

EDLA 601 Multicultural Literature for Children
Eastern Mennonite University, MA in Education
June 13-17, 2011

Credit Hours: 3 semester hours

Professor: Jean Roth Hawk, Ph.D. (hawkejr@gmail.com) 540 433-4089

Class Schedule: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Course Description: Explores multicultural literature for children in a variety of genre. Elementary classroom activities, including critical thinking and writing, are demonstrated.

This course is designed to introduce practicing teachers to a wide spectrum of literature for children. The course focuses on literature by and about persons from a variety of ethnic and cultural groups. Course participants will develop skills for evaluating the works as well as design curricula for their own classrooms which incorporate multicultural literature across the curriculum. Attention will be given to classroom applications using literature including writing and other literature response activities.

Throughout this course, students will be expected to examine their own beliefs and practices, examine the literature which they make available to the children in their classrooms, and to design curricula which will educate for a diverse world.

Conceptual Framework: “Preparing Caring, Reflective Teachers for a Changing World”

The EMU Teacher Education Program has chosen the theme *Preparing Caring, Reflective Teachers for a Changing World*” as the conceptual framework from which its beliefs and outcomes are based. The Teacher Education Program envisions preparing informed lifelong leaders and learners who value the dignity of all persons and are ready and willing to share a pilgrimage of openness and continuous growth as they invite others to join them. These caring, reflective educators will offer healing and hope in a diverse world. Six performance outcomes focus all course and candidate outcomes.

M.A. in Education Program Outcomes:

Scholarship: to acquire advanced knowledge through core curriculum and specialty area courses and to organize and integrate that knowledge into professional practice. **(S)**

Inquiry: to generate questions and to use critical thinking to self-assess, to view problems from multiple perspectives, to make informed decisions and to engage in action research for educational change. **(I)**

Professional Knowledge: to acquire advanced pedagogical and specialty area knowledge in order to create cultures of change and manage environments conducive to learning, setting high expectations and implementing appropriate instructional and assessment practices. **(PK)**

Communication: to develop communication strategies (verbal, nonverbal, and technological) which support collaboration and resourcefulness to empower self and others. **(C)**

Caring: to develop a nurturing spirit that advocates for students, encourages social and ethical responsibility, and promotes peacebuilding in diverse settings. **(Ca)**

Leadership: to act as social change agents by working collaboratively to bring about fair and just systemic change within educational contexts. **(L)**

Course Objectives (EMU program outcomes):

Students successfully completing this class will be able to. . .

. . . articulate the value to students of exposure to literature from a variety of ethnic and cultural groups. (S; Ca)

- ... critically evaluate literature for children and to make informed decisions about the use of particular pieces of literature in their classrooms and use a variety of appropriate literature response activities in their classrooms. (S; I; Ca; C; PK)
- ... design and implement culturally responsive curricula using literature across the curriculum. (PK; Ca; L)
- ... demonstrate knowledge of critical and creative writing strategies. (PK; C)
- ... demonstrate the delight and enrichment of quality of life that can be experienced through literature. (I; L)

Text (any paperback version will be fine):

Taylor, M. D. (1976). *Roll of thunder, hear my cry*.

Participants will be encouraged to read a wide variety of children's literature. In addition to children's texts, a number of scholarly texts will be available.

Course Requirements: Because the course is condensed in so few sessions and is designed to be highly interactive, attendance and active participation at each session is essential. University policy includes lowering of grade for absences for a day or part of a day. An "A" grade cannot be earned by any student who misses a day or the equivalent.

- Each student should keep an annotated list of literature selections read for this class. (Minimum of 30 hrs. of reading).
- Each student is asked to submit three formal reviews of books read for this class.
- Daily participation with literature groups, read-alouds, scholarly reading and team participation will be expected.
- Each student will propose (by July 1) and complete independently an individually designed project which demonstrates a significant application of knowledge of multicultural literature across the K-8 curriculum.

-Materials will be due in the EMU office by noon July 11, 2011.

Evaluation

Grade of A: All requirements of the course are met at a highly proficient level. This means that you demonstrate an advanced level of performance in your writing and presentation skills and that your project demonstrates originality and excellence in style and organization. Obvious time and care were given to reviews and bibliography. More than 35 hours of documented reading. Active participation in all sessions. Assignments completed on time.

Grade of B: Satisfactory completion of course requirements. Writing, presentation, style and organization are at a proficient level. Effort and commitment are obvious in written work and class participation. 30 hours of documented reading.

Grade of C: Course requirements are completed but may be characterized by minimal effort. Late or incomplete assignments.

Below C: Failure to meet expectations of the course.

Class Format: Lectures, activities involving sharing of books and resources, videos and book discussions will be utilized during the class sessions. Participants will prepare a presentation on books about a particular ethnic group or topic.

Academic Integrity: The responsibility to foster and guard academic integrity rests with all members of the academic community. A foundation of mutual trust is essential to the learning community. Any incidents of academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade for the work submitted and a "Record of Academic Dishonesty" filed in the graduate dean's office. Students are asked to meet with the professor (and other affected persons, where appropriate) to examine the effects of the dishonesty on others and to develop an accountability plan.

Special Accommodations Statement: If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability, or has emergency medical information to share, please contact the instructor personally as soon as possible to discuss any accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate equal educational opportunity. All information and documentation of the disability is confidential and will not be released without permission.

Use of Graduate Level Writing Standards and American Psychological Association (APA) Writing Style

Candidates are expected to use *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association 6th Edition* (*5th Edition still accepted as well*) for written assignments including annotated bibliographies and references. Candidates citing references in Power Point references are also expected to use APA style. Instructors may exclude short personal narratives, essays, lesson plans, or some project work if APA writing style is inappropriate.

All instructors teaching in the Master of Arts in Education program are asked to apply the EMU Graduate Writing Standards to any written work submitted. The instructors may use their discretion of the assignment does not lend itself to the EMU Graduate Writing Standards rubric. (See Appendix A). Use of APA and the Graduate Writing Standards rubric ensures uniformity of writing standards and serves to prepare enrolled program candidates for writing their action research projects.

Knowledge Base and Rationale: Since 1965 when Saturday Review published Nancy Larrick's article, "The All White World of Children's Books" which brought to the attention of the literary world the dearth of multiethnic children's books, many have appeared on the scene. This is a positive move. As Rudine Simms (1982) suggests in her seminal work, *Shadow and Substance: Afro American Experience in Contemporary Children's Fiction*, "literature is one of the most powerful components of a multicultural education curriculum". In order to promote positive self images and to learn to value diversity, children must be exposed to literature which represents diversity. However, mere colored-in faces or different spelling of names will not achieve desired goals. The references listed here represent scholarly works which take seriously the need for authentic, culturally sensitive, high quality materials for children.

References:

Larrick, N. (1965). *The all-white world of children's books*. Saturday Review, 11 September, 63-65, 84-85.
Simms, R. (1982). *Shadow and substance: Afro-American experience in contemporary children's fiction* Urbana, IL.: National Council of Teachers of English.

Bibliography:

- Ada, A.F. (2003). *A magical encounter: Latino children's literature in the classroom*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Botelho, M.J. & Rudman, M.K.. (2009). *Critical multicultural analysis of children's literature: Mirrors, windows, and doors*. New York: Routledge.
- Cai, M. (2002). *Multicultural literature for children and young adults: Reflections on critical issues*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.
- Fox, D.L. & Short, K.G., Eds. (2003). *Stories matter: The complexity of cultural authenticity in children's literature*. NCTE.
- Gopalakrishnan, A. (2011). *Multicultural children's literature: A critical issues approach*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Harris, V. J. (Ed.). (1993). *Teaching multicultural literature in grades K-8*. Norwood, MA: Christopher Gordon.
- Harris, V.J. (Ed.). (1997). *Using multiethnic literature in the K-8 classroom*. Norwood, MA: Christopher Gordon.
- Lindgren, M.V. (Ed.). (1991). *The multicolored mirror: Cultural substance in literature for children and young adults*. Fort Atkinson, WI: Highsmith Press.
- Norton, D.A. (2005). *Multicultural children's literature: Through the eyes of many children, 2nd Ed.* Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- Seale, D. & Slapin, B. Eds. (2005). *A broken flute: The native experience in books for children*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira.
- Smolen, L.A. & Oswald, R.A. (Eds.). (2011). *Multicultural literature and response: Affirming diverse voices*. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited.

Appendix A: Writing Standards – Graduate Level (Grid Version)

<u>Criteria</u>	<i>A excellent</i>	<i>B competent</i>	<i>C below expectations</i>	<u>Comments</u>
Content (<i>quality of the information/ideas and sources/details used to support them</i>)	- has clarity of purpose - has depth of content - displays insight or originality of thought -demonstrates quality and breadth of resources	- has clarity of purpose - has substantial information and sufficient support - contains some originality of thought -uses quality resources	- has clarity of purpose -lacks depth of content and may depend on generalities or the commonplace - has little originality of thought -uses mostly quality resources	
Structure (<i>logical order or sequence of the writing</i>)	- is coherent and logically developed -uses very effective transitions	- is coherent and logically developed -uses smooth transitions	- is coherent and logically (but not fully) developed -has some awkward transitions	
Conventions (<i>appearance of the writing: sentence structure, usage, mechanics, documentation</i>)	- has virtually no errors of conventions	- has minimal errors of conventions	- is understandable <u>but</u> has noticeable problems of sentence structure, usage, mechanics or documentation	
Style (<i>personality of the writing: word choice, sentence variety, voice, attention to audience</i>)	- is concise, eloquent and rhetorically effective -has nicely varied sentence structure -is engaging throughout and enjoyable to read	- displays concern for careful expression -has some variation in sentence structure -is generally enjoyable to read	- has some personality <u>but</u> lacks imagination and may be stilted and may rely on clichés -has little variation in sentence structure -is not very interesting to read	

The weighting of each of the four areas is dependent on the specific written assignment and the teacher's preference.	<u>Grade</u>
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