



RED 6656
Literature for a Diverse Society
50516 900
Summer 2026

Instructor Name

Janet Richards

University Course Description

Focuses on the examination of historical and contemporary multicultural children's, adolescent and young adult literature in order to gain a pluralistic perspective of society. On-line course requires intensive writing and how to write in an Academic Voice.

Course Prerequisites

Prerequisite(s):

Corequisite(s):

Course Format

The course is organized through a series of modules that students will complete during the semester. These modular units of study include synchronous and asynchronous online course sessions, content presentation, and assignments. The content of each unit is outlined below, but new topics will also emerge based on students' needs and the collective understanding of participants. Therefore, the instructor will open

the units of study on a schedule and engage in planned synchronous sessions to interact with participants. Students are responsible for checking the online course materials for weekly postings and updates.

Student Learning Outcomes

During the course, students will:

1. Examine the historical development and current status of literature representing diverse cultures. (FEAP 2d,h, 3d,h; CF 4; ILA 1, 4; FRC 2.G.4; ESOL 2.2.A, 3.1.A,B; FLCS 12.2)
2. Develop an awareness of the functions of literature and how literature is shaped by socio-cultural and historical processes. (FEAP 2d,h, 3d,h; CF 4; ILA 4; FRC 1.B.5, 1.C.6, 1.G.2, 2.C.3, 4.8; FLCS 7.1; ESOL 2.2.C, 2.3.D)
3. Explore issues and concerns relating to the authentic portrayal of diverse cultures in literature leading the reader to exhibit an understanding and respect for the similarities and differences of various societies. (FEAP 2d,h, 3d,h; CF 4; FRC 1.9.A.,I.C.5; ILA 4; FLCS 8.3; ESOL 1.1.b)
4. Explore the thematic concerns, range of literary genre, and major authors, poets, and illustrators who create literature representing various ethnic and cultural groups. (FEAP 3c; CF 4; IRA 4; FRC 2.G.4, 4.8; FLCS 7.1, 8.3; ESOL 4.2.A)
5. Demonstrate the ability to accurately select and evaluate poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and drama that represents diverse societies. (FEAP 2d,h, 3d,h; CF 2, 4; ILA 4, 5; FRC 4.8; FLCS 7.1, 10.1; ESOL 3.3.A, 4.2.A)
6. Identify techniques for making connections between families and the literature program (FEAP 2d, 4e, 5d; CF 3, 5; ILA 4; FRC 2.B.3, 2.D.2, 4.9, 4.9.10, FLCS 13.1; ESOL 1.1.C)
7. Demonstrate the ability to design and implement appropriate literature-based programs in language arts and other content areas to guide all students toward acceptance of and respect for the differences and similarities of all cultural and ethnic groups. (FEAP 2d,h, 3d,h; CF 2; ILA 2, 4, 5; FRC 1.B.4, 2.G.4, 4.9.10; FLCS 8.3, 10.1; ESOL 1.1.A, 1.1.C, 1.1.D, 1.1.F, 3.3.2.E, 3.2.I, 3.3.A).

Course Objectives

During the course, the instructor will:

1. Model various text-based, arts-based, and performance-based strategies that enable students to interpret literature that is constructed through multiple modes (e.g., images, text, sound, etc.).
2. Present the central conduits of collection, curation, distribution, and prizing of children's literature and how cultural entities and societal factors affect access

to diverse books.

3. Guide students through an examination of diverse portrayals in children's literature and innovative contributions from notable authors and illustrators who publish diverse books.
4. Demonstrate how to critique children's and young adult literature for a balanced portrayal of contemporary and historical issues that have social, cultural, political, and global impact.
5. Demonstrate how to select the right book for the right reader at the right time by considering student interest and diverse perspectives that have potential for shaping and shifting students' awareness of common human experiences and the need for social justice.

Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

Books

- Schneider, J.J. (2016). *The inside, outside, and upside downs of children's literature: From poets and pop-ups to princesses and porridge* [E-book]. USF Scholar Commons: Retrieved from http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/childrens_lit_textbook/1/
- Bang, M. (2000). *Picture this: How pictures work*. Chronicle Books. [Scans are available in the Canvas course].
- Selections of Children's Literature will vary each semester depending on the topics selected by the instructor and students. Children's literature is available for purchase at online bookstores; however, all books are typically available for free at public libraries.

Articles

- Selected research articles will be available on Canvas.

Supplementary (Optional) Texts and Materials

Supplementary (Optional) Texts and Materials

In order to apply various text-based, arts-based, and performance-based strategies to interpret a body of literature that is constructed through multiple modes, students will need access to the following:

- Access to children's literature
- Basic art supplies
- Tech tools (camera for taking photographs and recording video)

How to Succeed in this Course

Online courses require students to be self-motivated, conscientious, diligent, and ethical. Online courses also require students to be excellent readers, digital navigators, and communicators. The course content is presented through modules built with text, video, and images as well as through live video sessions each week.

Characteristics of Successful Students

- Read across multimodal sources and make connections across assigned readings, module content, and class sessions.
- Complete all readings/viewings for each module.
- Carefully follow directions, adhere to rubrics, and submit work before deadlines.
- Check Canvas and emails daily for announcements.

Canvas Modules and Meetings:

In this course, we will use USF's learning management system (LMS), Canvas.

- If new to Canvas, read [this guide](#).
- If you need help learning how to perform various tasks related to this course or other courses being offered in Canvas, please consult the Canvas help guides. You may also contact USF's IT department at (813) 974-1222 or help@usf.edu.

Grading Scale

Course Grading Scale

Course Grading Scale			
	Grading Scale (%)		
94-100	A	74-76	C
90-93	A-	70-73	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
84-86	B	64-66	D

80-83	B-	60-63	D-
77-79	C+	0 - 59	F

Grade Categories and Weights

Basis for Final Grade

Assessment	Percent of Final Grade
Readings & Quizzes	10%
Read Aloud/Book Talk*	20%
Classroom Library	10%
Multimodal Responses	30%
Literary Analysis/Discussion Boards *	30%
100%	

Standard grammar, spelling, and punctuation are required on all written assignments. You are responsible for checking the online system for all assignments and corresponding rubrics.

Essay and Project Assignments

A. Readings and Quizzes (10%)

1. Weekly modules will include topical discussion boards and quizzes based on course readings.

B: Read Aloud/Book Talk: Modeling Reading and Advertising Books (10%)

1. How do you share books with students? For this assignment, you will demonstrate effective reading aloud strategies by selecting an appropriate book for reading aloud (use your textbook for ideas) and reading aloud to your peers as well as to a group of students.
2. You will present three book talks to demonstrate your ability to choose the right book for the right reader at the right time. After selecting a piece of literature, develop a book talk to introduce the book to three different groups of students.. ***You should select books that represents diversity within culture.***

1. C. Classroom Library (10%)

Define the elements of a library for diverse students. Use Pinterest, Goodreads, or Amazon Wishlist to develop an expansive book collection for a classroom or resource room for a grade level.

- Describe the demographics of your audience.
- Provide a goal or vision for your library.
- Provide a rationale for your book selections, citing particular books to demonstrate how they meet your goal/vision.
- Include the link to your library.

1. D. Multimodal Responses (30%)

Reading literature often elicits various responses. You will respond to selected books by making or doing something based on the reading. Each assignment will include specific directions, explicit criteria, and an ongoing focus on **appropriate language and communication methods that consider others' points of view and respect differences**. Each response will vary to match the content of the book—focusing on a specific theme, event, or portrayal.

A. Literary Analysis/Discussion Boards (30%)

You will read a selection of children's literature that features portrayals of different groups of people. Each text set will represent viewpoints of different authors and illustrators who have insider/outsider perspectives on the issues and who demonstrate differences in people's values, beliefs, attitudes, and actions. The children's literature will also include selections from different genres, offering you different perspectives through varied presentation of viewpoints and positions as well as different language and communication methods.

After you read selected children's literature, the instructor will provide a series of critical questions to encourage close reading and deep thinking. Critical questions require complex thinking and support your understanding of literature by requiring you to examine how global issues and systems are experienced at different scales and how they are presented to youth across cultures.

Each writing assignment will include specific directions, explicit criteria, and an ongoing focus on the process of idea development and revision as you explore issues from the perspective(s) of other groups/cultures by describing the values

and communication styles found in groups different from one's own and the way in which those differences can affect styles of verbal and nonverbal communication.

Instructor Feedback Policy & Grade Dissemination

Assignments for the course will be evaluated in different ways. For each assignment, you will receive an outline of the criteria for the assignment and a rubric for assessment. You will receive written or verbal feedback on all assignments within two weeks of submission. ***The timelines for readings and assignments will be located in the online course space.**

Assessment of Weekly Participation/Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory in synchronous sessions. Promptness is expected in synchronous sessions. Active participation and preparation for class are essential and should be demonstrated through synchronous session tools. Assignments must be turned in on time.

Course Schedule

Course Schedule

Date & Modules	Content	Assignment & Readings
Week 1 May. 18 Asynchronous Session	• Module 0 – Getting Started • Module 1 - Got Books?	Complete module 1 for first day attendance
Week 2 May. 25 Synchronous Session	• Module 2 Windows, Mirrors, and Sliding Glass Doors in Children's Literature What is critical consciousness? Critical literacy and using it to analyze children's literature	Articles on critical literacy Critical reflections
Week 3 June. 1 Asynchronous Session	• Modules 3 and 4 - Representations in Children's and Young Adult Literature Multicultural children's literature and Intersectionality	Reading and analyzing African American children's literature with critical lenses

Date & Modules	Content	Assignment & Readings
Week 4 June. 8 Asynchronous Session	• Module 5 – Appreciating the Role of Libraries and Book Stores • Module 6 – YA Fiction, Short Stories, and Poetry	Reading and analyzing Asian American children's literature with critical lenses
Week 5 June. 15 Asynchronous Session	• Module 7 – Practicing Close Viewing with Picturebooks and Graphic Novels • Module 8 – Banned Books and the Right to Read	Reading and analyzing Latinx American children's literature with critical lenses
Week 6 June. 22 Asynchronous Session	• Module 9 – Read Alouds • Module 10 – Close Viewing and Playing in Action	Reading and analyzing children's literature with intersectionality lens

USF Core Syllabus Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, pregnancy and related conditions, and sexual harassment that **apply to all courses at USF**. Be sure to review these online:

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>

Student Recordings

Florida Statute 1004.097 Free Expression on Campus

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal, educational use (USF Policy 10-048). A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach enrolled students about a particular subject.

Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty member is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the USF Student Conduct Code.

Course Policies: Grades

First Week Attendance Policy

First day attendance is determined by students' completion of Module 1. This module includes an orientation to the course, syllabus review, and short quizzes based on materials provided.

Late Work Policy:

I will not accept any late work past the last day of class, June 26th.

Extra Credit Policy:

Extra credit assignments are not built into the course. However, the instructor may decide to include extra credit at her discretion.

Grades of "Incomplete":

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course.

An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor's discretion only when the student has a demonstrated record of strong performance and becomes unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control. The course instructor and student must complete and sign the "I" Grade Contract Form that describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade the student would earn factoring in a zero for all incomplete assignments.

Rewrite Policy:

Rewrites are offered to all students on specific assignments, based on instructor discretion. The same rubric will be used and new comments provided.

Essay Commentary Policy:

Commentary on essays will be delivered in written format using Canvas tools and text boxes.

Group Work Policy:

Group work is not required. However, peer feedback and group interactions are required for discussion boards and synchronous sessions.

Final Examinations Policy: *All final exams are to be scheduled in accordance with the University's final examination policy.*

Grades of "Incomplete"

An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor's discretion only when students are unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control. The course instructor and student must complete and sign the "I" Grade Contract Form that describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade the student would earn factoring in a zero for all incomplete assignments. The due date can be negotiated and extended by student/instructor as long as it does not exceed two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses from the original date grades were due for that course. An "I" grade not cleared within the two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses (including summer semester) will revert to the grade noted on the contract.

Campus Free Expression

It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research.

In this course you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding and engaging with an idea does not require you to believe it or to agree with it.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

Canvas Modules and Meetings:

In this course, we will use USF's learning management system (LMS), Canvas. If you need help learning how to perform various tasks related to this course or other courses being offered in Canvas, please consult the Canvas help guides. You may also contact USF's IT department at (813) 974-1222 or help@usf.edu.

Recordings:

In this class, software will be used to record live class lectures and discussions. As a student in this class, your participation in live class discussions will be recorded. These recordings will be made available only to students enrolled in the class, to assist those who cannot attend the live session or to serve as a resource for those who would like to review content that was presented. Students who prefer to participate via audio only will be allowed to disable their video camera so only audio will be captured. Please discuss this option with your instructor.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Health and Wellness

Your health is a priority at the University of South Florida. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos so that the Student Outreach & Support can contact and provide helpful resources to the student in distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Title IX Policy

USF is committed to fostering a safe and respectful learning environment, free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment, in accordance with Title IX and USF Policy 0-004. If a student shares an experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship

violence with a USF employee (including faculty), that employee will notify the Title IX Office. This allows the Title IX Office to send the student an email with information about support resources and options—if it is safe to do so. Students are not required to respond to this email. The Title IX Office is a private resource. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to provide students with support measures. To speak to a confidential resource, students may contact USF Center for Victim Advocacy at 813-974-5757. Confidential resources do not notify the Title IX Office unless the student requests it. For more information about Title IX, available resources, or to make a report, please visit www.usf.edu/title-ix.

Course Hero / Chegg Policy

The USF Policy on Academic Integrity specifies that students may not use websites that enable cheating, such as by uploading or downloading material for this purpose. This does apply specifically to Chegg.com and CourseHero.com – almost any use of these websites (including uploading proprietary materials) constitutes a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Professionalism Policy

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Turnitin.com

In this course, turnitin.com may be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>. Essays are due at turnitin.com the same day as in class.

Netiquette Guidelines

1. Act professionally in the way you communicate. Treat your instructors and peers with respect, the same way you would do in a face-to-face environment. Respect other people's ideas and be constructive when explaining your views about points you may not agree with.
2. Be sensitive. Be respectful and sensitive when sharing your ideas and opinions. There will be people in your class with different linguistic backgrounds, political and religious beliefs or other general differences.

3. Proofread and check spelling. Doing this before sending an email or posting a thread on a discussion board will allow you to make sure your message is clear and thoughtful. Avoid the use of all capital letters, it can be perceived as if you are shouting, and it is more difficult to read.
4. Keep your communications focused and stay on topic. Complete your ideas before changing the subject. By keeping the message on focus you allow the readers to easily get your idea or answers they are looking for.
5. Be clear with your message. Avoid using humor or sarcasm. Since people can't see your expressions or hear your tone of voice, meaning can be misinterpreted.

Email and Discussion Board Guidelines

1. Use the subject line effectively by using a meaningful line of what your email or discussion is about.
2. Keep your emails and postings related to the course content. You should not post anything personal on a discussion board unless it is requested by the instructor.
3. Any personal, course or confidential issues should be directly communicated to the instructor via email. The discussion boards are public spaces; therefore, any issues should not be posted there.

End of Semester Student Evaluations

All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

Food and Drink Policy (for in-campus sessions only).

Please adhere to the firm policy of no beverages (other than bottled/capped water), food, tobacco products, or like items in the classroom. Your understanding of the necessity for this policy and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Learning Support and Campus Offices

Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in order to receive academic accommodations. For additional information about academic accommodations and resources, you can visit the SAS website.

[SAS website for the Tampa and Sarasota-Manatee campuses.](#)

[SAS website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, please visit the [Office of Student Success website](#).

Canvas Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by calling 813-974-1222 in Tampa or emailing help@usf.edu.

[USF IT Service Support Tampa Campus](#)

[USF IT Support St. Pete Campus](#)

[USF IT Support Sarasota-Manatee Campus](#)

Center for Victim Advocacy

The [Center for Victim Advocacy](#) empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Contact information is available online.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes the wellbeing of the campus community by providing culturally sensitive counseling, consultation, prevention, and training that enhances student academic and personal success. Contact information is available online.

[Counseling Center website for the Tampa campus.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the Sarasota-Manatee campus.](#)

Tutoring

The Tutoring Hub offers free tutoring in several subjects to USF undergraduates. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, email

asctampa@usf.edu.

[Tutoring website for the Tampa campus.](#)

[Tutoring website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

[Tutoring website for the Sarasota-Manatee campus.](#)

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate and graduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, email: writingstudio@usf.edu.

[Writing studio website for the Tampa campus.](#)

[Writing studio website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

[Writing studio website for the Sarasota-Manatee campus.](#)

Student Ombuds Office

Florida Statute 1006.51 and Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.011 require that all public institutions provide ombuds services to students. The Student Ombuds Office at USF is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent resource for students experiencing challenges related to the university. Ombuds can help students safely explore options, clarify processes, and consider next steps. [Learn more or make an appointment at usf.edu/student-ombuds.](https://usf.edu/student-ombuds)