



COURSE SYLLABUS

INSC 571 – Children’s Materials
School of Information Sciences – Spring 2023

Revised on 01/02/23

Course Sections: 001 (CRN 34123) and 002 (CRN 34124), combined online
Meeting Time and Place: Mondays, 6:30-9:10 (EST) via Zoom
Course Credit Hours: 3 Graduate Hours

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Course Description and Value Proposition

Critical survey of diverse children’s materials, for birth through age 12, in all formats and genres, including print, digital, and multimodal. Emphasis on evaluation, selection, and recreational or curricular use in school and public libraries.

Children’s literature is at the heart of what we do as youth librarians. We base programming, provide services, and create living collections using it. Taking this class will give you an overview of this very extensive field, and you will be exposed to important authors, genres, trends, and titles that will serve you the rest of your careers. On a more practical note, every children’s librarian’s job requires this knowledge, so you are making yourself more employable by taking the class.

There is a separate young adult resources and services class so we will restrict ourselves to considering literature for children from birth through the young side of age twelve. *Young adult and adult titles are outside the bounds of our class.*

Texts for the Course

Required Texts

- Bang, Molly. 2016. *Picture This: How Pictures Work*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books.
- Williams-Garcia, Rita. 2011. *One Crazy Summer*. New York: HarperCollins (Amistad).

Additional Texts

One of the purposes of this course is to expose you to a wide range of literature written for and about children, birth through age **twelve**. This course has a heavy reading load and there will be quite a bit of outside reading required. Individual texts are not required because there are many titles that can illustrate or support the concepts we discuss in class. **Be prepared to make frequent visits to libraries and/or bookstores of your choice.** There will be pop quizzes to insure you are doing the assigned readings.

Student Learning Outcomes

You will be able to:

- Discuss the evolution of children’s literature and how it is a social and cultural product;
- Articulate genre characteristics and discuss how they may be used to connect children and their literature (in whatever form it takes);
- Analyze the literary strengths and weaknesses of a particular work;
- Demonstrate how to use books and other media for recreation as well as for curricular support;
- Articulate how to build and manage a successful children’s literature collection in a school or public library;
- Articulate trends in children’s literature;
- Utilize professional resources in order to stay abreast of new publications, trends, and media related to children’s literature.

SIS Program Outcomes and Assignments for the Student Learning Collection (SLC)

Assignment	Associated with these SIS Outcomes
Genre Clinic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify critical professional issues in a variety of organizational, cultural, societal, disciplinary, transdisciplinary, and historical contexts. (#5) • Assess and implement information technologies, systems, sources and services that serve users effectively and efficiently. (#8)
Reading Blog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply the general principles, values, and ethical standards of providing information services in a variety of settings and for diverse populations. (#3) • Analyze and apply standards or policies related to the processes of creation, organization, distribution, storage, access, retrieval, management, use or preservation of information. (#6) • Assess and implement information technologies, systems, sources and services that serve users effectively and efficiently. (#8)
Nonfiction Analysis Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify critical professional issues in a variety of organizational, cultural, societal, disciplinary, transdisciplinary, and historical contexts. (#5) • Analyze and apply standards or policies related to the processes of creation, organization, distribution, storage, access, retrieval, management, use or preservation of information. (#6) • Assess and implement information technologies, systems, sources and services that serve users effectively and efficiently. (#8)

How to be Successful in this Class

Be present, be intellectually curious, contribute regularly, and engage equally with your peers and me. Do more than show up for class. Be present and engaged during and after class; start and contribute to posts on Canvas and bring related materials to the attention of the instructor and your fellow students. Your contributions show original thought and initiative, not simply agreement or endorsement. You interact with your peers as much as you do with me so that we create a learning **community**. Quality of thought is much more important than quantity.

Civility

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: <http://civility.utk.edu/>.

Learning Environment

Our class space is intended to be a safe, intellectually stimulating, collaborative space for learning, where we respect each other's thoughts and process, and everyone's voice and experiences are important.

My approach to teaching is based on Malcolm Knowles' view of adults as learners, and John Dewey's ideas about active (versus passive) learning. You are self-directed, purposeful learners, who learn best when you build on your own personal experiences. You like to be involved in the construction of your learning experience. Our mutual active participation will create a collaborative learning community, where we co-create value. Even though you may be new to working with youth in a professional capacity, you still bring knowledge and experience that can enrich our class when shared appropriately.

You are selfless learners, willing to put yourself forward to ask questions, propose answers, and provide feedback as needed. It is usually the case, for example, that if one person has a question or needs clarification, many others also wonder. Be bold and brave, asks when others are silent.

There are several different kinds of learning activities in this class, including but not limited to papers, group work, presentations, and lectures. You can realistically expect to spend three hours outside of class for each hour of in-class time. Instructional techniques include live and pre-recorded lectures, peer-to-peer teaching through presentations and collaborative projects, personal reflections and analysis through blogs and discussion board postings. Class sessions are 2 hours and 40 minutes long, including a break (usually 15 minutes).

Information Literacy/Technological Resources

This online synchronous (real time) class requires you to be comfortable with different technologies, including Online@UT (Canvas and Zoom), the Internet and world wide web, word

processing, presentation and spreadsheet software, and some social media applications. There are campus resources to support your use of technology (see list below), but ultimately it is your responsibility to make sure you have the necessary technical equipment and knowledge needed. For example, one of the most often overlooked technical requirements is your Internet connection speed. Try to have the fastest Internet connection available in your area.

For additional information or support:

- [Technology at SIS](#)
 - For online support during class, scroll down the page until you see the section entitled, “Real Time, Live Class Meetings Using ZOOM”
- UT Office of Information Technology ([OIT](#))
 - There’s a link to the OIT HelpDesk on the upper left side of the page.
 - [LinkedIn Learning](#) is a great source of online training support, with tutorials and video on everything from Google Drive to Canvas. You’ll need your UTK netid and password.

Each semester OIT offers “Test Flights” where you can join an informal Zoom session to test your equipment and connections prior to class. These sessions are announced on the [UTKSIS-L](#) listserv and the [LiveOnline@UT](#) site. Strongly recommended!

I am required to communicate with you through your UTK email address. If you prefer to use another address, consult the [OIT Helpdesk](#) to obtain directions for forwarding your UTK mail to your preferred address if you don’t wish to check both accounts.

Course Requirements, Assessment and Evaluation Methods Methods of Documentation for Assignments



**The Chicago Manual
of Style Online**

- Always give your paper a title and do NOT do a separate title page.
- Cite everything!
- Put your name on everything!

The quality of your writing and organization impacts your grade. Edit yourself or have someone review your assignments to make them as excellent as you can.

University Policies

Assessment and Evaluation

- Formative (along the way, usually ungraded)
 - Includes but is not limited to feedback during class, comments on drafts, discussion board postings, and in-class discussions.
 - Summative (at the end of a learning unit, usually graded), your assignments, as posted on Canvas

All assignments receive a point value, and a perfect score on all assignments adds up to 100 points. The University mandates a particular [grading scale](#) for graduate students, and the scale below is

how I convert our point values to letter grades. For individual assignments, divide the points you earned by the total points possible for the assignment and then multiply that number by 100 and round it to the nearest whole number. For example, if you earned 13 points for a 15-point assignment, your letter grade would be $13/15 = .87 \times 100 = 87$, or a B.

A	93 – 100	(4 quality points/semester hour) superior graduate student performance.
A-	90 – 92.75	(3.7 quality points/semester hour) intermediate performance.
B+	88 – 89.75	(3.5 quality points/semester hour) better than satisfactory performance.
B	83 – 87.75	(3 quality points/semester hour) satisfactory performance.
B-	80 – 82.75	(2.7 quality points/semester hour) intermediate grade performance.
C+	78 – 79.75	(2.5 quality points/semester hour) less than satisfactory performance.
C	70 – 77.75	(2 quality points/semester hour) well below the graduate student standard.
D	60 – 69.75	(1 quality point/semester hour) clearly unsatisfactory/doesn't satisfy requirements.
F	0-59.75	(no quality points) extremely unsatisfactory/doesn't satisfy degree requirements.

You are welcome to discuss your evaluations with me. **You must wait 24 hours after receiving the grade to contact me**, and present valid documentation for why you believe you have earned a different grade. The amount of time and/or effort spent does not qualify as a valid reason for a change. I reserve the right to make the final decision.

Penalty for Late Work

Except by **prior agreement**, 1 point per business day may be deducted for written or oral work not submitted by class time the day due. “**Prior agreement**” means at least 24 hours **prior** to the original time scheduled for the presentation or assignment.

Class Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class each week and be fully prepared to *actively* participate. Please try to notify me in advance if you need to miss class. If you do miss class, listen to the archived lecture/discussion and let me know if you have questions.

Class Cancellation

Should it be necessary to cancel a class meeting, every effort will be taken to do so in advance. Look for e-mail announcements via Canvas. More information about the School’s [cancellation policy](#) is available online. If UT cancels classes, then our class is automatically cancelled. Information about the University of Tennessee weather-related closing policy is available [here](#).

Academic Integrity

Students should be familiar and maintain their Academic Integrity, described in <https://hilltopics.utk.edu/academics/>, p. 15 as: “Study, preparation and presentation should involve at all times the student’s own work, unless it has been clearly specified that work is to be a team effort. Academic honesty requires that the student present his or her own work in all academic projects, including tests, papers, homework, and class presentation. When incorporating the work of other scholars and writers into a project, the student must accurately cite the source of that work.”

Students should abide by the Honor Statement ([https://hilltopics.utk.edu/student-code-of-conduct/Section X. Honor Statement](https://hilltopics.utk.edu/student-code-of-conduct/Section%20X.Honor%20Statement)), “As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.”

Plagiarism

Plagiarism in any of its several forms is intolerable, and attention to matters of documentation in all written work is expected and required. Inadvertence, alleged lack of understanding, or avowed ignorance of the various types of plagiarism are not acceptable excuses. Specific examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source;
- Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
- Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
- Collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor’s approval;
- Submitting work, either in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).

Students who may be unsure of the nature of plagiarism should consult the instructor or a guide for writing research reports. More information is available [here](#). Infractions of academic integrity are penalized according to the severity of the infraction but may include an assignment grade of "F."

Note on “Incompletes”

University of Tennessee policy states that an "Incomplete" is granted only under "the most unusual of circumstances" at the discretion of the instructor. An “F” is submitted for students who simply disappear. More information is available [here](#).

Students with Disabilities that May Impede Learning

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact Student Disability Services in Dunford Hall, at 865-974-6087, or by video relay at, 865-622-6566, to coordinate reasonable academic accommodations.

CCI Diversity Statement

The College of Communication and Information recognizes that a college diverse in its people, curricula, scholarship, research, and creative activities expands opportunities for intellectual inquiry and engagement, helps students develop critical thinking skills, and prepares students for social and civic responsibilities. All members of the College benefit from diversity and the quality of learning, research, scholarship and creative activities is enhanced by a climate of inclusion, understanding and appreciation of differences and the full range of human experience. As a result, the College is committed to diversity and equal opportunity and it recognizes that it must represent the diversity inherent in American society. The College is acutely aware that diversity and fairness are foundations that unite the College’s faculty, staff, students, and the larger communication and information community.

Instructor Status as a Title IX Mandatory Reporter

University of Tennessee faculty are committed to supporting our students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. Please be aware that if you choose to confide in a faculty member regarding an issue of sexual misconduct, dating violence, or stalking, we are obligated to inform the University's Title IX Coordinator, who can assist you in connecting with all possible resources both on- and off-campus. If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, the Student Counseling Center (865-974-2196) and the Student Health Center (865-974-3135) are both confidential resources. For additional resources and information, visit titleix.utk.edu.

Hodges Library Help for Information Science Students



Information Science [LibGuide](#) (library guide)
Our Information Sciences Liaison is [Calantha Tillotson](#)

I reserve the right to revise, alter or amend this syllabus. We will discuss changes ahead of time whenever possible and you will always be notified by email and Canvas if/when changes are made.

INSC 571 – Children’s Materials, Spring 2023
Weekly Schedule of Topics, REQUIRED Readings, and Activities

January 23: Course Introduction and Overview

Takeaways: What “success” looks like; expectations; definitions

Read for today

- Bruce, Allie Jane. 2016. “[A Deep Conversation About Binary Thinking](#),” November 21, 2016, from the *Reading While White* blog.

DUE today

- Introduction (see Canvas for instructions)
- List your top 3-4 genre choices after class on the Canvas “Genre Choices” discussion board.

January 30 & February 6 – Picturebooks (2 sessions)

Takeaways: Intentionality and choice make each book unique; every line, shape, and color matters

Read for today and bring the picturebooks books to class

- Bang, Molly. 2016. *Picture This: How Pictures Work*. Chronicle Books.
- Lukens, Rebecca, Smith, Jacquelin, Coffel Cynthia. 2013. Ch 3: “Picturebooks,” in *A Critical Handbook of Children’s Literature*, 9th ed. Boston: Pearson.
- Strouse, Gabrielle A., and Angela Nyhout and Patricia A. Ganea. 2018. “The Role of Book Features in Young Children’s Transfer of Information from Picture Books to Real-World Contexts,” in *Frontiers in Psychology* (February 2018) 9:50.
- Picturebooks (read and then bring to class) – see Canvas “Picturebook” week

View for Today

- “[Introduction to Visual Language](#),” Khan Academy – Pixar in a Box; Note: If you have time and enjoy this, you might also want to take a look at other parts of this “Art of Storytelling” course, particularly the section on “Tone.”

February 13 – Traditional Literature

Takeaways: Often children’s first exposure to literature; culture-centered; many types

Read for today

- Sayers, Frances Clark. 1965. “[Walt Disney Accused](#),” *Horn Book* 41 (December, 1965): 602-11.
- Warner, Marina. 2014. “[How Fairytales Grew Up](#),” *The Guardian*,” December 12, 2014.

DUE today

- Genre Clinic

February 20 – Poetry

Takeaways: Another early literature exposure; fiction, NF, novels, and more

Read for today

- Winter, Carol and Schmidt, Gary D. 2001. Ch 4: “The Delight and Wisdom of Children’s Poetry,” in *Edging the Boundaries of Children’s Literature*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

DUE today

- Genre Clinic
- Picturebook Analysis

February 27 – Concept Books and Early/Easy Readers

Takeaways: Foundational reading material bridging picturebooks and reading for school

Read for today

- Caravette, Loretta. 2011. “Portrait of the Reader as a Young Child,” *Children & Libraries* Summer/Fall 2011, pp 52-57.
- Carlson, Ann D. 1996. “Concept Books and Young Children,” in Vandergrift, K. E. (ed.) *Ways of Knowing: Literature and the Intellectual Life of Children*. Scarecrow Press, Inc.

Skim for today

- Goodreads “[Popular Concept Books Shelf](#).” Goodreads is a crowdsourced list of read-alikes and recommendations. HOWEVER, take their recommendations with a grain of salt.

DUE today

- Genre Clinic

March 6 – Informational Books

Takeaways: Definitions, types, conventions and affordances

Read for today

- Bamford, Rosemary and Kristo, Jan. 2003. Ch 2: “Choosing Quality Nonfiction Literature: Examining Aspects of Accuracy and Organization,” in Bamford & Kristo, eds. *Making Facts Come Alive: Choosing & Using Quality Nonfiction Literature K-8*, 2nd ed. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.
- Kerper, Richard M. 2003. Ch 3: “Choosing Quality Nonfiction Literature: Examining Access Features and Visual Displays,” in Bamford, Rosemary & Kristo, Jan, eds, *Making Facts Come Alive: Choosing & Using Quality Nonfiction Literature K-8*, 2nd ed. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.
- Smith, Jennifer M. and Marla K. Robertson. 2019. “Navigating Award-Winning Nonfiction Children’s Literature,” *The Reading Teacher* 73(2), September/October: 195-204.

DUE today

- Genre Clinic

March 13 – Spring Break – no class

March 20 – Biographies and Autobiographies

Takeaways: Emphasis on diversity, authenticity, “own” stories, authority, documentation

DUE today

- Genre Clinic

March 27 – Graphic Novels

Takeaways: Format vs. genre; variety and diversity

Read for Today

- Shelley, 2017. “[Wendy Xu’s Graphic Novel Evaluation Tips](#),” *School Library Journal*: September 7, 2017.

DUE today

- Genre Clinic
- Nonfiction Analysis

April 3 – Elements of Style

Takeaways: Plot, Setting, POV, Characters, Tone, Mood – all language for evaluation

Read for today

- Barone, Diane. 2011. Ch 5: “Exploring Qualities of Text,” in *Children’s Literature in the Classroom*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Lukens, Rebecca. 2006. Ch 1: “Literature: What Is it?” in *A Critical Handbook of Children’s Literature*, 6th ed. Boston: Pearson
- Lukens, Rebecca, Smith, Jacquelin, Coffel Cynthia. 2013. Ch 9: “Style and Tone,” in *A Critical Handbook of Children’s Literature*, 9th ed. Boston: Pearson.
- Williams-Garcia, Rita. 2011. *One Crazy Summer*

April 10 – Science Fiction; Fantasy

Takeaways: Definitions; importance and benefits

Read for today

- Spencer, Rochelle. “[Diversity is Magic: A Roundtable on Children’s Literature and Speculative Fiction](#),” November 5, 2015. *Los Angeles Review of Books*,” accessed on December 28, 2016.

DUE today

- Genre Clinic

April 17 – Mysteries and Horror

Takeaways: Emerging genre for children; definitions; societal thoughts about protecting children

Read for today

- Kowalewski, Kirsten. 2016. "Where are the Scary Books," in Jessica R. McCort's (ed.) *Reading in the Dark: Horror in Children's Literature and Culture*; pp. 219-239. Jackson, Mississippi: University of Mississippi Press.

DUE today

- Genre Clinic

April 24 – Historical Fiction

Takeaways: when is something “historical;” what happens when history “changes?”

Read for today

- Dorris, Michael. “Trusting the Words,” *Booklist*, June 1&15, 1993: 1820, 1822.
- Pavonetti, Linda M. 2004. Ch. 14: “The Evolution of Historical Fiction for Children,” in *Children’s Literature Remembered: Issues, Trends, and Favorite Books*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

Skim for today

- [American Indians in Children’s Literature](#) (AICL) blog, by Debbie Reese. Read the article on the book, [A Fine Dessert](#), and then anything else that catches your fancy.
- [Reading While White](#) blog. Read the Mission and FAQ sections and then skim whatever interests you.

DUE today

- Genre Clinic
- Fiction Analysis

May 1 – Children’s (Contemporary) Fiction

Takeaways: Culturally based, customs and parameters change with the times

Read for Today

- Leland, Christine, Lewison, Mitzi, & Harste, Jerome. 2013. Ch 4: “Choosing Books: Diversity Counts,” in *Teaching Children’s Literature: It’s Critical!* New York: Routledge.

Spend some time for today

- WNDB, “[We Need Diverse Books](#),” read some articles, blog entries on this site.

DUE today

- Genre Clinic

May 8 – Intellectual Freedom & Collection Development; Course Wrap-up

Takeaways: Self-censorship; cultural concerns and children; diverse collections; course wrap-up

Read for Today

- Gutman, Dan. 2010. “How I Corrupted America’s Youth.” *School Library Journal* 56(5) (May 2010): 28-31.
- Horning, Kathleen T. 2015. “Milestones for Diversity in Children’s Literature and Library Services,” *Children and Libraries* 13(3) (Fall 2015): 7-11.
- Kois, Dan. 2020. “[How One Librarian Tried to Squash Goodnight Moon](#),” *Slate*, January 13, 2020.

DUE today

- Read a banned or challenged children’s book (fiction or nonfiction) and post your thoughts on Canvas. If you need help finding a book, check [here](#) but be sure to get a *children’s* title.
- Reading Blogs

Assignments Recap – Spring 2023

Assignment	Points Possible	Upload thru Assignments or Post on a Discussion Board
Picturebook Analysis	20	Upload
Fiction Analysis	20	Upload
Nonfiction Analysis	20	Upload
Reading Blog	20	Discussion Board (post URL)
Genre Clinic	20	Discussion Board

Note: Although you are not *required* to share your analyses, I strongly encourage you to post your papers on the discussion boards after you turn them in via Canvas, so that we can maximize our exposure to and conversation about children’s books and materials. Thank you!