ENGLISH 208C: CHILDREN’S LITERATURE
Fall 2008, Tues and Thurs 10:00-11:20, AL 124

Professor Kate Lawson  klawson@uwaterloo.ca  HH 267  519-888-4567 ext 33965
Office Hours: Tues 11:40-12:40, Wed and Thurs 8:30-9:30, or by appointment
Course Website accessible on UW-ACE: uwace.uwaterloo.ca

TEXTS:
L. M. Alcott, Little Women*
Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer
L. M. Montgomery, Emily of New Moon
Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird
Salman Rushdie, Haroun and the Sea of Stories
J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone
*please note: some editions print a “Part 2” of the novel. You are only required to read Part 1, which ends with the chapter “Aunt March Settles The Question.”

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 aims of children’s literature, the history of genre, and the role of fairy tales, and then move on to consider the novels listed above.

Please note that this is a course in English literature that will examine texts written for children as literature. You are expected to read all of the novels listed above, to come to class prepared, and to produce written work that will be evaluated for the correctness and effectiveness of your writing and the sophistication and persuasiveness of your argument. This is not a course in how to teach novels to younger children.

METHOD OF EVALUATION:  VALUE  DATE/DUE
Mid-term test 25%  October 16
Office visit 5%  week of Oct 28-30
Essay first paragraph-draft 5%  October 28-30
Major Essay 35%  November 13
Final Exam 30%  Exam period: December 5-19

OFFICE VISIT, FIRST PARAGRAPH DRAFT:
In order to assist you with the preparation of your major essay, I will schedule meetings with every class member in the week of October 28-30. Together, we will go over your Mid-term test and a draft of the first paragraph of your major essay that you will bring with you. There are no classes scheduled that week.

You will receive 5 marks for coming to the appointment with the draft of the first paragraph. The paragraph must be well developed and contain a working thesis for the essay; it will be given a mark out of 5.
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

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, DISCIPLINE AND APPEALS:
I view all violations of academic integrity as serious and reportable. The Associate Dean of Arts requires that I make you aware of the following information:

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm

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.
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<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Event/Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>September 9</td>
<td>Introduction to the course</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 11</td>
<td>What is children’s literature? To delight and to instruct. History of the genre; fairy tales; moral tales</td>
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<td>September 16, 18</td>
<td>Louisa May Alcott, <em>Little Women</em> (Part 1 only)</td>
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<td>September 23, 25</td>
<td><em>Little Women</em>; Mark Twain, <em>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</em></td>
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<td>Sept 30, Oct 2</td>
<td><em>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</em></td>
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<td>October 7, 9</td>
<td>L. M. Montgomery, <em>Emily of New Moon</em></td>
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<td>October 14</td>
<td>Essay writing exercise</td>
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<td>October 16*</td>
<td>Mid-Term Test</td>
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<td>October 21, 23</td>
<td>Harper Lee, <em>To Kill a Mockingbird</em></td>
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<td>October 28, 30*</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASSES:</strong> You will schedule an office visit with Professor Lawson during this week. Bring with you to the meeting your draft of the first paragraph for the major essay</td>
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<td>November 4, 6</td>
<td><em>To Kill a Mockingbird</em>; Salman Rushdie, <em>Haroun and the Sea of Stories</em></td>
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<td>November 11, 13</td>
<td><em>Haroun and the Sea of Stories</em></td>
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<td>November 13*</td>
<td>Major Essay Due</td>
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<td>November 18, 20</td>
<td>J.K. Rowling, <em>Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone</em></td>
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<td>November 25</td>
<td><em>Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone</em></td>
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<td>November 27</td>
<td>exam information</td>
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<td>December 5-19*</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam:</strong> 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.</td>
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ENGL 208C - CHILDREN’S LITERATURE - MAJOR 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 13

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

1. In the novels on the course by Alcott, Lee, Montgomery, and Rushdie, fathers seem to play an especially crucial and perhaps idealised role for the growing child. Analyse the function and effect of this common feature 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? What is not included in the “happy ending” and with what effect?

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. Compare and contrast Injun Jo from Tom Sawyer with Tom Robinson from To Kill a Mockingbird as types of outsiders. What is the role or function of the outsider in children’s literature as evidenced by these two novels?

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. Arguably, in every novel on the course heroes or heroines use imagination, fantasy, or outright magic to cope with or defeat danger, threat or loss. Through the analysis of two novels, explore the limits of these coping strategies.

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.