

English 504.01W
Picture Books, Graphic Narratives, and the
Art of Illustration
Summer II 2015
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Image: Wood cut from John Newbery's *Little Pretty Pocket Book* (1744), one of the earliest fully-illustrated texts for children

<p>Course Description</p>	<p>This class explores the genre of illustrated books for young readers. We will look at the emergence of the picture book within a historical context and consider how the genre “works” in terms of a multi-layered narrative involving the marriage of text and image work. We will also examine how subtexts about society, gender, history, and childhood itself play out in illustrated texts.</p> <p>In this class you'll:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Become more familiar with the mechanics, aesthetics, and ideological nature of texts with pictures and illustrations; ▪ Become more familiar with some of the theoretical concepts regarding picture books and graphic narratives; ▪ Produce an annotated bibliography based on some of the critical scholarship about illustrated texts/picture books/graphic narratives, as published in scholarly journals and books. <p><u>Please note:</u> This is an English department class rather than a College of Education class. As such, we will not be discussion pedagogical issues. Our focus, rather, will be on the critical study of these texts as works of art and as artifacts of material and ideological culture.</p>
<p>Student Learning Outcomes</p>	<p>For TAMU-system assessment purposes, I have designated two specific Student Learning Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will demonstrate knowledge of key concepts about picture books, illustrated texts, and graphic narratives, as measured by an ungraded pretest and post-test. ▪ Students will demonstrate effective writing by preparing an annotated bibliography that meets or exceeds expectations, as measured by a rubric used to assess the assignment.
<p>Course Structure</p>	<p>In brief, in addition to the primary literary texts that you will read, this course will involve Reading Notes, online discussion, and one major</p>

writing assignment.

1. **Reading Notes.** These are notes that I have designed to introduce and contextualize each novel. You should always study the Reading Notes before you begin the assigned reading for the week.

2. **Online Discussions.** This is the most substantive part of your week-to-week grade for the course. For specific instructions on discussion threads and deadlines, see the weekly schedule at the end of this syllabus. All discussion posts for the week are due by 11:59 p.m. on the Sunday of the week in question. You may post as many times as you like, and you should definitely start posting even if you have not finished the entire reading assignment yet. In fact, sometimes it is very instructive to see people's responses when they are only mid-way through an assignment. I very much prefer that scenario rather than having everyone wait until the very end of the week to post on the discussion board.

I have not set a specific quota for how many posts you need to provide for each week's discussion. However, as a very general guideline, I will be looking for perhaps four **substantive** posts total per week to earn a "B/B+" for that week's discussion, including both responses to other people's posts and new topics that you start on your own. (By substantive I mean posts that are more than one or two sentences in length, posts that are detailed and specific, posts that work to enrich the conversation—not, in other words, short, overly-generalized posts that simply say "I really liked this story.")

I **urge** you to write your comments in response to what others have posted, in addition to starting your own threads. If someone has already posted the point that you had wanted to make, add to that thread rather than starting an entirely new thread that says the same thing. To me, that latter action implies that you are not reading what other people have written. Remember, the whole idea is to get a **discussion** going!

From time to time I will step in and participate in these discussions, and I will read everything you write, but I will not respond to each and every post because I am more interested in what you have to say about the pieces we read than in what I have to say. Please note that if you miss a discussion deadline, you will not be allowed to go back and post there. Thus you would not receive credit for that week's discussion.

	<p>3. Writing. For the writing assignment due at the end of the summer term, you will be writing an annotated bibliography consisting of 6-7 scholarly articles or book chapters that you have carefully selected and read, in addition to an introduction to the bibliography/scholarship. I will place an abbreviated sample in Doc Sharing, along with the grading rubric I will use. Each bibliographic entry should be 150-200 words, not counting the actual citation, which should be in either the most current MLA or <i>Chicago Manual of Style</i> format. The introduction should be about 650-700 words in length, and it should introduce your reader to the entries that follow by providing an overview and laying out a unifying theme running throughout the entries in the bibliography (the sample in Doc Sharing does this clearly). See full instructions and grading rubric at the end of this syllabus.</p> <p>4. And, of course, plenty of reading.</p> <p>Each week you should review the schedule on the syllabus carefully each week and make sure you are looking at the "Reading Notes" and "Discussion" areas under the "Week" tabs on the left side of the screen. Be thorough in examining relevant areas of the eCollege website, and let me know if you can't find something or if you find an error.</p>
<p>Required Texts</p>	<p>The following works are required for this course. In addition, you will have a number of readings to complete that you will download from eCollege (details provided in schedule of assignments). The ISBNs listed correspond with the editions ordered through the bookstore.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virginia Lee Burton, <i>The Little House</i> (ISBN 9780395259382) ▪ Mordicai Gerstein, <i>The Man Who Walked Between the Towers</i> (ISBN 9780761317913) ▪ Scott McCloud, <i>Understanding Comics</i> (ISBN 9780060976255) ▪ Doreen Rappaport, <i>Martin's Big Words</i> (ISBN 9780786807147) ▪ Jon Klassen, <i>I Want My Hat Back</i> (ISBN 978-1406338539) ▪ Jon Klassen, <i>This Is Not My Hat</i> (ISBN 978-1406353433) ▪ Brian Selznick, <i>The Invention of Hugo Cabret</i> (ISBN 9780439813785) ▪ David Wiesner, <i>Tuesday</i> (ISBN 9780395870822) ▪ Gene Yang, <i>American Born Chinese</i> (ISBN 9780312384487) <p>You will find additional required reading available for viewing and download in the DocSharing portion of eCollege. See details in Schedule of Assignments, below.</p>

Grading	<p>Your final grade for the class will be calculated with the following weights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Online discussion (15% each week) — 60% ▪ Annotated Bibliography (course paper) — 40% <p>The department of Literature and Languages does not, as a rule, allow the grade of “Incomplete” (X) for its courses; incompletes are <i>only</i> awarded under extraordinary circumstances, pending Department Head and Dean approval. If personal issues or conflicts arise that lead to your missing a substantial amount of class, I encourage you to consider withdrawing from the class. As a rough guideline for what A-F grades mean, realize that an A is awarded for truly outstanding work (superior), a B denotes work that is significantly above the level necessary to meet basic requirements (above average), a C is for work that meets basic requirements in every way (acceptable), a D is given for work that meets only some of the requirements yet is still deserving of credit (under average), and an F results if work is not completed or if it fails to meet the requirements of the assignment/course.</p>
Technology Requirements	<p>This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by TAMU-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to https://secure.ecollege.com/tamuc/index.learn?action=welcome. You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course page. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 902-468-6000 or helpdesk@online.tamuc.org. To complete this course successfully, you will need a computer with internet access (high speed recommended, not dial up) and a word processor equipped with Microsoft Word. Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of a browser like Internet Explorer or Google Chrome. Your course will also work with Macintosh OSx along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Explorer, Chrome, and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.</p>
Communication and Technical Support	<p>If I need to contact the class directly, I will use your university email account (myLeo), so please be sure to check this with frequency. TAMU-Commerce provides students with technical support in the use of eCollege. Technology problems on your end are not an excuse for a late assignment—make sure you submit your work in time to allow for any problems you might encounter with your personal computer. You may reach the help desk by the following means, 24 hours a day,</p>

	<p>seven days a week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phone 1-866-656-5511 to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representatives ▪ Email helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with an eCollege Technical Support Representative. Click on the “Help” button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (e.g. how to post to discussion, how to submit something to the Dropbox, etc).
<p>Additional Policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty, and acts of plagiarism can lead to immediate failure of the assignment and/or course. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion (<i>Texas A&M University—Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1,2,3]</i>). Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to cutting and pasting information directly from online sources, copying material from books without providing source documentation, taking essays wholesale from online sources, having someone else write a paper for you, and turning in work that you have already submitted for another class. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All students enrolled at the University must follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. Please note that I enforce standards of inclusiveness in my classes. What that means is that I will not tolerate discrimination and disrespect in regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation. ▪ The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services, Texas A&M University-Commerce, Gee Library 132; Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835; Fax (903) 468-8148; email StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu ▪ You are responsible for reading and understanding all the information on this syllabus, as well as on any additional materials I distribute during the course.
<p>Schedule</p>	

<p>Week 1 (July 13-19)</p> <p>Picture Books, Old and New</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read the course syllabus in entirety. ▪ Take the ungraded, no-pressure pretest located in Week 1 ▪ Introduce yourself under the appropriate Week 1 discussion thread. ▪ Study the Week 1 Reading Notes ▪ Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excerpts from Perry Nodelman, <i>Words About Pictures</i>, located in DocSharing in eCollege--read pages vii-21, 40-46, 77-89, and 101-105 ▪ John Newbery, <i>Little Pretty Pocket-Book</i> (1744). located in DocSharing ▪ Randolph Caldecott, <i>Randolph Caldecott's Picture Book</i> (1878), located in DocSharing ▪ Munro Leaf, <i>The Story of Ferdinand</i> (1936), located in DocSharing ▪ Virginia Burton, <i>The Little House</i> (1942) ▪ Jon C. Stott and Teresa Krier, "Virginia Lee Burton's <i>The Little House</i>: Technological Change and Fundamental Verities," in <i>Touchstones: Reflections on the Best in Children's Literature</i>, vol. 3. West Lafayette, IN: Children's Literature Association, 1989 (28-37), located in DocSharing. ▪ Post on the Week 1 discussion board as you read. The discussion board closes at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, July 19. ▪ Begin work on bibliographic essay
<p>Week 2 (July 20-26)</p> <p>More Picture Books</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study the Week 2 Reading Notes ▪ Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excerpts from Perry Nodelman, <i>Words About Pictures</i>, located in DocSharing in eCollege--read pages 158-163, 171-178, 199-202, 222-232 ▪ Doreen Rappaport, <i>Martin's Big Words</i> (2001) ▪ Mordecai Gerstein, <i>The Man Who Walked Between the Towers</i> (2003) ▪ Jon Klassen, <i>I Want My Hat Back</i> (2011) ▪ Jon Klassen, <i>This Is Not My Hat</i> (2012) ▪ David Wiesner, <i>Tuesday</i> (1991) ▪ Post on the Week 2 discussion board as you read. The discussion board closes at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, July 26. ▪ Work on bibliographic essay
<p>Week 3 (July 27-August 2)</p> <p>Graphic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study the Week 3 Reading Notes ▪ Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scott McCloud, <i>Understanding Comics</i> ▪ Gene Luen Yang, <i>American Born Chinese</i> (2006) ▪ Post on the Week 3 discussion board as you read. The discussion

Narratives	board closes at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, August 2. ▪ Work on bibliographic essay
Week 4 (August 3-9) Graphic Narrative Meets Cinema	▪ Study the Week 4 Reading Notes ▪ Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>L'Arrivee d'un Train a La Ciotat (Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat)</i>, 1896, by Louis Lumiere, at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RjtXXypztyw ▪ <i>Escamotage d'une dame au théâtre Robert Houdin (Vanishing Lady)</i>, 1896, by Georges Méliès, at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7-x93QaqJU ▪ <i>Le Voyage dans la lune (A Trip to the Moon)</i>, 1902, by Georges Méliès, at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1eVtv1YyzOU&feature=related ▪ Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brian Selznick, <i>The Invention of Hugo Cabret</i> (2006) ▪ Post on the Week 4 discussion board as you read. The discussion board closes at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, August 9. ▪ Work on bibliographic essay
Week 5 (August 10-13) Annotated Bibliography	▪ Submit annotated bibliography (course paper), before 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, August 13 ▪ Take the ungraded, no-pressure post-test located in Week 5

Annotated Bibliography
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For the writing assignment due at the end of Week 5 (by 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, August 13th), you will write an annotated bibliography based on 6-7 scholarly articles or book chapters that you have carefully selected from searching the MLA International Database, at Gee Library. Each annotation should be 150-200 words in length, not counting the formal citation information, which should be in either the most current *MLA Handbook* or *Chicago Manual of Style* format. In addition, you will write an introduction to the articles you have chosen, which should be about 650-700 words in length. This short essay will introduce your reader to the entries that follow by providing an overview and laying out a unifying theme that runs throughout the entries in the bibliography.

I have placed an example in Docsharing in eCollege, which is part of an assignment that was submitted by a student in an earlier English 504 class with Dr. Stewart. Take a look at how the essay lays out the issue of superhero comics as literature, and how each source is summarized.

Some sample ideas about how you might narrow your topic:

- Focus on an individual book or type of book (e.g., *American Born Chinese*; graphic narratives)
- Focus on a collection of related books (e.g. picture books about the Holocaust; picture books about divorce)
- Focus on a particular time frame (e.g. picture books of the 1930s)
- Focus on a particular theoretical or ideological viewpoint (e.g. books that lend themselves to a Marxist; gender issues in picture books)

No matter what you choose as your focus, remember that you are looking for scholarly articles and/or book chapters that offer critical commentary on the primary texts. Your bibliography will not describe the primary source material or literature; it will describe some of the secondary, scholarly work that has been published in the field.

For those of you new to graduate classes in English, your first stop should be the MLA International Bibliography, available through the databases page for Gee Library. Using relevant search terms, you will pull up a list of articles and book chapters related to what you are searching for. For many of these, you will need to request a copy of the article (or book) through our Interlibrary Loan (ILL) department. Our fabulous folks in ILL are fast, but they don't do overnight delivery--you will want to order any necessary articles just **as soon as possible**, preferably by the end of this first week.

If you are not familiar with how to access the MLA database (and other databases) or how to use Interlibrary Loan at TAMU-C's Gee Library, please contact one of the reference librarians there, who will be happy to show you the ropes. Also, it should go without saying, but you need to find **scholarly** articles, published in academic journals and books. Those are not, as a general rule, available via open access on the web, and certainly do use general online information from the web, since that's not scholarly.

Annotated Bibliography Rubric
English 504

Introductory Essay

Clear opening sentences provide specific focus for work (10 pts) _____
Detailed overview of how articles unified/connected (20 pts) _____
Adequate length (about 650-700 words minimum) (10 pts) _____

Annotated Bibliography Entries

6-7 scholarly articles discussed (8 pts) _____
Correct length (150-200 words per entry) (8 pts) _____
Citations presented in MLA or Chicago Style (8 pts) _____
Clear reiteration of article's central thesis (8 pts) _____
Succinct, description of article as a whole (15 pts) _____

Editing

Syntax, spelling, grammar, style (13 pts) _____

TOTAL (n/100) _____