

LRC 480  
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN THE CLASSROOM  
Fall 2012

Instructor: Susan Corapi, University of Arizona

Course Description: This course is a survey of children's literature during which we will explore through reading and discussion a wide range of genres and issues related to children's books.

Course objectives

During this course you will:

- gain a better understanding of yourself as a reader and of how to engage in personal and critical response to literature
- develop a broad knowledge of the various genres and types of books for children, including the major authors and illustrators of these books.
- be able to evaluate the literary quality and appropriateness of specific children's books.
- be familiar with the literary and artistic elements and how they interact to create an effective book for children.
- be familiar with the reference sources for information on children's literature
- examine the role of literature in the lives of children.
- explore ways to engage children with literature for both personal and academic purposes.
- develop an awareness of social, multicultural and international issues as they connect to literature for children.

Beliefs about learning:

Our class experiences are based on the following beliefs about learning (adapted from Dr. Kathy Short):

- Learning is an active process. We will immerse ourselves into reading and responding in various ways to many children's books.
- Learning is a social process of collaborating with others. We will explore our thinking about our reading through dialogue in small groups. There will be many opportunities for informal interaction and sharing about literature in small group and whole class experiences.
- Learning occurs when we make connections to our own experiences. We will respond to literature through making personal connections to our reading and then exploring and critically examining those responses in literature circles with other readers. Our focus will not be on a specific literary interpretation. We will make decisions about the books we read and the resources we develop based on our needs and experiences as individuals and as teachers and librarians.
- Choice allows learners to connect to their experiences and feel ownership in the curriculum. We will have choices in what we read, how we respond, and the specific focus of projects and small group activities.
- Learning is reflective as well as active. We will have many opportunities to reflect on what we are learning through writing, talking, and self-evaluations.
- We live in a culturally diverse world. We will explore literature from a multicultural and international orientation to expand our understanding of the cultural pluralism in children's lives and their world.
- Learning is a process of inquiry. We will search out the questions that matter in our lives and develop strategies for exploring those questions and sharing our understandings with others.

Language Reading and Culture statement of principles on multicultural education:

The term “multicultural education” expresses the essential mission of the department and the university. Multicultural education is not just “about” certain subjects; it does not merely offer “perspectives” on education. It is an orientation to our purposes in education - and ultimately an orientation to life, one that values diversity of viewpoints and experiences and sees people as valuable contributors to the experience of school and society. Life in universities is a self-consciously multicultural experience, from the varieties of personal, social, and cultural backgrounds represented in it to the full spectrum of ideas and disciplinary traditions the compose the community of scholars. Our recognition of this central tenet leads us to commit ourselves to the following general principles:

- Learners bring a variety of linguistic and cognitive strengths from their families, communities and nations into the classroom; these strengths are resources to be appreciated and as such by educators.
- Education must expand on the linguistic and cognitive strengths that learners already possess and bring with them to the classroom, rather than ignore or try to replace them with others.
- Respect and appreciation for cultural and community knowledge means that universities serve the interest of education when they allow for an exchange of views, rather than rely exclusively on a transmission model of instruction.
- We recognize the existence of a variety of communities - each with its own voice and interests - both within and outside the university; a broad education offers the opportunity to hear and study as many of these voices as possible. Such an accommodation must include those communities, which have traditionally been excluded or underrepresented in the university.

Recognition of the validity of these general principles must be reflected in our courses, our relations with students, staff and other faculty members, and in the community life of the Department.

#### Grade Policies

- Self-evaluation is an integral part of this course. You will be asked to submit an initial statement of goals for this semester. For each project, you will be asked to turn in a self-evaluation in which you state your goals for that particular project and evaluate the process you went through in reaching those goals. You will receive evaluative comments for each of your projects based on your goals and the project intent. You may resubmit projects that are not satisfactory in meeting the goals and intent. At mid-semester, you will revise your goals for the course and evaluate your learning at that point in the semester and will receive evaluative comments from me. At the end of the class, you will write an overall self-evaluation of your learning throughout the class.
- Your final grade will be based holistically on both my evaluation and your self-evaluation of your growth and learning related to the course objectives, the quality of your written work, and your attendance, participation, and preparation for class sessions. While you can negotiate the ways in which you define and complete class projects, you must complete all of these projects to fulfill course requirements and your final grade for the course will be based on the thoughtfulness and quality of this work with a B reflecting the completion of all course projects at a satisfactory level. You must exceed those requirements in some way to receive an A, but can choose which projects to emphasize. Your mid-term evaluation will include a discussion of the grade for your work completed as of that date so that you can establish goals for maintaining or improving your final grade for the course. Incompletes will not be given for the course except in extreme situations and only with prior approval by the instructor.
- Late assignments without a valid excuse will affect your final grade.
- If you need accommodations due to a documented learning disability, please discuss your needs with me during the first two weeks of the course. Students registered with the Disability Resource Center

need to submit documentation for reasonable accommodations: <http://drc.arizona.edu/teach/syllabus-statement.html>

### Attendance and Participation

**Class attendance and participation are essential to this course.** It has been purposefully structured as experiential learning involving book browsing, discussion groups and class projects. You cannot make up for absences by getting class notes or reading the text. Active participation in class is key. Therefore please abide with the following protocols:

- More than two absences and/or chronic tardiness/ leaving early will lower your grade for the class. If you must miss a class session, please email me in advance explaining your absence.
- Illnesses are excused only with a doctor's note.
- If you miss a class session you will need to turn in the work assigned and complete some additional reflections to make up for missing out on the class interaction.
- All holidays or special events observed by organized religions will be honored for students affiliated with the particular religion.
- Absences pre-approved by the UA Dean of Students (or designee) will be honored.
- Please turn OFF (not just silence) all cell phones and social websites in class. If you have an emergency that requires your phone to be on, please let me know before class begins.
- Please arrive and settle in so we can begin promptly at 10:00. Expect to keep working until 11:30.
- Please limit trips to the bathroom during class to **emergencies**
- NOTE: Drinks are permitted as long as they are in a covered container.

### Reading Materials

#### Required readings:

- 80 or more children's books (at least 15 of which are chapter books)
- Assigned articles
- *La Linea*, by Ann Jaramillo
- *Inside Out and Back Again*, by Thannha Lai
- *Locomotion*, by Jacqueline Woodson
- *Tuesday*, by David Wiesner
- Additional book TBA

#### Required Text:

- Lynch-Brown, C., Tomlinson, C & Short, K. (2010). *Essentials of Children's Literature*, 7th ed.

#### Sources of children's books:

- Room 455 paperback collection from which books may be checked out each week.
- Tucson public libraries (Pima County Public Library system) or school libraries
- University of AZ Children's Literature Collection (Main library, 2nd floor)
- WOW library - non circulating collection (room 453 during open reading hours)
- University bookstore
- Local books stores (eg. Kid's Center, Bookman's, B&N...)
- Scholastic Book Club orders (an economical way to begin building your personal library)
- Internet booksellers such as amazon.com, hpb.com, barnes&noble.com (their used book sites are an economical way to acquire books)
- For books not published in the US try amazon and scholastic sites from other countries

### Supplies

- Markers, colored pencils or crayons
- Post-it notes

Learning projects OR “Getting the gray matter going”:

### Reading Records

- Extensive and intensive reading of children’s books is the primary focus of this course. Record your reading on LibraryThing.com on your library page. Your records will vary from brief annotations or categorizations to more extensive annotations and analysis of your reading. The major function of the record is for you to write down information you want for the future.
- The kinds of information included about books should include:
  - bibliographic information (author, title, illustrator, publisher, date, number of pages)
  - type of book format and literary genre
  - short summary of the main plot
  - tags or subject headings that describe the content and the themes of the book
  - your response to the book (comments on connections, strengths, or concerns)
- The reading for this course should be done weekly. There may be some weeks when you read fewer books than others but this is not a project that you put off until it is due. This course is based on continuous reading of children’s literature and you will greatly decrease your learning and participation in this class if you are not reading regularly throughout the course.
- Include poetry books in your reading record since poetry is so often overlooked in classrooms and libraries.
- You are expected to read a minimum of 80 books in a combination of picture books (minimum of 65) and chapter books (minimum of 15), reflecting a range of genres and age levels.
- You will turn in your Reading Records five times during the semester along with an analysis sheet of your books.
- Your reading records need to include at least one book in Audiobook format, one graphic novel, one pop-up book and one magazine.
- The purpose of the course is to introduce you to new literature so try to read books that are new to you, not old favorites.
- If you are reading a series count only one of the books as part of your 80 books. Additional books in the series can count as ‘above and beyond’ the 80 required.
- Focus on books for children and young teens.

### Reflective journal

You will make at least one entry per week. The focus is on personal responses to books and learning activities. This is a chance for you to dig deep and reflect on what you read or experienced. **Aim for at least one typed page (500-600 words), single spaced with one inch margins, 12-point standard font. Please spell check and re-read your journal entries before turning them in.**

Example of journal entries include:

- your personal learning goals (revised mid-semester)
- responses to books and articles to be discussed in literature circles (so you are ready to contribute to the discussion – classmates do not appreciate students who are not prepared!)
- self evaluations
- read aloud evaluations

- literacy bag description (a bag containing minimally 5 significant books that reflect your literacy journey)

#### Read-Aloud

- Listen to Mem Fox on reading aloud to children. [www.memfox.com](http://www.memfox.com): How to Read Aloud (Introduction, And Do It Like This, Ten Read-Aloud Commandments). Write a reflection about the primary things you learned from listening to Mem Fox.
- Each student will read aloud twice to a group of children (group = at least 3 kids), once at the beginning of the semester and then again towards the end of the course. *The reading can be a single picture book or a chapter from a novel. The audience can be any group from toddlers to teens.* Practice so you can read it WELL. Write a reflection about the Read-Aloud experiences, paying attention to verbal and non-verbal feedback from your audience.

#### Library Exercises

Complete the library orientation provided by the university. Visit the library and complete the exercises as assigned during the semester. The links to the exercises can be accessed through D2L.

#### Genre study

Each student group will summarize a particular literary genre and present it to the class in the following way:

- Summarize the assigned genre filling in a chart with 4 sections: definition/description, types/characteristics, selection issues, and awards. No more than 1 sheet printed on each side.
- Select two poems to read aloud to the class. Each poem needs to be written in the genre the group profiled. The poems also need to “speak” to two different age groups. Prepare a handout with the poems and complete bibliographic info. Presentation should be creative and no more than 5 minutes long. Read the poems well!
- Choose around 50 titles from the bibliography of recommended books at the back of the assigned chapter. Find and bring the books to class for a “browsing”. Re-shelve or return the books after the browsing.

#### Book Club

When a genre is covered in class, each student will share their favorite book of that genre with their ‘book club’, convincing their club members to read the book. To prepare for the ‘share’, bring a paper with the title, a small picture of the cover, and 3 bullet points on why you like the book. As your group shares, add your book club partner’s books to your sheet. On the back of your paper, record several books from the book browse that you want to go back and read.

#### Author/Illustrator profiles

Create a PPT or flash card presentation on a author or on an illustrator. Include basic biographical information, major works, and why he/she is important in the field. Also include why you picked this person. Discover why this author or illustrator writes or illustrates what he/she does. Present this to the class and upload your document to D2L. Make a copy for all classmates by printing 6 slides/cards on a page.

#### Text Set

Create a text set of books that are related by a common theme. Record the bibliographic information, summary and your rationale for why this book is worthy of being in the text set. You will do this exercise as a small group. .

## Final Inquiry Project

Choose a topic that interests you in the field of children's literature. Create an invitation that you will share with the class during the last two class sessions. You will submit your topic several weeks before the project is due.

## Children's Literature Resource Portfolio (Signature project needed to take the final exam)

- **ALL** of the learning exercises will go into a notebook or expanding file folders (whatever format will be useful for you). Include all the handouts and the syllabus. Take photos of your group work to include as artifacts.
- The purpose of the portfolio is to gather and organize the projects and resources from this class according to the course objectives.
- The portfolio should include a reflection for each section indicating how the artifacts demonstrate how you have met the course objectives related to that section.
- You will use your portfolio as the basis for your final examination (in-class exam) and it will act as a final evaluation of whether or not you have met the course objectives.
- Include a Table of Contents for each section.
- The sections of your portfolio will include:

### **Responding as a Reader**

- Projects and handouts in which you reflect on yourself as a reader and in-depth personal responses to the books you have read in this class.
- Possible artifacts include your literacy bag, reflective journals with your personal responses to literature, Book Clubs, etc.
- Course objective: You will gain a better understanding of yourself as a reader and of how to engage in personal and critical response to literature.

### **Knowledge of Children's Literature**

- Projects and handouts that reflect your knowledge of children's books and ability to evaluate the literary quality and appropriateness of these books. Includes the range of books which you read as part of the class and your ability to organize text sets of conceptually related books.
- Possible artifacts include your reading records and inventories of your records, chapter AHAs, genres project, text sets, etc.
- Course objectives: You will develop a broad knowledge of the various genres and types of books for children, including the major authors and illustrators of these books. You will be able to evaluate the literary quality and appropriateness of specific children's books. You will be familiar with the literary and artistic elements and how they interact to create an effective book for children.

### **Reference Sources and Resources**

- Projects and handouts that reflect your knowledge and use of reference sources on children's literature and how to locate information on authors, illustrators, and poets as well as books on particular themes or topics.
- Possible artifacts include library exercises, library guides, author/illustrator/poet projects and handouts, professional articles that focus on children's literature as a field, poetry handouts. .
- Course objective: You will be familiar with the reference sources for information on children's literature.

### **Literature Engagements with Children**

- Projects and handouts that reflect ways in which literature can be used with children.
- Possible artifacts include read-aloud reflections, literature response strategies, professional articles or handouts on the use of books with children, professional conference reflections.

- Course objectives: You will examine the role of literature in the lives of children. You will explore ways to engage children with literature for both personal and academic purposes.

#### **Social and Cultural Issues in Children's Literature**

- Projects and handouts that focus on specific cultural and social issues in children's literature such as censorship, stereotypes, and controversial books.
- Possible artifacts include reflective journal entries and professional articles, projects or papers on these issues.
- Course objective: You will develop an awareness of social, multicultural and international issues as they connect to literature for children.

Tentative Semester Plan (can be modified by instructor with adequate notice)

Date	Main focus of the day	Assignments due
MON 8.20	Course introduction and details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post intro on D2L</li> <li>• Sign up for LibraryThing</li> <li>• Buy textbook &amp; class books</li> </ul>
WED 8.22	Starting to look closely at books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BRING LAPTOPS</li> <li>• Learning goals</li> <li>• Literacy bag and write up</li> <li>• Post it notes for classic picture book</li> <li>• AHAs for chapter 1 <i>Learning About Children and Their Literature</i></li> </ul>
MON 8.27	Old favorites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LibraryThing: 5 books (aim for 1 novel) &amp; analysis</li> <li>• Reflection: making connections</li> <li>• Library exercise: Amazing Library Race</li> <li>• AHAs for chapter 2 <i>Learning About Reading and Literature</i></li> <li>• Read assigned genre chapter and bring textbook Mon 8.27</li> </ul>
WED 8.29	What makes a book good?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection: Mem Fox on reading aloud</li> <li>• AHA's for chapter 3 <i>Learning about Literature</i></li> <li>• Print and read article by Grace Lin</li> </ul>
MON 9.3	NO CLASS	Labor Day Holiday
WED 9.5	Traditional Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BOOK CLUB: Traditional Lit</li> <li>• AHAs for chapter 6: <i>Traditional Literature</i></li> <li>• LibraryThing: 15 books &amp; analysis (3 novels)</li> <li>• List of 3 authors or illustrators you are interested in</li> </ul>
MON 9.10	Picture books: art elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library exercises: SATA and LIT Resource Center</li> </ul>
WED 9.12	Picture books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AHAs chapter 5: <i>Picture Books</i></li> <li>• Print and read article on using picture books with all age groups</li> </ul>
MON 9.17	Conceptual themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LibraryThing: 25 Books (aim for 5 novels) and analysis</li> <li>• Reflection: Read Aloud #1</li> </ul>
WED 9.19	Cultural interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection: <i>Tuesday</i></li> </ul>



Date	Main focus of the day	Assignments due
MON 9.24	Biography & Historical Fiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AHA's chap 9: <i>Historical Fiction and Biography</i></li> <li>• BOOK CLUB: Historical Fiction</li> <li>• Cultural maps</li> <li>• Reflection: cultural interaction</li> </ul>
WED 9.26	Making books more interesting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection: <i>Inside Out and Back Again</i></li> <li>• Print and read Jackdaw article</li> <li>• Library exercise: CLCD using <i>Inside Out and Back Again</i></li> </ul>
MON 10.1	Author-Illustrator presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26 copies of handout of presentation</li> </ul>
WED 10.3	Fantasy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection: fantasy novel</li> <li>• BOOK CLUB: fantasy</li> <li>• AHA's Chapter 7: <i>Modern Fantasy</i></li> </ul>
MON 10.8	Common Core Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LibraryThing: 40 books (8 novels) &amp; analysis</li> </ul>
WED 10.10	Informational books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AHA's chapter 10: <i>Informational Books</i></li> <li>• BOOK CLUB: Informational books</li> </ul>
THURS 10.11	4-5 pm	Tentative date for illustrator visit
MON 10.15	Poetry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection: Mid-term due on D2L</li> </ul>
WED 10.17	Poetry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AHA's chapter 4: <i>Poetry</i></li> <li>• BOOK CLUB: poetry</li> </ul>
Mon 10.22	Novels in verse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LibraryThing: 60 Books (12 novels) and analysis</li> <li>• Reflection: <i>Locomotion</i></li> </ul>
10.24	Text set concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Locomotion's</i> heart</li> </ul>
MON 10.29	Multicultural & international literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Exercise: Best Books &amp; A to Zoo</li> <li>• AHAs on chapter 11: <i>Literature for a Diverse Society</i></li> <li>• BOOK CLUB: multicultural / international</li> </ul>
WED 10.31	Book pairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring 6-8 books and 2 artifacts for text set</li> <li>• Print and read article on teachers</li> <li>• Reflection: <i>La Linea, Voices in the Field</i> &amp; picture book</li> </ul>

Date	Main focus of the day	Assignments due
MON 11.5	Realistic Fiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Text set bibliography due by Monday 11.5, 7pm</li> </ul>
WED 11.7	Text set presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection: doing the text set</li> </ul>
MON 11.12	NO CLASS	Veteran's Day holiday
WED 11.14	The love of reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AHA's chapter 13: <i>Engaging Children With Literature</i></li> </ul>
MON 11.19	Critical literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LibraryThing: 80 books and analysis</li> <li>Reflection: process of reading 80 books</li> </ul>
WED 11.21	Art techniques	<p>YES, WE HAVE CLASS!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection: Read Aloud 2</li> <li>Final inquiry project or invitation idea</li> </ul>
MON 11.26	Critical literacy in the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portfolios (send updates of book #'s by Monday 12/5)</li> <li>AHA's chapter 12: <i>Planning the Curriculum</i></li> <li>Print and read Christiansen article (optional Giroux article)</li> </ul>
WED 11.28	Critical literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection: critical literacy in the classroom due on D2L</li> </ul>
MON 12.3	Presentations of invitations or inquiry projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection on the process of doing the project</li> </ul>
WED 12.5	Presentations of invitations or inquiry projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection on the process of doing the project</li> </ul>
FRI 12.7	Final Exam 10:30-12:30	<p>Please bring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>laptop to access LibraryThing, or a printout of your reading records</li> <li>Portfolio</li> <li>Textbook</li> <li>Notebook paper if you do not have a laptop (no bluebooks please)</li> </ul>