

## Book Review Assignment

For this course, you will be writing a 2-3 page book review of each book that we read together as a class. No outside research is required for these projects, but if you do choose to conduct and include research, please document all additional source materials in MLA format. In any case, the focus of the review should be on your own evaluation of the text, and not a summary of the opinions of others.

In your reviews, you will want to consider how enjoyable/beneficial you believe each book would be for a child reader. Think about the ideal reader: do considerations of age, gender, race, class, reading ability, interests, etc., seem relevant in deciding what type of child might be the intended audience? What is the author's primary intent—to inform, to entertain, to teach a moral or ethical lesson? How successful do you believe the book is in fulfilling its goals? If the book is relatively old, how relevant does it seem to be for today's children? The literary terms and concepts (i.e. plot, setting, character, theme, etc.) that we have introduced in class notes and discussions will probably help you in your discussion of the book.

You do not need to discuss all of the above questions in every review. Decide on a case-by-case basis which aspects of each book you think are the most important for your review to cover—and don't forget to consider illustrations, if there are any. It's also not necessary that your review be always positive. If you see drawbacks to the book you are discussing, point them out. Do prepare a careful, thoughtful evaluation of each text that goes beyond merely repeating what we have already said about it in class. As you write, keep in mind all the standard elements of an academic essay, including paragraphing, thesis statement, etc.

Due dates (paper due by midnight Saturday of the given week):

Week of Feb. 22—*Winnie-the-Pooh*

Week of Mar. 8—*Where the Sidewalk Ends*

Week of Mar. 22—*Indian Captive: The Story of Mary Jemison*

Week of April 5—*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*

Week of April 19—*Hatchet*

Week of May 10—*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*