

**Ethical Implications of Children's Literature
J-term**

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Texts:

Alexie, *The Absolute True Diary of a Part Time Indian*

Barrett, *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*

Erdrich, *Game of Silence*

Mitchell, *Uncle Jed's Barbershop*

Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*

Newman, Leslea, *Heather Has Two Mommies*

Palacio, *Wonder*

Porter, *Meet Addy*

Sendak, *In the Night Kitchen*

Sendak, *Where the Wild Things Are*

Wilder, *Little House on the Prairie*

Yang, *American Born Chinese*

Pre-Course Reading: *The Bluest Eye, Little House on the Prairie, The Game of Silence*

Methods of Evaluation: (Students are responsible for all material covered in class whether or not they are present. They are also responsible for all changes made in the syllabus.)

class participation (Students should participate actively in class discussion, and grades will reflect such participation. Thoughtful questions are often as helpful and illuminating as insightful comments.)

reading quizzes (if deemed necessary. We hope not.) Class

Assignments. 40%

Formal papers and reports – 4 4-page papers 40%

Final effort 20%

optional additional project (worth potentially 1/3 final letter grade)

General Information Regarding University Policy:

Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Students may call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/alec/dass.asp> to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements. (See University Policy No. 2.4; an attachment describes the DASS procedures and relocated office.)

- Religious Observance: Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)
- Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities: Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to analyze and construct clear and well-supported interpretations of creative works.
2. Students will be able to articulate and discuss the ways in which creative works reflect values and modes of thought (or ways of knowing) of individuals and cultures.
3. Students will state and defend a thesis with adequate attention to analysis and evidence.
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of essay and paragraph development and organization.
5. Students will craft sentences with attention to audience, purpose, and tone, as well as sentence variety and diction.
6. Students will demonstrate proper use of grammatically and mechanically correct English (or the language in which the course is taught)
7. Students will be able to analyze and construct clear and well-supported interpretations of creative works.
8. Students will be able to evaluate sources and analyze the role and value of creative works to the cultures (context) that create and adopt them.
9. Students will write an essay employing psychoanalytic, feminist, or sociological criticism to fairy tales.
10. They will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the “un-text” (visual aspect) of picture books by giving an oral presentation on a specific book.
11. They will demonstrate their knowledge of the history of gender and racial portrayals by giving a presentation applying this knowledge to a specific book.
12. They will be able to discuss knowledgeably philosophical views embodied in particular texts for young children.

13.They will be able to take a position on censorship of children's books with a knowledge of the history of that issue.

Course Schedule:

I) Readers' Response to Children's Stories and Children's Psychological Development

January 7 M Introduction; Satz, "Race, Gender, ..."; excerpt from Lynn Sharon Schwartz, *Ruined by Reading: A Life in Books*; excerpt from *Black Boy*, Richard Wright; **Paper 1 – A Phenomenological Experience**; Bettelheim Readings; **An Exercise; Presentation of Paper**; Children's Psychological Development

II) Fairy Tales

January 8 T "Snow White": Bettelheim, "Snow White"; excerpt from Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic*, "Snow White"; Waelti-Walters, "On Princesses, Fairy Tales, Sex Roles, and Loss of Self"; Frozen; excerpt from Zipes, *Breaking the Magic Spell*; *Disney Material* ; *Princess and the Frog*; Excerpt from Lurie, *Don't Tell the Grown-Ups*;: **Fairy Tale Workshop**

III) Picture Books

January 9 W Sendak, *Where the Wild Things Are*; excerpt from Cech, *Angels and Wild Things*: Archetypal Poetics of Maurice Sendak; Sendak, *In the Night Kitchen*; Cech, "Mickey in Dreams"; Fox, "The Stop of Truth"; *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*; Satz, Barrett "Prevailing Culinary, Psychological, and Metaphysical Conditions: Meatball and Reality"; **Paper 2: Fairy Tale Paper Due**; *Goodnight Moon*; *Giving Tree* ; Giving Tree Symposium; **Giving Tree Symposium Assignment**; *Inside Picture Books*; **Attachment Assignment**

IV) Portrayal of Minorities and Girls

January 10 Th Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*; *Ethnic Notions*; Interview with Toni Morrison (video) ; **Workshop on Racism**; Racism Opal Moore, "Picture Books:theUn-Text; Ben's *Trumpet* (on reserve); Freeman, *Corduroy*; Keats, *Snowy Day*);Hoffman, *Amazing Grace* (on reserve); Mitchell, *Uncle Jed's Barbershop*; Johnson, *Just Like Josh Gibson*; *Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky*;Curious George Cummins,"The Resisting Monkey:'CuriousGeorge,'Slave Captivity Narratives, and the Postcolonial Condition" (CRB); Brunhoff, *The Story of Babar*(on reserve);Brunhoff,*Travels Babar*; ;Kohl,"Should We Burn Babar?"; ;*Meet Addy: An American Girl*; Hade, "Lies My Children's Book Taught Me"

January 11 F History Meets Popular Culture in 'The American "American Girl's Journey to the Lower East Side"; *My Very Own Room*; *A Chair for My Mother*; *Little*

House; excerpts from Cisneros, *House on Mango Street*; *Interview with Sandra Cisneros* (video); *A Day's Work*; *Little Mama Forgets*; *Five Chinese Brothers*; *The Red Lollipop*; *My Beautiful Birds*; *Stepping Stones*; *Nessa's Fish*; *Brave Irene*; *The Purple Coat*; *Jane and Dragon*; *A Chair for My Mother*; *The Princess Knight*; *Beautiful*; Newman, Leslea, *Heather Has Two Mommies*; *And Tango Makes Three*; *The Sissy Duckling*; *My Daddy's Roommate*; *King and King*; *My Princess Boy*; *I Am Jazz*; *In My Mother's House*

January 14 M *Little House on the Prairie*; **Paper 3-Oral Presentation and Written Paper**; *Game of Silence*; *The Absolute True Diary of a Part Time Indian*; *In Whose Honor* (video)

January 15 T *Slaying the Dragon* (video); *Movie Visit*; *Wonder*; *American Born Chinese*

January 16 W **Final Paper Due; Final**