

**ENGLISH 406 ADOLESCENT LITERATURE AND CENSORSHIP**

**SPRING 2025**

**DR. ROGGENKAMP**

**Office 315 DTH**

**Office hours MWF 11:00-12:00 and 2:00-3:00 and by appointment**

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Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion,  
or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;  
or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press;  
or the right of the people peaceably to assemble,  
and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.  
(*Constitution of the United States of America, Amendment I, 1791*)

**COURSE  
DESCRIPTION**

Of the issues facing middle schools and high schools today, one of the most pressing involves disputes about what adolescents should (or shouldn't) read. In trying to balance the diverse needs and beliefs of constituents, American schools have strained, especially since the 1980s, with escalating complaints about the literature offered in classrooms and school libraries. The goal of this course is to investigate the issue of censorship as it pertains to literature frequently used in American middle schools and high schools. Our readings will include books that have been either widely challenged or successfully banned in public schools and libraries. While the course will not focus exclusively on "book banning" (after all, this is an English class, not a First Amendment law class), the issue of censorship will serve as a touchstone as we investigate some of the most compelling—and controversial—works written for adolescents and/or read by adolescents in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries. As we read these literary texts and think about the protests that have been lodged against them, we will want to consider how our own beliefs shape and are shaped by reading, the value of consuming controversial literature, and what limits (if any) should be placed on adolescents' freedom to read—and who should place those limits. We will also want to question why fiction written for and read by 12 to 18-year-olds seems so vulnerable to controversy.

Please note: while we may occasionally discuss such issues as adolescent development, educational psychology, reading theory, and pedagogy, this is not a class about teaching adolescent literature in the middle school or high school classroom. Rather, our focus will be on reading and interpreting adolescent literature from an adult, literary point of view.

**STUDENT  
LEARNING  
OUTCOME**

For the purpose of measured Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: Students will demonstrate effective analysis through the production of a formal rationale document, as measured by a checklist for that assignment.

**REQUIRED  
TEXTS**

**YOU ARE REQUIRED TO BRING THE RELEVANT BOOK TO CLASS EACH DAY!**

ISBN information is based on the edition of book ordered through campus bookstore, but you may obtain books from other sources and use other editions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sherman Alexie, <i>The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian</i> (978031601369)</li> <li>▪ Robert Cormier, <i>The Chocolate War</i> (ISBN 978044094459)</li> <li>▪ Jerry Craft, <i>New Kid</i> (ISBN 978006269119)</li> <li>▪ Lois Lowry, <i>The Giver</i> (ISBN 978054433626)</li> <li>▪ J. D. Salinger, <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> (ISBN 978031676948)</li> <li>▪ Mariko Tamaki and Jillian Tamaki, <i>This One Summer</i> (ISBN 978159643774)</li> <li>▪ Aiden Thomas, <i>Cemetery Boys</i> (ISBN 978125025046)</li> <li>▪ Mark Twain, <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> (ISBN 978055321079)</li> <li>▪ Plus some additional readings which you will download from D2L</li> </ul>										
<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<p>Grades will be weighted as follows:</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>Scribbles</td> <td style="text-align: right;">25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Close Reading Exam</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Final “rationale” project</td> <td style="text-align: right;">25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Class participation</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>30%</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">100%</td> </tr> </table> <p>The department of Literature and Languages does not, as a rule, allow an “Incomplete” (X) on the transcript; incompletes are <i>only</i> awarded under extraordinary circumstances, pending Department Head and Dean approval. If personal issues or conflicts arise that lead to your missing a substantial amount of class, you will need to consider withdrawing from the class. As a rough guideline for what A-F grades mean, A is awarded for truly outstanding work, B denotes work significantly above the level necessary to meet basic requirements, C is for work that meets basic requirements in every way, D indicates work that meets only some of the requirements yet is still deserving of minimal credit, and F results if work is not completed or if it fails to meet the requirements of the assignment and/or course.</p>	Scribbles	25%	Close Reading Exam	20%	Final “rationale” project	25%	Class participation	<u>30%</u>	TOTAL	100%
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Final “rationale” project	25%										
Class participation	<u>30%</u>										
TOTAL	100%										
<b>LATE WORK</b>	<p>I grant extensions on papers and assignments only under the most <u>exceptional</u> of circumstances. I will only accept late papers if you make explicit prior arrangements with me and provide documented proof of your inability to complete the paper on time due to extenuating circumstances (dire illness, death in the immediate family, etc.).</p>										
<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	<p>Your attendance in class is crucial, and you cannot expect to do well if you do not attend each meeting (and get here on time). According to the ETAMU student handbook, “students are expected to be present for all class meetings of any course for which they are enrolled.” I will keep attendance, and you can expect your grade to suffer for excessive absences (more than three, for any reason). Students will be permitted to make up work for excused absences, which include, for instance, participation in a required or authorized university activity, a verified severe illness, or a death in the immediate family.</p>										
<b>COMMUNICATION AND</b>	<p>I tend to send several emails over the semester, and I will use your university email account (myLeo), so be sure to check it every day.</p>										

<p><b>TECH</b></p>	<p>This course will be supplemented using myLeo Online (D2L Brightspace), the Learning Management system used by ETAMU. You will need your CWID and password to log into the course page via the myLeo portal. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 902-468-6000 or <a href="mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org">helpdesk@online.tamuc.org</a>. To complete this course successfully, you will need a computer with internet access (high speed recommended) and a word processor equipped with Microsoft Word. Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system and a recent version of a browser like Internet Explorer or Google Chrome. Your course will also work with Macintosh OS along with a recent version of Safari or Firefox.</p> <p>ETAMU provides students with technical support in the use of D2L. Technology problems are not generally an excuse for a late assignment--make sure you submit your work in time to allow for any problems accessing the Dropbox. You may reach the help desk by the following means, 24 hours a day, seven days a week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Phone 866-656-5511</li> <li>➤ Email <a href="mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org">helpdesk@online.tamuc.org</a></li> <li>➤ Click on “Help” button for information regarding working with D2L</li> </ul>
<p><b>ADDITIONAL POLICIES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ You are responsible for reading and understanding all items included on this syllabus and on any additional documents you receive during the course.</li> <li>▪ Texas Senate Bill 17, the recent law that outlaws diversity, equity, and inclusion programs at public colleges and universities in Texas, does not in any way affect curricular content, instruction, or discussion in a course at a public college or university in Texas. Expectation regarding academic freedom for teaching and class discussion have not been altered post-SB 17, and students should not feel the need to censor their speech as it pertains to topics related to race and racism, structural inequality, LGBTQ+ issues, or related issues.</li> <li>▪ The Department of Literature and Languages will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalty for students who are found guilty of academic dishonesty include failure of the assignment and/or course, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. Refer to the ETAMU Code of Student Conduct 13.99.99.R0.10 for details: <a href="http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf">http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf</a>. Examples of plagiarism include but are not restricted to: turning in an essay written entirely or partly by someone else; copying any portion of someone else’s words and presenting those words as your own (i.e. without quotation or citation); copying paragraphs, sentences, or parts of sentences from another source without citation; using the same ideas that you have found in another writer’s essay and presenting those ideas as your own (again, without quotation or citation). If you are not clear about how to avoid</li> </ul>

any of these acts, it is up to you to clarify, either via online information or our own Writing Center on the first floor of DTH. Unintentional plagiarism is still plagiarism, and we expect all students to understand what constitutes an act of academic dishonesty.

- ETAMU acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text or to suggest replacements for text beyond individual words. However, since this course is intended to teach you how to generate your own content, **no use of AI will be permitted**. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).
- All students enrolled in the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. ETAMU will comply in the classroom and online courses with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with registered disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact the Office of Student Disability Resources and Services, Gee Library 162; phone 903-886-5150 or 903-886-5835; fax 903-468-8148; email [Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu](mailto:Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu); website <http://www.tamuc.edu/CampusLife/CampusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/default.aspx>.
- Texas Senate Bill 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in *ETAMC* buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas license to carry a handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the state of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all ETAMU campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 911.
- Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, DTH 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head or Assistant Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities (CHSSA) after following the steps outlined above. If the instructor in question is the Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where

	applicable, students should also consult University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 ("Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation").
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS</b>  <b>Have each assignment completed before class.</b>  <b>Revisions may occur during semester.</b></p>		
WEEK 1	1/13 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Syllabus and introductions</li> </ul>
	1/15 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read articles on censorship posted in D2L, Week 1 Readings folder</li> </ul>
	1/17 Fri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue discussing articles on censorship</li> </ul>
WEEK 2	1/20 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No class—MLK day</li> </ul>
	1/22 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read Robert Cormier, <i>The Chocolate War</i>, chapters 1-20</li> </ul>
	1/24 Fri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read <i>The Chocolate War</i>, chapters 21-39</li> </ul>
WEEK 3	1/27 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read Robert Cormier, “A Book is Not a House,” located in D2L Week 3 Readings folder.</li> <li>▪ Read excerpt from Roberta Trites, <i>Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature</i> (U of Iowa P, 2004); download from D2L Week 3 Readings folder.</li> </ul>
	1/29 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No reading assignment—I will introduce in class Mark Twain, <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i></li> </ul>
	1/31 Fri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read Mark Twain, <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>, Chapters 1-7</li> <li>▪ Note: librivox.org has a decent, free audio version of the novel at <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPo5PhfJnZE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPo5PhfJnZE</a></li> </ul>
WEEK 4	2/3 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read <i>Huck Finn</i>, Chapters 8-14</li> </ul>
	2/5 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read <i>Huck Finn</i>, Chapters 15-19</li> </ul>
	2/7 Fri	TBA
WEEK 5	2/10 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read <i>Huck Finn</i>, Chapters 20-25</li> </ul>
	2/12 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read <i>Huck Finn</i>, Chapters 26-31</li> </ul>
	2/14 Fri	TBA
WEEK 6	2/17 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read <i>Huck Finn</i>, Chapters 32-37</li> </ul>
	2/19 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read <i>Huck Finn</i>, Chapters 38-end</li> </ul>
	2/21 Fri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read Articles about ending section of <i>Huck Finn</i>, located in D2L Week 6 Readings folder</li> </ul>
WEEK 7	2/24 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In class: watch <i>Born to Trouble: Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i></li> </ul>
	2/26 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In class: watch <i>Born to Trouble: Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i></li> </ul>
	2/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In class: watch <i>Born to Trouble: Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i></li> </ul>

	Fri	
WEEK 8	3/3 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read J. D. Salinger, <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>, Chapters 1-7</li> </ul>
	3/5 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>, Chapters 8-14</li> </ul>
	3/7 Fri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>, Chapters 15-20</li> </ul>
WEEK 9	3/17 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>, Chapters 21-26</li> </ul>
	3/19 Wed	TBA
	3/21 Fri	<b>Midterm exam</b>
WEEK 10	3/24 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Lois Lowry, <i>The Giver</i>, first half</li> </ul>
	3/26 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>The Giver</i>, second half</li> </ul>
	3/28 Fri	TBA
WEEK 11	3/31 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Sherman Alexie, <i>The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian</i>, pages 1-81</li> </ul>
	4/2 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Absolutely True Diary</i>, pages 82-158</li> </ul>
	4/4 Fri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Absolutely True Diary</i>, pages 159-230</li> </ul>
WEEK 12	4/7 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Jillian Tamaki and Jillian Tamaki, <i>This One Summer</i>, pages 1-107</li> </ul>
	4/9 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>This One Summer</i>, pages 108-200</li> </ul>
	4/11 Fri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>This One Summer</i>, pages 201-end</li> </ul>
WEEK 13	4/14 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Aiden Thomas, <i>Cemetery Boys</i>, Chapters 1-3 (pages 1-60)</li> </ul>
	4/16 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Cemetery Boys</i>, Chapters 4-7 (61-113)</li> </ul>
	4/18 Fri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Cemetery Boys</i>, Chapters 8-12 (pages 114-180)</li> </ul>
WEEK 14	4/21 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Cemetery Boys</i>, Chapters 13-16 (pages 181-233)</li> </ul>
	4/23 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Cemetery Boys</i>, Chapters 17-21 (pages 234-289)</li> </ul>
	4/25 Fri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Cemetery Boys</i>, Chapters 22-end (pages 290-364)</li> </ul>
WEEK 15	4/28 Mon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Jerry Craft, <i>New Kid</i>, first half</li> </ul>
	4/30 Wed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Jerry Craft, <i>New Kid</i>, second half</li> </ul>
	5/2 Fri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Jerry Craft article on censorship and listen to NPR interview, available in D2L Week 15 folder</li> </ul>
<b>Rationale Project due Thursday, May 8 by 11:59 p.m. in D2L Week 15 Dropbox</b>		

