

FEB 07 2003

**English 3890: Studies in Children's Literature**  
**Winter 2003**  
**Lecture/3 Credits (3-0-0) UT**  
**Section A3**

\*\*\* Please note that the prerequisite for this course is English 1000 or English 1010 or equivalent

Louise Saldanha  
office: C308  
office hours: Mondays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.  
                  Fridays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.  
                  or by appointment

telephone: 539,2869  
e-mail: lsaldanha@gprc.ab.ca

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**HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS CLASS:**

- 1) Plan enough time to get the assignments done.
- 2) Read actively, take notes, and jot down questions as you read.
- 3) Some reading assignments are longer than others; plan your time accordingly.
- 4) Take responsibility for the success of your small group discussions. Since I can't be everywhere (and since I don't think my role is to police your discussions), it's up to each of you to use your time wisely in your small group. This is your opportunity to discuss issues we have not covered in the larger group and to ask questions of your classmates that you may not feel comfortable asking of the larger group.
- 5) Come to my office with your questions. It is difficult to strike a balance in this course between those of you who already have a strong background in literature, and those of you who have less experience with literature and are unfamiliar with literary concepts/conventions; therefore, it is important that you let me know if you are having difficulties, or if you feel that you want more in-depth discussion.

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course involves a representative sampling of classics in children's literature in English with historical and contemporary contexts. The focus will be critical assessment of how prevailing and changing ideas about children and childhood are engaged, adapted, or challenged by various authors who write for children. We will approach the study of these works analytically, focussing on developing an adult understanding of and appreciation for the texts children enjoy. We will focus on the dynamics of race, gender, class, and cultural difference in relation to writing/reading/teaching practices, within the context of our assumptions and attitudes about children and culture. The course will foreground the ways children's literature "teaches" children about being and living in the world and is therefore always political and non-neutral. *Because this is an English class rather than a course in Education, the emphasis is on literary critical skills rather than on methods or curriculum development.*

### TEXTS

Griffith & Frey *Classics of Children's Literature* (5<sup>th</sup> edition)  
Brown, Margaret. *Goodnight Moon*  
Munsch, Robert. *The Paperbag Princess*  
Philip, Marlene Nourbese. *Harriet's Daughter*  
Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*  
Seuss, Theodore, Dr. *The Cat in the Hat*

In addition to the above texts, please read at least two from each of the following groupings. Check with your group members, however, to ensure that all three texts from each grouping will be read by at least two of you.

#### Group A:

Highway, Tomson. *Dragonflies*  
McLellan, Joe. *Nanabosho, Soaring Eagle*  
Tobias, Lenore. *Bird Talk*

#### Group B:

Allen, Lillian. *Why Me?*  
Badoe, Adowa. *Crabs For Dinner*  
Mollel, Tololwa *The Orphan Boy*

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### EVALUATION

weekly reading responses	10%
group class presentation	20%
journal	30%
final exam	30%
class participation	10% (this includes coming to class prepared, contributions to class discussions, improvement, attendance, participation in small group work, as well as participation in large class discussions)

### GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE GRADING GUIDELINES

9 Point Grade	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
9	90 – 100	Excellent
8	80 – 89	Excellent
7	72 – 79	Good
6	65 – 71	Good
5	57 – 64	Pass
4	50 – 56	Pass
3	45 – 49	Fail
2	26 – 44	Fail
1	0 – 25	Fail

## OTHER STUFF

- 1) Attendance: You are expected to attend all classes and are responsible for obtaining information given in classes you miss. I am not able to keep track of who did not receive handouts, so be responsible for yourself.
- 2) Attendance Policy: You are allowed two unexcused absences. These absences require no explanation on your part—they are "freebies." An excused absence needs to be cleared with me and usually requires documentation. Any unexcused absences beyond two will lower your grade, and your participation grade will be affected.
- 3) Late assignments will not be accepted unless arrangements for late submissions have been made with me at least two days prior to the date on which the assignment is due.
- 4) All work must be submitted personally to me. Keep a copy of all your written work.
- 5) Please see the College Policy on plagiarism under "Academic Conduct" in the Calendar. Plagiarism is never allowed. Plagiarism includes representing the ideas or words of another person as your own without proper acknowledgment and extends to the work of other students, the Internet, books, magazines, journals, TV shows, films, etc. This would not only include direct copying without citing the source, but paraphrasing as well.
- 6) All class assignments require current MLA documentation style.
- 7) All assignments must be typed and double-spaced.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### 1) *weekly reading responses (10%)*

These will be one page in length and will respond to the works assigned. They should take no longer than twenty minutes to write. They must be written in sentences and not in point form.

On the days they are due (see attached schedule) they are to be submitted to one member of the group for summary.

The group member responsible for the summary will alternate with each submission. This summary will be submitted to me by the date due (see attached schedule). All group summaries are a requirement. No late summaries will be accepted.

Individual responses and group summaries of responses should follow the format outlined in the handouts provided in class.

Class presenters are not required to complete the reading responses for the week they present.

### 2) *group class presentation (20%)*

Dates and topics for presentations will be assigned during the first week of classes.

### 3) *journal (30%):*

DUE: January 23:

two Journal Entries Due

February 20:

two Journal Entries Due

March 27:

two Journal Entries Due

Your journal must be submitted in a notebook or duo-tang separate from the one you are using for your notes. Your journal must be typed and double-spaced. Please do not use point-form.

The reading journal consists of **six** responses to any of the texts from the course (excluding the one you are using for your class presentation). You do not have to write about each of these texts separately; you may find connections or wish to pursue a comparison between two texts, for example (Note: such a comparison entry, however, will count as one entry and not two entries). If you take my suggestions into consideration each time you submit your entries, your work will improve.

Your grade will be based on the progress you show throughout the journals and the ways in which you demonstrate a concerted effort to achieve the analysis/critique work required for this assignment. This is why I require you to submit all your entries to me, including those I have already read, for each submission. If you are unclear about these requirements, or your progress within the context of these requirements, come and see me before the deadline (remember: if you cannot make my office hours, we can arrange an alternative time). If you do not see me with your questions, I cannot help you.

No late journals will be accepted.

Each of your entries should show me that you have read and thought about the text, and should contain a substantial critique. To do this you won't be able to do an entry in any fewer than 2-3 double-spaced typed pages. Please carefully proofread your entries and ensure that they are without grammatical or mechanical errors.

Each entry must involve the following intellectual work:

i) level one: response

- What is the predominant effect of the text on you? (confusion, suspense, identification with the characters, interest, boredom, amusement, terror, etc. Expand as much as possible)

ii) level two: self-critique

- Why do you think the text had that effect? To answer, this you should ask yourself questions such as the following:

Where does my response come from? Why did I respond this way? What assumptions/expectations did I bring to my reading of this text? How does this text challenge my assumptions/expectations? What challenges me the most about this text? What things in this text do I resist? Why? Where and why was I taught the beliefs that are being challenged by these texts? What knowledge/lack of knowledge am I discovering? (Note: If there are culturally specific references in the text with which you are not familiar, try and research these). Overall, what does your response tell you about your style of reading, your values, your assumptions? (There is no need to answer all of these questions. They are meant as ways to get you thinking. Respond to the ones that work for you.)

iii) level three: cultural critique

- This needs to be less "I-oriented" and must move into a societal critique, focussing on dominant, or mainstream, society's attitudes towards the issues you raise in the self-critique section. What are society's ideas about children, children's literature, codes of behaviour, notions about what is "normal," "conventional," etc. that are revealed?

#### **4) final exam (30%)**

This will be a take home exam and will be distributed in advance of the due date. The examination will be based on topics discussed in class lectures and discussion.

#### **5) class participation (10%)**

This includes contributions to class discussions, improvement, attendance, participation in small group work, as well as participation in large class discussions.

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For your information . . .

**Campus Security: 539.2700**

Campus Security Services are located in H101. Red telephones have been located throughout the College for your convenience in contacting Security. Campus Security will provide a 24-hour Safe Walk Service anywhere on Campus. Whenever Campus Security can be of assistance, you are encouraged to use the conveniently located red telephones.

**Friendship Centre at Grande Prairie Regional College: 539.2092**

Remember that the Friendship Centre at Grande Prairie Regional College (Room B205) provides a space for Aboriginal students to meet, do homework, retrieve or leave messages, obtain community resources material, or just relax. The on-campus Friendship Centre is available for sharing circles, gatherings, study groups, and tutoring sessions. Everyone is welcome.

### SCHEDULE (TENTATIVE!!!!)

Note: Most of the assigned readings for this course are not overly demanding (you are above the grade level of all the assigned children's books). However, you must endeavour to keep up with the reading. Lectures will not be helpful to you if you have not read the assigned books. If I detect lagging in this area, I will give unannounced quizzes. If you are not a fast reader, start reading the longer works early.

You are responsible for having all weekly readings scheduled for discussion done by the beginning of each week, unless you are otherwise instructed in class. Always bring the book(s) on the schedule to class. Texts will be supplemented by critical articles and suggestions for further reading.

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January 7 – 9

Introduction  
History of Children's Literature

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January 14 – 16

**Assignments due:**

JANUARY 14: Reading Response to Perrault/Beaumont/Grimm (Summary of Group Responses Due by JANUARY 17 @ 11:00 A.M.)

**Readings due:** *Folk and Fairy Tales*

Perrault, "The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Blue Beard," "Puss in Boots," "Cinderella"

Beaumont, "Beauty and the Beast"

Grimm, "Aschenputtel" and your choice of any four other tales by The Brothers Grimm

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January 21 – 23

**Assignments due:**

JANUARY 21: Reading Response to Anderson/Jacobs/Munsch (Summary of Group Responses due by JANUARY 24 @ 11:00 A.M.)

JANUARY 23: Two Journal Entries Due

**Readings due:** *Folk and Fairy Tales (cont'd)*

Anderson, "The Little Mermaid," "The Ugly Duckling," and your choice of any two other tales by Hans Christian Anderson

Jacobs, "Jack and the Beanstalk," "The Story of the Three Little Pigs," "The Story of the Three Bears," "Molly Whuppie"

Munsch, *The Paperbag Princess*

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January 28 – 30

**Assignments due:**

JANUARY 28: Reading Response to Carroll (Summary of Group Responses Due by JANUARY 31 @ 11:00 A.M.)

**Readings due:** *Classic Fantasy*

Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

February 4 – 6

**Assignments due:**

FEBRUARY 4: Reading Responses to Baum (Summary of Group Responses due by FEBRUARY 7 @ 11:00 A.M.)

**Readings due:** *Classic Fiction*

Baum, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

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February 11 – 13

**Assignments due:**

FEBRUARY 11: Reading Response to Alcott (Summary of Group Responses Due by FEBRUARY 14 @11:00 A.M.)

**Readings due:** *Classic Fiction for Girls*

Alcott, *Little Women* (Chapters 1, 2, 7—9, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23)

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February 18 – 20

**Assignments due:**

FEBRUARY 18: Reading Response to Twain (Summary of Group Responses Due by FEBRUARY 21 @11:00 A.M.)

FEBRUARY 20: Two Journal Entries Due

**Readings due:** *Classic Fiction for Boys*

Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Chapters 1-9, 21, 35, Conclusion)

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February 24 – 28 READING WEEK (no classes)

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March 4 – 6

**Assignments due:**

MARCH 4: Reading Responses to Potter/Brown/Seuss (Summary of Group Responses Due by MARCH 7 @11:00 A.M.)

**Readings due:** *Picture Books*

Potter, *Peter Rabbit*

Brown, *Goodnight Moon*

Suess, *The Cat in the Hat*

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March 11 – 13

**Assignments due:**

MARCH 11: Reading Responses to Montgomery (Summary of Group Responses Due by MARCH 14 @11:00 A.M.)

**Readings due:** *Classic Canadian Children's Literature*

Montgomery, *Anne of Green Gables*

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March 18 – 20

**Assignments due:**

MARCH 18: Reading Responses to Philip (Summary of Group Responses Due by MARCH 21 @ 11:00 A.M.)

**Readings due:** *Contemporary Canadian Children's Literature*

Philip, *Harriet's Daughter*

March 25 – 27

**Assignments due:**

MARCH 25: Reading Responses to any two of Highway/M<sup>c</sup>Lellan/Tobias  
(Summary of Group Responses Due by MARCH 28 @ 11:00 A.M.)

MARCH 27: Two Journal Entries Due

**Readings due: *Aboriginal Children's Literature***

Please read any two of the following:

Highway, *Dragonflies*

M<sup>c</sup>Lellan, *Nanabosho, Soaring Eagle*

Tobias, *Bird Talk*

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April 1 – 3

**Assignments due:**

APRIL 1: Reading Responses to any two of Allen/Badoe/Mollet (Summary of  
Group Responses Due by APRIL 4 @ 11:00 A.M.)

**Readings due: *Multicultural Canadian Children's Literature***

Allen, *Why Me?*

Badoe, *Crabs For Dinner*

Mollet, *The Orphan Boy*

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April 8 – 10

**Assignments due:**

APRIL 8: Reading Response to Rowling (Summary of Group Responses Due by  
APRIL 11 @ 11:00 A.M.)

**Readings due: *Contemporary Classic . . . ?***

Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

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April 15

**Readings due (cont'd):**

Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*