

Thesis Specifications for the M. A. Program in Children's Literature

MA candidates will choose **one** of these three options for their culminating experience:

1. Students will produce a creative manuscript of at least 60 pages, accompanied by a 10-15 page critical essay situating their creative work in the historical and critical context of children's literature. This will be registered as ENG 599 Thesis and will carry 8 credits.

2. Students will produce a 20-30 page scholarly essay, of publishable quality, accompanied by a 10-15 page bibliographic essay that identifies and describes important scholarship relevant to the topic and places their own contributions in relation to prior work. This will be registered as ENG 599 Thesis and will carry 8 credits.

3. Students will undertake a final examination, which will consist of two parts:

Part I:

Students will be asked to identify and explain the significance of three quotations (from a list of six) These quotations will be taken from a reading list of "major works" in children's literature and will be arguably central or crucial to the works in question or to larger issues in children's literature. These short essays will give students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to construct an organized argument and to support that argument with close reading. It will also allow them to articulate their understanding of major texts in children's literature.

Part II:

The student will choose an essay from a critical course taken at Hollins. In collaboration with an advisor, the student will put together a reading list of 10-12 primary texts and 10-12 critical texts that provide useful context for the essay. Some of the primary texts might overlap with the list from Part I. These works may include articles as well as books, works used in the essay as well as works that supplement the essay. The list should reflect the broader field within which the essay falls — other texts by the author(s) the student is treating, other texts dealing with the same theme, theoretical works that inform the paper, criticism on the text and topic. The list should be designed to place the paper's focus in the broader context of children's literature studies.

The student will write a 10-15 page statement explaining how her/his essay fits in the context of the reading list she/he has developed. The reading list, the essay, and the critical statement will be given to a group of three faculty members who will prepare questions (on the essay and on the reading list more generally) for a one-hour oral exam. [Alternately, the exam questions may be answered in writing and graded by the faculty members who wrote them.]

This will be registered as ENG 598 Capstone Seminar and will carry 8 credits.

You will need a **director and a second reader** for your thesis. The thesis should be sent to the second reader when you and your director agree that it is in its final form. However, in the case of a creative thesis, if your first reader does not possess scholarly expertise, then the accompanying essay should instead be written under the direction of a second reader who can fulfill that requirement.

PREPARATION OF THE THESIS:

Two copies must be turned in, one for the Department and one for the Library. The **title pages** of both copies must be **signed** by both your director and your second reader. (When your thesis is finally approved, you may want to simply mail title pages to your readers.)

The Library copy must follow the Library's thesis guidelines, which are attached. No cover is needed for the Library copy, since it will be bound and placed on file. The student must fill out the Library's "Thesis Processing and Bindery Form," which is available from the Department. The Library will also require a check for the binding fee of \$12.00. Both **signed** copies of the thesis, the check and the bindery form should be turned in to the Department.

The Departmental copy can be on bond or a good quality photocopying paper (the paper used in the Printing and Mailing Office is acceptable). It **must** be contained in a substantial binder which does not require punching holes in the paper. The Acco Grip is ideal. The more expensive black wide-spine binder is also acceptable.

All copies must be made on letter-quality printers, in 12-point serified font (Courier or Times Roman).

Pages must be numbered sequentially. Be sure the number is placed where it is still easily visible after binding. Start numbering with the first page of the text, **but** the number "1" should not actually appear on page one.

The accompanying critical essay should follow the thesis itself.

Use left justification only. Right justification produces odd gaps between the words.

Margins should be set at: 1-1/2" left margin; 1" right margin; 1" top and bottom margins with page numbers approximately 1/2" from the top.

[Sample Thesis Title Page]

Deconstructing Chicken Little

by

R. F. Loxey

B.A., Poultry University, 1989

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Master of Arts in Children's Literature

Hollins University,
Roanoke, Virginia

May (or October), 2002

Directing professor: _____

Dr. Candice Latrans

Second reader: _____

Professor Remus Lupine

[use Dr. for a professor who has a Ph.D. Use Professor as the title of one without a doctorate]