

## Course Syllabus

**EDUC 3108.02**  
**Children's Literature**  
**3 credit hours**

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### **1. Course Description: (Student focus, rationale, scope, prerequisites).**

This course is designed for elementary, early childhood, and special education majors, and any others interested in exploring quality literature for children, preschool through eighth grade, in order to recognize the personal and educational values literature offers to said children. In addition, the course will expose future teachers to the ranges of children's literature available for use in the classroom setting and to encourage quality reading of an independent nature.

The course will provide a broad overview of the field of children's literature including: historical and contemporary considerations, criticism, and representative works from major genres. Special emphasis will be given to establishing a literature based classroom with consideration for children's responses to quality literature as well as using trade books across the curriculum.

**Prerequisite:** A willingness to read and share a wealth of children's books that will serve as a personal anthology for future planning of a literature based program.

### **2. Learning Outcomes: (Goals, objectives, course outcome, etc.)**

*The student will:*

Recognize the value of children's literature in the school curriculum.

Become familiar with the literature that is currently available for children.

Develop and apply specific criteria for evaluating the various types of literature read by children in terms of appeal, quality, and usefulness in the classroom.

Develop motivational and creative activities in using literature across the curriculum.

Appraise graphic media used by artists in picture books.

Identify and evaluate the contributions of contemporary authors and illustrators of children's literature.

Use Bloom's Taxonomy for developing higher level questions and in planning literature responses.

Identify and use professional resources available for selections of books, lesson planning, and critiquing students' responses.

Acquaint himself with the components of a well-run literature based classroom including use of literature sets, journaling, story telling, and literature based writing.

**3. Text: Huck, Charlotte et al. CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. Seventh ed. McGraw-Hill, 2001.**

**You will also need to secure a copy of the children's book, Because of Winn-Dixie by Kate DiCamillo.**

**4. Schedule of required reading, lectures, assignments, student presentations and exams.**

**Week 1**

**8/25** Introductory Meeting:

**Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Review course syllabus with emphasis on assignments.
2. Overview of the wide range of literature for children.
3. Overview of the many uses of children's literature throughout the elementary and middle school curriculum.
4. Complete an informal survey of personal reading interests and habits.

READ: Huck, Chapter One: Knowing Children's Literature

**ASSIGNMENT #1:**

Survey five friends using the handout to gain further information on reading interests and habits. *Due 8/27*

**JOURNAL ENTRY #1**

Write your reading autobiography. What memories do you have of your early reading? Did your parents read to you? What books do you recall? Did teachers or librarians read aloud to you? What were some of your favorite books and why? Were there any that you did not like? What importance do you put on reading aloud to young children? How do the surveys of your friends influence your feeling on the importance of children's literature and life long reading habits? *To be discussed at next class meeting. 8/27*

**8/27**

**Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Share survey data and reflections.
2. Review story elements. (Text: pp 13 – 24 including: plot, setting, theme, characterization, style, and point of view).
3. Apply story elements to the evaluation process in choosing a good book.
4. Identify components for a "book talk"?

## JOURNAL ENTRY #2

Using a book chosen in class, read and record your initial reactions as to the quality of the book in your journal. Did you like it? Did you not? Why or why not? - Go to Assignment #2. Following Assignment #2 reflect on how your initial reaction to the book compared to the results of the given evaluation tool.

## ASSIGNMENT #2

Reread and evaluate the book for story elements and additional considerations used in the list provided (Text pg 14) Complete the form. *Due 9/3*

## Week 2

### 9/1 No Class – Labor Day

9/3

#### **Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Recognize the differences between children's literature and adult literature.
2. State the personal and educational values a child receives from children's literature.
3. Reflect on the importance of children's literature in the school curriculum.
4. Familiarize self with the Newberry and Caldecott Awards.

READ: Huck, Chapter Two: Understanding Children's Responses to Literature

## ASSIGNMENT #3

Search the internet for information regarding the Newberry and Caldecott Awards. Find current lists of all award winners in both categories. Find an additional book award that is given and the qualifications for receiving it as well as past recipients.

Select and read three Caldecott books (or other picture award books) and read them. Complete information forms on all three. Prepare one for a book talk. Another of these books may be used for your field experience in story telling. *Due 9/8*

BOOK TALK #1 – Caldecott book - Presentations begin on 9/8.

## Week 3

9/8

#### **Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Share information pertaining to award books.

2. Identify the growth patterns that influence children's responses to literature with relationship to the work of Piaget, Kohlberg, and Vygotsky.
3. Match children's interests and preferences for books with their developmental needs.
4. Evaluate reading interest inventories.

#### PRESENTATION: BOOK TALKS

#### ASSIGNMENT #4

Bring to class one picture book appropriate for a level you choose which meets the guidelines for evaluating children's fiction and one picture book for the same age that does not meet the guidelines. Be prepared to discuss your reasons. Prepare book forms on both books. *Due 9/10*

#### JOURNAL ENTRY #3

Using the resource section of the text (p 45 – 54), determine the child's age most appropriate for the books you chose. What specifics made you determine the age. Is there anything in the book that is not age appropriate? Could you justify reading this book at another age? Why? *Due 9/10*

**9/10**

#### **Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Gain a historical background of the development of children's literature from its early beginnings through the twenty-first century.
2. Identify the purpose and early forms of lesson books.
3. List the characteristics of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century books for children.

#### PRESENTATION : BOOKTALKS

READ: Huck, Chapter Three: The Changing World of Children's Books.

#### ASSIGNMENT #5

Select a book from the first half of the 1900's (or late 1800's) as well as one from the past ten years. Read both. Write a comparison of the two books. Be sure to include any indications of society's role towards children as well as story elements, illustrations, style, format and general publishing information.) Complete book forms for both books. *Due 9/17*

**Week 4**

**9/15**

#### **Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Visit the children's library to become aware of organization, review the Dewey Decimal System, and familiarize himself with search information and additional literature related materials (i.e. periodicals, films, etc.)

## PRESENTATION: BOOKTALKS

**9/17**

### **Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Recognize the need for developing initial literacy in young children and the ramifications of such early intervention.
2. Recognize the appeal of Mother Goose rhymes.
3. Identify a variety of books for the young child including: baby's first books, finger and nursery rhyme books, toy books, alphabet books, counting books, concept books, and wordless books.

## PRESENTATION: BOOKTALKS

READ: Huck, Chapter Four: Books to Begin On

### PROJECT #1

From the books mentioned in *class*, book lists, or other books found in a library search, choose one counting book, one ABC book, one Mother Goose book, one book with repeating patterns, and one Beginning-to-Read book. For each book include a book talk and student activity sheet. These activities should help the child acquire skills important for emergent readers. Be sure to give the objective (s) of each activity. Be prepared to share in class how you would share these books and activities with children. Prepare a list of at least three additional books that fall into each category for children in pre-school to first grade. *Due 9/24*

### **Week 5**

**9/22**

### **Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Identify the value of predictable, pattern, and cumulative books and determine possible uses in the classroom including making books.
2. Recognize techniques to employ when sharing books with very young children.
3. Focus on the power of reading aloud to children.
4. Become familiar with major authors of Beginning-to-Read books.

## PRESENTATION: BOOKTALKS

ASSIGNMENT: continue with above mentioned project.

**9/24**

**Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Define picture books.
2. Identify methods used by picture book artists to show mounting tension, create visual metaphors, create mood, and show character development.
3. Recognize at least one major children's book illustrator who works specifically in the following mediums: woodcut, collage, paints, pen and ink, crayon or chalk, charcoal or pencil,
4. Identify unusual mediums for picture books i.e., removable parts, see through books, fabric relief.

PRESENTATION: BOOK TALKS

READ: Huck, Chapter Five: Picture Books

**Week 6**

**9/29**

**Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Share projects concerning early literacy with class.
2. Contribute to discussions concerning projects.
3. Reflect on the validity of projects and books offered.

**JOURNAL ENTRY #4**

Take notes on the projects as they are presented. (It is not necessary to write a reiteration of the story of any one book as the book form papers will be copied and shared for our notebooks.) Reflect on the merit of the projects that are offered. Offer suggestions of how they might be changed or extended. Reflect on your own work as compared to others. (Be honest on this, the best teachers are honest appraisers of their skills and learn from their mistakes, so learn to become a good reflective practitioner. *Due 10/1*)

**10/1**

**Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Identify the conventions artists use such as representational, impressionistic, expressionistic, surrealistic, naïve or folk art, cartoon and cultural.

**PROJECT #2**

Choose one illustrator who has won the Caldecott Award and who as illustrated at least three other picture books. Provide a one page summary of interesting information about the illustrator. Discuss the technique (s) the illustrator uses. Find and read the three books. Prepare a book talk on each

book as well as an art activity that demonstrates his/her medium in the form of a lesson plan. Present your books, illustrator information, and activity in class. Include a web site on said artist as well as any possible sites on the particular books. (*Due 10/6*)

BOOK TALK #2 - Caldecott Book or another by award winning illustrator

### **Week 7**

**10/6**

#### **Objectives:**

*The student will:*

1. Recognize the range of content covered in picture books.
2. Identify the themes and advanced subjects addressed in picture books.
3. Give examples of the value and use of picture books in upper grades.
4. View samples of literature bags used to encourage a school-home literature connection.

**10/8**

#### **Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Recognize the origin of folktales: monogenesis vs. polygenesis.
2. Recognize the various types of folktales including: cumulative tales, pourquoi tales, beast tales, wonder tales, realistic tales.

PRESENTATIONS: ILLUSTRATOR PROJECTS

READ: Huck, Chapter Six, Traditional Literature – Folk Tales, pp 245 – 275

### PROJECT #3

Choose one folktale and find at least one, hopefully two, variants of the same tale. Read and complete a book talk on each book. Write a paragraph about the cultural clues represented in the story that reflect the country (flora, fauna, food, housing, customs, language, religious beliefs, climate, landscape etc.) Prepare an activity for each book that will enable the student to learn about the country of origin. Complete book forms on all books. **Bring your books to class on Thursday for in-class activity.** *Due 10/13*

Week 8

**10/13**

#### **Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Identify opportunities for teaching cultural awareness through folk tales.
2. Identify the elements of folktales: plot, characterization, theme, style and motifs and find commonalities among tales.

PRESENTATIONS: BOOK TALKS

**ASSIGNMENT #6**

In-class assignment based on the folktales chosen for folktale project. Be sure that you have read your books and bring your books to class.

**10/15**

**Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Determine the value of sharing fantasy with children.
2. Identify the source of modern fantasy tales.
3. Identify the difference between the traditional and modern fairy tale.
4. Cite differences between modern fantasy, high fantasy, and science fiction.
5. List the types of fantasy and give a major example of each.

PRESENTATIONS: BOOK TALKS

READ: Huck, Chapter Seven: Modern Fantasy

**BOOK TALK #3**

Choose and read one modern fantasy from the lists provided in your book (at least 100 pages). Prepare a book talk on the book and be prepared to give it after the next class date. Bring your book to class.

**JOURNAL ENTRY #5**

What message do you think the author is saying that is of importance to the children who read this book.

**ASSIGNMENT #7**

Find at least two extension activities related to the modern fantasy book on-line. Bring in the activities and give the web site. *Due 10/29*

**Mid-Term Exam/ Project**

**Exam: In class essay – There is no need to prepare for this as it will be reflective in nature.**

**Project: Choose one from list that will be passed out in class. *Due 10/29***

FALL BREAK OCT. 20 & 22

Week 9

**10/27**

**Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Recognize quality poetry and poets for children.
2. Identify basic elements of poetry.
3. Identify basic forms of poetry children prefer.
4. Identify reasons why children dislike poetry.

PRESENTATIONS: BOOK TALKS

READ: Huck, Chapter Eight, Poetry

BOOK TALK #4

Find and read a Halloween picture book, or an excerpt from a longer scary book. Prepare a book talk for Thursday. Bring book to class.

**10/29**

**Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Build a theme related unit around Halloween.
2. Brainstorm activities from Halloween books offered.
3. Share a book talk on a Halloween book.

PRESENTATIONS: MID-TERM PROJECTS

ASSIGNMENT #8

Compile a list of ten poems from a variety of children's poets. Be sure that you give the name of the poet and the source of the poem. *Due 11/3*

**Week 10**

**11/3**

**Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Identify cross-curriculum opportunities for poetry.
2. Recognize major children's poets.
3. Practice using poetry from choral reading.
4. Use poetry for springboard to writing.

ASSIGNMENT #9

Choose a poem from those shared or of your own finding. Prepare an activity in which you use the poem to help teach in other curricula. (Example: math poem). Write a lesson plan based on the poem. (*due Nov.5*)

**11/5**

**Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Define contemporary realistic fiction.
2. Determine the values of sharing this genre with students.
3. Discuss the realism and graphic nature of this genre and the appropriateness of this realism in the classroom and in children's literature.
4. List the major themes and topics in realistic fiction today.

PRESENTATION: BOOK TALKS

READ: Huck, Chapter Nine: Contemporary Realistic Fiction

**ASSIGNMENT #10**

Choose two novels by different authors that deal with the same Contemporary social issues. Novels should be for grade four or above. Write a book talk for one of the novels. Find two web sites appropriate for children that will extend their understanding of the social issue. Write at least five higher level questions for each of the books that can be used in a literature discussion. *Due 11/12*

**Week 11**

**11/10**

**Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Discuss the major appeal of realistic fiction.
2. Discuss current criticism of both realistic fiction and modern fantasy.
3. Recognize the literary contributions of Katherine Paterson. Ms Paterson will be the featured speaker at the Webster Fall Children's Literature Workshop.

PRESENTATION: BOOK TALKS

**ASSIGNMENT #11:** Read: *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo – *available at any bookstore or in any public library.* We will use this book for a literature discussion on Wednesday. Bring book to class.

**11/12**

**Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Contribute to a literature discussion on the book, *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo.
2. Recognize varying levels of questioning techniques.
3. Respond to book in journaling format.

4. Using Blooms Taxonomy design sample reader response extensions and higher level questioning techniques.

## CHILDREN'S LITERATURE CONFERENCE – FRIDAY, NOV. 14 & 15

### **Week 12**

**11/17**

#### **Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Define historical fiction.
2. Give examples of types of historical fiction.
3. Recognize opportunities for using historical fiction as an additional avenue for teaching social studies.
4. Become aware of the opportunities for using multiple reading levels for historical fiction themes.

PRESENTATIONS: BOOK TALKS

READ: Huck, Chapter Ten, Historical Fiction

#### ASSIGNMENT #12

Choose a time period and find examples of six or more historical fiction books for that period. Write a book talk on one and be prepared to present. Be sure that your choices include at least two books for differing reading levels. *Due 11/19*

**11/19**

#### **Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Distinguish between an authentic and fictionalized biography.
2. Differentiate between picture-book biographies, simplified biographies, partial biographies and complete.
3. Recognize current trends in biographical writing.
4. Evaluate the authenticity of juvenile biographies.

PRESENTATIONS: BOOK TALKS

#### JOURNAL ENTRY #6

What is the purpose for the varying biographies? Do you feel there is any merit to the more simplified books? How would you explain the differences or authenticity deviations to your students?

## **Week 13**

**11/ 24**

### **Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Identify those factors which determine whether an informational book is written appropriately for an intended audience.
2. Determine ways to check the accuracy of an informational book.
3. State the differences among: concept books, informational picture books, photographic essays, identification books, life cycle books, experiment and activity books, journals, survey books, craft and how-to books.

PRESENTATION: BOOK TALKS

READ: Huck, Chapter Eleven: Non-Fiction Books

### JOURNAL ENTRY #7

How important is it to have students read both fiction and non-fiction books. How would their responses to the books differ?

**11/26**

### **Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Recognize the basic purpose and long term goal of a literature program.
2. Identify the basic components of a literature program.
3. Recognize the importance of SSR, learn techniques for one-on-one conferencing, and the use of Accelerated Reader.
4. Develop a theme related literature/cross-curricular study.

READ: Huck: Chapter Thirteen: Planning the Literature Program

### ASSIGNMENT #13

Read the handout for the final project. Choose a theme or topic. Determine the age level for the study. Search the internet or do a library search for books related to topic. Be sure to include varying ability levels. Read all choices you wish to use. Complete an across the curriculum literature worksheet. ASK FOR HELP IF YOU NEED IT.

PRESENTATION: BOOK TALKS

## **WEEK 14**

**12/1**

### **Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Become acquainted with graphic organizers: KWL charts, Story Maps,

Flow Charts, Venn Diagrams, webbing etc. to assess literature understanding and for pre-reading opportunities.

2. Become acquainted with vocabulary building techniques.
3. Become acquainted with methods of assessment of literary growth.

ASSIGNMENT: Work on final project. If you have missed any of the BOOK TALKS ask for the opportunity to do them in the next two class meetings.

**12/3**

**Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Recognize opportunities for using literature in the teaching of math and economics.

ASSIGNMENT #14

Using the handout of books for math and economics, select a book. Prepare a one page lesson plan for the use of the book to teach a specific objective in either subject. Give a three minute presentation of the book and plan. *Due 12/8*

**WEEK 15**

**12/8**

**Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

1. Recognize opportunities for using literature in a school's character awareness program.
2. Become familiar with books that will meet PREP goals in the elementary school.

ASSIGNMENT: Continue working on final project. Final project presentations will begin on **Dec. 10**. Sign up for your time.

JOURNAL ENTRY #8

Reflect on what you have learned this semester. Have your feelings towards the importance literature plays in learning changed whether it be in becoming a better reader, developing a life-long love for reading, or is using literature for gaining knowledge in the content areas? What particular literary areas do you feel most proficient in? What areas do you feel you would like to strengthen? Name three children's books you were motivated to read or will want to read in the future. Add any additional comments you would like to include pertaining to the class and how it helped or hindered your understanding of children's literature. (due 12/10)

Journals will be returned to you at the last class meeting.

12/10

## LITERATURE UNIT PRESENTATIONS

### WEEK 16

#### **FINAL WEEK – In lieu of a final we will continue with Unit Presentations.**

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Book Talk presentations are subject to time allowed after new material is presented. Students will be required to read a sampling of each kind of genre and share their books in class discussions.

**Attendance** – In order to completely cover the content of this course it is imperative that you attend class. In the case of a necessary absence, i.e. death in the family or severe illness, you must e-mail me in advance. Missed classes will reflect in a grade being dropped.

#### Grading:

#### Grading Scale

Assignments 14x10 pts.	=	140	383 - 425	90% - 100%	= A
Journal Entries 8x5 pts.	=	40	340 - 382	80% - 89%	= B
Book Talks 4x10 pts.	=	40	297 - 339	70% - 79%	= C
Projects 3x20	=	60	255 - 298	60% - 69%	= D
Story Telling (Field Work)	=	15			
Mid –Term project	=	40			
Final project	=	75			
Participation	=	<u>25</u>			
		425 pts.			



