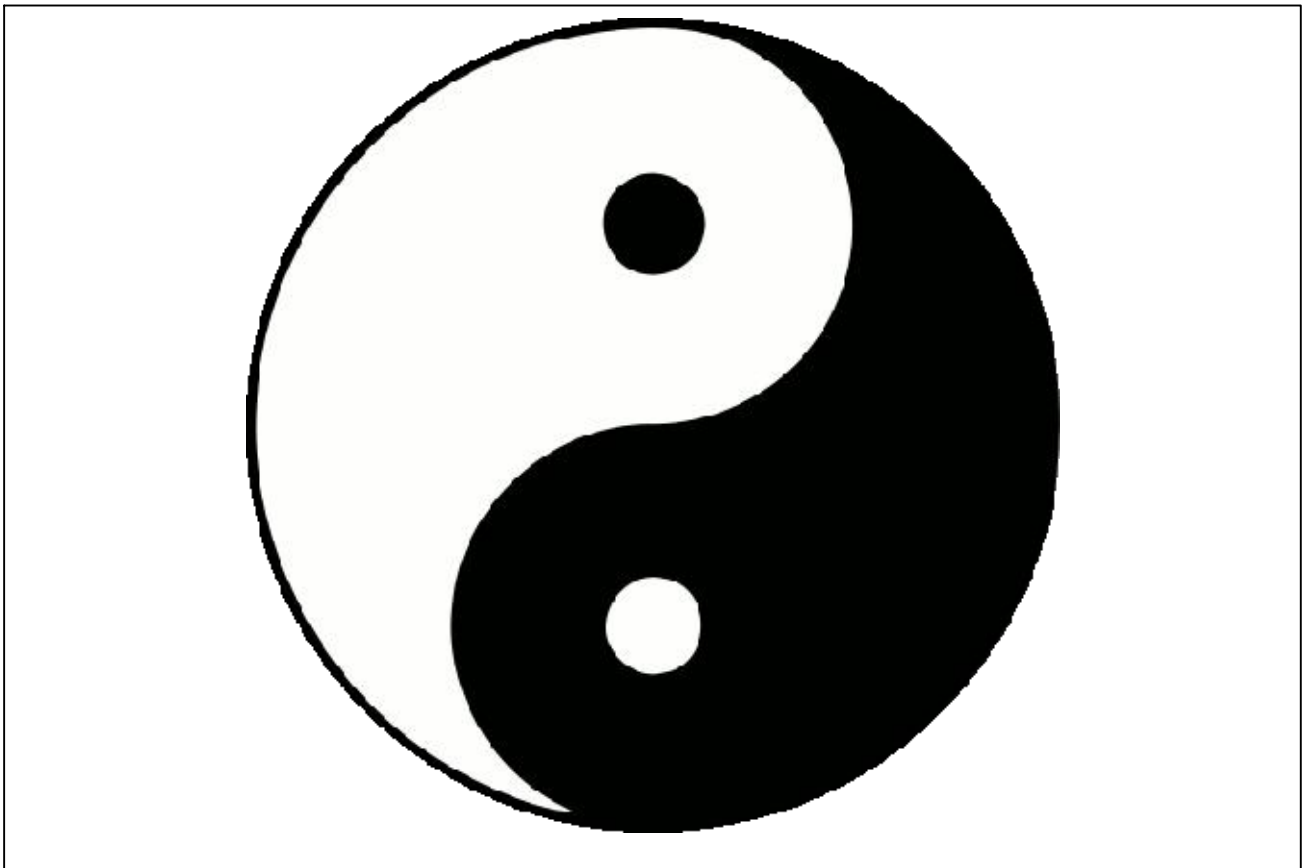


ENGL 420

Modern Fiction: NZ Fiction for Children

Trimester 2 2009

30 Points



TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates: 13 July to 16 October 2009

Study week: 19 to 23 October 2009

School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies
ENGLISH PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE ENGL 420

Examination/Assessment period: 27 October to 15 November 2009

Note: Students who enrol in courses with examinations are expected to be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the formal examination period.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Kathryn Walls Room: VZ 916 E-mail: kathryn.walls@vuw.ac.nz Tel: 4636898

Office Hours: I don't keep formal office hours. If you would like to see me, please mention this after a class, or email me to make a time.

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Seminars

Tuesdays 9.00-11.50 am VZ 820

COURSE DELIVERY

We shall discuss the set texts according to the "Course Programme." For the most part, I shall be asking members of the class to generate topics by entering their suggestions on Blackboard on the Monday before each class. I will describe the relevant procedure in more detail at the first (introductory) session.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information will be supplied in class. For the sake of any absentees, I shall place follow-up notices on Blackboard.

COURSE CONTENT

The course aims to engage students in the serious study of fiction written for children through the work of two equally acclaimed but very different contemporary New Zealand writers—Margaret Mahy and Maurice Gee. The essential texts are those listed in the attached Course Programme.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should be familiar with most of the novels written for adolescents by Margaret Mahy and Maurice Gee. Having worked closely with these texts, students ought to be able to demonstrate a sophisticated appreciation of each author's characteristic forms and themes. They should also be equipped to consider what distinguishes "children's literature" as a genre.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

A thirty-point course is expected to occupy about 300 hours in total. In other words, perhaps, you might reasonably expect to spend *on average* two-three days a week reading, in class, preparing assignments, and revising for the examination.

READINGS

For the first two weeks of trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of VicBooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two all undergraduate textbooks will be sold from VicBooks and student notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building. Students may order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to the purchaser, or collected from the shop. Intending purchasers will be contacted when they are available.

Some of the set texts may be out of print. Students have, in the past, been able to get around this difficulty (by using public libraries, searching second-hand bookshops, borrowing from me, and sharing). We shall discuss the availability of each text in advance of the relevant session.

Essential texts:

See "Course Programme," below.

Recommended Reading:

Kathryn will supply a relevant handout at the first Mahy seminar, and again at the first Gee seminar. Suggestions for further reading will be made from time to time throughout the course.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Assessment is on the basis of both in-term work and a final three-hour examination. Each component counts for approximately 50%. In-term assignments should be set out according to "MLA style"; please check the Referencing Update for Students of English, available in the Reception area, VZ floor 8.

In term work:

1. **Due Friday July 31**

A close reading exercise (1000-1500 words). Value: 10%

Write a detailed discussion of the opening chapter of any set text (whose opening chapter has not been a significant topic of seminar discussion). Include some consideration of whether (and, if so, how) the writing is adapted to the expected age of readers.

2. **Due Friday September 11**

An essay on Margaret Mahy (2000-2500 words). Value: 20%

Please choose your own topic in consultation with me. You may, if you wish, refer to other works by Mahy or incorporate texts by other authors for the purposes of comparison.

3. Due Friday October 16.

Please note, however, that Kathryn will be happy to give extensions on this assignment until Friday October 23 (the end of the first week of the study/examination period). After this latter date students will need to apply for any extension in the normal way—and Kathryn will be unable to accept any work handed in after the date of the examination.

An essay on Maurice Gee, all details as for Margaret Mahy, under 2 above. Value: 20%

Examination

The three-hour examination will be “limited open book.” That is, set texts (only) will be permitted in the examination room. They may be annotated, even fully. Further information about the examination will be distributed by September 15.

The examination period is from Tuesday 27 October to Saturday 14 November.

Relationship between assessment items and course objectives

The initial exercise is designed to test your attention to detail, and to comment on it articulately. The essays are designed to test your familiarity with the set texts, and your appreciation of each author’s characteristic forms and themes. They will also test your ability to write clearly and coherently on an original topic.

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Programme office. Remember to include my name (Kathryn Walls)!

PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS

Late work:

If work is handed in late without an extension, one grade will be subtracted and no comments offered.

Extensions:

What follows here is the policy of the English Programme as a whole. Speaking more personally, I would like to stress the importance of keeping me informed as soon as you feel you are falling behind or are having difficulties of any kind. The standard Programme requirements are as follows:

If you require an extension, you must complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) prior to the assignment due date, and get this to Kathryn. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor's certificate) where appropriate.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- (i) The completion of the written work detailed above.
- (ii) Meaningful attendance at a minimum of 70% of seminars. (In order for your attendance to be "meaningful" you must have read the relevant set text/s in advance of the class.)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

What follows is a statement supplied by the University for the information of all students:

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

The following instructions have been supplied by the University:

You should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to

School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies
ENGLISH PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE ENGL 420

the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

The AVC (Academic) website also provides information in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcademic/Publications.aspx>

COURSE PROGRAMME

Please note that this programme is provisional. We are unlikely to have time to deal with every text listed. For dates on which written work is due, please see “Assessment Requirements,” above.

Week 1	July 14	Introduction
Week 2	July 21	Mahy, Ghost Stories: <i>The Haunting, The Changeover</i>
Week 3	July 28	Mahy, Continued: <i>The Tricksters, Alchemy</i>
Week 4	Aug 4	Mahy, Other worlds: <i>Aliens in the Family, Dangerous Spaces</i> , recent fantasies
Week 5	Aug 11	Mahy, Realistic Novels: <i>Catalogue of the Universe, Memory</i>
Week 6	Aug 18	Mahy, Continued: <i>Underrunners, Other Side of Silence, Twenty-Four Hours</i>
Mid Trimester Break: Monday 24 August– Friday 4 September 2009		
Week 7	Sept 8	Gee, Introduction/fantasy: <i>World Around the Corner, Under the Mountain</i>
Week 8	Sept 15	Gee, Other worlds: <i>The Halfmen of O, The Priests of Ferris</i>
Week 9	Sept 22	Gee, Continued: <i>The Motherstone</i> , recent fantasies
Week 10	Sept 29	Gee, Historical Novels: <i>The Fireraiser, The Champion</i>
Week 11	Oct 6	Gee, Continued: <i>Orchard Street, The Fat Man</i>
Week 12	Oct 13	Gee, Continued: <i>Hostel Girl</i>
Study Period:	Monday 19 to Friday 23 October 2009	
Examination Period:	Tuesday 27 October – Sunday 15 November 2009	