ENGLISH 208C: CHILDREN'S LITERATURE  
Fall 2007, Tues/Thurs 10:00-11:20, CPH 3388

Professor Kate Lawson  klawson@uwaterloo.ca  HH 267  519-888-4567 ext 33965
Office Hours: Tues 11:30-12:20, Thurs 9:30-10:20, or by appointment

TEXTS:  
Mark Twain, *Tom Sawyer* (Broadview)  
L. M. Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon* (McClelland-Bantam)  
Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Warner)  
J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (Raincoast)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:  
This course examines two competing and intertwined topics of literature written for children: the  
fabulous, grotesque, extraordinary realm of the imagination, fantasy and magic, and the hard,  
unyielding, traumatic (though often sentimentalized) world of reality. We will come to see that  
children’s literature is not an escape from the “real” world but a response to it. We will begin by  
considering the history of genre and the role of fairy tales, and then move on to consider the  
novels listed.

Please note that this is a course in English literature that will examine texts written for children  
as literature. It has the same expectations as other English courses in terms of the quality of  
written work. This is not a course in how to teach novels to younger children.

METHOD OF EVALUATION:  

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<tr>
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<th>Value</th>
<th>Date/ Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-class test</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>October 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>November 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Exam period: December 6-20</td>
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LATE POLICY, etc.:  
Work handed in late will have one mark deducted per day (e.g. a 73% paper handed in two days  
late would receive a 71%) to a maximum of 20 marks. Extensions may be granted for personal  
or medical reasons but you must speak to me, preferably in advance.

The Mid-Term Test is scheduled for October 16. If you are ill and unable to write the test  
that day, you must provide a doctor’s note stating you were ill on that date. If you have a family  
emergency or other situation on that date, please speak to me before the test if at all possible.  
Otherwise you will receive a grade of zero.

ON-LINE RESOURCES:  
You may find the following links to be useful:  
Literary Terms and Definitions: [http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/lit_terms_A.html](http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/lit_terms_A.html)  
NOTE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

PLAGIARISM and ACADEMIC OFFENCES:
I view all violations of academic integrity as serious and reportable. The Associate Dean of Arts requests that I make you aware of the following information:

"Note on avoidance of academic offences:
All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their actions. When the commission of an offence is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (section 1; on the Web at wwwadm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). If you need help in learning what constitutes an academic offence; how to avoid offences such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission; how to follow appropriate rules with respect to 'group work' and collaboration; or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your TA and/or your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean. See also: ‘Avoiding Academic Offences’: http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

"Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70, Student Grievance, http://wwwadm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm."

ENGL 208C - Children's Literature  
SCHEDULE: FALL 2007

September 11: Introduction to the course

September 13: Introduction to the idea of children’s literature
Overheard: *Puppy*; A.A. Milne, “Piglet meets a Heffalump”; Russell Hoban, *The Stone Doll of Sister Brute*

September 18: History of the genre; fairy tales; moral tales

September 20: Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women* (Part 1 only)

September 25, 27: *Little Women*

October 2, 4: Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

October 9: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

October 11: Essay writing exercise

**October 16: Mid-Term Test**

October 18: L. M. Montgomery, *Emily of New Moon*

October 23, 25: *Emily of New Moon*

October 30, November 1: Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

November 6: *To Kill a Mockingbird*

November 8: Salman Rushdie, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*

November 13-15: *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*

November 20-22: J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*

November 27: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*

November 29: exam information

**FINAL EXAM** period, December 6-20:

NB: The final examination for this course will be during the university-wide exam period. It will not be rescheduled for students who make early travel plans prior to the exam schedule being posted.
ENGL 260 - CHILDREN’S LITERATURE - ESSAY TOPICS

N.B. all topics require you to write on two novels from the course.

LENGTH: 6-7 double-spaced, typed pages in 12 point font

DUE: November 15

EVALUATION CRITERIA: see the Grading Rubric under the “Lessons” tab on UW-ACE

1. Absent and/or dead parents (or a parent) are a common feature of many fairy tales as well as of every novel in the course. Analyse the function and effect of this common feature of children’s literature through a close examination of any two novels.

2. Examine closure in any two novels studied in this course. Fairy tales frequently end “... and they lived happily ever after.” Do children’s novels also have unambiguous happy endings? How is “happiness” achieved? Are we uneasy with any of the elements of the “happy ending”?

3. Compare and contrast the moral attitude of and the challenges faced by a female heroine (Emily in Emily of New Moon or Scout in To Kill a Mockingbird) with those of a male hero (Tom in Tom Sawyer or Haroun in Haroun and the Sea of Stories or Harry in Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone).

4. Analyse the presentation and function of religion in two of the following: Emily of New Moon, Little Women, Tom Sawyer. Or, compare and contrast the function of religion in one of the novels above with the function of magic in Haroun and the Sea of Stories or Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone. Does magic displace religion or work in a similar way to a religion?

5. Analyse satire and/or irony in Tom Sawyer and Haroun and the Sea of Stories. What is being satirised? How? Are the novels didactic? Make sure you begin with and employ definitions of satire and/or irony from a dictionary of literary terms.

6. Analyse the presentation of race and/or class in To Kill a Mockingbird and Tom Sawyer.

7. Evaluate the role, significance, and function of violence in children’s literature through an analysis of any two appropriate novels on the course.

8. Analyse how the hero/heroines of two novels we have studied use imagination, fantasy, and/or magic to cope with or defeat danger, threat or loss.

9. Analyse the function of reading in any two novels studied in the course. Two suggested novels are Little Women and Haroun and the Sea of Stories.