



A Critical Handbook of Children's Literature

Rebecca J. Lukens , Jacquelin J. Smith , Cynthia Miller Coffel

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A Critical Handbook of Children's Literature, Ninth Edition, gives future teachers, practicing teachers, librarians, and parents many examples of quality children's literature to guide them in choosing the best books for the classroom, library, or home. The *Handbook* analyzes children's books that showcase positive examples of the literary elements, formats, and genres that are the focus in the field of children's literature. The books are noteworthy children's books, from classics to favorites to just-published titles, all selected as thought-provoking, important, or motivating choices. The authors suggest that readers examine the *Handbook* and then apply the literary concepts to additional reading from today's ever-expanding selection of children's books.

A Critical Handbook of Children's Literature Details

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From Reader Review A Critical Handbook of Children's Literature for online ebook

Meltha says

The greatest strength in this text is the sheer volume of recommendations, textsets, and reviews present. It's a little overwhelming to read at times since I would guess there are over a thousand children's books represented in this work, either through casual mention or in-depth analysis. The three authors obviously did their homework in this regard, and I salute them for it.

I found four general problems with the text, though. The first is something of an afterthought in that a couple of the appendices could have been better annotated, but that's something easily fixed. The second problem is there was some repetition present in the concepts that led to redundancy. This wasn't a terrible issue, but it could have been handled a little better. The third issue involved definition of terms. Occasionally a term would be thrown out and the definition for it was either implied or too vague. The glossary in the back was helpful in this regard, but placing definitions nearer to their usage physically would have been useful.

The final issue bothered me a bit. The authors (and for some reason Jacquelin J. Smith and Cynthia Miller Coffel aren't appearing on my page for this book) do tend to be very critical of "didactic" or "propaganda" works, pushing the concept that "preaching" in books is not a good idea. Well and good, but at times they turn didactic and preachy themselves upon the subject, basically giving a list of no-nos. Very few things make me want to assign a book more than being told I'm not supposed to.

The last chapter, which focuses predominantly on how teachers can increase the possibility of lifelong literacy made good points, but I wish librarians and parents/guardians would also have been included a bit more at that point since usually a teacher has access to a student for only one year while librarians and parents, both key audiences for the text, usually remain within a young reader's scope of access for far longer.

On the whole, though, this was generally a good resource.

Liz says

I appreciate the additions to this updated version of a children's literature resource that I have used for quite some time. Updated book examples are included as well. More could be done to address multicultural literature, but still a solid resource of genre and literary elements.

Widyastuti Purbani says

Great comprehensive book for those who begin to study children's literature. I have been using this book for my Introduction to Children's Literature Class for 6 years. It works so well, and helps a lot in making my students understand even some difficult concepts in CL.

Charlene says

I read this over the course of 6 weeks to give myself background for a work project. Appreciated the fact that the author gives her opinions about particular books, both good and bad, in chapters on the major components of story (tone, style, plot, point of view, etc.). A good book for a non-English major to understand more explicitly elements of fiction. Most enjoyable chapter was the one on poetry.

Bridget R. Wilson says

Not the best Children's lit textbook I've ever used for a class.

Meredith Links says

I read this for my children's literature class.
