

B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies

Course Title	: Introduction to Children's Literature in English
Course Code	: ENG3379
Recommended Study Year	: 3 rd or 4 th Year
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture-tutorial mode
Class Contact Hours	: 2-hour lecture per week 1-hour tutorial per week
Category	: Discipline Elective (Contemporary Literary Strand)
Prerequisite(s)	: Nil
Co-requisite(s)	: Nil
Exclusion(s)	: Nil
Exemption Requirement(s)	: Nil

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. Thematic focus in the course will vary with the instructor, and may include "alternative worlds", "children's literature in English translation", and so on.

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

1. Students will be able to enjoy, analyze and critique YA texts using a range of critical approaches;
2. Students will be able to discuss and analyze the personal, social and cultural impact of YA fiction on issues such as genre, gender, social justice and ethnicity;
3. Students will write and speak in effective English;
4. Students will demonstrate an awareness of the evolution of the YA genre;
5. Through active participation in discussion and listening, students will gain the ability and language necessary to understand different possibilities and diverse perspectives both in the literature and amongst each other. This will be a valuable asset both in and out of the classroom;
6. Students will practice and continue to develop writing and revision skills through regular feedback and guidance from the professor and from peer review.

Indicative Contents

(“alternative worlds” theme)

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 20th 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)

(“children’s literature in English translation” theme)

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 translation

Aesop’s Fables (first translated in the 15th century, dozens of new translations and adaptations being produced every decade even now)

Mother Goose tales (first compiled in the late 17th century in French by Charles Perrault, the creator of the “fairy tale” genre; many new translations and adaptations being produced still today)

Arabian Nights’ Entertainment (first compiled from various Arabic sources by the French orientalist Antoine Galland and translated into English from the French in the early 18th century; many illustrious translations since, including Sir Richard Burton’s in the mid-19th century and several throughout the 20th century)

Folk tales of the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen (early to mid-19th century)

Carlo Collodi, *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (late 19th century)

Astrid Lindgren, *Pippi Longstocking* (mid-20th century)

The Ballad of Mulan (first introduced to the English-speaking world by Maxine Hong Kingston in *The Woman Warrior* [1975], since then adapted for the Disney movie in 1998 and appearing in various other translations and adaptations for both children and adults)

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.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

In addition to measuring learning outcomes, each of these assignments is designed to help you participate actively in reading, writing, discussing, and thinking about the material in this course.

- Class participation (includes student-led presentations) (25%) [LO1-6]
- One 3-4 page close-reading paper including draft (25%) [LO3-6]
- Research paper including draft (30%) [LO3-6]
- Group/individual creative writing project plus critical commentary (20%) [LO2-6]

Assessment

Continuous Assessment: 60%

Final Examination: 40%

Required Readings

(“*alternative worlds*”:))

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*

(“*children’s literature in English translation*”:))

Multiple translations and/or adaptations of specific Aesopian fables, *Mother Goose* tales, *Arabian Nights* tales, Grimm brothers tales, HC Andersen tales, Collodi’s *Pinocchio*, Lindgren’s *Pippi Longstocking*, and the Mulan legend.

Short historical and theoretical articles providing background to the various texts, including Jeffrey Garrett, “Of Translations and Tarantulas: What’s at Stake when American Children Read Books from Other Countries” (2006), relevant passages from *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English* and Jorge Luis Borges, “The Translators of *The Thousand and One Nights*”

Background Readings

Alderson, Brian. *Hans Christian Andersen and his Eventyr in England*. London: IBBY, 1992.

Appleyard, J. A. *Becoming a Reader: The Experience of Fiction from Childhood to Adulthood*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

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.

Hallford, Deborah, and Zaghini, Edgardo, eds. *Outside In: Children’s Books in Translation*. London: Millett, 2005.

- 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.
- Irwin, Robert. *The Arabian Nights: A Companion*. Tauris Parke, 2004.
- Klingberg, Göte. *Children's Fiction in the Hands of the Translators*. Malmö, Sweden: Gleerup, 1986.
- Knowles, Murray & Malmkjaer, Kirsten, *Language and Control in Children's Literature*, London & New York: 1996.
- Lan Dong. *Mulan's Legend and Legacy in China and the United States*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010.
- Lathey, Gillian. *The Role of Translators in Children's Literature: Invisible Storytellers*. London and New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Lerer, Seth. *Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- 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.
- Oittinen, Riitta. *Translating for Children*. New York: Garland, 2000.
- 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.

Important Notes:

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.