

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ENG-L 204: INTRO TO FICTION</b>  <b>“Epic Kids in Popular Fiction”</b></p> <p>Instructor: Dr. Miranda Rodak    Email: rodak@iu.edu  Class:            TR 1:15–2:30 BH 245    Office Hours: TR 2:30–4:00</p>	
		
		

## Course Description

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How can the fate of the world rest on one kid’s shoulders? From Harry Potter to heroes you haven’t heard of yet, like Sparrowhawk and Lucero-Elisa, this course focuses on kids and teens who undertake epic quests to save their families and their world. We will ask why these children’s and young adult stories have lasting and cross-generational appeal. Why do so many different people of all ages read them and re-read them? What fears and fantasies do they represent about who we are or might become? How do they balance escapist entertainment with poignant meditations on sacrifice, trauma, transition, family, friendship, and hope? As we work to answer these deeply fraught questions, we’ll address the power fiction has to create imagined landscapes that reflect our world back to us and invite individuals and communities to analyze and introspect. In doing so, we’ll gain an introduction to the elements and hallmarks of fiction.

## Class & Office Hours

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Our class meets **in person** (Ballantine Hall 245) on Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:15 - 2:30

Click [here](#) to schedule an office hours appointment (Ballantine Hall 445) T/R 2:30 - 4:00

Click [here](#) if we make Zoom arrangements (Meeting ID: 879 6054 9868) (password: epic)

For important details regarding daily work, deadlines, and submission requirements, please see the Weekly Schedule and visit our week-by-week homepages in Canvas.

# Mission

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The College of Arts + Sciences is dedicated to the liberal arts, which teaches us to question critically, think logically, communicate clearly, act creatively, and live ethically. These practices serve as the foundation for living the examined life and succeeding in an increasingly global world. Reading fiction plays a central role in that mission. Fiction provides an entertaining but also critical space that helps readers thoughtfully reflect on themselves and their culture, as well as develop intellectual, communicative, and emotional tools. Specifically, we will meet the following learning objectives and outcomes, all of which meet the requirements for GenEd Intensive Writing (IW) and A&H credit.

## Learning Objectives & Outcomes

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### 1. Critically read and interpret fiction as well as scholarly and theoretical texts.

- 1.1. Summarize the main ideas or arguments of a given text
- 1.2. Demonstrate critical reading skills, including paraphrasing passages, identifying and defining unfamiliar language or details, annotating as you read, and reading texts multiple times
- 1.3. Analyze the way the formal literary elements function within fiction, including plot, setting, characterization, point of view, narration, style, and language
- 1.4. Apply close-reading techniques to specific passages to reveal relationships in the language and details that drive the text's meaning
- 1.5. Make claims about the way a piece of fiction (including both its text and subtext) addresses issues beyond its pages (this could include how a piece of fiction speaks to a general theme and/or how it responds to a specific issue of genre, culture, history, social movement, etc.)

### 2. Write analytical arguments about fiction.

- 2.1. Construct clear, effective, rigorously revised arguments supporting a central claim
- 2.2. Provide and analyze relevant evidence in support of claims
- 2.3. Use proper protocols and conventions of academic writing, including succinct prose, correctly citing sources according to MLA guidelines, and avoiding plagiarism
- 2.4. Demonstrate appropriate awareness of audience, including who your readers are and in what context they will be reading your work
- 2.5. Contribute to an intellectual discussion about fiction by appropriately interpreting and respectfully responding to the ideas of others (this could mean responding to classmates and/or responding to critics or theorists)

### 3. Demonstrate a critical understanding of genre.

- 3.1. Recognize key generic features of the fictional text
- 3.2. Construct an argument about a text's use of generic conventions

# Reading & Viewing Expectations

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**Fair Warning: We will read and write a lot this semester!** The majority of texts are children's stories and young adult novels/novellas, such as *The Hobbit*, which can be read fairly quickly. But these texts can also be deceptively complex -- requiring more than one or two readings to catch significant details and engage in the kind of close analysis ENG-L 204 requires. We will also read scholarly essays that may take more time than fiction.



In all cases, you will be expected to keep up with the pace of the workload, so look at the schedule and plan ahead! It would be wise to block time on your calendar for reading, *re-reading*, and writing each week.

**Please note:** If you're assigned to read a novel, watching the movie *instead* isn't an option. Quizzes are designed accordingly.

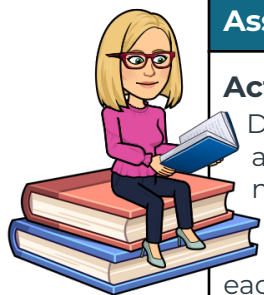
## Required Texts

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In addition to purchasing the required novels (bolded below with ISBN #), I will also provide you with additional linked materials on our Canvas weekly module pages.

Title	ISBN#
<i>The Hobbit</i> (J.R.R. Tolkien, 1937) [highly excerpted eText provided but you're certainly welcome to purchase a paperback or other digital version if you prefer]	On Canvas
Selections from <i>The Books of Earthsea</i> (Ursula LeGuin, 1964, 67)	On Canvas
<b><i>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire</i> (J.K. Rowling, 2000)</b>	<b>9780439139601</b>
<b><i>The Girl of Fire and Thorns</i> (Rae Carson, 2011)</b>	<b>9780062026507</b>
<b><i>The Merciful Crow</i> (Margaret Owen, 2019)</b>	<b>9781250250940</b>

# Assignments Overview



Assignment Categories	%
<p><b>Active-Learning Classwork (graded pass/fail)</b></p> <p>Developing analytical reading and writing skills requires working together within a community. In other words, the kind of reading &amp; writing we're focused on are not solitary acts. Moreover, they require a series of scaffolded steps. Thus, we will do significant, hands-on, community-based work in every single class. As long as you participate in these discussions and activities, you will earn full credit each day. Failure to engage actively or appropriately during class can result in either half or zero credit at my discretion. The 3 lowest grades will be dropped.</p>	10%
<p><b>Writing Prep Work (graded pass/fail)</b></p> <p>The kind of rigorous intellectual work we will be producing requires preparation; this kind of prep is often invisible but <i>absolutely necessary</i> to craft sophisticated arguments and polished writing. Prep work includes textual annotations, brainstorming activities, outlines, drafts, etc. To reward you for giving these your best shot, they are <i>typically graded pass/fail</i> based on demonstrating good-faith effort. Some of these assignments, however, are graded on <i>how effectively</i> the content meets the criteria and objectives.</p>	10%
<p><b>Reading Comprehension/Application (graded for quality)</b></p> <p>We can't engage in sophisticated levels of analytical work if we haven't first read and appropriately understood the basics of the assigned texts. Quizzes, Reading Guides, and Discussion Boards, therefore, address comprehension and application of details, terminology, and concepts. They are graded for quality and accuracy.</p>	20%
<p><b>2 Short Essays: formal analytical essays, 750-words/ea (graded pass/fail)</b></p> <p>These succinct essays will advance analytical, interpretive claims supported by textual evidence and outside sources. <i>While formal, they are also formative</i> -- meaning they're meant to help you gauge how effectively you are mastering course outcomes. <i>To that end, they'll be awarded two separate grades:</i> (1) a letter grade for how effectively they meet criteria and objectives; but this grade will <i>not</i> be calculated into your course grade, rather it's merely an indicator of your skill development/execution; and (2) a pass/fail grade of full credit or zero credit that <i>will</i> be calculated into the course grade [100 points], and this will depend on whether the essay demonstrated good-faith effort to meet all the criteria and objectives, regardless of how well it ultimately did so. <i>Note: Be sure to use these focused essays as they are intended: rigorous but productive "safe spaces" to stretch yourself and to build up and demonstrate your skills.</i></p>	15%
<p><b>2 Long Essays: formal analytical essays, 1500-words/ea (graded for quality)</b></p> <p>These essays are two of the course's three summative assignments, which means major assignments wherein you demonstrate your mastery of course learning outcomes. <i>While the short essays act as safe spaces focused on growth and development, these essays test the extent to which you've mastered core skills.</i> As such, they are graded for quality in terms of how effectively the content meets the criteria and objectives. <i>Note: Failure to take the short essays seriously will jeopardize your ability to fare well on the long essays -- where it counts!</i></p>	20%
	20%
<p><b>Revision Portfolio (500-word statement + one full revision)</b></p> <p>The Portfolio is the capstone project. It includes the revision of 1 previous essay + a reflective learning statement (500 word min.) + a series of reflective annotations.</p>	5%

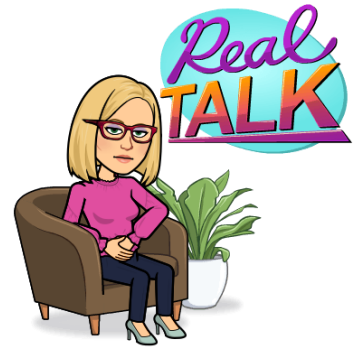
# Course Policies

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**Attendance.** According to the [IU Division of Student Affairs](#), as an IU student “it is your responsibility to attend all of your classes and submit all of your assignments according to the syllabus.”

Part of being an adult means making the best and healthiest choices possible. In particular,

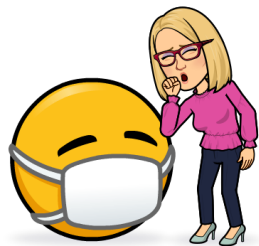
- If you are sick, please do not come to class -- especially if you are experiencing COVID-like symptoms.
- By the same token, if you are not sick, please prioritize your attendance -- accumulating absences can undermine or complicate your ability to learn, particularly when it comes to writing development.



If you experience any difficulty this semester, the [Office of Student Advocates](#) and the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) stand ready to help you! But please note that **if you need an official accommodation (either temporary or permanent)**, then you must work with either the [Office of Disability Services](#) and/or the [Office of the Dean of Students](#). The Office of Student Advocates cannot officially approve accommodations.

This class follows the absence policy as outlined by the [IU Division of Student Affairs](#): if illness requires you to miss more than 20% of the semester, no matter how legitimate the reason, then you will need to meet with your academic advisor to consider withdrawing from this course (and perhaps all courses) until you are able to return in a future semester and focus

on your academic goals. **The last day to drop with an automatic W this semester is Friday, 4/29/2022.** Under no circumstance will you be able to make up more than 20% of this semester’s work. In other words, even legitimate illness carries a limit regarding how much work can reasonably be made up before your ability to learn the skills and meet course outcomes cannot be reasonably met. If a prolonged illness or serious personal situation requires you to miss 4 or more consecutive classes at any point this semester, please be in touch with me as



proactively as possible. **I encourage you to take absences very seriously and use them only for illness and emergencies.** Also be sure to inform me in advance of special circumstances, such as religious holidays or other university-related absences, so that we can proactively prepare for your absence.

**Course Modality.** ENG-L204 is an in-person class. But if you are ill, I am happy to arrange a live-stream of the class via Zoom. But please note, this is meant as an emergency response to the Omicron surge; this semester’s course was not designed from the outset to be “high-flex” (i.e., attended simultaneously by in-person and online students). Thus, some of our class group activities will be more conducive than others to live-streaming. We will just have to do our best! But I cannot guarantee your learning experience via live stream will be as productive as in class. Moreover, live-streaming is only a temporary option. Students cannot live-stream more than a week at a time.

**Engagement.** Your ongoing engagement in class is an important factor in the success of our course. Our class meetings have been carefully designed to foster active engagement, learning, discussion, and collaboration. In contrast to traditional lectures, the success of our class meetings depends entirely on all of us thinking, working, and imagining together as a community of writers. This learning dynamic cannot be replicated outside of class meetings. If you are not present and participating in our class meetings, then how can we learn from you? Or you from us? Moreover, close reading and analytical writing are skills that require progressive development over time. They require ongoing iteration and feedback. Again, this cannot be replicated individually outside of class. Because of the collaborative and communal nature of this course, you are responsible for consistently attending and participating in our class meetings and scaffolded activities and assignments.

We work actively during *every* class, and often that work carries points. If you miss class on a day with a graded engagement activity, you will receive a zero for that activity.

I will automatically drop your 3 lowest in-class engagement grades to cover temporary illness, such as COVID and quarantine. If you miss more than these 3 will cover, then you must email me within 24-hours of the missed class to arrange for a make-up activity. That make-up activity must be submitted within 7 calendar days of the missed class, and you will not be allowed to make up more than 3 engagement activities in total this semester, no matter how legitimate the reason and no matter what documentation you provide, because that would mean you've missed 6 classes, which is more than 20% of the entire course.

**Late Assignments.** Because our reading and prep-work are used to establish the basis for class discussion, it doesn't do you, or us, any good if you submit late. Therefore, the only assignments that can be submitted late are the short and long essays. The late penalty for those is 20% for each calendar day late, and "late" begins 5 minutes past the deadline. Every student can have one deadline extension this semester -- no questions asked! -- to cover temporary illness. The extension grants you 7 additional days from the original deadline to submit the assignment for full credit. You must email me within 48-hours of the original deadline (preferably *before* the deadline) to use the extension.

You must complete and submit all major writing assignments, which means both Short Essays and both Long Essays, in order to qualify for a passing grade this semester. A zero on any one of these 5 assignments results in an automatic F in the course.

**Drafts and Pre-Writing.** Revision is a critical part of inquiry and writing. For that reason, you will be required to submit drafts and other pre-writing work before each of the two Long Essays, and you will often be required to bring drafts to our class meetings. Sometimes this will be a draft of a specific section, and sometimes it will be a complete rough draft (which means a full-length version that addresses all of the requirements that are specified on the assignment sheet). All drafts are worth points. Failure to submit and bring the required draft by the deadline will result in a late penalty (as outlined above). Even if late, you must still submit all required pre-writing and drafts. If any required pre-writing or draft is missing, then the attendant essay will automatically receive a zero. In other words, absolutely no essay can be submitted without the pre-writing/drafts that demonstrate its iterative process.

**Arriving Late.** It's a weird semester, and we're all navigating new technological challenges. If you arrive a few minutes late to our classroom once or twice, that's okay! We all get it. If, however, you consistently arrive late or leave early, I will apply penalties at my discretion. The point here is not to be overly litigious, but to recognize that you miss significant learning opportunities and potentially disrupt others' learning if you can't consistently participate during our entire class period.

**Digital Tools.** L204 is a reading- and writing-intensive course, which means we use digital tools to collaborate during *every* class. Therefore, **always bring a device to class** (laptop, tablet, even a phone will do in a pinch), and get your technology setup before class begins, including logging into Canvas and opening the weekly page. If you have any technology limitations, don't worry -- just email me proactively, and we'll work through it together.



**Assignments.** All assignments must be submitted to Canvas following the instructions in the Canvas modules and submission portal. Failure to follow instructions correctly could result in a late penalty, so please review all details carefully.

**Email.** Please allow 24-hours for me to respond to email or DMs. Also, note that questions requiring detailed answers or relating to grades should be handled during office hours. If you need me urgently, please type URGENT in caps in your subject line and also DM me.

**GroupMe.** We have a GroupMe text for our class as a place where we can ask one another questions and build our community. You can join this group by scanning the QR code with your phone's camera. Please do not mute our group -- I will send time-sensitive messages and reminders throughout the semester. While you are not required to join, several semesters of my students have found it a truly helpful, healthy, and happy place to share and feel connected. If you join, you will be expected to engage in a respectful and friendly manner. Failure to contribute to the safe, civil, friendly tone of this group could lead to your removal from it.



**Professionalism.** The classroom is our professional space where we work together as collaborators. Exhibiting appropriate behavior, demeanor, courtesy, and communication is an important part of your responsibility in building and maintaining our community. Respectful, civil behavior and enthusiastic participation is expected of IU students at all times. Failure to behave professionally—including inappropriate use of digital devices—can result in a deduction of points at my discretion.

**MLA.** All assignments must conform to MLA format. All assignments citing or paraphrasing outside sources must provide in-line citations and a Works Cited. No exceptions. Brief assignments may simply place citations at the bottom of the page.

**Academic Integrity.** As a student at IU, you are expected to adhere to the standards contained in [the Code](#) of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct. Academic misconduct is defined as any activity that tends to undermine the academic integrity of the institution. Academic integrity violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, interference, violation of course rules, and facilitating academic dishonesty. When you submit an assignment with your name on it, you are signifying that the work contained therein is yours, unless otherwise cited or referenced. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged. In addition, posting questions from quizzes/exams or assignments or downloading answers from online sources is considered academic misconduct. All suspected violations of the Code will be reported to the Dean of Students (Office of Student Conduct) and handled according to University policies. Sanctions for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on the assignment, a reduction in your final course grade, or a failing grade in the course, among other possibilities. If you are unsure about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or exam, be sure to seek clarification from your instructor in advance.

**Note Selling.** Various commercial services have approached students regarding selling class notes/study guides to their classmates. Selling the instructor's notes/study guides or uploading course assignments to these sites in exchange for access to materials for other courses is not permitted. Violations of this policy will be reported to the Dean of Students (Office of Student Conduct) as academic misconduct (violation of course rules). Sanctions for academic misconduct for this action may include a failing grade on the assignment for which the notes/study guides or assignments are being uploaded, a reduction in your final course grade, or a failing grade in the course, among other possibilities. Additionally, you should know that selling a faculty member's notes/study guides individually or on behalf of one of these services using IU email, or via Canvas may also constitute a violation of IU information technology and IU intellectual property policies; additional consequences may result.

**Online Course Materials.** The instructor teaching this course holds the exclusive right to distribute, modify, post, and reproduce course materials, including all written materials, study guides, lectures, assignments, exercises, and exams. Some of the course content may be downloadable, but you should not distribute, post, or alter the instructor's intellectual property. While you are permitted to take notes on the online materials and lectures posted for this course for your personal use, you are not permitted to re-post in another forum, distribute, or reproduce content from this course without the express written permission of the instructor.

**Masks.** Currently, IU does not require masks indoors. But this is a difficult and complicated time, and **everyone is welcome and encouraged to do what is right for them!** If you would rather wear a mask, you're not strange! Go for it! If you'd rather not, that's okay too. Just be sure to respect the people around you. In all instances, let's try to be as accepting and inclusive of one another's needs, wishes, and comfort as we can.



# Important Campus Resources

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College is an exciting but also stressful experience, particularly now. IU offers many resources for your physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing. You can access them by checking out the [Division of Student Affairs](#). If you need help, please let me know. Although I expect L204 to be rigorous and academically challenging, I also want to foster a [culture of care](#).

**CAPS.** Click here to learn about the services offered by Counseling and Psychological Services ([CAPS](#)). Also, you can reach out for help to [Crimson CORPS](#) as well as check out [WellTrack](#), a new mobile app created to support your mental health.

**Accessibility.** As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. If you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the Office for Students with Disabilities. Please assert requests for accommodations often and early. It is never too late to request accommodations – our bodies and circumstances are continuously changing. You will be asked to make use of formal accessibility services on campus; however, you will not be asked to disclose personal medical information. If there are ways in which the overall structure of the course and general classroom interactions could be adapted to better facilitate your full participation, please do not hesitate to share your ideas with me. I will make every attempt to accommodate qualified students with disabilities (e.g. mental health, learning, chronic health, physical, hearing, vision, neurological, etc.). But it is important you have established your eligibility for support services through Disability Services for Students. Note that services are confidential, take time to put into place, and are not retroactive. Please contact [Disability Services](#) by clicking the link or calling 812-855-7578 as soon as possible if accommodations are needed. The office is located on the third floor, west tower, of the Wells Library, Room W302 and walk-ins are welcome 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday.

**Assault Resources.** As your instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. Title IX and IU's Sexual Misconduct policy prohibit sexual misconduct. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, the University can help.

**If you are seeking help and would like to speak to someone confidentially, please call:**

The Sexual Assault Crisis Service (SACS) at 812-855-8900  
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 812-855-5711  
Confidential Victim Advocates (CVA) at 812-856-2469  
IU Health Center at 812-855-4011

More information and resources can be found at [StopSexualViolence](#). It is also important that you know that federal regulations and University policy require me to promptly convey any information about potential sexual misconduct known to me to our campus' Deputy Title IX Coordinator or IU's Title IX Coordinator. In that event, they will work with a small number of



others on campus to ensure that appropriate measures are taken and resources are made available to the student who may have been harmed. Protecting a student's privacy is of utmost concern, and all involved will only share information with those that need to know to ensure the University can respond and assist.

**Biased-Based Incident Reporting.** As your instructor, one of my responsibilities is to create a positive learning environment for all students. Bias incidents (events or comments that target an individual or group based on age, color, religion, disability, race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status or veteran status) are not appropriate in our classroom or on campus. What should you do if you witness or experience a bias incident? See it? Hear it? Report it by submitting [a report online](#) or calling the Dean of Students Office (812-855-8187).