

# Syllabus

**COURSE TITLE:** Language Arts Seminar: The Role of Narrative in Humane Education

**COURSE NUMBER:** COMM 5340.W1

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course investigates multiple perspectives on the role of narrative in shaping our beliefs, values, and actions. Students will explore personal stories, literary stories, historical stories, mythology, and folklore as tools for integrating the principles of humane education in classrooms. Participants will develop a body of age-appropriate stories focusing on the relationships between humans and animals and explore strategies for using stories as vehicles for examining moral principles and decision-making.

## COURSE PREREQUISITES

No prerequisites

## COURSE OBJECTIVES/EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Understand theories related to the role of narrative in shaping our beliefs, values, and actions.
- Understand the virtues promoted by humane education.
- Analyze key texts for thematic links to humane virtues
- Evaluate age-appropriate literature to determine its value in humane education.
- Create curricular and instructional materials for use in classrooms

## REQUIRED READING:

Students will be expected to complete required readings on electronic reserve and access grade level appropriate literature.

Articles on Electronic Reserve:

Bruchac, J. (1998). Thanking the birds: Native American upbringing and the natural world. In B. Slapin and D. Seale . *Through Indian eyes: The native experience in books for children*. (pp. 58-63). (Berkley, CA: McNaughton & Gunn).

Bruchac, J. (1998). Storytelling and the sacred: On the uses of Native American stories. In B. Slapin and D. Seale . *Through Indian eyes: The native experience in books for children*. (pp. 64-72). (Berkley, CA: McNaughton & Gunn).

Bruchac, J. (1996). Combing the snakes from Atotarho's hair: Native stories of natural balance and reconciliation in J. Bruchac. *Roots of survival: Native American storytelling and the sacred*. (pp. 108-116). Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing

Bruner, J. (1991). Life as narrative. In A. H. Dyson & C. Genishi (eds). *The need for story: Cultural diversity in classroom and community*. (pp 28-37). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Copland, M (1998). National Association for Humane and Environmental Education (2001): "The Power of Narrative" Script: Reference for Copeland, M. (1998). Animal stories with humane themes in children's literature. NAHEE publication (To be obtained)

Kemple, K. M. & Johnson, C. A. (2002). From the inside out: Nurturing aesthetic response to nature in the primary grades. *Childhood education* Summer 210-218.

Linking literacy and moral education in the primary classroom. *The Reading Teacher* 55 (2). 125-129.

Schank, R. C. (1992). Story-based memory. In R. Morelli et.al. (Eds). *Minds, brains, and computers*. (pp. 134-151). Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Company.

Tappan, M. & Brown, L. M. (1989). Stories told and lessons learned: Towards a narrative approach to moral development and moral education. *Harvard Educational Review* 59 (2), 182-205.

Vitz, P. (1990). The use of stories in moral development: New psychological reasons for an old education method. *American Psychologist*. 45 (6). 709-720.

**PICTURE AND CHAPTER BOOKS** (should be purchased or checked out of a library by the individual student)

Aesop's Fables (Any collection will do)

Bruchac, J. and Canuto, M. (1997) Gluscabi and the game animals. In J. Bruchac and M. Canuto. *Keepers of the earth*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). (pp. 165-172). Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing

Carle, E. (1991) *A house for hermit crab*. New York: Aladdin

Creech, S. (2003) *Love that dog* New York: Harper Trophy

Dicamillo, K. (2001) *Because of Winn-Dixie* New York: Candlewick Press

Hamilton, V. (1997). *A ring of tricksters: Animal tales from America, the West Indies, and Africa*. New York: Blue Sky Press

Myers, L. (2002). *Lewis and Clark and me: A dog's tale* . New York: Henry Holt

Paulsen, G. (1999). *My life in dog years*. New York: Dell Yearling

Pratt-Serafini, K. (2002). *Saguaro moon: A desert journal*. CA: Dawn Publications

Rathmann, P. (1995) *Officer Buckle and Gloria* New York: Putnum

Tsuchiya, Y. (1988). *Faithful Elephants: A True Story of Animals, People, and War* Boston: Houghton Mifflin

Viorst, J. (1971). *The tenth good thing about Barney*. New York: Aladdin

Films:

View Bambi, Lassie, Dances with Wolves, Black Beauty, Homeward Bound: Any Movie that looks at the roles and relationships of animals and humans.

## WEBSITE

Animal idioms (4/27/2003) [www.xiangtan.co.uk/doctors7animalidioms.htm](http://www.xiangtan.co.uk/doctors7animalidioms.htm)

## GUIDE LINES FOR DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENTS/PROJECTS

Student assessment will be based on the following criteria:

1. Weekly participation in discussion groups targeting assigned reading.
2. Completion of eight annotated bibliography entries. Each annotated bibliography entry should focus on a picture book or chapter book and should include the following:
  - a. Full citation information: (Author, Title, Publication Date, Place of Publication, Publisher). Information should be presented using APA style.
  - b. An indication of target audience reading level. (i.e.: Appropriate for ages 4-8).
  - c. An identification of the text's literary genre (i.e. fantasy, realistic fiction, ABC book, etc..)
  - d. A brief summary of the plot.
  - e. A discussion of the text's themes and their links to humane virtues:
    - i. Fairness/Justice
    - ii. Trustworthiness/Honesty/Integrity
    - iii. Responsibility
    - iv. Caring
    - v. Friendship/Companionship
    - vi. Respect
    - vii. Citizenship
    - viii. Courage
    - ix. Stewardship
3. Creation of a virtual "storywalk" linked to a particular animal/nature story. Details explained Week Four
4. Creation of either:
  - ❖ an integrated curricular unit appropriate for the grade level/age level that you teach.

-or-

- ❖ a Packet of 8 separate lesson plans

The major difference between the two projects is that activities in the the unit will be linked by a common theme and the lesson plans in the packet can stand alone.

Regardless of which project you choose the following criteria apply:

Unit/Lesson activities should

- a) Be based on texts or a text set focusing on animal/human relationships.
- b) Target content and skills linked to multiple disciplines (i.e. language arts, social science, mathematics, science, visual and performing arts).

- c) Specify activities designed to engage students in an exploration of humane education virtues.
- d) Describe the Grade/Age Level to be served.
- e) Specify clear learning objectives and their links to national, state, or district standards.
- f) Provide a detailed description of teacher roles and student roles. (What will the teacher do? What will the students do?)
- g) Provide a detailed discussion of learning activities. (Could another teacher pick up the lesson packet or unit plan and understand how to implement the activities?)
- h) Provide an approximate timeline for the individual lessons or unit.
- i) Describe materials needed to complete learning activities, including bibliographic information if relevant.
- j) Describe adaptations designed to meet a variety of learning styles/preferences/needs.
- k) Describe formative and summative assessment activities that are clearly linked to learning objectives.

### **ONLINE PARTICIPATION EXPECTATION**

You are expected to participate in this course in a consistent and timely fashion. You will notice that each week you are expected to have participated in a discussion based on a week's assigned readings and learning activities.

This means that during each week you are expected to participate in each discussion **a minimum of four times**. These four postings should include at least one posting (which you yourself initiate) and at least three postings in which you respond to other students' questions or observations.

These postings should be spread out throughout the week. This means that the required four postings should be **at least 12 hours apart**. Of course, if you wish to respond immediately to a comment or question from another student, you are certainly encouraged to do so, but these postings would be in addition to the four required postings.

### **ASSIGNMENTS SUBMISSION**

You are required to submit all assignments in a timely manner via WebCT Assignments area. WebCT will stamp your submission date/time automatically. Please be aware that all assignments in this course use Eastern Time. If you are encountering technical problems in WebCT submission, please contact the Collegis Help Desk at (877) 725-4357 (toll-free to US residents only) or online at <http://eduprise.custhelp.com>. You are also recommended to contact the instructor right away and submit your assignments to the instructor's personal email account as suggested.

### **POLICIES ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Because this course spans only eight weeks, it is compact and intensive. It is imperative that you stay current on all readings, discussions, and assignments.

The penalty for late assignments including discussion deadlines, submission of bibliographic entries, the "virtual story walk", and the final project is as follows"

Late assignment turned in within 24 hours past the deadline: 20% off the earned grade.

Late assignment turned in 24-48 hours past the deadline: 50% off the earned grade

Late assignment turned in within 48-72 hours past the deadline: 75% off the earned grade.

Assignment turned in 72 hours past the deadline: NO CREDIT

## **FEEDBACK SCHEDULE**

You can expect feedback from the instructor within 48 hours of your inquiries. The instructor will log onto the course discussion forum at least once every week-day (Mondays-Fridays). She will also check postings for immediate questions and concerns on Sunday afternoons at some point between 2:00 and 6:00 PM (EST).

Graded work will be returned within 48 hours of posting.

Real time chat will be available if specifically requested by an individual student, but only on a limited basis.

## **COURSE GRADING**

Specific grading criteria will be detailed within the description of each individual assignment. Rubrics will be provided for each assignment.

### **Percentage of final grade linked to individual course requirements:**

Introduction Assignment: 5%  
Response to Introduction Assignment: 5%  
Participation in Discussion: 30%  
Virtual Story Walk: 20%  
Bibliographic Entries: 20%  
Lesson Packet or Unit Plan: 20%

### **Grading Scale:**

**Remember that late postings will also impact your final grade.**

A = 93-100%.  
A- =90-92%  
B = 830-89%  
B- = 80-82%  
C = 70-79%  
D = 60-69%  
F = 59% or below

---

This syllabus is subject to change.