Course Description:
Welcome! Many of us chose to become English teachers because we love literature. We began reading at a young age, we read voraciously, and we are outspoken about the many benefits, both intellectual and emotional, of reading books. However, we soon discover that many adolescents in our classrooms do not share our views. In fact, some of them claim to hate reading and do it as little as possible, and when they do read, they see little benefit in it. We find as teachers that our job is not only to “introduce” students to good literature, but also to introduce them to the very act of reading and the pleasure it can bring. We find we have to provide students with the opportunity (and convince them they should take this opportunity) to lose themselves in a good book.

There is a WebCT site that accompanies this class. It is available through the WebCT home page at http://webct.cc.purdue.edu and then by logging in using your career account log in and password. On this site will be the class syllabus, class assignment sheets, some articles to be read and responded to, and a discussion board which we will use weekly. There are also places to “turn in” work electronically which we will use as often as possible, especially for the web-based, distance learning, and photography related projects.

This course will explore several facets of teaching literature in high schools in an effort to prepare you for the job of creating and nurturing young readers: These facets include 1) reasons for including literature in the curriculum and how to select literature for classroom use; 2) suggestions for devising and implementing a response-based literature program; 3) approaches to teaching young adult literature; 4) strategies for assisting struggling readers, and 5) exploration of professional resources concerning the teaching of literature in the secondary school.

Course Goals:
- Identify and explore the differences between “canonical” and “young adult” texts
- Interrogate why we teach literature and how we know what books to use with students
- Be familiar and comfortable with response-based literature teaching strategies
- Identity courses of action when we have students who struggle with reading
- Read and respond to three young adult books representing different genres
- Begin to understand that we are teachers of literacy as well as of literature

Required Texts:
- *Critical Encounters in High School English: Teaching Literary Theory to Adolescents* by Deborah Appelman (Teachers College Press 2000)
Recommended Text:
• *From Hinton to Hamlet: Building Bridges Between Young Adult Literature and the Classics* by Sarah K. Herz with Donald R. Gallo (Greenwood 1996)

YA Books:
• *Gathering Blue* by Lois Lowry (Houghton Mifflin 2000)
• *True Believer* by Virginia Euwer Wolff (Atheneum 2001)
• *Whale Talk* by Chris Crutcher (Greenwillow 2001)

Course Requirements:
• *Attendance and participation.* (10% of grade) If you are unable to attend class, please contact me in advance. You are expected to be in class every time the class meets, unless there are dire circumstances. If you miss 3 classes, your grade may be lowered; if you miss five classes, your grade will be lowered. When you are in class, you are expected to participate in class discussions, in-class writings, and small group work.

• *Complete all reading assignments and write electronic responses to readings and class discussions* (15% of grade) Every week, you will post at least one response to the previous week’s reading assignments and class discussions and one response to another student’s post. There will be a minimum requirement of 15 total posts (we are skipping Thanksgiving week). These posts should be reflective, thoughtful, and critical. They will be posted to the course WebCT site Discussion Board.

• *Partner teaching or pedagogical discussion of literary text of your choice.* (20% of grade) You will select a partner and a young adult or classic literary text to “teach” in one class period to your peers. I urge you to choose from a variety of genres, including drama, poetry, novels, short stories, and non-fiction. You will be expected to draw upon course readings and discussions when preparing and teaching your lesson or leading your pedagogical discussion. You and your partner will also turn in a “packet” containing a complete (and accurately composed) lesson plan, any necessary materials, a bibliography of sources consulted, and relevant “extensions.” Examples of lesson plans, ideas for effective pedagogical discussions, and additional, complete instructions will be distributed in class and posted on the WebCT site.

• *Short presentation analyzing on-line literature teaching resources.* (10% of grade) Working alone or with a partner, you will choose one of two types of on-line projects:

  1. Research 3-5 “sites” containing resources for teaching high school literature (I will provide a list of “starting points” in class, or you can simply engage in a web search from scratch). You should attempt to answer the following questions about the lessons and ideas you find there (in short essay format, 1-3
pages, not counting attachments or in annotated bibliography format, 1-3 pages): 1) Are the lessons theoretically sound? 2) Do they seem developmentally appropriate? 3) Are extensions and modifications easily imagined, or do the lessons/ideas seems more prescriptive? 4) Do the lessons/ideas seem to be sensitive to needs of diverse students? 5) Would you use the lessons/ideas in your own classroom or recommend them to others? Finally, you will give a 10-minute presentation to the class summarizing your findings and showing examples whenever possible.

(2) Research 3-5 young adult author websites that have potential (either in full or in part) for classroom use. Compare the information given on the sites and discuss what the site teaches about the author’s writing process, the author’s works, the author’s thematic or conceptual emphases, etc. You should answer the following questions about the sites in short essay or annotated bibliography format, 1-3 pages: (1) How does the site look? Are their visuals, images, pictures, text? Is it inviting? (2) Does the site teach anything about the writing process? (3) Does the site include the author’s own words or selected passages from his/her works? (4) Did you find the site useful in learning about the author? (5) Would you show or use this site in your classroom? If so, how? You will give a 10-minute presentation to the class summarizing your findings and showing examples whenever possible. We will link all of these sites to the class WebCT page.

- **Final project connecting young adult and classic texts.** (20% of grade) This paper will be in the form of a “take home final,” and it will require you to “connect” a YA book and a “classic” book in the spirit of Gallo’s guidelines in *From Hinton to Hamlet: Using Young Adult Novels as a Bridge to the Classics*. A complete assignment sheet will be provided in class, and books with ideas will be put on reserve. The final project will be a minimum 3-week unit plan, with at least three “exploded” (fully developed) lessons. You may use the same YA novel you may have taught in partner teaching or one of the YA books we read in class.

- **Photographic Philosophies Project.** (10% of grade) Using the digital camera owned by the English education program or the SOE, you will work in a small group to create 3-5 photographic images that represent metaphorically what you believe about teaching literature in secondary schools. These images will be downloaded and displayed in hard copy or electronic form and will be accompanied by written, explanatory text (more details to be provided later). Your projects will be “published” on the course WebCT site.

- **Video Field Experience Project.** (5% of grade) This project will consist of a via video, distance-learning connection with a middle or high school literature class somewhere in the state of Indiana (specific school still to be determined). You will participate in this link and then write a reflective response afterwards (exact requirements will be distributed at a later date).
• Final portfolio that includes all coursework and a critically reflective introduction. (10% of grade) This portfolio will be useful as you create an “interview portfolio” your student teaching semester.

Tentative Daily Schedule:

Week One: August 19-23

Monday, August 19:
Introduction to the class and each other; reading autobiographies
Why teach literature? How do we select appropriate literature for our students? What is appropriate literature for our students and how do we know?
Homework: Read syllabus and bring in questions

Wednesday, August 21:
What is young adult literature? What is the canon?
Homework: Read Chapter One in Critical Encounters
Due by Friday: Post #1 on Discussion Board in which you introduce yourself and begin to address/explore any of the above questions.

Friday, August 23:
What is a response-based approach to teaching literature?
Homework: Read Gathering Blue for Monday
Have Discussion Board post #1 posted by class time

Week Two: August 26-30

Monday, August 26:
Practice response-based strategies with Gathering Blue.
Homework: Chapter Two in Critical Encounters

Wednesday, August 28:
Ways of facilitating literature discussions: Socratic Seminar
Due by Friday: Threads post #2
Homework: Chapter Three in Critical Encounters

Friday, August 30:
Critical Theories of reading and response
Homework: Read True Believer for Monday
Have Discussion Board post #2 posted by class time
**Week Three: September 2-6**

Monday, September 2:

**Labor Day. No Class.**

Wednesday, September 4:

Practice response-based strategies with *True Believer*.
Homework: Chapter 4 in *Critical Encounters*

Friday, September 6:

Reading *Gathering Blue* through a Marxist lens
Have Discussion Board post #3 posted by class time
Homework: Read *Whale Talk* for Monday

**Week Four: September 9-13**

Monday, September 9:

Discussion of *Whale Talk*
Homework: Chapter 5 in *Critical Encounters*

Wednesday, September 11:

Reading *True Believer* through a feminist lens

Friday, September 13:

Using drama, role-playing, and readers’ theater in the high school class.
Have Discussion Board post #4 posted by class time
Homework: Chapter 6 in *Critical Encounters*

**Week Five: September 16-20**

Monday, September 16:

Reading *Whale Talk* through the lens of deconstruction
Homework: Chapter 7 in *Critical Encounters*

Wednesday, September 18:

Strategies for assisting struggling readers in high school
Homework: Chapter 8 in *Critical Encounters*

Friday, September 20:

Discussion of end of *Critical Encounters* book
Literature Circles and text sets
Have Discussion Board post #5 posted by class time
**Week Six: September 23-27**

Monday, September 23:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #1:

Homework: *Literature and Lives* Chapter 1: “A Course in Contemporary World Literature” and the introduction to the book

Wednesday, September 25:
Discussion of *Literature and Lives* Chapter 1: “A Course in Contemporary World Literature”
What is a “cultural studies” approach to teaching literature?

Friday, September 27:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #2:

Read *Literature and Lives* Chapter 2: “Teaching about Homelessness”
Have Discussion Board post #6 posted by class time

**Week Seven: September 30-October 4**

Monday, September 30:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #3:

Wednesday, October 2:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #4:

Friday, October 4:
Discussion of *Literature and Lives* Chapter 2: “Teaching About Homelessness”
Censorship and the high school literature class
Homework: *Literature and Lives* Chapter 4: “Addressing the Youth Violence Crisis”
Have Discussion Board post #7 posted by class time

**Week Eight: October 7-11**

Monday, October 7:

**October Break—No Class**

Wednesday, October 9:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #5:
_______________________________________

Friday, October 11:
**Class Cancelled:** Indiana Teachers of Writing Conference in Indianapolis
Have Discussion Board post #8 posted by class time

**Week Nine: October 14-18**

Monday, October 14:
Discuss Literature and Lives Chapter 4
Homework: Literature and Lives Chapter 5: “Shakespeare and the New Multicultural British and World Literatures”

Wednesday, October 16:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #6:
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Homework: Literature and Lives Chapter 6: “Huckleberry Finn and the Issue of Race in Today’s Classroom” and Chapter 8: Conclusion

Friday, October 18:
Discussion of Literature and Lives Chapters 6 and 8
Have Discussion Board post #9 posted by class time

**Week Ten: October 21-25**

Monday, October 21:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #7:
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Wednesday, October 23:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #8:
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Friday, October 25:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #9:
_______________________________________
Have Discussion Board post #10 posted by class time

**Week Eleven: October 28-November 1**

Monday, October 28:
On-Line Teaching presentations

Wednesday, October 30:
On-Line Teaching presentations

Friday, November 1:
On-Line Teaching presentations
Have Discussion Board post #11 posted by class time

Week Twelve: November 4-8

Monday, November 4:
On-Line Literature Teaching Presentations
Due: Written component of On-Line Teaching Presentation, if not turned in day of presentation

Wednesday, November 6:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #10:

Friday, November 8:
Guest presenter: Modifying Literature Lessons for Diverse Learners: Dr. Teresa Taber, Professor of Special Education
Have Discussion Board post #12 posted by class time

Week Thirteen: November 11-15

Monday, November 11:
Video conference interaction with literature classroom

Wednesday, November 13:
Video conference interaction with literature classroom

Friday, November 15:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #11:

Due: Written reflection about video conferencing experience
Have Discussion Board post #13 posted by class time
Homework: Read “Media Literacy and Cultural Studies” by Carmen Luke (handout)

Week Fourteen: November 18-22

Monday, November 18:
Popular culture and visual media in the literature classroom

Wednesday, November 20:
Partner Teaching/Pedagogical Discussion #12:
Friday, November 22:

**No class.** I will be out of town at the NCTE conference. Work time for Photographic Philosophies Project.

Have Discussion Board post #14 posted by class time.

Homework: Read “Mission Impossible” by Scholes (handout)

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**Week Fifteen: November 25-29**

Monday, November 25:

Literature and standardized testing in Indiana and beyond

Wednesday, November 27:

**No Class. Thanksgiving Break.**

Friday, November 29:

**No Class. Thanksgiving Break**

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**Week Sixteen: December 2-6**

Monday, December 2:

Photographic Project share day

Wednesday, December 4:

Course wrap-up—looking back, looking forward

Friday, December 6:

Course evaluations and celebration!

Have Discussion Board Post #15 posted by class time.

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**Week Seventeen: December 9-13**

FINALS WEEK

**Portfolios and final unit plan projects due at my office in Heavilon 436—on Friday, December 13th NLT 5PM**

Students with disabilities must be registered with Adaptive Programs in the Office of the Dean of Students before classroom accommodations can be provided.

If you have a documented disability that will impact your work in this class, please contact me to discuss your needs.