

**LITERATURE FOR ADOLESCENTS Spring 2009**  
**ENG 471-10850- and ENG 540- 10868**

COURSE INSTRUCTOR: Professor Alleen Nilsen      CLASSROOM LL 148 T/TH 4:30 to 5:45  
 Office: LL 215-A; Phone 965-9577; e-mail: alleen.nilsen@asu.edu  
 Office Hours: T/TH 3:00 to 4:30 and by appointment (NOTE: I will usually be in my office from 10:00 until noon except when I am out supervising student teachers)

CLASS READING MATERIAL: Texts available at ASU bookstore

*Literature for Today's Young Adults*, Eighth Edition by Nilsen and Donelson Allyn & Bacon, 2009.

A book by each of our visiting authors: Jack Gantos and Chris Crowe--borrowing is fine

One of the *Twilight* books or *Host* by Stephenie Myer -- borrowing is fine

*Point of Departure: Nineteen Short Stories of Youth and Discovery* ed. By Robert S. Gold (Dell Laurel Leaf 2005 edition)

Twenty books (you choose 16 because you can count the ones you read by Stephenie Meyer, J. K. Rowling, and our two visiting authors: Jack Gantos and Chris Crowe as part of the 20). I am trying to encourage you to read from various genres. I will bring in books for you to borrow, but you will also want to buy some of your own and to borrow some from libraries. ASU has some YA titles, but your best bet will be a community library.

GRADING: I will give plus and minus grades and will grade on a modified curve meaning that in a general way you compete with each other in earning a maximum of 100 points, but I will lean the curve toward A's and B's and will make the dividing lines where there are natural breaks. NOTE TO GRADUATE STUDENTS: You have one extra assignment of reading a professional book and doing a 30-minute presentation to the class TBA.

Midterm Exam Thurs. March 5	20 points
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Final Exam Tues. May 12, 2:30 to 4:20	20 points
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Class participation based on my evaluation of your contributions to group work and presentations including presenting a poem in our poetry slam.	5 points
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Graduate student presentation or undergraduate panel participation. I have prepared sign up sheets for both the graduate book sharing and The undergraduate panels. Look them over and be ready to sign up on Wednesday Jan. 23.	10 points
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Your term project which will be a teaching plan for at least one YA novel (published within the last ten years) that you will tie in with other books, poems, nonfiction, etc.	15 points
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Four written assignments (5 pts. each) including: 1. A script for a book talk distributed to the class (due Feb. 26 or April 14) 2. A reading autobiography--due Jan. 27 3. A short story reaction--due April 9 4. A collection of ten poems--due Feb. 19	20 points
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Attendance (I will give you 10 points but will deduct one for each absence) I do not "excuse" absences, but I do provide make-up opportunities.	10 points
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## Tentative Class Schedule

**Except for Ch. 1, please read the textbook chapters before they are discussed in class.**

### January

- T-20 Introduction to the class, each other, young adult literature, and Arizona State Standards in relation to the teaching of reading and literature. I will also talk about the reading autobiography, which you will turn in on Jan 27 and will lead an introductory lecture/discussion on Text Ch. 1 "Young Adults and Their Reading"
- Th-22 Read and come to class ready to talk about the following short stories from *Point of Departure*: John Updike's "A&P," Bernard Malamud's "A Summer's Reading," William Saroyan's "Seventeen," and Nadine Gordimer's "A Company of Laughing Faces."
- T-27 Turn in reading autobiography.  
Read and come to class ready to talk about the following short stories from *Point of Departure*: Alan Sillitoe's "The Bike," Carson McCuller's "Sucker," John Collier's "Ah, the University," and William Melvin Kelley's "A Good Long Sidewalk."
- Th-29 Finish reading Text Ch. 1 and skim Text Ch. 2 "A Brief History of Young Adult Literature."  
**Panel Presentation #1 YA Lit--Is It Pop Culture or Something More?**

### February

- T-3 Read Text Ch. 3 "New Technology, New Attitudes, and New Literacies" pp. 77-94
- Th-5 Complete Text Ch. 3 pp. 95-109  
**Panel Presentation #2 Video Games as Interactive Fiction, Graphic Novels, and Other Unusual Formats**
- T-10 Read Text Ch. 4 "Contemporary Realistic Fiction: From Tragedies to Romances" pp. 111-131
- Th-12 Complete Ch. 4 pp. 132-145  
**Panel Presentation #3 What's with DYA (Dark Young Adult) Books?**
- T-17 Read Text Ch. 5 "Poetry, Drama, Humor, and New Media" pp. 147-162
- Th-19 Complete Ch. 5 pp. 163-182 Hand in your collection of 10 poems that you think you can use with students. At least five of the poems should come from poetry books prepared specifically for young readers. I will give your collection back to you (without marks or any such things on it) in hopes that you will look forward to sharing the poems with others. Be prepared to present one of your poems in a poetry slam
- T-24 Read Text Ch. 6 "Adventure, Sports, Mysteries, and the Supernatural" pp. 183-214  
Author Jack Gantos will be speaking the last hour of class, so come prepared to talk with him about the Gantos book you have read.
- Th-26 Read Text Ch. 7 "Fantasy, Science Fiction, Utopias, and Dystopias" pp. 215-242 Also, students in the first half of the alphabet do a book talk on the "best" book you have read this semester.

### March

- T-3 **Panel Presentation #4 What's the Deal with Harry Potter? Why Is He World Famous?**

Turn in your reading list so I can pick a couple of books to ask about on the midterm

- Th-5 Midterm Exam Followed by Spring Break
- T-17 Read Text Ch. 8 "History and History Makers: Of People and Places" pp. 243-258
- Th-19 Complete Ch. 8 pp. 259-276  
**Panel Presentation #5 Truth vs. Fiction--Recent Controversies and What They Reveal**
- T-24 Read Text Ch. 9 "Nonfiction: Information, Literary Nonfiction, Biographies, and Self-Help Books pp. 277-297
- Th-26 Complete Text Ch. 9  
**Panel Presentation #6 Sex Education--Compare the Role of Fiction, Movies, the Internet, and Informational Books**
- T-31 Read Text Ch. 10 "Evaluating, Promoting, and Using Young Adult Books" pp. 312-336
- April**
- Th-2 Finish Reading Ch. 10  
**Panel #7 Using and Teaching Multi-Cultural Books**
- T-7 Read Text Ch. 11 "Young Adult Literature in the English Class" pp. 355-368  
 We will talk about the importance of teaching short stories  
 Come ready to talk about your book written by Chris Crowe so that we will be ready for his visit on April 9.
- Th-9 Guest Author Chris Crowe will visit class. Come with questions to ask.  
 Also turn in your short story reaction (directions below)  
 Select from my cart a short story collection to read as one of your 20 books. Choose a story worthy of "teaching" either from the book of "new" short stories that you read or go back to the stories in Point of Departure and choose one that we did not work with in class. Write a two-page paper in which you:
1. Indicate the appropriate grade and maturity level.
  2. Tell why the story is worth using with kids.
  3. Tell how you would prepare kids to read and consider the story.
  4. Tell what's worth talking about in the story.
  5. List at least seven questions worth asking about the story. Put them in ascending order of difficulty or sophistication.
  6. As a conclusion, write a paragraph or two responding to one of the more difficult questions as you hope a good student would.
- T-14 Finish Ch. 11 pp. 369-386  
 Second half of class (alphabetically speaking) come prepared to do book talks on the "best" book you have read this semester.
- Th-16 Read Text Ch. 12 "Censorship: Of Worrying and Wondering" pp. 387-396
- T-21 Complete Text Ch. 12 pp. 397-427  
**Panel Presentation #8 Dealing with Parental Concerns -- Maybe do a demonstration meeting (or two meetings--one bad and one good) between a couple of parents and a school committee brought together to respond to the parents' desire to have a book removed from the school library.**
- Th-23, T-28, and Th-30: Class presentations (five to seven minutes) of whatever part of your thematic unit you think will be the most interesting to fellow class members. Also prepare a one-page handout. Be sure

your name is on it I will make a list; people who do not go on their assigned day will be moved to the end and will lose 1 pt..

**May**

T-5 Finish up any left-over reports and review for final exam

T-12 Final Exam May 12, 2:30 to 4:20

**First Half Book List**

**TURN IN ON MARCH 3rd**

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: All books except #2 and #3 on your reading lists should be YA books written after 1965. I know teenagers read lots of other books, but I want you to focus on books identified as YA either by the publishers or by your textbook writers so you won't be tempted to write down the books you are currently reading for other classes or just something you remember from high school, etc.**

Book Title .....	Author's Name	Original Publisher	Orig . Year	# of pages	Brief Reminders to Yourself ...
An Honor List book (see text pp. 21-26)					
Second Honor List					
Pre-1960 landmark (see text pp. 66-67)					
An adult book often taught in high school					
A "grim" realistic book					
A more optimistic book					
Skim 3 poetry books 1. 2. 3.					
Sports, adventure, or mystery					

<b><i>Hole in My Life</i> or other YA book</b>	<b>Jack Gantos</b>				

**SECOND HALF BOOK LIST**

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Turn in on May 5th

Again, the books you read should be YA books written after 1965.

<b>Book Title .....</b>	<b>Author's Name</b>	<b>Original Publisher</b>	<b>Orig. Year</b>	<b># of Pages</b>	<b>Brief Reminder to Yourself</b>
<b>One of the <i>Twilight</i> books or <i>Host</i></b>	<b>Stephenie Meyer</b>				
<b>A <i>Harry Potter</i> book</b>	<b>J. K. Rowling</b>				
<b>Science fiction</b>					
<b>Historical fiction or biography</b>					
<b><i>Getting Away with Murder, Mississippi Trial, 1955; or Thurgood Marshall</i></b>	<b>Chris Crowe</b>				
<b>Informative non-fiction</b>					
<b>Short Story YA collection</b>					
<b>Banned or censored book</b>					
<b>Free choice</b>					
<b>Free choice</b>					

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