



Independent Study | in Idaho

**LibS430 Children's
Literature for
Teacher**

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Course Guide

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LibS 430: Children's Literature for Teacher Librarians

University of Idaho
3 Semester-Hour Credits

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1 – LIBS 430

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Welcome!

Whether you are a new or returning student, welcome to the Independent Study in Idaho (ISI) program. Below, you will find information pertinent to your course including the course description, course materials, course objectives, as well as information about assignments, exams, and grading. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the ISI office for clarification before beginning your course.

Policies and Procedures

Refer to the ISI website at www.uidaho.edu/isi and select *Students* for the most current policies and procedures, including information on setting up accounts, student confidentiality, exams, proctors, transcripts, course exchanges, refunds, academic integrity, library resources, and disability support and other services.

Course Description

LibS 417 Children's Literature for Teacher Librarians (3 cr)

This course will develop students' basic knowledge and understanding of the field of children's literature, particularly as it pertains to librarians, with a focus on children ages 2-12. This course will emphasize skills, tools, and insights necessary for effective professional librarianship in the area of services to children.

10 graded assignments, 2 annotation projects

Available online only.

Course Materials

Required Course Materials

- Tunnell, Michael O., James S. Jacobs, Terrell A. Young and Gregory Bryan. *Children's Literature Briefly*. 6th edition. Boston: Pearson, 2016. ISBN 0-13-384655-5; 978-0-13-384655-3
- Supplementary Materials: Various electronic readings found in UI Library databases.
- UI Library online article databases to search for reviews and other supplementary information requested in the written assignments: <http://www.lib.uidaho.edu/find/articles.html>

Course Delivery

All ISI courses are delivered through Canvas, an online management system that hosts the course lessons and assignments and other items that are essential to the course. Upon registration, the student will receive a *Registration Confirmation Email* with information on how to access ISI courses online.

Course Introduction

This course will cover characteristics of many genres and formats of children's literature, sources of selection and evaluation for children's literature, as well as contemporary trends and issues in the field, all within the context of the library. The course also will cover guidance techniques for librarians in relationship to children's interests and needs. Course materials will include traditional print sources as well as newer and emerging electronic formats. The term "librarian" is used to describe information professionals in schools and public libraries, and the term "Library/Media Center" (abbreviated as LMC) is used to cover the various school collections or public libraries, even if the names may be different. Reading assignments include textbook readings, articles from the professional literature as well as children's book.

Course Objectives

- The primary objective of this course is for you to learn evaluation and selection criteria in order to build a children's literature collection in a library and to support education using children's literature.
- By the end of the course, you will understand the development of children's literature, be able to identify different genres of children's literature and some of the unique criteria and issues for selecting and promoting these genres to children.

Lessons

Overview

Each lesson includes lesson objectives, a brief introduction, reading assignments (often including online articles) and a writing assignment. The questions in the writing assignments sometimes ask you to respond to the readings or summarize content. Some questions ask you to find articles or reviews of literature. Each lesson also asks you to read, evaluate and annotate examples of the literature discussed. The midterm and final consist of extensive annotations of children's literature and it is recommended you read the books and write the annotations in connection with the lesson to which they correspond. However, you will turn them in as a midterm and final project.

Study Hints:

- Keep a copy of every assignment submitted.
- Complete all reading assignments.
- Set a schedule allowing for course completion one month before your personal deadline. An *Assignment Submission Log* is provided for this purpose.
- Web pages and URL links in the World Wide Web are continuously changing. Contact your instructor if you find a broken Web page or URL.
- Add your own recommendations here.
- Introduce and explain any terms that are essential to understanding the course.

Refer to the **Course Rules** in Canvas for further details on assignment requirements and submission.

Exams

There are no proctored exams for this course. Two annotation projects are required in lieu of exams.

Grading

The course grade will be based upon the following considerations:

10 Lessons: 60 points each for written assignments = 600 points

2 Projects (sets of annotations): 200 points each = 400 points

Grand total points: 1000

Grading:

A = 90% to 100%

B = 80% to 89%

C = 70% to 79%

D = 60% to 69%

F = 59% and lower

The final course grade is issued after all lessons and projects have been graded.

About the Course Developer

Diane Prorak, MLIS, is a reference and instruction librarian and associate professor at the University of Idaho. She coordinates the University of Idaho Library's information literacy program and teaches many college level information literacy sessions.

Contacting Your Instructor

Instructor contact information is posted on your Canvas site under *Course Rules*.

Lesson 1

Introduction to and History of Children's Literature

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, you should understand/be able to:

1. Give a working definition of the term "children's literature."
2. Understand how books help children grow along with their needs, values and skills.
3. Be able to describe in general terms the history of children's literature;
4. Be familiar with early forms of books;
5. Know the names of some of the early pioneers in children's literature

Reading Assignment

Textbook

Tunnell, et al. *Children's Literature, Briefly, 6th ed.*

- Chapter 1, "Read, Read, Read," pp. 1-14
- Chapter 5, "Children's Books: History and Trends," pp. 47-62

Electronic articles or websites to read

Gubar, Marah. "On Not Defining Children's Literature." *PMLA: Publications Of The Modern Language Association Of America* 126.1 (2011): 209-216.

<http://ida.lib.uidaho.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=59548373&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

"[Children's Literature in Special Collections](#), University of Missouri" (Click on the links for the different types on the left and read the descriptions.)

Snyder, Iris R. "World of the Child: Two Hundred Years of Children's Books." University of Delaware Library. (Read the introduction and scan the rest) <http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/exhibits/child/>

Important Terms

chapbooks	battledores
hornbooks	didacticism
engaged reading	Efferent reading
aesthetic reading	

Introductory Lecture

The phrase "children's literature" has a distinct meaning for most people. While it seems that it should be fairly easy to define, it soon becomes apparent that there is wide variation on what constitutes children's literature. The text for this course defines it as "...good-quality trade books for children from birth to early adolescence, covering topics of relevance and interest to children through prose and poetry, fiction and non-fiction" (Short et al., p. 4). Questions arise: What about "adult" books that allude to adolescent topics? Should all materials be included, or do we exclude textbooks and comic books? Some professional librarians are strong believers in recreational reading—anything that keeps a child reading may be considered appropriate children's literature, while others hold a more traditional view of children's literature.

Children's literature has existed in various forms for several hundred years. But it did not come into its own as a field of serious study until the 20th century. The field of children's literature publishing has grown tremendously in the past 100 years. Most bookstores today carry large inventories of children's books, reflecting the interest and demand in this category of literature. Books published for children explore a wide range of topics and reflect many of the contemporary problems and issues of modern cultures. Some critics deplore the realistic approach to children's literature and advocate a return to more "innocent" times for children's books. But children do seek out books that help them deal with difficult subjects such as divorce, death, illness, etc. As librarians our role is to find a balance in what we offer children, so that those looking for pure escape in fairy tales and other fiction may find it in the library, just as those seeking books on more serious subjects may find that they are looking for, too.

Long before moveable type was invented, all books for children were instructional. These earliest books began a tradition of didacticism that dominated children's books for centuries. William Caxton, England's first printer, published the earliest accounts of King Arthur, Reynard the Fox, and Aesop's Fables, intended for adult audiences but eventually claimed by children, too. Children's literature grew and changed, becoming more for entertainment and pleasure. In the 20th century, children's literature exploded in numbers and also ventured into topics that were formerly forbidden. New formats also emerged. Librarians must choose among the old and new to develop a collection that meets the needs of the children that use their libraries.

Written Assignment

Before beginning the first written assignment, refer to the *Course Rules* in Canvas for your instructor's assignment requirements. If emailing assignments to your instructor, please copy the ISI office at indepst@uidaho.edu.

Tips for written assignments:

- Assignments should be written clearly and correctly, showing a thorough, thoughtful approach.
 - Format assignments in a way that is easy to read. Please number your answers to correspond to the questions. Copy and paste the question from the written assignment into your document, then write your answer after the question.
 - Don't copy from the book or readings; summarize in your own words.
 - Write thorough answers in complete sentences, using correct spelling and grammar.
 - When appropriate, use examples to illustrate that come from children's literature or your own library experience.
 - Each answer should have at least a few sentences, usually more.
 - Use specific examples in your answers that show you understand the concepts.
 - Most answers are worth 10 points, unless marked with a different point value.
1. Introduce yourself, describing your current career, your career aspirations, your experience with children and describe your goals or reasons for enrolling in this class. If you have any personal memories of children's literature from when you were young, describe them or any impacts children's books may have had on you. (10 points)
 2. Define "engaged," "efferent" and "aesthetic" reading. (5 points)
 3. Describe 5 benefits of engaged reading for children. (5 points)

4. Summarize the article by Gubar on defining children's literature. (10 points)
5. What were five early forms or categories of children's books or instructional materials? Describe them and their significance in the context of children's books. (10 points)
6. Describe 5 of the major developments or works in children's literature (listing book, author or individual involved, with date and significance) before 1900. (10 points)
7. Using the UI Library databases available to you, find a recent professional article (written within the last 5 years) about children's literature that interests you. It can be an article on the history, definition, selection, teaching, or any other topic. Cite the article and then summarize and react to it in 1-2 paragraphs. (10 points)
 - a. Here are the recommended steps for choosing professional databases for articles in this course:
 - i. From the UI Library web page (www.lib.uidaho.edu), click on **Academic Search Premier**
 - ii. On the search screen, click on "Choose databases" (near the search box).
 - iii. In the list of databases, check **ERIC and Library, Information Science and Technology Abstracts**.
 - iv. Click OK and then search.
 - v. Another important database is **Children's Literature Comprehensive Database (CLCD)**. You need to search that separately from the databases above. It can be found using the pulldown "Go to a specific database" on the UI Library website.

ANNOTATIONS for Lesson 1

See the instructions for annotations included in this lesson.

Write one of your annotations for this assignment and turn it in with this assignment for comments. I will not grade it yet, but I will return it with comments so that we know you are on the right track with your annotations. After Lesson 5, you will turn in all your annotations for Lessons 1-5 (including the one you send now again) for the Midterm Project.

Annotation #1: a historical children's book (originally published before 1950)

Annotation #2: a book you remember reading as a child, particularly one you really liked or had some significance. If you can remember, comment on your reaction to the book now, compared to what you remember about it as a child.

Guidelines for Annotations

With each lesson, you will need to write **annotations for children's books** that you read for this class. (Annotation writing will be assigned after the *Written Assignment* portion of the lessons; the compilations of your annotations will take the place of exams.) The purpose of writing these annotations is for you to develop a working tool for yourself, and to sharpen critical thinking and expression skills. Keep in mind that this is an ongoing project for the class. You will need to send me the first compilation of your annotations **as one document** *after* you have completed Lesson 5 and the second compilation *after* you have completed Lesson 10. However, it is highly recommended that you choose the book(s) and at least begin the reading in connection with each lesson, rather than doing all the reading and annotating at once after the five lessons.

Annotations should be approximately three-quarters of a page to one-and-a-half pages in length. They should be written in complete sentences. These are not just reviews, but more of an analysis of each book.

You may find reviews from article sources (such as NoveList, Ebsco, and *Book Review Digest*—linked from the UI Library website) to inform your annotation, but you must cite the reviews (at the end of the annotation) if you use ideas from them or, especially, if you quote from them. You should not rely on or copy from the book jacket information.

Write your annotations using the following format:

Annotation number

Lesson number

General description of the category of book you are annotating

I. Bibliographic Information

- Include author, title, illustrator, edition, publisher, number of pages in the book, and copyright date.
- Take this information from the book's title page and title page verso (reverse side of the title page).

II. Selection Source

- How/why did you select this book? Did you use a selection aid, such as *School Library Journal* or *The Horn Book Magazine*, for example, or did you ask a librarian?

III. Summary/description

Include the following pieces of information in your description of the book:

- Genre and/or subject
- Summary: statement of plot or contents (at least one paragraph)
- Format and illustrations if applicable (e.g., graphic novel, text only, illustrated novel). Describe the artwork of the illustrations in some detail.

V. Evaluation and Commentary (at least half a page)

- Evaluation of style, structure, literary quality, likely appeal to age group, reading level (if available), effectiveness of illustrations,
- Usefulness in collection or within instructional units; activities, extensions that could be done with this book
- Comparison with others of same genre, subject, reading level

- Reasons it is included in the category (e.g., Why is this banned book controversial? Why did this book win an award? Why is this categorized as a multicultural book?)
- Subcategory within the genre that it fits in and why, if applicable. For example, if this is an adventure novel tell what subcategory it falls in. See pages 153–155 for this particular genre’s subcategories.

Some pointers:

1. Be precise and concise.
2. Avoid over-use of adjectives, clichés such as “will appeal to everyone from eight to eighty”; hackneyed and basically meaningless words such as “charming, cute, beguiling, whimsical, fascinating.” It should not sound like a publisher’s advertisement.

Very important: Use your own words and ideas about these books. Don’t copy from publishers’ blurbs or review sources.

Sample annotations:

Sample #1, Annotation #15

LibS428

Classification: Science Fiction Book

Selection Source: I saw this book listed in the textbook and I had two copies on my bookshelf. My daughter liked it when she did a report on it, so I decided to read it.

Bibliographic Information: *Things Not Seen*, by Andrew Clements. New York: Puffin Books, 2000. Paperback, 251 pages.

Summary & Description: This is a science fiction book for ages 10 and up. Bobby is a fifteen year old boy who wakes up one morning and is invisible. He has no idea why he cannot be seen by anyone. He gets tired of being home, so he bundles up to go outside. By wearing gloves, a hat, and sunglasses, people do not realize they cannot see his face. When he gets to the library, he goes to the bathroom and takes off all his clothes. He is then able to walk around the library and observe people. He goes into a private practice room and the young girl, Alicia, realizes he is in the room. She is blind and can feel that he is near. They become friends and she helps him deal with his invisibility. Bobby’s father, a physicist, teams up with Alicia’s father, an astronomer, and they begin researching why he became invisible. They realize it has something to do with Bobby’s electric blanket and the electromagnetic field of the earth. Alicia suggests that two wrongs don’t make a right, but two negatives make a positive, so maybe it can be reversed on a night when the electromagnetic field is high. Bobby tries this and once again becomes visible. His family goes through many trials while he is invisible and meets all of the challenges head-on.

There are no illustrations in the book, just the picture on the cover. The cover shows a silhouette of a boy in silver with the Chicago skyline in the background.

Evaluation & Commentary: This is a very good science fiction book. The science and explanation for why Bobby becomes invisible is based on real scientific facts and makes the situation that does not take too much imagination to see happening. Although the idea is farfetched, it is a good basis for a fiction story. The friendship between Bobby and Alicia is very well developed and shows the ups and downs friends have. The fact that she is blind and has to deal with her disability is a secondary part of the story that is very important. The strained relationship between Bobby and his parents is one most children can relate

with. This is a book that I would highly recommend for any upper elementary high reader and above. The book has a starred review from Book Review Digest and an ALA best books for young adults. It has also been placed on reading lists for Illinois, Texas, and Pennsylvania.

Rochman, Hazel. "Things Not Seen (Book Review) (Undetermined)." *Booklist* 98.16 (2002): 1412. *Book Review Digest Plus (H.W. Wilson)*. Web. 11 Jan. 2013.

Sample #2, Annotation 5: Choose, read, and annotate an ABC book.

Martin, B. & Archambault, J. (1989). *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Classification

Reading Level: Ages 3-6.

Dewey Classification: 813.5.

Selection Source

This was one of the recommended alphabet books from both textbook reading assignments.

Bibliographic Information

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom / Written by Bill Martin, Jr., and John Archambault ; illustrated by Lois Ehlert ; New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1989, 1st edition ; 40 p.

Genre: Alphabet picture book.

Summary: This colorful ABC book introduces the letters of the alphabet as mischievous characters climbing a coconut tree, using rhyme, rhythmic and fun language like “chicka chicka boom boom” and “skit skat skoodle doot” to engage and entertain young readers.

Format/Illustrations: Lois Ehlert’s colorful illustrations dominate every page. Her illustrations are made by painting and using cut-out pieces attached to a backing to make an abstract collage. This creates a clear, colorful, eye-catching focus on the main “characters.”

Critical Statement

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom is a highly reviewed, much-appreciated resource and bestselling classic. The inviting language is appealing to young children, and helps them learn to recognize the letters of the alphabet with no feeling of studying. Particularly clever is the way some of the letters become injured and change shape, letting children find the significant differences. Author Bill Martin is the author of several bestselling children’s books, and Illustrator Lois Ehlert has won several awards, including the Caldecott Honor Book.

This book would be useful in a school library collection for the youngest beginning readers. My son loved this book when he was little, and I never got tired of reading it. The language is just so fun, flowing, and alive that it is very repeatable.

Compared with other alphabet books, this is one of the most fun and appealing, while offering the same exposure to the letters. Lower-case letters are featured in the illustrations, while upper-case letters are

used in the text, so it is a thorough introduction. Some words in the text would not be easily readable by beginning readers, but most of those parts will be almost memorized after hearing it just once.

SAMPLE Annotation #3

Lesson #2

Classification: A book that has won a significant award.

Selection Source: This book is in my elementary school collection and is one of my favorite stories about Harriet Tubman.

Bibliographic Information: MOSES When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom by Carole Boston Weatherford. Illustrated by Kadir Nelson. New York. Jump at the Sun/Hyperion Books for Children. 2006. Hardback. 36 pages.

Summary and Description: This lovely book has won two literary awards. The Caldecott Honor Award (2007) and the Coretta Scott King Award (2007). The story is centered around enslaved Harriet Tubman and her decision to flee her future filled with slavery to the land of freedom that which is Philadelphia, PA about 100 miles away. She turns to her faith to lead her out of her deplorable conditions and take her on a dangerous route to freedom. Knowing no one, she comes to rely on the generous folks prepared to assist runaways with food, clothing and safe haven. These folks are known as members of the Underground Railroad put in place to defy the practice of slavery and assist those in need as they traverse the difficult conditions to freedom. Harriet finds peace in Philadelphia and learns of the intricacies of the Underground Railroad while working and saving her money in for two years. It is then, with her deep faith guiding her, she returns to the south to save her family in the same way she saved herself...by guiding them north to freedom.

The oil-painted illustrations are mesmerizing with every detail beckoning attention. From the wrinkles in Harriet's face and hands, to the folds in her clothing, to the deep hues of day and night and the texture of the natural elements of the scenes...all of it together pulls you in for a deeply moving literary and visual experience that connects the reader to an important historical time. The illustrations cover the full spread with no white space and the changing text fonts are helpful in deciphering from who's point of view are we reading? Harriet's thoughts? God's thoughts? The narration? This is a large book, with large pictures filled with small and large text. It is clear the author and illustrator wish the reading experience to be emotional and memorable far beyond the reading of the last word of this historical re-telling of Harriet Tubman.

Evaluation and Commentary:

Children aged 5 all the way to adult would appreciate this book for what it can offer to the understanding of history. Bringing these large paintings of Harriet Tubman to life with text that is engaging and comprehensible make the reading experience very satisfying and moving. The paintings are large and the text is just enough not to overpower each spread. Enjoying this story with a child would easily be a soft, quiet and thoughtful experience with follow up conversation an expectation to bring the whole encounter to a close. Children as young as 5 will be able to pull from the story a sense of injustice to those held captive while older readers may use this story to spur further research or to remind themselves to "never forget." This story has a place in all libraries along with other historical

works written of this time. The Coretta Scott King Award and the Caldecott Award were both given to this title for the illustrations and the illustrator, Kadir Nelson, is sought out by many author's to illustrate their books. It is no wonder because his illustrations tell the story as clearly as the text does. This book received favorable reviews from The NY Times, ALA, Goodreads, Barnes and Noble and several other review sources.