

ENG 380—Children's Literature

Midterm Review/Study Guide



Date: Friday, May 22, 2009

Time: 11:30-1:30

Review all the readings that have been assigned, including that from the Nodelman & Reimer text as well as the Norton Critical Edition of Classic Fairy Tales. The following are some key review questions and/or points to consider. You may want to prepare a brief study sheet to help you.

History of Children's Literature

1. When was Children's Literature first recognized as a genre unto itself?
2. How does the concept of childhood relate to the idea of children's literature (or lack of it)?
3. How does the *oral tradition* relate to children's literature?
4. What books did people read/listen to before children's literature developed as a genre?
5. What technological invention revolutionized the concept of literacy? When did this invention occur?
6. For what purpose was the earliest children's literature created?
7. How did Puritanism affect the earliest children's books?
8. What sub-genres of children's literature have we discussed in this class? For some additional information & review, see:

<http://home.earthlink.net/~jcorbally/eng218/lect2.html>

Fairytales/Folktales

1. Know the names of the stories read in class and the authors to which they were attributed.
2. Know the names of the characters in the stories and know how to spell them correctly.
3. What are the characteristics of folktales?
4. Who are Charles Perrault, Hans Christian Anderson and the Brothers Grimm,
5. Be able to recall significant details of the individual stories (for example, you might examine how beauty and ugliness relate to moral character in several of the stories—having some quotations ready to share).
6. Be prepared to do a literary analysis of a folktale using one of the schools of literary theory & thought (listed below in the Literary Analysis section).
7. Be able to compare/contrast these stories to one another
8. Know how different critical approaches would affect one's *reading* of these tales.

See website—a great reference/review source: <http://www.surlalunefairytales.com/>;
<http://home.earthlink.net/~jcorbally/eng218/lect3.html>

Picture Books

1. What different kind of pictures books did we discuss in class? (ie. Concept books—shape, color; counting; alphabet; pop-ups; toys books—shape of cars)
2. What are some common themes of picture books (hint: sleep and bedtime are probably the most predominant themes).
3. Be able to comment upon a sight picture book in terms of: plot, point of view, theme, character, setting, and tone—all elements of literature.
4. Be able to discuss how the pictures contribute to the overall effect of the story being told in any of the books we studied (I would give you a copy of a picture on the midterm to reignite your memory). Consider the illustrator's use of: space: shape; composition; perspective.
5. What authors/stories did we study in class? What were the salient features of these works?

<http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/special/childhood/pictur.htm>

Charlotte's Web

1. Who is the author?
2. When was the book published?
3. Who are the main characters in the novel?
4. What themes are recurrent in the Charlotte's Web? (Death, love, growing up, the cycle of life, etc.)
5. What is animal fantasy? How do different forms of this sub-genre differ?
6. What other works of animal fantasy did we address in this class? You may include works that you have read that were not mentioned in class).

7. How does this book highlight the *human condition*?
8. Commit a few memorable quotations to memory.

The Little Prince

1. Who is the author?
2. When was the book published?
3. Discuss this book as an allegorical work.
4. Who/what are the main characters, images, and motifs that are recurrent in the book? What do these images/people/things symbolize:
 - Picture of hat/boa constrictor eating an elephant
 - Baobabs
 - The rose
 - The Fox
 - The Snake
 - Businessman, Geographer, Drunk, Lamplighter, Turkish Astronomer, King, etc. (Make your own list)
 - The Well/Water
5. How is the Little Prince a Christ-like figure? In what other ways can this work be seen as a Christian Allegory? (Consider the snake, the Little Prince's death, "leaving this earth").
6. Consider the theme of isolation. How does the removal of the little prince from his planet to this barren desert help him and/or the pilot to better understand life?

The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe

1. Who is the author?
2. When was the book published?
3. Who are the main characters in the novel? As allegorical characters, who/what do they represent? (Especially Aslan--Christ, the Emperor-over-the-Sea—God the Father; The White Witch—Satan/Temptation, Edmund—Forgiveness/Atonement, etc.)
4. What themes are recurrent in the novel?
5. What are some important symbols in the book? (Turkish Delight)
6. How can the book be read as a Christian Allegory? (Be specific: the sacrifice of Aslan, his *resurrection*, The Witch (sin/evil), the Emperor-Over-the-Sea.
7. How did C. S. Lewis' life affect his writing of this novel? Be specific.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to be child-like? (See article about C.S. Lewis on: <http://cslewis.drzeus.net/papers/childlike.html>)
2. How do the different authors portray/represent children (as opposed to adults).
3. What lessons can we learn from these stories?

4. How are these stories for adults? How are they stories for children?
5. What are the elements of animal fiction? Of fantasy fiction?

Literary Analysis

Review these terms as they were discussed in class:

- Point of view (First person, Limited Omniscient Third Person, Omniscient)
- Allegory
- Symbolism
- Setting
- Schools of Critical Thought:
 - Psychoanalytic
 - Reader-response
 - Marxist
 - Historical
 - Gender Criticism
 - Mythological Criticism

For online resources, I strongly encourage you to see:

http://www.gfsd.org/gfhs/teachers_pages/bates/critical_approaches_to_literatur.htm

http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/literature/bedlit/glossary_a.htm

<http://lis.dickinson.edu/LibRec/ResearchRes/SubjectGuides/English/litcrit.htm>

TYPES OF QUESTIONS that MAY be on the exam

1. IDENTIFICATION SECTION—given a significant quotation from the works studied thus far, be able to name the: author; title of the book; speaker of the quotation; context; significance.
2. SIGHT PASSAGE—Be able to analyze a short passage of children’s literature and discuss it in terms of the elements of fiction that we have discussed in class (theories of criticism, point of view, symbolism, visual effect—picture books).
3. ESSAY RESPONSE—(one or two questions—choice will be given).
Given a question based upon the readings in this class, be able to respond critically to the question, citing specific examples and giving ample evidence to illustrate your points. “A” responses will include exact quotations from the readings (you must memorize these – this will not be an open-book exam).
4. SHORT ANSWERS
These would be very short response questions, similar to the extended quiz questions.

NOTES/TIPS:

- When discussing the authors, name them using the full name the first time you mention them, and thereafter, refer to by them by last name only.
- Underline titles of books and put short stories and poems in quotation marks.
- WRITE in complete sentences always.
- In the essay response section, your writing should demonstrate:
 - Clear and logical organization
 - Sufficient evidence/support
 - Adherence to grammatical conventions
 - Smooth transitions
 - Proper paragraphing
 - LEGIBLE HANDWRITING!!!!
- Be detailed and thorough in your responses. In a timed writing test, *more* is actually *more* (as opposed to a formal essay where *less* is usually *more*.) Write amply. Do not go with a simple answer if you have more to say. (That said, budget your time).
- **I HIGHLY SUGGEST THAT YOU USE ALL THE TIME YOU ARE GIVEN** rather than trying to *breeze* through the exam, leaving unused time at the end. (I'm always baffled when students leave midterms early—you can use any extra time to proofread and revise/edit your work or use it in the pre-writing stages to construct an outline of what you are going to say.
- **I WILL EXPECT MORE FROM YOU ON A MIDTERM THAN I HAVE ON THE QUIZZES.** This means that while you may receive full points for a question on a quiz, I would expect much more in an exam. The quizzes are mostly checks to see that you completed the reading and understood the “big picture.” The exam calls upon you to think more deeply and critically.
- One of my favorite English Professors once gave me advice for taking literature exams: **GO INTO THE EXAM WITH AN ANSWER AND LOOK FOR A QUESTION THAT GOES WITH IT.** This is good advice! You can probably anticipate the kinds of questions I am likely to ask based on the quizzes and the class discussions/lectures. Anticipate—and prepare ahead of time, and you will do well!