



### Course Description

The undergraduate catalog describes ENGL 405 as “a survey of fiction for adolescents with special attention to literary theories that assist its interpretation,” which broadly describes what we will be covering in this course. We’ll also discuss the history of young-adult (YA) literature, and examine the ways in which authors, teachers, and critics imagine such literature functions. This semester, we’ll also look at the ways in which the idea of “community” plays out in contemporary YA literature.

As a writing intensive (“W”) course, this class requires a significant amount of written work: 20 polished pages of writing, total, by the end of the semester, in addition to drafts and informal writing assignments. We will do peer responding to these drafts in class, and you are always welcome to bring drafts to me to discuss as you revise them. Since this is a 400-level class, I will expect you to demonstrate your understanding of course content by incorporating original research (beyond the required course materials) into your final project. We’ll discuss all of this more as the course gets underway.

### Contact Information

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 Class website: <https://ecampus.wvu.edu/webct/logon/1634406998061>  
 Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:30-4:00 p.m., and by appointment

**Social Justice Statement:** West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veterans status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Disability Services (304/293-6700). Feel free to talk with me about how we can work together most effectively.

### Texts

#### REQUIRED:

Alexie, Sherman. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*.  
 Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Speak*.  
 Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*.  
 Collins, Suzanne. *Hunger Games*.  
 Ehrenberg, Pamela. *Tillmon County Fire*.  
 Yang, Gene Luen. *American Born Chinese*.  
 Zusak, Marcus. *The Book Thief*.

## OPTIONAL TEXTS FOR LIT-CIRCLE PROJECT:

Bray, Libba. *Going Bovine*.  
 Cashore, Kristin. *Graceling*.  
 Northrop, Michael. *Gentlemen*.  
 Williams-Garcia, Rita. *Jumped*.

**Policies and Procedures**

It should go without saying, but ***please turn off cell phones and put them away during class***. If you're expecting an important call, please set your phone to vibrate and take the call in the hallway.

**Attendance**—Since most of the learning in this course will happen via class discussion, I expect you to attend every class. I trust that you'll check in if you've missed class to find out what you've missed, and that you will get notes from another class member. Missed in-class work must be made up before the next class meeting—no exceptions.

**Late arrivals**—We will start class on time, so please plan to be here at 10:00 a.m. Late arrivals are really disruptive, and if chronic lateness becomes a problem, it will affect your final grade.

**Leaving early**—Please let me know before class begins if you need to leave early, and what time you will need to leave. In this situation, I'd also appreciate it if you'd sit close to the door so that you can slip out unobtrusively.

**End of class**—The end of class is usually devoted to summarizing material or making announcements, so please refrain from packing up books, etc., so that you don't miss anything yourself or distract others. I know that some professors have a bad habit of going way over the scheduled ending time for their classes (I had some of them myself)—but I do keep track of the time and promise to always let you out at the class' scheduled ending time.

**Course Requirements**

To pass the class, you must complete all major assignments. Detailed instructions about each of these assignments will be provided separately. Your grade will be calculated as follows:

Blogs	30%	
Final project (10-12 pages)	30%	
Project proposal	5%	
Preliminary research report	5%	
Annotated bibliography		15%
Group project/presentation	10%	
Discussion questions	5%	

**Grades**

Most assignments will be graded on a 100-point scale, with 90-100 being an A, 80 to 89 a B, 70 to 79 a C, 60 to 69 a D, and anything below 60 an F. Shorter assignments will be graded on a 5- or 10-point scale, or (in some cases) just with a checkmark to indicate completion.

**Late Papers/Assignments and Extensions**

All assignments are due in class, at the beginning of class, on the day they are due. Papers submitted by e-mail or put in my mailbox instead of in class will have 5 pts. deducted from the paper's final score, and papers turned in in any form after class will lose 5 pts. per day. (So, a paper turned in on the day it is due but after class will lose 5 pts., a paper turned in the following day will lose 10 pts., and so on.)

# ENGL 405: Adolescent Fiction

PLEASE NOTE: I'm always willing to grant extensions, but you must talk to me first and submit a written extension request to me before the assignment is due. I will ask you to set your own revised due date, subject to my approval, and you will be held to that due date.

## Academic Integrity

My policy regarding plagiarism is zero tolerance: plagiarize even one part of one assignment, and fail the entire course. Period. If I can document the plagiarism, I will also turn the materials over to the chair of the English Department and the Dean of Student Life. However, I am committed to helping you learn how to cite and document sources correctly, so please feel free to ask questions when they come up.

The following definitions are from the *West Virginia University Undergraduate Catalog*. Please see the catalog's section on Academic Integrity/Dishonesty for the full definition and discussion of procedures.

Plagiarism. "Submitting, without appropriate acknowledgment . . . material that has been knowingly obtained or copied in whole or in part, from the work of others, whether such source is published or not, including (but not limited to) another individual's academic composition, compilation, or other product, or commercially prepared paper."

Cheating. "Doing academic work for another student, or providing one's own work for another student to copy and submit as his/her own."

### DAY-TO-DAY SCHEDULE

("eCampus" = Readings available on class' eCampus site)

#### WEEK ONE

T Jan 12 Introduction to course  
R 14 READ: eCampus, Gauthier's "Whose Community? Where Is the 'YA' in YA Literature?"

#### WEEK TWO

T 19 **DUE: Blog 1**  
READ: Ehrenberg, *Tillmon County Fire*, pp. 1-79  
R 21 READ: Finish *Tillmon County Fire* [Blogs on TCF must be posted before class meets]

#### WEEK THREE

T 26 READ: Collins, *Hunger Games*, part 1  
R 28 READ: *Hunger Games*, Part 2

#### WEEK FOUR

T Feb 2 READ: Finish *Hunger Games* [Blogs on HG must be posted before class meets]  
R 4 READ: Zusak, *The Book Thief*, parts 1 and 2 (through p. 122)

#### WEEK FIVE

T 9 READ: *The Book Thief*, parts 3 and 4 (through p. 238)  
R 11 READ: *The Book Thief*, parts 5-7 (through p. 403)

#### WEEK SIX

T 16 READ: Finish *The Book Thief* [Blogs on *Book Thief* must be posted before class meets]  
R 18 READ: Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, through p. 116

# ENGL 405: Adolescent Fiction

## WEEK SEVEN

- T 23 READ: Finish *Absolutely True Diary* [Blogs on *Diary* must be posted before class meets]  
 R 25 READ: Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street* (all) [Blogs on *Mango* must be posted before class meets]

## WEEK EIGHT

- T Mar 2 READ: eCampus articles on graphic novels  
 IN CLASS: Introduction to graphic novels; discussion of annotated bibliography and final projects  
 R 4 READ: Yang's *American Born Chinese*, through p. 130

## WEEK NINE

- T 9 READ: Finish *American Born Chinese* [Blogs on *ABC* must be posted before class meets]  
 R 11 IN CLASS: Library research orientation  
 DUE: PROJECT PROPOSAL

## WEEK TEN

- T 16 READ: Anderson, *Speak*, to section titled "Stunted" (p. 102)  
 R 18 READ: Finish Anderson's *Speak* [Blogs on *Speak* must be posted before class meets]

## WEEK ELEVEN

- T 23 Research conferences (preliminary research summaries due at conference)  
 R 25 Research conferences (preliminary research summaries due at conference)

## SPRING BREAK—HAVE A GOOD ONE!

## WEEK TWELVE

- T Apr 6 READ: eCampus essays on lit circles and wikis  
 IN CLASS: First literature circle group meeting  
 R 8 IN CLASS: Literature circle meeting

## WEEK THIRTEEN

- T 13 IN CLASS: Literature circle meeting  
 R 15 IN CLASS: Literature circle meeting  
**DUE: Annotated bibliography**

## WEEK FOURTEEN

- T 20 DUE: First draft of final project and **final blog entry** (prompt TBA)  
 IN CLASS: Responding session  
 R 22 IN CLASS: Presentations

## WEEK FIFTEEN

- T 27 IN CLASS: Presentations  
 R 29 DUE: Second draft of final project  
 IN CLASS: Responding session & presentations; course wrap-up and evaluations

## FINALS WEEK

Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup>—Final exam period, 11 a.m. -1 p.m.—Final projects due during final exam period