

LITERATURE FOR ADOLESCENTS

I. Introductory Information:

- A. Department: English, Journalism, and Philosophy
- B. Departmental Catalogue Number: ENGL 350
- C. Course Title: Literature for Adolescents
- D. Credit in Terms of Semester Hours: 3 Hours
- E. Clock Hours Per Week: 3 Hours
- F. Restrictions Upon Student Registration: None

II. Description of the Course:

A preprofessional study of young adult literature designed for teachers, librarians, and others who use literature in dealing with adolescents. In addition to a critical survey of material written for or suitable for young adults, consideration is given to techniques for using these materials in middle, junior, and senior high schools to develop adolescents' enjoyment of reading and to promote reading maturity. Additional topics include current trends in the field and specialized sources of information about young adults and their reading.

III. Exposition:

A. Objectives:

A student who has taken this course will:

1. Be aware of the philosophy and general nature of adolescent literature.
2. Be cognizant of a wide variety of materials written for and/or suitable for young adult readers and understand their use as bridges to enjoyment of both classic and superior contemporary adult literature.
3. Use literary standards for critical evaluation of reading for young adults.
4. Understand basic principles of reading guidance and will have practiced these principles in a tutorial setting with one or more adolescent readers.
5. Know the nature and use of specialized sources of information about books having appeal and meaning for adolescent readers.

B. Activities and Requirements:

1. Students will attend classes and participate in group activities including large and small group discussions and role-playing demonstrations of effective group and individual use of adolescent literary materials.
2. Students will complete all reading assignments, participate in discussions of them, and keep a critical log of these readings.
3. Students will complete all written assignments.
4. Preservice English teachers will observe and report on literature classes in the public schools. All students will in cooperation with public school teachers participate in an individualized reading guidance project involving weekly meetings one-on-one with a volunteer adolescent reader. Each class member will keep a log of these tutorial experiences, evaluate the status and progress of the adolescent reader with whom he works, and report orally to the class about the insights gained through this tutorial project.
5. Students will take announced and unannounced quizzes as well as unit tests.

C. Major Units and Time Allotted:

1. Introduction (2 weeks)
 - A. The nature and philosophy of literature for young adults.
 - B. The young adult and his reading
 - (1) Adolescent reading interests
 - (2) Stages of reading development and their implications for selection of reading materials for young adults
 - (3) Special literary characteristics of books written for young adults
2. A survey of literature written for young adults (10 weeks)
 - (1) Brief survey of early, traditional young adult literature (1800-1966)
 - (2) Contemporary young adult literature (realistic novels, romances, adventure and suspense, science fiction, poetry, biography, nonfiction)

- (3) Standard adult literature which appeals to adolescents and has cultural value for them
 - (4) Ethnic literature (Blacks, American Indians, Chicanos, Asiatics)
3. Techniques for using adolescent literature to promote reading maturity and enjoyment (3 weeks)
- (1) Basic principles of reading guidance and motivation
 - (2) Reading ladders: planning for growth
 - (3) Estimating difficulty: levels of reading and concept difficulty
 - (4) Special materials for reluctant, advanced, and learning-disabled readers
 - (5) Controversial books: coping with censorship

NOTE: Sections 2 and 3 may be presented concurrently when appropriate. For example, the consideration of censorship (Section 3) is a logical accompaniment to a discussion of adult fiction and its use in the classroom (Section 2).

D. Suggested Text and Bibliography:

Text: Donelson, Kenneth and Alleen Pace Nilsen. Literature for Today's Young Adults. 2nd ed. Glenview IL: Scott Foresman, 1985.

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See also periodicals such as School Library Journal, The ALAN Review, New York Times Book Review, Ideas Plus, English Journal, etc. for information about new publications for young adult readers.

IV. Standards:

Grades will be assigned in accordance with the grading policy of the University. Specifically, evaluation will be based on the quality of work demonstrated by students in meeting the requirements noted in section B.1 above.