



2215A (570)
REPRESENTATIONS OF CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH
Fall/Winter 2026-2027

Instructor: J. Drew
Email: jwdrew@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

An introduction to the historically embedded words, metaphors, tropes, figures, narratives, and images of childhood and youth.

Pre-requisite(s): Childhood and Youth Studies 1025F/G or the former Childhood and Social Institutions 1025F/G.

Anti-requisite(s):

Extra Information: 3 hours

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: CYS

Mode of Instruction: In-person

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.



CYS 2215A
Representations of Childhood and Youth
Fall 2026

Instructor: John Drew, PhD

Email: jwdrew@uwo.ca

Classroom: TBD

Class hours: Available on Brightspace

Office hours: by appointment.

Course Information

Course Weight: 0.5

Prerequisites: Childhood and Youth Studies 1025F/G or the former Childhood and Social Institutions 1025F/G.

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be deregistered and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

An introduction to the historically embedded words, metaphors, tropes, figures, narratives, and images of childhood and youth. This course will consider key representations and discourses of modern childhood from the 17th century to contemporary times and engage with a range of texts and interpretive lenses that shape cultural perceptions of childhood and youth.

There are no materials to purchase for this course. All readings will be posted on Owl.

Learning Outcomes

This course invites you to critically examine how childhood and youth have been and continue to be represented in various forms of Western media, literature, and art. More specifically, you will learn how these representations have impacted broader cultural perceptions of childhood and youth as well as how they influence how children and youth perceive themselves.

LO1 - CYS students acquire a general knowledge of the key concepts, theoretical approaches and assumptions within the field of childhood and youth studies. They come to see children as competent social actors and understand the implications of this fact for children's participatory rights in a local, national and global contexts. Those who obtain an Honours Specialization (HSP) in CYS demonstrate the ability to assess issues and critique arguments about the politics of childhood, social justice for children, and children's rights and capabilities in various institutional contexts.

LO2 - CYS students become familiar with interdisciplinary approaches to childhood and learn to evaluate and distinguish between them. Those who complete an HSP come to understand how these approaches intersect with other fields and disciplines, and formulate their own research questions in upper division seminars.

LO3 – CYS students gain a working knowledge of case law, statutory law, public policy, and institutional features of childhood and youth in the past and the present. They critically reflect on the significance of various norms, rules, and practices for young people. They consider these structures in terms of power relationships between children, parents, and professionals, as well as those between racial, ethnic, migrant, gender, class, and national groups.

LO4 – CYS students apply analytic tools within childhood studies, and defend their ideas and arguments in oral and written forms. HSP students conduct research in childhood studies. Apply and defend ideas and arguments in speech and writing and in communication with others

Land Acknowledgement and Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation

We acknowledge that King's campus is on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. We are inspired by and grateful for Indigenous ways of knowing that teach us the interdependency and interconnectedness of all life forms, and our relationship of mutual reliance and shared destiny with other people, animals, and the earth. Finally, awareness of past and ongoing colonial injustices, and how education and childcare contexts have been used as vehicles for perpetuating colonial violence, is essential for those committed to studying and working in childhood- and youth-related fields, as is the commitment to reconciling with Indigenous communities.

"It is precisely because education was the primary tool of oppression of Aboriginal people and the miseducation of all Canadians, that we have concluded that education holds the key to reconciliation."

Justice Murray Sinclair

Course Expectations

If you need help, clarification, or additional information you are welcome to email me at jwdrew@uwo.ca, speak to me before or after class, or we can set up an appointment to meet in person or via Zoom. I can normally respond to emails within 1-2 days during the week and that should be your expectations. Remember that emailing a professor is not akin to texting a friend and professionalism is expected. Any announcements will be posted on the course home page and sent to your Western email. Check your Western email daily.

Cellphones are not permitted to be used during class time. You are allowed to use laptops or tablets responsibly. This means that it must be used as a learning aid. If it is clear you are distracted with unrelated content and/or distracting others you will no longer be permitted to use the devices in class.

Ensure that you not only come to class, but also complete the readings to the best of your ability and take notes. Some of the readings will be challenging and you may struggle to understand the content and ideas but asking questions and working through difficult material are integral to learning. Be prepared to invest additional time outside of class (1-3 hours/week) for reading, note taking, and assignments.

Policy on Artificial Intelligence

All assignments **must be done by you**, following the instructions provided. You may be asked to submit your work to plagiarism or AI detection software. Academic integrity is essential and [Western's scholastic discipline policy](#) applies. **You are not permitted to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as Chat GPT** as you will be hindering your own academic development. Moreover, AI tools frequently produce incorrect, biased, and sometimes prejudiced and offensive statements. Intentional usage of artificial intelligence or language generation or translation applications by students to summarize readings or complete assigned work for this course must be approved by the instructor and noted by the student in the submitted work itself. This mandate does not refer to aspects of AI programming embedded into applications such as Word, Chrome, etc. It applies to all intentional usage of AI as a 'co-reader' or 'co-writer.' Students must do their own reading and writing to construct their own voices as democratic citizens. They are not allowed to write text and feed it into a computer application to improve it or translate it. Asking an application to compose text and then changing words before submitting it as your own, constitutes plagiarism. The use of Grammarly or similar applications is prohibited. Using plagiarism checkers to see if plagiarized text has been altered enough to avoid detection is itself a form of academic dishonesty. Students must compose text, choose words, construct logic flow, structure sentences and paragraphs using their own minds and in response to what they read, hear, and experience. When you borrow words or ideas from another person or from a machine this must be placed in quotation marks and properly cited.

CYS 2215A Schedule: Readings, Lessons, and Writing

WEEK NUMBER and CLASS DATE	READINGS Go to the READINGS Resource tool in OWL	TOPICS	Key Dates Go to the ASSIGNMENTS section in OWL
Week 1 Sept. 11	- Course outline - Rundle, K. "Mind Games" - Maity, N. "Damsels in Distress: A textual Analysis of Gender Roles in Disney"	- Introduction to the course - Introduction to childhood and youth discourses and representations	Daily contribution marks begin today.
Week 2 Sept. 18	Ryan, P. "Discursive Tensions on the Landscape of Modern Childhood"	- Introduction to discourse analysis and literary devices - Examining the linkages between discourses, devices, and representations - Introduction to media analysis	Last day to add or drop a full (1.0) course, a first term half (0.5) course, or a full year half (0.5) course. Courses dropped by this date will not appear on a transcript; no fee penalty
Week 3 Sept. 25	- Bradstreet, A. "Childhood" and "Before the Birth of One of Her Children" - Bunyan, J. Selected poems from <i>The Book for Boys and Girls</i>	- The discursive constructions of childhoods - Historical and contemporary discourses of childhood - Identifying discursive tensions in representations of childhood and youth - The Conditioned Child: Puritan representations of childhood and youth	
Week 4 Oct. 2	- Blake, W. Selected poems from <i>Songs of Innocence</i> and <i>Songs of Experience</i> - Wordsworth, W. "Ode: Imitations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood."	The Authentic Child: Romantic era representations of childhood and youth	

Week 5 Oct. 9	Russell, P. "Parallel Fantasies" In class screening: <i>Monster</i> (Dir. Hirokazu Kore-eda, 2023)	- Discursive tensions - Diverse children's identities and representations - Adult/childhood tensions	
Reading Week Oct. 12- 16	No Classes		
Week 6 Oct. 23	In class screening: "Reservation Dogs" Season 1, episode 1. Content Warning: References to settler/colonial violence	Decolonizing discourses and representations of childhood and youth	Test (50 minutes)
Week 7 Oct. 30	- Watch <i>14 Up</i> (Dir. Michael Apted, 1970) Available on Youtube - Moran, J. "Childhood, Class and Memory in the Seven Up Films" - The Sesame Street Effect" by Alia Wong In-class Screening: <i>Mad Hot Ballroom</i> (Dir. Marilyn Argelo, 2005)	- Childhood escape into the imaginary - Discourses of childhood development - Ethics of children's participation in documentaries - Television and public pedagogy - Discourses of diversity and class	
Week 8 Nov. 6	Watch: <i>The Hunger Games</i> (Dir. Gary Ross, 2012) Available on Weldon Library Criterion Collection Read: Fisher, M. "Remember Who the Enemy Is"	Representations of children's inequality - Dystopian childhoods - Political discourses of childhood	
Week 9 Nov. 13	- Diepeveen, S. "How Does Social Media Influence Gender Norms Among Adolescent Boys?" "Helping Boys Log Off From Online Hate" by Omar Mesleh	- Digital media and meme representations/discourse and their influence on children and adolescence - Online representations of gender	

Week 10 Nov. 20	White, E.B., <i>Charlotte's Web</i>, Chapters 1-3; 14	- Children's ecological discourses and representations - Discourses of gender	
Week 11 Nov. 27	Student-led seminars	Students will sign up for time slot to present and respond to Q and A.	Seminar presentations and Q/A
Week 12 Dec. 4	Student-led seminars	Students will sign up for time slot to present and respond to Q and A.	Seminar presentations and Q/A Complete Student Questionnaire on Courses and Teaching (SQCT) for this course

Assessment weights and due dates

Each student will be given feedback on, and assigned a grade for the following written work:

Assessment	Weight	Due date/time
Responses (Best 4 out of 5)	10% (4 x 2.5%)	Various
Test	20%	Oct. 23
Video Essay/Seminar	25%	Nov. 27 and Dec. 4 (Sign-up for preferred date)
Participation	15%	Ongoing
Final Exam	30%	TBD
	100%	

In-class Responses: In six classes, you will complete a short (typically one paragraph) response, normally based on the assigned reading or film. You must be present in class to complete these assessments and the best five out of six will determine your final grade. No alternatives or makeups will be provided. If you are present for and complete all six, every point you earn will be awarded (i.e., in theory, you could get 12/10).

Test: a 50-minute, short and medium length answer test.

Video Essay/Seminar: Students will individually develop a 3-5 minute video essay responding to an assigned question. The video essay will allow you to balance visual representation/expression with analytical insights and commentary. Video essays will be posted in advance of the two seminar classes (Nov. 27 and Dec. 4) for viewing by other members of the class. Students will be responsible for watching five videos and preparing questions for the presenters. Students be assessed on: the production of the video essay, the accuracy and quality of seminar responses, and the thoughtfulness of the questions asked of other students.

Contribution: In-class participation is demonstrated through thoughtful, correct, and/or intellectually curious engagement in class discussions. Each class you will earn a score out of 15 for the quantity and quality of your contributions. The lowest daily score for each student will be dropped when the final participation grade

is determined at the end of the course. In other words, one zero or low grade is automatically 'forgiven.' Any others will contribute to your final participation mark. Please note how much a zero pulls down an otherwise good participation grade. At the midpoint of the course, you can request feedback on how your contributions have been to date. See course expectations above regarding policy on cameras.

>12 = excellent to outstanding. Not only did you effectively prepare for class, discuss the material, and remain focused throughout the session, you also demonstrated a deeper and particularly advanced level of engagement and analysis (such as by making connections between concepts or issues or applying a theoretical lens).

10.5-11.5 = good to very good. You were prepared for class and effectively contributed to discussions and remained engaged throughout the session. You asked and/or answered questions and/or shared ideas that demonstrated understanding and curiosity.

9-10 = capable. Your contributions were occasional and/or uneven.

7.5-8.5 = minimal or fair. This grade will be earned in different situations. Very shy students who do not contribute verbally in class but who engage in active and focused listening and note taking will not fail but rather will earn a grade in this range. This grade also applies to students who are present and may even contribute but are demonstrably unprepared.

Final Exam: A 2-hour exam assessing your knowledge of the full content of the class. It will be comprised of a series of short answer responses and an essay question.

- **Please note that Friday Make-Up exams may only be written with instructor's consent.**
- **As of September 1, 2026, students will incur a fee of \$45.00 per make-up assessment booked with the Exam Office.**
- **As of September 1, 2026, for any Special Exams booked outside of the designated special exam days, students will incur a fee of \$75.00. The designated Special Exam Days for 2026-27 are January 8 and 9, 2027, and May 7 and May 12, 2027.** Any absences are governed by the university academic consideration policy and documentation must be submitted to the absence portal. Note that the midterm is the designated assessment.

CYS ABSENCE/LATE POLICY

Penalties for late papers or projects may be avoided if extensions are requested in advance. Otherwise, a two-mark deduction will be taken for each of the first five days it is late (including weekends). After 5-days without communication, a zero will be assigned.

Students are expected to schedule appointments and other responsibilities around class time. To be excused from participatory requirements (attendance or homework, etc.) due to temporary illness or an unavoidable scheduling conflict, contact the instructor directly via email as soon as you are aware of the problem. Ordinary problems of this nature do not require documentation or communication with the Dean's Office; they will be dealt with by the course instructor. If a student experiences a disruption in their ability to study or participate in the course for more than one week, or if there is a personal loss or trauma of a serious nature, they may request more extensive accommodations, counselling, and other forms of help. The best way to do this is to contact the instructor and/or the Academic Dean's Office.

Assessment follows Western grading criteria, including for the daily participation marks:

Western's Grading Guidelines

- **A+ (90 - 100%)** – One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
- **A (80 - 89%)** – Superior work which is clearly above average
- **B (70 - 79%)** – Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
- **C (60 - 69%)** – Competent work that meets requirements
- **D (50 - 59%)** – Fair work, minimally acceptable
- **F (<50%)** – Below expectations (or assigned when course is dropped with academic penalty)

Additional Instructions and Resources

What expectations for ethical behaviour, politeness, and honesty govern our interactions?

In this class, we will be discussing a range of issues that are integral to the field of Childhood and Youth Studies. Sometimes these issues provoke feelings of discomfort or points of disagreement. At the university level, we aim to challenge many of our preconceived notions of the world and to engage the course material in the spirit of thoughtful and critical evidence-based practice. We should feel comfortable disagreeing but always express our disagreement in respectful and generous terms and provide supporting rationale and evidence for arguments.

Commitment to Student Wellness and Basic Needs

If you face any challenges securing food or housing, you are encouraged to contact King's Accessibility Office at (519) 433-3491 ext. 7800 or email acsd@kings.uwo.ca for support. The King's Accessibility Office can assist with mental health, security, and/or marginalization supports.

Accessibility at King's

If there is anything I can do to make the course more accessible for you, please let me know. For information on accessible routes, temporary service disruptions, feedback about the accessibility of services, and policies related to service animals, support persons, and assistive devices, please visit [King's Accessibility Website](#).

Important university dates (Add/Drop deadlines, the exam period and Study Days, etc.) are posted online, see [this page on Academic Dates and Events for Western University](#).

We are committed to establishing an anti-oppressive learning environment and equity, diversity, and inclusion is a responsibility of all members of the King's community. See [the code of student responsibilities](#). We honour each other's preferred names and pronouns and respect the diverse languages and experiences that enrich the classroom.

Good luck and have a great term!

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one

week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College:
<https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to

have a cellphone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see

https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see

https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality_Reports_-_TurnItIn.html.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.