

English 2033E  
Children's Literature  
Summer 2023

Dr Jennifer O Venn

jvenn@uwo.ca

**Course Description** This course examines the development of literature for and about children from its roots in fairy tales, nursery rhymes, and nonsense literature. Animal stories, adventure tales, picture books, and domestic novels will be considered alongside visits to fantasy realms like Wonderland, Neverland, or the Land of Oz. A central focus will be the assumptions about children and childhood that shape these texts, all produced by adults based on what they believe children enjoy, want, or need.

**Assignments and Grade Distribution**

Task 1 is a paraphrase due by the end of Week 2 (May 16) about 1000 words	10%
Task 2 is an essay due by the end of Week 6 (June 13) about 1500 words	20%
Task 3 is an essay due by the end of Week 10 (July 11) about 2000 words	25%
Participation in rich weekly discussions with classmates (2 posts weekly)	15%
Final exam (last week of July or first week of August)	30%

Please note: The Department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <https://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, the successful student will be able to

- place individual texts in their context within the historical development of children's literature
- recognize and understand the features of genres such as the fairy tale, the cautionary tale, nonsense, adventure, domestic fiction, and fantasy
- display a knowledge of several classic children's novels, as well as more recent contributions to the genre
- analyze texts employing the skills of literary analysis, considering features such as narrative technique, symbolism, rhyme and rhythm, layout and illustrations, etc.
- understand the political, religious, moral, and philosophical underpinnings of the books on the course
- communicate ideas effectively in writing (through discussion posts and persuasive essays)
- develop a specific, focused argument and support it with textual evidence

**Reading Schedule**

During the Summer term, you should complete two units per week.

**WEEK ONE (May 8-13) Introduction / Traditional Fairy Tales**

Read the following fairy tales from *Folk and Fairy Tales*

- “The Story of Grandmother” Paul Delarue
- “Little Red Riding Hood” Charles Perrault
- “Little Red Cap” Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm
- “The Chinese Red Riding Hood” Isabelle C. Chang
- “Sun, Moon, and Talia” Giambattista Basile
- “The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood” Charles Perrault
- “Brier Rose”-



WEEK SEVEN (June 19-24)

Unit 13: The Domestic Novel

Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women*

Unit 14: The Domestic Novel

L.M. Montgomery,

can be found explicitly in the course notes; in other cases, the questions prompt you to think more deeply about the ideas presented in the notes. I ask students to do the questions in the fall course. Us? We're just too busy ! These questions are for your own confidence building DO NOT SUBMIT THESE :)

3. DISCUSSION FORUMS: You will usually find several discussions listed below the self-testing questions. Have a think about these ideas. They are very similar to the formal questions on the FORUMS tab on the left hand tool bar. The Participation mark of 15% will be based primarily on your activity in the forums, reflecting both the quality and the quantity of your responses.

I expect the initial posts to be clumsy. Students fall into the trap of showing off; I promise that this is both unnecessary and unwanted! Please just post your responses with the goal of creating conversation. I want to see how you can use your learning to create an informed exchange with each other, always remembering that for some of us, this is our only literature course in our undergrad careers. We're at different levels of experience: just create those conversations.

### Citing Sources

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major offense (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). Any student who commits this or any other act of academic dishonesty will receive a grade of zero and a note will be placed on his or her academic record.

Here are some steps to follow to avoid plagiarism

1) Do as much work as possible before beginning your written assignments, read the novel(s), think of a thesis statement, sketch out your argument. Write down your own ideas before reading any criticism.

2) Develop a note-taking style that clearly indicates what ideas are your own and what ideas are taken from another source. You can use different coloured pens, cue cards, or any other method that helps you distinguish your own ideas from those of others.

3) Feel free to disagree with any critic you may be reading, don't simply regurgitate somebody else's argument.

4) When you are incorporating someone else's ideas into your essay, acknowledge them within the essay itself using

(a) quotations marks (whenever you have even part of a sentence that's the same as the original)

(b) introductory tag phrases i.e. According to John Smith...

As Smith points out...

Smith observes that...

(c) a reference in parentheses that indicates the source of the idea (use the page number, if you've already used a tag phrase)

1) In the first four lines in the top left and corner of the first page, put your name, the name of your