

## **B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies**

<b>Course Title</b>	: Introduction to Children's Literature in English
<b>Course Code</b>	: ENG379
<b>Recommended Study Year</b>	: 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year
<b>No. of Credits/Term</b>	: 3
<b>Mode of Tuition</b>	: Lecture and Tutorial
<b>Class Contact Hours</b>	: 2 hours Lecture/week 1 hour Tutorial/week
<b>Category in Major Programme</b>	: Required Course
<b>Prerequisite(s)</b>	: N/A
<b>Co-requisite(s)</b>	: N/A
<b>Exclusion(s)</b>	: N/A
<b>Exemption Requirement(s)</b>	: N/A

### **Brief Course Description**

This course introduces students to the important and vast area of children's literature in English from a contemporary point of view. As well as reviewing the various definitions of children's literature and surveying the key texts and movements that have shaped this literature, the course will focus on selected readings from children's fiction which will form the core experiential learning of the course. A key thematic focus will be on "alternative worlds".

### **Aims**

The course will examine the rich and expanding field of literature for children in English and aims to provide theoretical models from which to understand this sub-discipline. It will provide definitions of what constitutes children's literature and survey its major types and forms.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course students will have:

1. Surveyed major examples of children's literature in English;
2. Considered historical and contemporary definitions of what counts as children's literature;
3. Examined the psychological, cultural, educational and social uses of story;
4. Explored in depth a range of texts written for children;
5. Developed the skills of talking and writing about literature for children;
6. Written a long paper on a relevant topic incorporating knowledge about children's literature in general and some text(s) in detail.

## **Indicative Content**

Definitions of children's literature and its uses in a child's development.

A brief survey of the history of children's literature in English.

The Fairy Story – a sampling.

Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century classics: Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows* (1908); Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden* (1911).

Classic 'other worlds': J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit* (1937) and C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* (1955).

Subversive Fantasy: Roald Dahl, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (1964).

Contemporary 'otherworlds': J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1999); Philip Pullman, *The Golden Compass* (1997).

Cross-cultural Perspective: Salman Rushdie, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (1990).

## **Measurement of Learning Outcomes**

Students' progress towards the learning outcomes outlined above will be measured by continuous assessments on the students' engagement with the lectures, tutorial discussions, readings, presentations, and written assignments. In addition, students' knowledge will be assessed by a final examination at the end of the term.

## **Teaching Method**

The course will be largely teacher-centered in the lectures but with a significant proportion of small group and student-centered activities in the tutorials and in some of the lecture slots. Students will be expected to lead one tutorial section (probably as part of a group) to develop and demonstrate their understanding of the main texts studied.

## **Assessment**

Continuous Assessment: 60%

Final Examination: 40%

## Required Readings

Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows*  
Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*  
J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*  
C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*  
Roald Dahl, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*  
R.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and The Chamber of Secrets*  
Philip Pullman, *The Golden Compass*  
Salman Rushdie, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*

## Background Readings

Fox, G. & et al., *Writers, Critics, and Children*, London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1978.  
Glazer, Joan I., *Introduction to Children's Literature*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1997.  
Hillman, Judith, *Discovering Children's Literature*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1999.  
Hunt, Peter, *An Introduction to Children's Literature*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.  
Hunt, Peter, *Children's Literature – The Development of Criticism*, London & New York: Routledge, 1990.  
Knowles, Murray & Malmkjaer Kirsten, *Language and Control in Children's Literature*, London & New York: 1996.  
Lurie, Alison, *Don't Tell the Grown-Ups – The Subversive Power of Children's Literature*, USA: Back Bay Books, 1998.  
May, Jill P., *Children's Literature and Critical Theory – Reading and Writing for Understanding*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.  
Tomlinson, Garl M. & Lynch-Brown, Carol. *Essentials of Children's Literature*, USA: Allyn & Bacon, 1995.  
Townsend, John Rowe, *Written for Children – An Outline of English-language Children's Literature*, England: Penguin Books Ltd, 1980.  
Wilkie-Stibbs, Christine, *The Feminine Subject in Children's Literature*, New York & London: Routledge, 2002.  
Zipes, Jack. *Sticks and Stones – The Troublesome Success of Children's Literature from Slovenly Peter to Harry Potter*, New York and London: Routledge, 2002.