reading aloud

at least 3

5. Follow up activities (writing, art, science, etc.)

at least 3

6. Related web sites/blogs

at least 3 (annotated)

7. Related books (other poetry, related nonfiction, related fiction)

at least 3 (annotated)

### **b. Digital Trailer**

You also have the opportunity to try your hand at creating a video book trailer for a poetry book. It's the latest trend in book promotion and booktalking. Here are the major guidelines for this option:

- Keep the content appropriate for sharing in the school venue, as well as on public sites like YouTube
- Feature the book's cover (multiple covers, if appropriate)
- Include complete bibliographic entry for book within the trailer
- Follow good "booktalking" principles in making the book irresistible
- Include an excerpt from the text, both visually and orally, if possible
- Include musical soundtrack and/or audiotrack
- Include appropriate visuals
- Do NOT use any illustrations from WITHIN the book
- Do NOT use more than 8 words from any single poem
- Length: approximately 1 minute (more or less)
- Note your name (first only is fine), city, school or library, and TWU SLIS
- Note ALL sources for EACH visual, audio, and print materials in the final screen(s)
- Note any other awards won, review excerpts, and/or kid quotes
- Consider using excerpt from audio adaptation, if available, but note source in writing
- You may involve kids in creating the trailer; this must be an original creation
- Weave together text, visuals, music, audio commentary and poem to create an experience that leads young people back to the book
- Be sure all words are spelled correctly, grammar and mechanics are correct, all text is legible and audio is intelligible

You will submit your Midterm Projects via the Discussion Board. You do not need to post these on your blog site, although you may, if you desire. Sign up early for the book and project you want so we can avoid duplication. **NO LATE PROJECTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

### **COURSE TOPIC SEQUENCE**

Note: Course schedule is subject to change without notice at the discretion of the instructor. Students will be informed of any and all changes. See separate assignment schedule of due dates for assignments for each genre module.

GENRE 1 PICTURE BOOKS

GENRE 2 TRADITIONAL LITERATURE

GENRE 3 POETRY

GENRE 4 NONFICTION

GENRE 5 HISTORICAL FICTION/BIOGRAPHY

GENRE 6 FICTION, FANTASY, AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

Written feedback on all work is provided to each student after each module.

### **RELATED PROFESSIONAL READINGS IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

Anderson, N. A. 2005. *ELEMENTARY CHILDREN'S LITERATURE; THE BASICS FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS*. (Second edition). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Donelson, K. and Nilsen, A. P. 2004. *LITERATURE FOR TODAY'S YOUNG ADULTS* (seventh edition). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Galda, L. and Cullinan, B. 2005. *LITERATURE AND THE CHILD*. (Sixth edition). Stamford, CT: Wadsworth Thomson Learning.

Goforth, F.S. 1998. *LITERATURE AND THE LEARNER*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Gunning, T. 2000. *BEST BOOKS FOR BUILDING LITERACY FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Hadaway, Nancy, Vardell, Sylvia, and Young, Terrell. 2002. *LITERATURE-BASED INSTRUCTION WITH ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon Longman.

Hancock, M.R. 2007. *A CELEBRATION OF LITERATURE AND RESPONSE; CHILDREN, BOOKS, AND TEACHERS IN K-8 CLASSROOMS* (third edition). Columbus, OH: Merrill.

Hillman, J. 2002. *DISCOVERING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE*. (Third edition). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Kiefer, B.Z., Hickman, J., and Hepler, S. 2006. CHARLOTTE HUCK'S CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. (Ninth edition). Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

Lynch-Brown, C. and Tomlinson, C. 2004. ESSENTIALS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE (fifth edition). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Nodelman, P. and Reimer, M. 2002. THE PLEASURES OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. (Third edition). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Norton, D. E. 2006. THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD; AN INTRODUCTION TO CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. (Seventh edition). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Russell, D. L. 2004. LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN; A SHORT INTRODUCTION. (Fifth edition). New York: Longman.

Sloan, Glenna D. 2003. THE CHILD AS CRITIC: TEACHING LITERATURE IN ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS (revised). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Stoodt-Hill, B. D. and Amspaugh-Corson, L. B. 2004. CHILDREN'S LITERATURE; DISCOVERY FOR A LIFETIME. (Third edition). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Sutherland, Z. 2004. CHILDREN AND BOOKS. (Tenth edition). New York: Longman.

Temple, C., Martinez, M., and Yokota, J. 2005. CHILDREN'S BOOKS IN CHILDREN'S HANDS; AN INTRODUCTION TO THEIR LITERATURE. (Third edition). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Vardell, Sylvia M. 2007. POETRY PEOPLE; A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO CHILDREN'S POETS Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

*"A room without books is as a body without a soul."*  
Cicero

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