

Survey of American Literature ("Children's Fantasy")

AML 2070, Section 03A5
MWF Period 7 (1:55-2:45 PM),
Rinker Hall 230

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Introduction

The American tradition of fantasy journey seems to be—at least to an Englishman like myself—one reaching outwards and westwards; it is a linear matter. Because there is little to dig down into, American fantasy tends to be set in secondary worlds.... The English, in contrast, are re-treading ancestral ground. (Peter Hunt 1987:11)

It is a common misconception that American children's literature before Oz is devoid of fantasy. This course presents a survey of American children's fantasy literature from The Legend of Sleepy Hollow to The Wonderful Wizard of Oz to The Lightning Thief and many in between. This course aims to introduce students to the rich history of fantasy in American children's literature. Students will write blog responses to the readings on Canvas, compose three essays throughout the semester, and prepare final in-class presentations. During the course of the semester, students will visit and utilize the resources available at the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature.

This is a General Education course providing student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx> (Links to an external site.)

List of Books

Most all of the readings are available on course reserves. Some are ebooks that you can link from anywhere, others are available on 2-hr loan from the library, and all are available at one of the libraries on campus. If you prefer a physical copy, you may purchase at a bookstore or online retailer. The readings in bold will likely take longer than 2 hours to read so consider purchasing. **NOTE: Tarzan Twins is only available at the Baldwin, so be sure to make an appointment in advance.**

Alexander, Lloyd	THE BLACK CAULDRON
Baum, Lyman Frank	THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ
Juster, Norton	THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH

LeGuin, Ursula K	WIZARD OF EARTHSEA
Levine, Gail Carson	ELLA ENCHANTED
Riggs, Ransom	MISS PEREGRINE'S HOME FOR PECULIAR CHILDREN
Riordan, Rick	LIGHTNING THIEF
Scieszka, Jon	THE STINKY CHEESE MAN AND OTHER FAIRLY STUPID TALES
Sendak, Maurice	WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE
Seuss, Dr.	THE LORAX
Silverstein, Shel	DON'T BUMP THE GLUMP!: AND OTHER FANTASIES
Van Allsburg, Chris	JUMANJI

Assignments

Discussion Posts (100+ words every class) For short stories and novels, write a response to what you found interesting and how you think the work fits in to the American tradition of children's fantasy literature. Write one discussion question for each reading and make it **bold** on Canvas.

Discussion Posts + Participation/Attendance = 25% of course grade

Comparison Essay (1500+ words): Write an essay in which you 1) compare two forms of the same story, i.e. an adaptation (Spike Jonze's live action *Where the Wild Things Are*), 2) compare an American story to a similar non-American story (*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* vs. *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*), or 3) compare American children's fantasy to adult fantasy literature (e.g., *The Woman Who Rides Like a Man* vs. *Game of Thrones*).

Comparison Essay = 20% of course grade

Material/Visual Rhetorical Analysis (1500+ words): The most prestigious American children's book award is the Randolph Caldecott medal, which recognizes excellence in book illustration. American children's literature has often been recognized for its image-text properties and the Baldwin library happens to have a large collection of Caldecott winners. Pick a Caldecott winner or nominee from the Baldwin Collection that exhibits some image/textual properties and analyze the material aspects as well as the visual rhetoric.

Rhetorical Analysis = 25% of course grade

Final Paper (1500+ words) Option 1: Write an original argument about the American children's fantasy genre. You may include texts we've read in class or bring in outside material. Consider historical context; themes of race, class, or gender; image/text interplay; ecological framework; and/or intended audience as jumping-off points for your essay.

Option 2: Design a children's picture book/write a short story that deals in some way with American fantasy. Write a short accompaniment of your rhetorical decisions (e.g., the intended audience, the color scheme, any didacticism, world building, etc.).

Final Paper + Presentation = 30% of course grade

*****You may choose to rewrite one of the first two assignments, and your grade will be completely replaced. If you do, it is due two weeks from getting your essay back. You will also need to submit one paragraph on what changes you made and why.*****

Students are responsible for submitting assignments by their due dates. **Papers are due at the beginning of class on the assigned date.** Late papers will NOT be accepted. Failure of technology is not an excuse. If illness or injury prevents a student from turning in a paper on time, the student should consult with the instructor to turn in the work as soon as is feasible given the situation. If you are handing in a physical copy, it must be properly stapled.

During the course of the semester, you may rewrite any one individual assignment of your choosing (your new grade will replace the previous one). In addition to the revised project, you must also write a one-page memo addressed to the instructor in which you detail what, how, and why you've revised. Revised work is due two weeks from the day the assignment is first returned to the class. **You are responsible for knowing the deadlines for all assignments.**

Students are encouraged to use the instructor's office hours when there are questions about progress in the course, work underway, or any other course-related concerns. If there is a conflict with the posted office hours, please contact the instructor to schedule a better time. Having conferences on assignments is frequently the best way to improve the quality of final drafts. There is a direct correlation between your effort and your grade, so you will get out what you put in. The UF [Writing Studio](#) also offers one-on-one assistance on writing projects and is available to students of all levels.

Grading scale, rubric, and policy

A 4.0	93-100	930-1000	C 2.0	73-76	730-769
A- 3.67	90-92	900-929	C- 1.67	70-72	700-729
B+ 3.33	87-89	870-899	D+ 1.33	67-69	670-699
B 3.0	83-86	830-869	D 1.0	63-66	630-669
B- 2.67	80-82	800-829	D- 0.67	60-62	600-629
C+ 2.33	77-79	770-799	E 0.00	0-59	0-599

You must pass this course with a "C" or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C) and to receive the 6,000-word University Writing Requirement credit (E6). You must turn in all papers totaling a minimum of 6,000 words to receive credit for writing 6,000 words.

NOTE: a grade of "C-" will not confer credit for the University Writing Requirement or the CLAS Composition (C) requirement.

A 93-100 This paper goes above and beyond. The thesis is strong, significant, and original. There is ample, detailed support for the claim. The organization is superior. The prose is elegant. It is free of grammar, style, or mechanics errors.

A- 90-92 This paper is strong. The thesis is strong, significant, and original. There is ample, detailed support for the claim. Organization is superior. Prose is elegant. Nearly free of grammar, style, or mechanics errors.

B+ 87-89 Meets all of the requirements of an A paper, but some noticeable mechanical errors

B 83-86 This paper is noticeably lacking strength in one criterion of an A paper, yet still shows an understanding of the assignment and is generally error free.

B- 80-82 This paper is noticeably lacking strength in one criterion of an A paper and has some noticeable errors, yet still shows an understanding of the assignment.

C+ 77-79 This paper is noticeably lacking strength in two criteria of an A paper, yet still shows an understanding of the assignment and is generally error free.

C 73-76 This paper is noticeably lacking strength in two criteria of an A paper, and seems to lack a full grasp of the assignment. It is generally error free.

C- 70-72 This paper is noticeably lacking strength in two criteria of an A paper, and seems to not quite respond to the assignment. There are some noticeable errors.

D+ 67-69 This paper is noticeably lacking strength in two or more criteria of an A paper, and seems to not quite respond to the assignment. There are many noticeable errors.

D 63-66 Does not demonstrate understanding of most of the requirements but is error free.

D- 60-62 Does not demonstrate understanding of most of the requirements and has some noticeable errors.

E- 0-59 Does not demonstrate understanding of the requirements and has many errors

For UF's grading policies and grade points information, see

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Absence and tardiness policies

The official UF Attendance Policy can be located at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

The university recognizes the right of the individual professor to make attendance mandatory. After due warning, professors can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences.

Please carefully read and take note of the specifics of this policy.

Unlike some of your classes, this course is skills-based. In other words, practice makes all the difference to writing; the more you write, the better you become. Consequently, the effects of this course are cumulative, and frequent absences will affect your progress and success dramatically. Instruction during class is often spontaneous, so it is impossible to offer a recap of what transpired. Writing is

process and experience based. This is not a course where you can “catch up” on what happens during class. If you fall behind, you will stay behind.

Attendance is required. The only exemptions to this policy are those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, military duty, court-mandated responsibilities, and religious holidays. It is required and the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor of excused absences a reasonable time in advance of the expected absence. Make-up work will only be accepted due to university-approved excused absences. A valid, signed doctor’s note, with the reason illness or injury prevented you from attending class, may also be submitted, and will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor.

Students are permitted to miss six 50-minute blocks. Students will be credited an "E" for the course at the seventh absence. If you have a medical reason for missing multiple classes, please review this web page on the medical withdrawal process: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/care/medical-withdrawal-process/>. Portfolios will not be accepted for any student who has 6 or more absences. Since this is a participatory workshop class centered on active learning, any lesser number of absences, excused or unexcused will affect your grade. Repeated tardiness will also hurt your participation grade. Attendance is taken at the beginning of class. **If you arrive more than 5 minutes after class starts, you will be counted as absent.** Being present is not just a physical state, but a mental one as well. If you are unprepared for the day’s activities or are using technologies not for class purposes (e.g., texting, on Facebook, checking emails), you will be marked absent and may be asked to leave the classroom.

Participation is a crucial part of the class and your grade.

Much of this class is discussion-based, so it is vital that we always respect each other's views. Students are required to silence ALL electronic devices before the beginning of each class period. Ringing phones, social media notifications and text messaging is a disruption of the class, which may result in your being asked to leave the classroom and being counted absent. If you have a personal emergency and must keep your phone on one day, please discuss it with the instructor before class. A zero will automatically be given for participation for having your phone out during discussion.

Additional policies

Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

This course can satisfy the General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/writing-and-math-requirement.aspx> Note: Only certain kinds of writing can count towards the 6000. For more information, please consult the writing requirement guidelines.

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.hr.ufl.edu/eo/sexharassment.htm>

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Schedule

August 24- Syllabus and icebreakers
August 26- Fantasy and Childhood Studies
August 28- Introduction to first unit

Unit 1 American Fairy Tales/Re-telling of old tales

August 31- Neil Philip American Fairy Tales Carl Sandburg "How They Broke Away to Go to the Rootabaga Country"
September 2- Mark West Before Oz "Introduction" 1-6, "Ting-a-ling's Visit to Turilia" 47-58 "The Bee-Man of Orn" and "The Griffin and the Minor Canon" 391-400 (The American Fantasy Tradition)
September 4- Samuel Goodrich Peter Parley's Book of Fables "The Carrier Pigeon" "The Frog and His Neighbors" "The Vessel Without a Pilot" "The Flies and the Spider" "The Raven and the Cock"

September 7- Holiday

September 9- Daniel Shealy *Louisa May Alcott's Fairy Tales and Fantasy Stories* "The Candy Country" 268-280 and Ruth Plumly Thompson "The Princess Who Could Not Dance"

September 11- **(Comparison Essay Topic Proposals Due)** Nathaniel Hawthorne *A Wonder Book for Girls and Boys* "The Gorgon's Head" "The Golden Touch" "The Three Golden Apples" "The Chimera"

September 14- Christopher Pearse Cranch "The Last of the Huggermuggers"

September 16- Virginia Hamilton "Mary Belle and the Mermaid"

September 18- Joseph Bruchac "The Hero Twins and the Swallower of Clouds"

September 21- Howard Pyle "The Story of Merlin"

September 23- Howard Pyle "Robin Hood and Guy of Gisbourne"

September 25- Howard Pyle "The Garden Behind the Moon"

September 28- Jon Scieszka *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*

September 30- Gail Carson Levine *Ella Enchanted*

October 2- **Assignment 1 Due: Comparison Essay** *Ella Enchanted* (continued)

Disney and Fantasy Discussion Part 1

Unit 2 American Regional Fantasy

October 5- Washington Irving "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"

October 7- Special Collections Day 1- *Little Nemo in Slumberland* (Meet at 2nd Floor of Baldwin)

October 9- Lyman Frank Baum *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

October 12- Lyman Frank Baum *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (continued)

October 14- Edgar Rice Burroughs *The Tarzan Twins* (BALDWIN)

October 16- Maurice Sendak *Where the Wild Things Are*

October 19- Chris Van Allsburg *Jumanji*

October 21- Norton Juster *The Phantom Tollbooth*

October 23- Norton Juster *The Phantom Tollbooth* (continued)

October 26- Rick Riordan *Lightning Thief*

October 28- Rick Riordan *Lightning Thief* (continued)

Unit 3 Fantastical Places/ World Building

October 30- **Assignment 2 Due: Rhetorical Analysis** Moonbot Studios eBook *The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore* Marston Science Library L136

November 2- Dr. Seuss *The Lorax*
November 4- Shel Silverstein *Don't Bump the Glump!: And Other Fantasies*
November 6- Homecoming

November 9- Special Collections Day 2: Interactive Books
November 11- Holiday Veteran's Day
November 13- SAML A Conference

November 16- Ursula K. LeGuin *A Wizard of Earthsea*
November 18- Ursula K. LeGuin *A Wizard of Earthsea* (continued)
November 20- Lloyd Alexander *The Black Cauldron*

November 23- Lloyd Alexander *The Black Cauldron* (continued)
November 25- Holiday
November 27- Holiday

November 30- Ransom Riggs *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*
December 2- Disney and Fantasy Part 2
December 4- Children's Fantasy Across the Pond: Chronicles of Narnia, Harry Potter, etc.

December 7- **Final Assignment Due** Final Presentations
December 9- Final Presentations