

Andrea Immel & Jill Shefrin
H-200: Print for Children
27 July–1 August, 2025, Princeton, New Jersey

1) *Were the pre-course reading assignments useful? Are there any readings that you would like to see added or removed in future years?*

1. Yes! I enjoyed them and they were useful in providing a foundational knowledge.
2. I loved all the pre-course readings. I sank my teeth into them and they prepared us all for the material we would explore in the course.
3. I thought the readings were useful and I profited by looking at the catalogs suggested as options.
4. It was a little unclear what the takeaways were supposed to be in the pre-readings. Now that we're done, I'm not sure I can connect all of the readings to the content. They were interesting, for sure, but perhaps could have been listed with objectives or something to clarify their selection.
5. Yes.
6. While we didn't discuss the readings explicitly in class, I did find the readings helpful for setting the main themes of the course. In addition, the reading material gave me a starting point for further researching I hope to do. I think we received the right amount of reading.
7. Pre-course readings were very helpful — the number of readings was ideal and established context for examining the materials.
8. Readings were not directly correlated to class.
9. The readings were all very useful and informative. I would have liked to speak about them a bit in class, I think. There was no mention of them.
10. Yes. Knowing some of the historical context was helpful in understanding what the course covered without having to start from scratch.
11. Yes! I'd love a list of a few more optional readings from the instructors since their selections were so good.

2) *What are your thoughts on the course workbook and/or other teaching materials distributed during class? Was the content appropriate and useful? Will it continue to be useful for you after the course?*

1. N/A
2. No teaching materials were distributed but I took twenty pages of notes that I will use in my graduate and undergraduate classes.
3. No info was distributed.
4. I wish we had received a workbook. I wrote so many notes, but I missed things, too.
5. N/A
6. I wish there were more materials distributed to us in class. The history we were moving through was quite dense and I hoped that we would get articles and

writings that also had the information. The slides were helpful, however, and I believe I was able to get good notes.

7. I would love to have had a workbook for this course!
8. No materials distributed which would have been helpful.
9. We were not given a course workbook.
10. N/A
11. Yes!

3) *Which aspects of the course were most intriguing and relevant for you as an individual? Did you walk away with any new insights, ideas, or project plans?*

1. All of it! I enjoyed everything about this course.
2. Absolutely. This course expanded my knowledge of print for children (18th century especially) (and Chinese and Russian print for young people), and it has further fuelled my enthusiasm for bibliographical study.
3. I was most interested in ideas about the range of print for children and info on other products from some publishers. Also, sources of info I have not used/considered before. I walked away with a shopping list. :)
4. JS's work on school pieces was totally new and fascinating. AI's mouth-busting about Newbery helped me question my prior knowledge. They both inspired us to never take others' arguments about the past as gospel truth.
5. {no response}
6. I have long been interested in illustration techniques in early children's literature and both the readings and the class discussion were useful for that. In addition, the days where we focused on international children's literature were really helpful for my research.
7. I've come away with many fresh insights I'll need to sift through. Although not directly relevant to my research, what I've learned will inform my teaching. I feel more knowledgeable about print materials for children as well as books. I'm inspired by the Princeton creational blog also.
8. Better understanding of the timeline of literacy acquisition especially children.
9. Yes, understanding many of the things I sell and collect {illegible} in the context of the history is very useful. I will certainly look more closely for many of the identifiers we learned about in class.
10. Seeing how book historians approach libraries & special collections made some of my description practice ideas far more clear.
11. So many! longer history helped me challenge previous assumptions/misconceptions about what I thought was "new" International + subject matter variety = incredibly eye-opening learned teaching techniques for working with/ my students on special collections material.

4) *Did the instructors help you to acquire all the skills and information promised in the course description? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?*

1. AI and JS are delightful, knowledgeable, and such wonderful instructors. I appreciated the presentations by Minjie and Maria as well. Huge thanks to each of them!

2. Absolutely. I have come away from this course with an extended knowledge of print history, the diversity of materials for children, and idea of print for children in an international scale.
3. I learned much of what I hoped to get — mostly how to find info later on and many things I did not know I needed.
4. I think so. A workbook with objectives/vocabulary would have helped me as a measure of this.
5. {private response}
6. Yes, while we didn't expressly talk about the type of children's literature I write about in my research, the instructors and my classmates eagerly helped whenever they could, and I'm leaving with some really good ideas on how to proceed.
7. For the most part! I would like to learn more about the history of print technologies for children's print culture & the book trade.
8. Course description not helpful. Hoped to learn more about printing, per se. Great deal of dates & names which may or may not have been relevant due to rapid fire delivery.
9. For the most part, yes. It was a wonderful course and the teachers were incredible. I would have liked to spend a bit more time on print after 1850, which is where the bulk of my work falls.
10. Yes. I am coming away with a much more comprehensive understanding of children's books as a material of the trade & the trade & publishing practices.
11. Yes!

5) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*

1. Professionally and for my own research.
2. I will integrate this knowledge into my third-year undergraduate archives course. This course has further inspired my love of bibliographic methodologies that I am integrating into my research (I have just finished an article on Taylor Swift's book materialist aesthetic!)
3. {no response}
4. I'm sure to use them in my curation of rare children's books and in special collections courses. I feel better ground in the contexts surrounding print for children — I wish I'd had this course 10 years ago!
5. The skills and knowledge I acquired will be of immense use in my teaching and collection development.
6. I plan to use the knowledge from this course to expand my own research by diving into the history of education for enslaved and free children in the 1600's, 1700s.
7. I will apply to my undergraduate teaching on children's books & special collections. I will also apply to my own research & personal collecting.
8. I will look at my collection with new eyes & great depth.
9. In assessing my own collection as well as informing the descriptions of those that I sell.
10. I intend to advise my institution of buying & description practices.
11. Sparked new ideas for research + creative projects as well as for objects of study + methods to bring to my undergrad classes.

6) *Who might benefit the most from taking this RBS course?*

1. Anyone with an interest in children's book history.
2. Anyone with a passion for books! Anyone who wants to return to school to learn more! Anyone who loves working in rare book collections!
3. We had a wide range of students & academics, curators in collections dealing with children's lit, library staff learning more about juvenile prints, collectors. We all got something different from the course.
4. Children's literature scholars and students, curators, instructors in historical print/publishing or historical children's lit.
5. Scholars of early children's books, rare books curators, print historians.
6. A grad student looking to learn from experts about something their school may not have the resources to teach them, A librarian or curator wanting to beef up their collections or improve their cataloguing.
7. Teaching faculty, curators, librarians, graduate students, illustrators authors &
8. Children's librarians & collectors.
9. Anyone with the interest!
10. Booksellers, curators.
11. In addition to profs and curators...teachers — including at pre-college level (high school, middle school) in the print for children class, maybe also child psychologists and social workers artists!

7) *If applicable, what were the most original, powerful, or otherwise noteworthy educational moments in the course? Were there any "aha!" moments you'd like to share?*

1. {no response}
2. There were so many each day that I cannot count. Our instructors brought a remarkable amount of knowledge that was awe-inspiring. JS on the Osborne collection; AI on marginalia.
3. {no response}
4. Learning about punched type to create plates for printing was a totally new idea. I also loved international day, which broke us all out of our Euro-centric bubble. There could be a whole course on this.
5. {no response}
6. I'm an early career librarian and on day one, AI and JS were talking about the History of early children's Librarianship. It made me so excited to be joining that lineage.
7. Minjie's & Maria's presentations on Chinese children's literature & Soviet era Russian children's books were superb. I really enjoyed the Monkey King material :)
8. Enjoyed overview of Russian children's books in the context of history.
9. Learning about how many people are involved in the creation of a children's books — Learning how important collectors have been — Learning about the ways children engage (Gatekeeping).
10. The whole course was so valuable & gave me so much in terms of ideas for how to approach all my materials.
11. Getting to see striking rare images, books, objects first-hand, learning about books for children in Ukraine + how adults value helping kids emotionally process in crisis moments, seeing white space + picture books for kids earlier than I expected + seeing Chinese Alice in Wonderland!

8) *Are there any other ways in which the course could have been improved?*

1. {no response}
2. I would have liked to learn more about the Cotsen Beatrix Potter collection (maybe that makes me “unserious”) esp. since it is part of the Cotsen collection.
3. {no response}
4. It did, at times, feel like drinking from a firehose. I think a guide/course booklet or perhaps more examination/application might have helped us return more and build confidence in recognition/application.
5. {no response}
6. More children's books featuring children of color and authors of color.
7. {no response}
8. 1) Printed materials to focus information provided by instructors 2) Restrain so much verbal information diverging from topic.
9. One of the professors had great difficulty with the display and had to teach a number of the sessions (maybe 2-3) without her slides. It was very informative in spite of this but I felt that could be made easier. }
10. {no response}
11. Maybe one more social activity for the group in the middle of the week, the lunch at the end bonded us + would be great for more earlier (but post Sunday dinner when we were all new). Perhaps a more detailed schedule in advance listing the topic of each session (tho I liked being surprised too!).

9) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? How likely are you to recommend this course to others? On a 1-10 scale, 1 would indicate that you disagree that you got your money's worth, 5 would indicate a neutral response, and 10 would indicate that you agree that you got your money's worth.*

1. 10
2. 12! OMG best value for money! Looking forward to another course already! See you next year!
3. 10
4. 10
5. {no response}
6. 10 - I believe I got my money's worth I am very likely to recommend this in the future.
7. 10
8. 5
9. 10 though I attended for free
10. 10
11. 10

10) *If your course made any (virtual) field trips outside of the classroom or had guest speakers, do you feel that they enhanced the course experience?*

1. {no response}

2. Absolutely. We had the privilege of learning from Maria + Ming about Russian + Chinese children's lit. respectively. What a treat and I learned about 2 fields that I wouldn't have known about otherwise.
3. {no response}
4. Two catalogers spoke for international day, and I was particularly impressed with Minjie's presentations on Chinese children's literature.
5. Yes, learning about Russian and Chinese books for children was fascinating and provided valuable context beyond the staple early Anglophone texts.
6. Julia's talk on Wednesday was a definite plus. I wish we had visited to Cotsen during class time. Because of the RBS schedule, it was always closed by the time I tried to view it.
7. I suggest a field trip upstairs to the Cotsen Children's Library.
8. Enjoyed guest speakers. Monkey King overly long for relevance to course.
9. Yes, we have one of the event speakers join our class for a day and that was such fun.
10. I appreciated the expertise provided by the guest speakers and thought it was a valuable contribution. Getting expertise outside of the instructors made it more well rounded.
11. For print for children, we should do a field trip to a local bookstore (Labyrinth?) to see how books are selected and presented there in a local/contemporary context. I loved the 2 guest speakers and learned so much about Chinese and Russian books from them.

11) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*

1. {no response}
2. Take it — it'll blow your mind.
3. {no response}
4. Bring breakfast bars, instant coffee, and shower shoes!
5. {no response}
6. No.
7. Just do it.
8. Ask if there is take home material.
9. This course focuses on the history of print for children, the individuals who brought the study into the public eye and how institutions or parents gatekeep books for children. &c — It is not about classics and canons. You won't speak much about Alice, Bilbo, Curdy, &c.
10. Read the advanced reading & look up the prominent scholars. Their names will come up a lot and it pays to know them in advance.
11. Prepare to learn a lot from amazing teachers and fellow students :)

12) *If you had to sum up your RBS experience with a single sentence, phrase, or haiku, what would you say?*

1. RBS is the best!
2. Thank you to everyone who made this happen. It was transformative.
3. {no response}

4. RBS is like the best of grad school — all of the fascinating info, people, and materials, without the painful seminar papers.
5. {no response}
6. It was delightful.
7. Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious. Thank you all, so very much
8. Friendly caring staff & instructors who thoroughly know their materials.
9. To be surrounded by such thoughtful and knowledgeable people is one the finest things there is.
10. You'll be exhausted but you'll laugh and learn so much you won't care.
11. Immersive and illuminating!