ENG 221 Children’s Literature

Week Two Reading and Writing Assignment Guide: We’ll be covering two chapters in one week (the only time we’ll be covering such a wide territory!). For Tuesday, January 16, please read Chapter Two and be prepared for a discussion of the key concepts. For Thursday, January 18, please read Chapter Three and be prepared for a discussion of the key concepts in Chapter Three. For Weekly Writing #3, please choose either to respond to Chapter Two’s prompt or one of Chapter Three’s prompts.

CHAPTER TWO

Key Theme: The better we understand what a child understands and appreciates, the better we will appreciate the text.

Learning Outcomes
- Read children’s books with a new sensitivity to the child’s understanding and appreciation.
- Be familiar with the effects of intelligence, illustration, accessibility, and peer recommendations on children’s reading interests.
- Recognize the relationship between physical development and children’s use of books.
- Be familiar with Piaget’s theory of cognitive stages.

Chapter Reading Guide

Reading Interests and Preferences
- Consider the topics and literary elements that, over the years, have been of interest to children.
- Note conclusions about age and sex differences that have been shown to be characteristics of children’s interests in books.
- Pay attention to the caution regarding sex-role stereotyping about children’s interests.
- Consider the effects of the following factors on children’s reading interests: Intelligence; Illustration; Accessibility; Peer recommendations; Other factors

Growth Patterns that Influence Response
- Consider the influence of physical development on children’s “book behavior.”
- Study the relationship between children’s use of books and Piaget’s theory of cognitive stages.
- Note the caution that is given to cognitive stage theory and literature use.
- What generalization can be made about the use of children’s books based on the information gleaned from theories of language development.

Weekly Writing  Choose either Chapter Two or Chapter Three (backside)
- Observe a young child (or children) as a parent or teacher reads to them. (Please identify the book and distinguishing features of the book.) Note as many behaviors (verbal, nonverbal, or artistic/creative) as you can. What clues do you get about the value of reading aloud and about the value of effective presentation?