Eastern Illinois University
New Course Proposal
ENG 3406, Literature for Pre-Adolescents

Please check one:  ☑ New course  □ Revised course

PART I: CATALOG DESCRIPTION

1. Course prefix and number, such as ART 1000:  ENG 3406
2. Title (may not exceed 30 characters, including spaces):  Lit for PreAdolescents
3. Long title, if any (may not exceed 100 characters, including spaces):  Literature for Pre-Adolescents
4. Class hours per week, lab hours per week, and credit:  (3-0-3)
5. Term(s) to be offered:  ☑ Fall  □ Spring  □ Summer  ☑ On demand
6. Initial term of offering:  ☑ Fall  ☑ Spring  □ Summer  Year:  2008
7. Course description (not to exceed four lines):
   Study of literary works written for pre-adolescent readers (approximately ages 8-12, grades 4-8), including novels in a variety of genres, poetry, and picture books for older readers. Emphasis on critical evaluation encompasses literary, historical, cultural, and theoretical perspectives.
8. Registration restrictions:
   a. Identify any equivalent courses:  N/A
   b. Prerequisite(s):  . English 1001G & 1002G
   c. Who can waive the prerequisite(s)?
      ☐ No one  ☑ Chair  ☐ Instructor  ☐ Advisor  ☐ Other (Please specify)
   d. Co-requisites (course(s) which MUST be taken concurrently with this one):  N/A
   e. Repeat status:  ☑ Course may not be repeated.
   f. Degree, college, major(s), level, or class to which registration in the course is restricted, if any:  N/A
   g. Degree, college, major(s), level, or class to be excluded from the course, if any:  N/A

9. Special course attributes:  Writing Intensive

10. Grading methods (check all that apply):  ☑ Standard letter  □ C/NC  □ Audit  □ ABC/NC
11. Instructional delivery method:  ☑ lecture  □ lab  □ lecture/lab combined  □ independent study/research
    □ internship  □ performance  □ practicum or clinical  □ study abroad  □ other

PART TWO: ASSURANCE OF STUDENT LEARNING

Agenda Item #07-29
Effective Spring 2008
1. List the student learning objectives of this course:
   • Recognize the broad range of classic and contemporary literary works for pre-adolescent readers
   • Develop awareness of historical developments related to this literature
   • Demonstrate understanding of terminology used to describe and evaluate youth literature
   • Develop and apply criteria for evaluation of this literature that takes into account its literary qualities, ideology, cultural authority, rhetorical purposes, and potential uses, with attention to the strategies by which authors of youth literature accommodate their intended audiences
   • Critique print and electronic resources available to scholars and professionals in the various fields that work with youth literature. These resources include review journals, reference books, websites, discussion lists, and scholarly journals in disciplines such as English Studies, Education, and Library & Information Science.
   • Develop awareness of issues and controversies in youth literature and explore these issues from a variety of perspectives (professional, personal, political, practical).

2. Identify the assignments/activities the instructor will use to determine how well students attained the learning objectives:

   Reading Log ~ The score for this assignment will reflect the quality and completeness of homework and in-class writings related to class readings. These informal assignments will be incorporated throughout the semester and will include such things as individual responses to assigned reading in textbooks or trade books; close readings of selected passages, poems, or illustrations; annotation and analysis of professional book reviews; and collaborative work creating or responding to in-class discussion prompts.

   Classic Novel Responses + Review Essay ~ Students will read and write a series of informal analytic responses to a “classic” novel from the anthology, and then write a formal review essay describing, analyzing, and evaluating its literary qualities, including theme & ideology, for a specified audience.

   “New Arrival” Responses + “Booktalk” ~ Students will read and respond to a recently published novel, book of poetry, or picture book for pre-adolescent readers and research the critical reception of this work plus its author and illustrator. Then, students will “booktalk” their selection to the class, helping us to see what is useful, beautiful, entertaining, important, effective, appropriate, or exciting about it.

   Final Exam Essay ~ This will consist of a single essay written in class during the final exam period. In this essay, students will explore three works read during the semester in light of some overarching theme, issue, or literary strategy.

   Explain how the instructor will determine students’ grades for the course:

   Reading Log (includes all informal writing) = 20%
   Classic Novel Responses (15%) + Review Essay (20%) = 35%
   New Arrival Responses (10%) + “Book Talk” (5%) = 15%
   Final Exam = 20%
   Participation (includes attendance) = 10%

3. For technology-delivered and other nontraditional-delivered courses/sections, address the following:

   N/A
4. For courses numbered 4750-4999, specify additional or more stringent requirements for students enrolling for graduate credit.

N/A

5. If applicable, indicate whether this course is writing-active, writing-intensive, or writing-centered, and describe how the course satisfies the criteria for the type of writing course identified.

Writing Intensive. Over 35% of the course grade is determined by performance on formal & informal writing assignments; the review essay can be revised after the student receives oral or written feedback.

PART III: OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

Provide a week-by-week outline of the course’s content. Specify units of time (e.g., for a 3-0-3 course, 45 fifty-minute class periods over 15 weeks) for each major topic in the outline. Provide clear and sufficient details about content and procedures so that possible questions of overlap with other courses can be addressed.

**Tentative List of Reading and Writing Assignments**

MWF class (3 50-minute class periods per week; 45 total over 15 weeks)

Week 1

M  Introductions: Book-Tasting
W  *The Pleasures of Children’s Literature* (hereafter PCL) chapter 1 “How to Read this Textbook” + half of chapter 2 “How to Read Children’s Literature” (through page 22)
F  Finish PCL ch. 2 (22-end); Begin *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*

Week 2

*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*

PCL 6: “Children’s Literature in the Marketplace”
Introduction to Review Journals + Contemporary Reviews of *Harry Potter*
PCL 5: “Common Assumptions about Childhood”
Censorship Materials from ALA (American Library Association) and NCTE (handouts)

Week 3

M  Begin selection from *Classics of Children’s Literature* (*Alice in Wonderland, Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Little Women, Treasure Island, Peter Pan* or *Anne of Green Gables*)
PCL 4: “Strategies for Reading a Literary Text” (52-66 only)
Response DUE

W  Continue “classic” selection
PCL 4 (67-70)
Response DUE

F  Finish “classic” selection
PCL 4 (70-77)
Response DUE

Week 4

M  Visit to Ballenger Teacher Center for introduction to print research sources
W  Annotated Reviews plus properly documented response to biographical research DUE
F  Draft Review Essay DUE
Week 5  *Individual conference appointments available this week
*Hatchet [or Joey Pigza Loses Control]*
Review Essay DUE Friday

Week 6
*Ella Enchanted*
PCL 9: “Children’s Literature as Repertoire”
Recommended Supplemental Reading PCL 13: “Fairy Tales and Myths”

Week 7
*The Secret of the Old Clock*
PCL 8: “Literature and Ideology”
Self-selected Popular Series Books
PCL 7: “World of Children’s Culture”

Week 8
*The Watsons Go to Birmingham ~ 1963*

Week 9
*Birchbark House*

Week 10
*Becoming Naomi Leon*

Week 11
*Holes*

Week 12
PCL 11: Picture Books
*Black and White, The True Story of the Three Pigs, Tar Beach, Grandfather’s Journey*
Scavenger Hunt: Picture Books for Older Readers (in Ballenger Teacher Center)

Week 13
Book Tasting: Poetry (Meet in Ballenger Teacher Center)
PCL 12: “Poetry”
*Love that Dog, Locomotion*

Week 14
Self-Selected Contemporary Novel
Review of Reviews + Response to Research DUE ~ MLA style in-text citations required

Week 15
Book Talks
Prepare for Final Exam

Final Exam
In-class Essay Exam
PART IV: PURPOSE AND NEED

1. Explain the department’s rationale for developing and proposing the course.
At present, the English department regularly offers two courses in youth literature: “Children’s Literature” (English 3405) and “Young Adult Literature” (English 4903). Donelson and Nilsen (2006) note that “[i]n the late 1980s and early 1990s . . . publishers began focusing their attention on junior high and middle school readers.” There is now a considerable body of literature for pre-adolescent readers, which includes 19th century classics such as *Little Women* and *Alice in Wonderland*, 20th century standards such as *Little House on the Prairie*, an increasing range of multicultural works (marked on the course outline), works in progress such as the Harry Potter series, poetry, and even picture books for older readers. This canon is distinguishable—in content and form—from literature for younger readers, which includes nursery rhymes and fairy tales, and from “Young Adult” literature, which deals with developmental issues (e.g. sexuality) that are less relevant to pre-adolescents. In the new course, “Literature for Pre-Adolescents,” students will be able to read works in a wider variety of novelistic genre and sub-genre, with time for more significant attention to cultural diversity and historically contextualized study of classic and contemporary works.

2. Justify the level of the course and any course prerequisites, co-requisites, or registration restrictions.

English 3406: Literature for Pre-Adolescents will join the existing English department survey course (English 3405: Children’s Literature) at the 3000-level. Its content and goals are more narrowly focused than those of the introductory courses and general education courses at the 2000-level, while assignments and assessment methods are equivalent to those used for other English courses at the 3000-level. Students are not, however, expected to bring as much disciplinary maturity to this course as to the 4000-level course in Young Adult literature (English 4903), which can be taken by graduate students.

The only pre-requisites for this course are English 1001G and 1002G, the first-year writing courses. This is standard for literature courses in the English department.

3. If the course is similar to an existing course or courses, justify its development and offering.

Although “Literature for Pre-Adolescents” (English 3406) does encompass some material that has traditionally been included in “Children’s Literature” (English 3405), English 3406 will focus exclusively on literature intended for pre-teen readers. The existing course will no longer cover this material. Students and faculty will benefit from the narrowing of focus in both cases: exposure to a wider range of works—and more time to work with their generic features (oral, visual, narrative)—will allow for more rigorous assessment of student efforts to analyze and evaluate these works.

Note: The existing course description for English 3405: Children’s Literature does not specify an age/grade level, but does indicate that the course will focus on the genre associated with younger readers: “folk and fairy tale, picture book, poetry, early readers and ‘chapter books.’” The number and title of the new intermediate course—English 3406: “Literature for Pre-Adolescents”—and its placement between English 3405 and English 4903: “Young Adult Literature” should make the distinction between them sufficiently transparent.

4. Impact on Program(s):
The proposed course fits in “Group 5” of the revised undergraduate English curriculum and can be taken by any English major with an interest in youth literature. For those working toward certification in English Language Arts, especially those seeking a Middle Level endorsement, “Literature for Pre-Adolescents” is a relevant supplement to Young Adult Literature.” The increased breadth of our offerings will also benefit English majors who plan to attend graduate school in Library Science or in an English program that offers a specialization in Youth Literature (e.g. Illinois State).
While the existing survey course serves a broad cross-section of students, most are education majors. For Elementary Education majors with a concentration in English and for Middle Level Education majors, the proposed course can fulfill the requirement for at least one upper-division course in children’s literature or be counted as three of the six “additional” credit hours of upper-division English.

PART V: IMPLEMENTATION

1. **Faculty member(s) to whom the course may be assigned:** Fern Kory, Carol Stevens, Jerie Weasmer, Robin Murray, Donna Binns, John Kilgore, John David Moore

2. **Additional costs to students:** N/A

3. **Text and supplementary materials to be used (Include publication dates):** (sample texts)

   **TEXTBOOK**
   *The Pleasures of Children’s Literature* (3rd edition, 2003), Nodelman & Reimer

   **ANTHOLOGY**

   **TRADE BOOKS**  **indicates “multicultural” selections**
   **NOVELS**
   *Hatchet* (1995), Paulsen [Realistic Adventure/Survival Story]
   **The Watsons Go to Birmingham~1963** (1995), Curtis [Historical Fiction ~ African American]
   *Ella Enchanted* (1997), Levine [Modern Revised Fairy Tale]
   *Holes* (1998), Sachar [National Book Award Winner + Newbery Medal Winner]
   *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* (1998), Rowling [Fantasy]
   **Birchbark House** (1999), Erdrich [Historical Fiction ~ Native American]
   *Joey Pigza Loses Control* (2000), Gantos [Realistic Fiction ~ ADHD]
   *Love that Dog* (2001), Creech [Epistolary Novel]
   **Locomotion** (2003), Woodson [Novel in Poems ~ African American]
   **Becoming Naomi Leon** (2004), Ryan [Realistic Novel ~ Mexican American]

   **PICTURE BOOKS**
   *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* (1990), Scieszka (illus. Smith)
   *Black and White* (1990), Macaulay
   **Tar Beach** (1991), Ringold [~ African American]
   **Grandfather’s Journey** (1993), Say [~ Japanese American]

   **RESOURCES**
   Youth Literature website: www.eiu.edu/~childlit
PART VI: COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRANSFER

A community college course will not be judged equivalent to this course.

PART VII: APPROVALS

Date approved by the department or school: February 7, 2007

Date approved by the college curriculum committee: February 21, 2007

Date approved by the Honors Council (if this is an honors course):

Date approved by CAA: March 22, 2007

*In writing-active courses, frequent, brief writing activities and assignments are required. Such activities -- some of which are to be graded -- might include five-minute in-class writing assignments, journal keeping, lab reports, essay examinations, short papers, longer papers, or a variety of other writing-to-learn activities of the instructor's invention. Writing assignments and activities in writing-active courses are designed primarily to assist students in mastering course content, secondarily to strengthen students' writing skills. In writing-intensive courses, several writing assignments and writing activities are required. These assignments and activities, which are to be spread over the course of the semester, serve the dual purpose of strengthening writing skills and deepening understanding of course content. At least one writing assignment is to be revised by the student after it has been read and commented on by the instructor. In writing-intensive courses, students' writing should constitute no less than 35% of the final course grade. In writing-centered courses (English 1001G, English 1002G, and their honors equivalents), students learn the principles and the process of writing in all of its stages, from inception to completion. The quality of students' writing is the principal determinant of the course grade. The minimum writing requirement is 20 pages (5,000 words).