

Literature in English: Literary Paradigms (A006663)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2027-2028

A (semester 2) English Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2027-2028

Bricker, Andrew	LW07	lecturer-in-charge
McCausland, Elly	LW07	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2027-2028

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Teaching in Languages(main subject Linguistics and Literature)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - English)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Greek)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Italian)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Latin)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Scandinavian Studies)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Spanish)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - English)	5	A
Exchange Programme Cultures and Languages in Context	5	A
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature	5	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Children's literature; medieval; early modern; eighteenth century; modern

Position of the course

A transhistorical study of children's literature

Contents

This course offers a historically wideranging and theoretically informed exploration of children's literature from the Middle Ages to the present day. It examines how texts for and about children have been shaped by changing ideas of childhood, education, morality, imagination, and readership, situating literary works within their broader sociocultural and ideological contexts. Beginning with medieval and early modern didactic texts, fables, and folklore, the course traces the emergence of children's literature as a distinct category in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and follows its development through its "Golden Age," modernism, postwar publishing, and contemporary global and multimedia forms. Alongside close readings of key texts, the course introduces students to the major theoretical debates and paradigms that have shaped the academic study of children's literature. These include constructions of childhood and the child reader; questions of power, authority, and ideology; canon formation and literary value; gender, race, class, and colonialism; fantasy and realism; and the relationship between pedagogy, pleasure, and control. The course also engages with critical approaches drawn from literary theory, cultural studies, book history, and childhood studies, encouraging students to reflect on how theory reshapes the

interpretation of texts written across periods and genres.

Students are encouraged to think critically about continuity and change in representations of childhood, to interrogate the cultural work children's literature performs, and to consider the ethical and political dimensions of writing for young audiences. By combining historical breadth with sustained theoretical engagement, the course equips students with the conceptual frameworks and analytical skills necessary for advanced study and research in children's literature.

Initial competences

- Academic proficiency in writing
- C1 English language level in presentation
- Completion of English Literature: Introduction (A00575)
- Completion of English Literature: Overview up to 1800 (A005757) and Overview 1800 to the present (A005756)
- Completion of at least one "English Literature III" course or equivalent
- Familiarity with literary and critical theory and cultural analysis

Final competences

- 1 • Demonstrate insight into the development of English children's literature over past centuries.
- 2 • Critically examine and evaluate works of children's literature
- 3 • Engage critically with historical, cultural, and ideological contexts for children's literature, childhood education, and the construction of childhood
- 4 • Formulate an original research question about a chosen topic and conduct the research necessary to answer that question
- 5 • Evaluate and use relevant critical material
- 6 • Evaluate and engage with advanced critical concepts

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Seminar

Extra information on the teaching methods

Classes combine short lectures with extended seminar discussions, with active student participation

- *No lecture recordings are provided for this course (interactive teaching format).*

Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games*

Indicative price: € 15

Optional: no

Language : English

Author : Suzanne Collins

Online Available : No

Available in the Library : No

Available through Student Association : No

Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive

Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : one-time

Type: Handbook

Name: R.M. Ballantyne, *The Coral Island* (Oxford World Classics edition)

Indicative price: € 15

Optional: no

Language : English

Author : Ballantyne

Online Available : No

Available in the Library : No

Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive

Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : one-time

Type: Handbook

Name: A picturebook that foregrounds multisensory communication and multisensory reading
Indicative price: € 15
Optional: no
Language : English
Author : n/a
Online Available : Yes
Available in the Library : No
Available through Student Association : No
Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive
Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : one-time
Additional information: A picturebook that foregrounds multisensory communication and multisensory reading (e.g., sound buttons, books with textures, books with smells, fabric books, pop-up books, books with a CD, books with an app, wordless books, audiobooks, etc.)

Type: Handbook

Name: Geraldine McCaughrean, *Where the World Ends*
Indicative price: € 15
Optional: no
Language : English
Author : Geraldine McCaughrean
Online Available : No
Available in the Library : No
Available through Student Association : No
Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive
Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : one-time

Type: Handbook

Name: Philippa Pearce, *Tom's Midnight Garden*
Indicative price: € 15
Optional: no
Language : English
Author : Philippa Pearce
Online Available : No
Available in the Library : No
Available through Student Association : No
Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive
Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : one-time

References

Required

- R.M. Ballantyne, *The Coral Island* (Oxford World Classics edition)
- Philippa Pearce, *Tom's Midnight Garden*
- Geraldine McCaughrean, *Where the World Ends*
- Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games*
- A picturebook that foregrounds multisensory communication and multisensory reading (e.g., sound buttons, books with textures, books with smells, fabric books, pop-up books, books with a CD, books with an app, wordless books, audiobooks, etc.)

Additional materials will be provided via Ufora.

Course content-related study coaching

Interactive teaching in the classroom and online ; opportunity to discuss the preparation of the paper by appointment

Assessment moments

continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Oral assessment, Participation, Written assessment

(Approved)

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

- Research Proposal for Final Research Project: a short research-intensive proposal for the final research project
- Final research project: an extended, research-intensive final project
- Oral Exam: a one-on-one oral examination with course instructor(s) about all assigned readings and concepts across the semester

Calculation of the examination mark

- Research Proposal for Final Research Project - 10%
- Final research project – 40%
- Oral Exam - 50%

Facilities for Working Students

1. Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year
2. Feedback can be given during an appointment during or after office hours