

COURSE SYLLABUS

LIT 904 Children's Literature

Instructor: Luetta Reimer

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Number of Units: 3 Semester Units

Grade Level: K - 8

Course Description:

Learning how to bring children and texts together in productive and satisfying experiences is the ultimate goal in this course. Teachers will become more aware of the wealth of available children's literature and they will develop skills for selecting literature that is enriching and beneficial for children.

Few experiences are so universally enjoyed by children as reading. *Children's Books in Children's Hands*, the text for this course, is an inviting and practical new book full of exciting ideas. Specific suggestions for meeting the Common Core Standards are interspersed throughout. Teachers will read selected chapters in the text and engage in a variety of exercises to enhance their own understanding of the role of literature in the classroom.

Course activities include interviewing children, analyzing and critiquing children's books, evaluating classroom settings, and selecting texts around themes.

The Common Core State Standards for Language Arts as well as the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards have provided the guiding principles and philosophical basis for this course. Participants may be asked to make connections between course work and these standards or the standards of their own states.

Course Dates:

This course is self-paced; students may enroll at any time and take up to a year to complete assignments. No course should be completed in less than three weeks (one week per credit).

Course Materials:

Text (Included):

Children's Books in Children's Hands, by Charles Temple, Miriam Martinez, and Junko Yokota. Pearson, 2015. This is an eText with an access card, accompanied by a loose-leaf version.

Materials for this course also include a folder with information about Fresno Pacific University, the Center for Professional Development, and the instructor, plus information on course policies and procedures.

Course Requirements:

To successfully complete this course, participants must submit

1. a 200-300 word analysis of interviews with four children
2. a 200-300 word evaluation of a children's book
3. a three paragraph description of three books illustrating literary elements
4. a 200-300 word survey of multicultural books
5. a one-page reflection on a selected chapter from the text
6. a plan outline for a unit utilizing non-fiction

See the "Schedule of Topics and Assignments" for more details on these assignments.

All work should be typed and sent to the instructor at one time when the course is completed. Please make a copy; work will not be returned. Students have one full year to finish the course but should not send completed work in less than three weeks from registration.

Send completed work by email attachments to: Lmreimer@fresno.edu

OR

Mail all the above items to:

Luetta Reimer
1549 S. Lind Avenue
Fresno, California 93727

IN EITHER CASE, request online grading: <http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd>

National Standards:

This course is designed to reinforce and support the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSS). The Anchor Standards for Reading (Grades K-6) are listed here:

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards: Five Core Propositions

In addition to the content standards referenced above, this course supports the following core propositions that characterize National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs).

Proposition 1: Teachers are Committed to Students and Their Learning

- NBCTs are dedicated to making knowledge accessible to all students. They believe all students can learn.
- They treat students equitably. They recognize the individual differences that distinguish their students from one another and they take account for these differences in their practice.
- NBCTs understand how students develop and learn.
- They respect the cultural and family differences students bring to their classroom.
- They are concerned with their students' self-concept, their motivation and the effects of learning on peer relationships.

Proposition 2: Teachers Know the Subjects They Teach and How to Teach Those Subjects to Students.

- NBCTs have mastery over the subject(s) they teach. They have a deep understanding of the history structure and real-world applications of the subject.
- They have skill and experience in teaching it, and they are very familiar with the skills gaps and preconceptions students may bring to the subject.
- They are able to use diverse instructional strategies to teach for understanding.

Proposition 3: Teachers are Responsible for Managing and Monitoring Student Learning.

- NBCTs deliver effective instruction. They move fluently through a range of instructional techniques, keeping students motivated, engaged and focused.
- They know how to engage students to ensure a disciplined learning environment, and how to organize instruction to meet instructional goals.
- NBCTs know how to assess the progress of individual students as well as the class as a whole.
- They use multiple methods for measuring student growth and understanding, and they can clearly explain student performance to parents.

Proposition 4: Teachers Think Systematically about Their Practice and Learn from Experience.

- NBCTs model what it means to be an educated person—they read, they question, they create and they are willing to try new things.
- They are familiar with learning theories and instructional strategies and stay abreast of current issues in American education.
- They critically examine their practice on a regular basis to deepen knowledge, expand their repertoire of skills, and incorporate new findings into their practice.

Proposition 5: Teachers are Members of Learning Communities.

- NBCTs collaborate with others to improve student learning.
- They are leaders and actively know how to seek and build partnerships with community groups and businesses.
- They work with other professionals on instructional policy, curriculum development and staff development.
- They can evaluate school progress and the allocation of resources in order to meet state and local education objectives.

Learning Outcomes:

Participants will be able to

- 1) define and identify the characteristics of good books for children. (CCSS 1-9; NBPTS Props. 1-5)
- 2) analyze how children's development shapes their responses to literature. (NBPTS Props. 1-5)
- 3) acquire skills to help children learn about literary elements, such as characterization, plot, and theme. (CCSS 1-7, 9; NBPTS Prop. 2)
- 4) understand and appreciate the role of multicultural literature. (CCSS 3, 6, 9; NBPTS Prop. 1-4)
- 5) develop a lesson plan to effectively teach non-fiction texts. (CCSS 1-10; NBPTS Props. 1-5)
- 6) connect lessons to state or national standards. (NBPTS Prop. 5)

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Children's Literature

A. Assignment Preview:

1. Browse the text, *Children's Books in Children's Hands*, to discover the wealth of information and resources it contains. Note especially the many practical teaching suggestions and the comprehensive annotated lists of children's books included. This text may become a favorite resource; there is far more in it than can be utilized in one course.
2. Read the preface to understand the goals of the text and to clarify the purposes of this course.
3. Complete the readings and corresponding activities identified in the numbered assignments below. All students are asked to thoughtfully read chapters 1, 2, 4, 6, and 11, plus the student's choice of chapter 3, 7, or 8.

B. Readings and Activities:

Read the designated section of the text and reflect on the activity with a typed response. Identify each activity response with the appropriate assignment number.

1. Reading: Chapter One: "Children's Books in Children's Hands."
Activity: Follow the instructions in Teaching Idea 1.1 (p 5).
Use either a small group of children or interviews with four or five individuals. Record your discoveries in several short paragraphs. Total response should be about 200-300 words.
2. Activity: Pick any children's book. Identify the name and author of the book. Evaluate it according to the qualities of "outstanding" children's literature identified with bullet points on pages 9-10 of the text. How does it fare? Are there other criteria of excellence that you would propose? Record your reflections in several short paragraphs.
3. Reading: Chapter Two: "Literary Elements in Works for Children"
Activity: Select three children's books, each of which is an especially effective illustration of one of the literary elements discussed in this chapter (setting, characterization, plot, theme, point of view, style). Write a brief paragraph about each book, explaining your choice.
4. Reading: Chapter Four: "Literature Representing Diverse Perspectives"
Activity: Survey the multicultural books that are available in your public or school library and collect a representative sample. Evaluate four or five of the books in light of the issues discussed in this chapter (pp 94-96). Be sure to read, "Ask the Author" (p 87), before preparing your evaluations. Total response: 200-300 words.

5. Reading: Based on your teaching level and personal interest, select and read one of the following: Chapter Three: Picture Books, Chapter Seven: Traditional Literature, or Chapter Eight: Modern Fantasy and Science Fiction.

Activity: Identify the chapter read and briefly record three insights from this chapter. How might you apply this knowledge in your teaching?

6. Reading: Chapter Eleven: “Nonfiction”

Activity: Select a topic identified in Table 11.1 (p 274) in the course text. Prepare a short unit (2-3 lessons) using at least two nonfiction texts. Include information on “Organizational and Support Tools” as identified in Table 11.3 (p 282). The Recommended Books section at the end of the chapter may be useful in finding appropriate texts. Submit a brief outline of the unit, identifying goals or objectives, texts used, classroom activities, and an analysis of the unit’s effectiveness.

*NOTE: If you are completing this course during summer break or when you are not teaching, you may omit the actual teaching of the nonfiction unit without penalty.

Evidence of Learning:

- Instructor observed evidence of understanding of course objectives as demonstrated through student’s reflective writing assignments. (Assignments B1-B6)
- Instructor observed evidence of understanding literary concepts and terminology as demonstrated through student’s reflective writing assignments. (Assignments B1-B6)
- Student included the use of critical thinking skills. (Assignments B1-B6)
- Student demonstrated an understanding of course objectives by identifying how course content and terminology may be used in his/her teaching. (Assignments B1-B6)
- Student demonstrated his/her understanding of effective design of lesson plans and made connections to state content and/or professional teaching standards. (Assignment B6)

Grading Policies and Rubric:

Grades will be determined using the following percentages:

Responses to items #1, #2, #3, & #5: 15% each

Multicultural review (#4): 20%

Unit plan outline (#6): 20%

Total scores determine the final grade:

90 - 100% = A

80 - 89% = B

79% or below = no credit

All coursework must reflect a minimum "B" quality to receive credit. The discernment between an A and a B is at the discretion of the instructor, based on the quality of work submitted (see assignment rubric). Participants may request either a letter grade (A or B) or credit (CR). Coursework falling short of a "B" or CR grade will be returned with further instructions. Every person with a score of 80% or above will receive three semester units of credit.

Scoring Rubric

Type of Assignment	90 – 100 points Exceptional	80 – 89 points Adequate	70 – 79 points Not Acceptable
Written responses	Student's written responses show an exceptional investment of time, energy and thoughtful reflection. The work submitted by the student is original and thorough. The student effectively organizes key insights and demonstrates evidence of interaction with the texts.	Student's written responses show an adequate investment of time, energy and thoughtful reflection. The work submitted by the student is complete, but lacks thoroughness and originality. The student sufficiently organizes insights and demonstrates evidence of interaction with the readings.	Student's written responses show little investment of time, energy and thoughtful reflection. The work submitted by the student does not show adequate thought or effort.
Lesson design	Lesson plans show an exceptional investment of time, energy and thoughtful reflection. Student consistently makes connections to local instructional goals/standards and implements research-based strategies and approaches.	Lesson plans show an adequate investment of time, energy and thoughtful reflection. Student makes some connections to local instructional goals/standards and research-based strategies and approaches.	Lesson plans submitted by the student do not show adequate thought or effort, and may not address specific goals.
Lesson evaluations	Student includes the use of critical thinking and reflection in the evaluation of lessons implemented.	Student includes the use of reflection in the evaluation of lessons implemented, but may lack sufficient detailed analysis.	Student does not demonstrate critical thinking or reflection in the evaluation of lessons implemented.
Presentation	Student effectively organizes key insights into a thoughtful and well-written presentation.	Student includes several key insights in an adequately written response.	Student response lacks key insights and is carelessly written.

Instructor/Student Contact

Students are warmly invited to contact the instructor at any time with concerns, questions, or comments related to course work. They are specifically asked to do so after finishing Assignment B.1. At the completion of the course, the instructor will comment on the student's work and make suggestions, if needed.

Policy on Plagiarism

All people participating in the educational process at Fresno Pacific University are expected to pursue honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic work. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will be handled according to the procedures set forth in the Fresno Pacific University Catalog.

University Information

Graduate level course work reflects Fresno Pacific University's Desired Student Learning Outcomes as it applies to professional development to demonstrate the following:

- Oral and written communication in individual and group settings
- Content knowledge, and application of such knowledge in the student's area of interest to affect change
- Reflection for personal and professional growth
- Critical thinking
- Computational/methodological skills to understand and expand disciplines, including an understanding of technological systems