



Plainview Campus  
School of Languages and Literature

**Wayland Baptist University Mission Statement:**

Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused, and distinctively Christian environment for professional success, and service to God and humankind.

**Course Name:**

ENGL 5309 – Young Adult Literature (YAL)

**Term and Year:**

Spring 2, 2026

**Full Name of Instructor:**

Dr. Erin Heath

**Office Phone and WBU Email Address:**

[erin.heath@wbu.edu](mailto:erin.heath@wbu.edu) 806-291-1110 (Feel free to leave a voicemail, although this is my office phone and I will not see it if Wayland's Plainview campus is not in session.)

**Office Hours, Building, and Location:**

Gates Hall 206-B and Online, various times, and by appointment

**Class Meeting Time and Location:**

WBU's Virtual Campus: Link to Wayland Blackboard

**Catalog Description:**

Focus is literature for middle and high school students. Emphasis is placed on contemporary literary and non-literary selections.

**Prerequisite:**

None, other than graduate-level status.

**Required Textbook and Resources:**

This version of the course is being taught as a combination film and literature course. Some books may be physical and will be mailed to you. Some books will be provided digitally through the course book fee.

For all undergraduate courses, textbooks and course materials are a part of the **Pioneer Academic Access** program. This program provides students with access to eBooks and other interactive learning materials on the first day of class through their Blackboard course(s). If the course requires a physical book, it can be ordered through the University Bookstore. Be sure to order them early, so you get them in time. This is the link to order physical books: <https://bookstore.wbu.edu/courselistbuilder> The costs of these course materials are automatically billed to student accounts based on the number of credit hours in which a student enrolls. Students may choose to opt-out, but in doing so, they will lose access to all course materials and will have to source those materials through third-party vendors. (Students will receive additional course material details via email and/or in their Bb courses.)

For all graduate courses, Automatic eBooks and other course materials will be billed directly to your account, or a physical book can be ordered through the University Store at [bookstore.wbu.edu](https://bookstore.wbu.edu). Be sure to order them early, so you get them in time. This is the link to order physical books: <https://bookstore.wbu.edu/courselistbuilder> Graduate students who do not wish to participate in the Automatic eBook program have through the first week of class to opt-out of the program.

The movie(s) must be purchased or rented by you separately. It cannot be included in the fee. You may either get the DVD or watch a digital version of the films from a streaming service like Amazon, Google Play, I Tunes, or YouTube.

Carrie Hintz and Eric L. Tribunella *Reading Young Adult Literature A Critical Introduction*  
Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street* (1983)  
Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* (2008)  
Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*  
Assorted Poetry Available on Blackboard  
Film: *The Hate You Give* Directed by George Tillman Jr.

This course will take place entirely online. You must have a reliable and secure computer connection and internet service, as well as access to software for writing papers (such as Microsoft Word) and software capable of reading documents produced in .pdf formats; backup media such as a USB flash drive, google docs, or dropbox, etc. Reliable internet service and WBU email account. Your WBU email is the way that I will contact you.

**Caution:**

We will watch a variety of films and read a variety of books in this course. Because of the nature of this topic, some of these works will contain adult content, images and/or language. These may include sexual references, sexual scenes, drug references, violent scenes, or other similar material. All film viewings will be required for the course. If you do not anticipate

being comfortable with the works as listed on the syllabus, please contact me immediately. This course may not be the best choice for you.

### **Course outcome competencies:**

Upon the conclusion of this course, students actively engaged in learning at the graduate level will be able to:

1. Understand how literature is a means of exploring and interpreting the human experience.
2. Determine criteria for selecting books for middle school and high school students.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of notable book awards.
4. Explain the benefit of using a variety of types of literature for this age range.
5. Plan ways to use literature in the classroom.
6. Through the use of an oral (or other) presentation or teaching session, introduce others to a contemporary literary selection recently developed for middle or high school students, and suggest appropriate activities for using it in a middle or high school classroom.

The more the student puts into the course, the higher his or her outcome competencies will be.

### **Attendance Requirements:**

Because this is an online course and because we will not meet synchronously, your attendance for the course is largely dependent on your contribution to the discussion board's weekly topics and other participation grades. In keeping with the on-site attendance policy, failure to provide a full response for at least 75% of the discussion topics will result in an F for the course.

### **Due Dates and Late Penalties:**

Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. (Central Time Zone) on the date posted. Be sure that your clock matches the clock in WBU's Blackboard. All assignments must be submitted to the Blackboard site to receive a grade. These deadlines, like most deadlines in life, are not negotiable. *Any late assignment will receive a 15 point deduction if it is late.* Nothing will be accepted after the last regular day of the course.

If for any reason you have trouble submitting your assignment online, send me an email with the attached assignment (in Microsoft Word) before the due date/time, with an explanation of the technical problem. I will note the submission time of the email in order to assess removing late penalties. You will be required to re-submit the assignment within 24 hours, or once the technical problem is resolved.

### **Expectations, Communication, & Other Information:**

Announcements and important information will be posted on the Blackboard site. Be sure to check the site often. Additional information may be sent to your WBU emails, so make sure you've set up a WBU email and are checking it often. Always feel free to email me or chat online anytime I'm signed on if you are concerned about the course or your progress. I am available to help you, provide resources, and give direction—but I cannot help you if I do not know you're struggling.

Students should contact me by using my wbu.edu email. I am also available on zoom by appointment. I have an office on the Plainview campus, as well, so Plainview campus students can set up an appointment to visit with me there. Please note that the phone number listed in this syllabus is my office number, which may be checked periodically throughout the week during the spring and fall Plainview semesters, but not often during the summer. The best way to get in touch with me quickly is through email.

### **Technical Support:**

If you need assistance with your Wayland email, call IT @ (806) 291-3540, OR go here:

[student IT help](#)

If you encounter other technical problems, contact the Virtual Campus (VC) via this link:

[Virtual Campus Online](#), or feel free to call direct (866) 547-9192 or email [virtualcampus@wbu.edu](mailto:virtualcampus@wbu.edu)

### **Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:**

Participation in discussion questions and peer review	35%
Annotated bibliography	15%
Research and analysis essay	40%
Short reflection and write-up functioning as “final exam”	10%

### **Writing Assignments:**

In addition to discussion boards, students will be required to write an annotated bibliography, a research analysis essay, and a final exam essay. Each assignment will use MLA documentation style. A helpful online resource for citing in MLA is the OWL at Purdue:

[Purdue Online Writing Lab Link](#)

### **Final Exam:**

One exam, a final, will be given during the term. This exam is likely to be a relatively short essay in which you reflect on your experiences with the texts and themes of this course, including a “take away” list of which two lessons you believe were most insightful or valuable to you as a literary student or scholar, and why. A list of prompts will be provided no less than one week before the exam is due.

### **Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:**

Wayland Baptist University observes a zero tolerance policy regarding academic dishonesty. Per university policy as described in the academic catalog, all cases of academic dishonesty will be reported, and second offenses will result in suspension from the university. Plagiarism is described in part as:

1. asking or paying someone else to write your paper;
2. copying, stealing, or “borrowing” another’s paper, or portions of a book, article, or

website, without using quotation marks and proper acknowledgement.

Submitting your own work for more than one course without permission of both instructors can also constitute plagiarism. For any work submitted in this course, documentation should follow current MLA form; the current MLA guide is available at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>. If you have questions about fair use or documentation, please do not hesitate to consult me.

**Artificial Intelligence Policy: No use of any generative AI tools permitted.**

- i. Students are required to create and produce all work themselves or with assigned group members. Any work submitted that has used an AI generative tool like ChatGPT will be in immediate violation of the academic integrity policies for the course and WBU.
- ii. All assignments must be fully created, designed, and prepared by the student(s).
- iii. Any work that uses generative AI will be treated as plagiarism.

**Disability Statement:**

“In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291- 3765. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.”

**Grade Appeal:**

“Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Executive Vice President/Provost to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.”

**Tentative Schedule:**

The schedule below is a tentative outline for the term. As such, it is subject to change, with notification of course. All readings ought to be completed *prior* to doing any posts in the discussion forum.

Topic	Reading/Viewing	Wednesday respond to peers in DB	Sunday Weekly Assignment
Week 1	1. Syllabus  2. Reading Young Adult Literature chapter 2   4. Lecture on BB	1. Send me an email introducing yourself by Wednesday 2. Do the Required First Assignment. (You will be dropped from the class if you don't submit this assignment.)	Introductions: Discussion Board
Week 2	Suzanne Collins' <i>The Hunger Games</i> first half 2. Reading <i>Young Adult Literature</i> Chapter 4 3. Lecture on BB	Respond to peers about last week's DB	Discussion Boards
Week 3	Suzanne Collins' <i>The Hunger Games</i> (second half Chapter 16-end)  3. Lecture on BB	Respond to peers about last week's DB	1. Proposals for Final Paper  2. Discussion Boards
Week 4	Cisneros' <i>The House on Mango Street</i> 2. Reading <i>Young Adult Literature</i> Chapter 1 3. Lecture on BB	Respond to peers about last week's DB	1. Annotated Bibliography  2. Discussion Boards

Week 5	<p>Assorted Poetry See Readings in Blackboard</p> <p><i>Reading Young Adult Literature</i> chapter 5 (Tip Life of Pi is long, you might start it this week and give yourself more time.)</p> <p>3. Lecture on BB</p>	Respond to peers about last week's DB	<p>1. Draft of final paper (10 pages) for Peer Critique Discussion Board</p> <p>2. Discussion Board</p>
Week 6	<p>Yann Martel's <i>Life of Pi</i></p> <p>3. Lecture on BB</p>	Respond to peers about last week's DB	<p>1. Peer Critique Response to your peer 2. Discussion Boards</p>
Week 7	<p><i>Film: The Hate You Give</i></p> <p><i>Reading Young Adult Literature</i> Chapter 3</p> <p>3. Lecture on BB</p>	Respond to peers about last week's DB	<p>1. Brief Discussion Board</p> <p>2. Final Paper Due</p>
Week 8	1. Read Instructions for Final Exam		<b>Final Exam Due: <u>Saturday</u></b>