

# CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

## Some Suggested Essay Topics & Guidelines

For your research paper, you may choose from one of the following topics that challenge you to explore more deeply one of the genres of Children's Literature that we will have covered thus far. There are many ways to come to understand these genres better and the following topics are just suggestions. Check here frequently, as I will update this as more essay ideas come to me.

### Possible Essay Topics Include:

- Examine a fairytale or folktale from another culture that has been highly regarded by the critics. Compare and contrast this book to another book from the same or a different culture. **What is the value of introducing children to these stories from other cultures?** Consider literary criticism in your analysis.
- Study the works of one particular author and/or illustrator and discuss the influences that have affected his/her work, and how his/her stories compare with one another and/or to works by different authors. Be sure to read at least 3 works from this author (or several more if they are short story books).
- Read and research a lesser-known work of children's literature. How do you think it does or doesn't fit into the literary canon of children's literature (that is, the kinds of literature for children that have endured over time and are deemed to be "classics.")
- Examine a number of different films or literary works that demonstrate the prevalence of the fairytale in pop-culture.
- Do an analysis of one or more fairytales or children's books from the perspective of one of the literary theories that you have been introduced to (you will be expected to do research on these).
- Discuss an recurring theme or literary element in 3 or more children's books (such as theme) and explore in detail eg. (violence; beauty; etc.) Present the stories, information about the authors, and discuss when such books are necessary.
- Compare several picture books of your own choice. Discuss how the combination of text and pictures creates a particular effect.
- Choose one or more picture books from a non-Western cultures. Compare them to several picture books from western culture. How do these stories differ and how does this reflect the cultures from which the stories arose?
- Your own topic—Please discuss with me before you proceed!**

In choosing a topic, remember that one of the goals of this class is for students to gain a better understanding of the genre of Children's Literature. Whatever assignment you choose, tackle it with interest, enthusiasm, and inquisitiveness.

Because you will be presenting your research to the class through a poster presentation or full-audience presentation, I do not want to have multiple students researching the same topic. **To claim your topic, be the first to put it in writing and have it approved by me. Then I will steer others away from your topic! Let me know right away.**

Final Due Date	Tuesday, June 2, 2009
Essay Length	Approximately 6-8 pages (1500-2000 words)
Weight	25% (Presentation is worth an additional 10%)

All essays must be presented using *MLA* or *APA format*, including a **Works Cited or REFERNECES** page.

Please see [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r\\_mla.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_mla.html) for specific guidelines or a handbook.

This is a research paper. As such, **I do expect that you will consult several secondary sources** (literary criticism) so that your analysis is informed.