

Dipartimento di Scienze della Formazione
Laurea Magistrale in
Scienze Pedagogiche e Progettazione Educativa



LINGUA INGLESE

Dott.ssa Alessandra Nucifora

Lingua Inglese

4 CFU



The course aims at providing students with the knowledge to improve, consolidate and deepen English language skills, particularly concerning the grammatical, morphological and phonological aspects of language (B level of the Common European "framework", reading comprehension and the ability to talk about topics that are related with the students field of interest).

Entry level: B1; achievement level: B1+.



Contents:

grammatical, morphological and lexical analysis of texts belonging to the field of educational studies' reading comprehension activities with a focus on the scientific lexicon on education, particularly focusing on the following topics(

-) Current children's literature
-) Political correctness in children's literature
-) - reading on your own
-) The use of Lewis Carroll's /Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Learning outcomes



By the end of the course students will be able to(

- Interpret, understand and comment on the texts
- Analyse and identify syntax and grammatical structures'
- find information in texts and support their own ideas about the text '
- recognise and employ the elements of lexic on education and children,s literature'
- sum up (written and oral# information found in texts and comment on tests supporting ideas properly.



Exam

Testing will be based on a written test and an oral exam. The written test assesses grammar skills. Students who fail the written test cannot be admitted to the oral one.

The oral exam is based on a conversation in English language, on the revision of the written test and on the comment on the reading passages dealt with during lessons.

Course-books



Grammar and language skills:

5 6. 4wan, !.. 0 alter, D. Bertocchi, *The Good Grammar Book for Italian Students*, . &ford 7.+., 899: (reference grammar# 5 6. ; ancock, A. 6cDonald, *English Result*, +re) intermediate, . &ford, 899<.

6 onographic course(

4. A. Notini, ;. 6 onaco, *Issues in Education*, ! lue\$, Bologna 899 , pp. =) >=) *. ! arroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, %iunti ! lassics, %iunti Editore, 6 ilano 8998 (<) 9 selected passages#

Lessons



Tuesday: h. 14.00 - 16.00

Wednesday: h. 12.00 - 14.00

Lettorato (*dott.ssa C. Owen*)

Monday: 8.00-10.00 (starting(april >^{rd#}

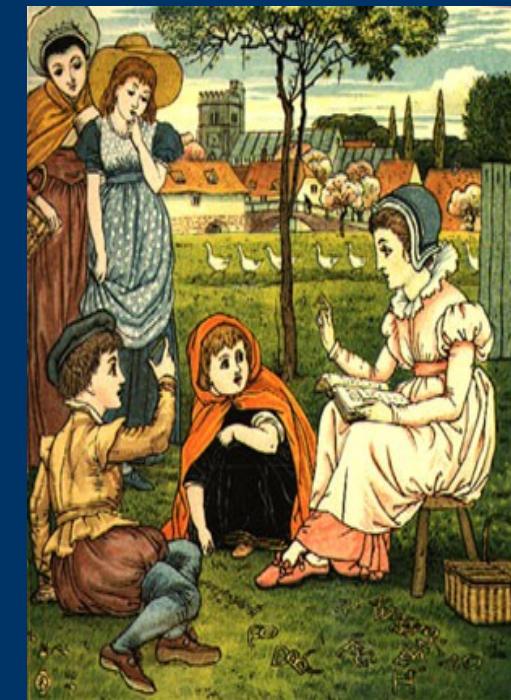
Wednesday: 18.00-20.00

Office hours: tuesday 9.99) 8.99 ?ia . felia

Children's Literature

Why do we read to children?

- * *It's fun*
- * *It benefits children's growth as readers and learners*
- * *It teaches children to come into contact with and appreciate the written world*
- * *It helps children develop important language skills*
- * *It helps build children's listening skills, attention span and imagination.*
- * *Children's literature can often be read on different levels and enjoyed by adults as well.*

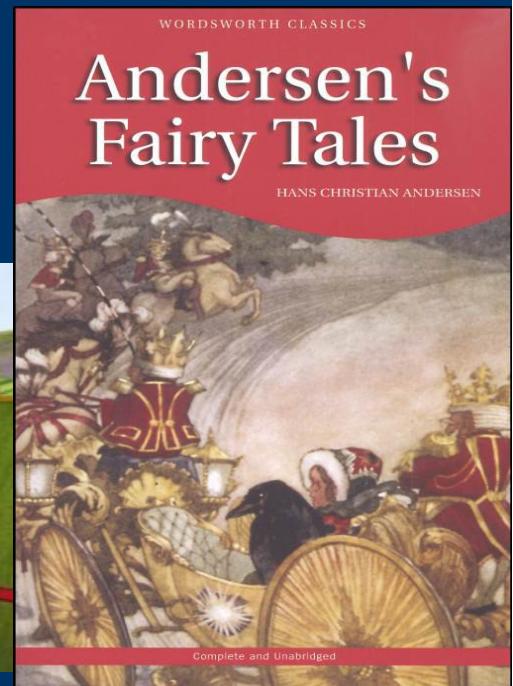
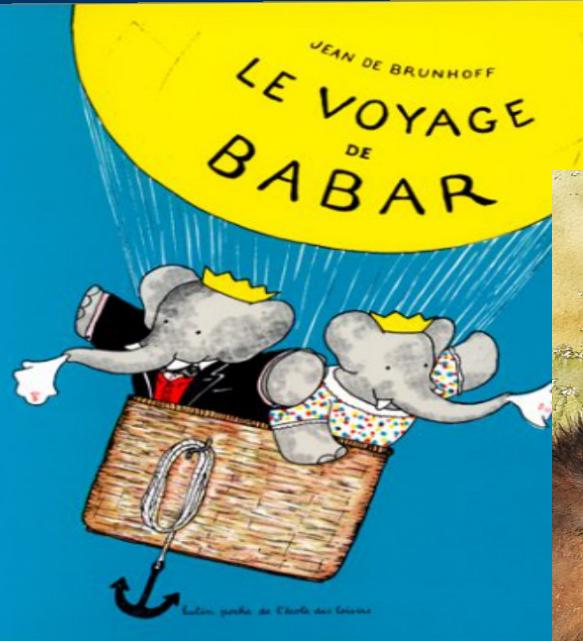


Many of the best-known books for children either British or American. Why?

- *Germany*
- *Sweden*
- *Italy*
- *France*



- *Grimm Brothers' Fairy Tales*
- *Andersen's Fairy Tales*
- *Pinocchio*
- *Babar*



Some British famous books for children



XVIII- XIX century

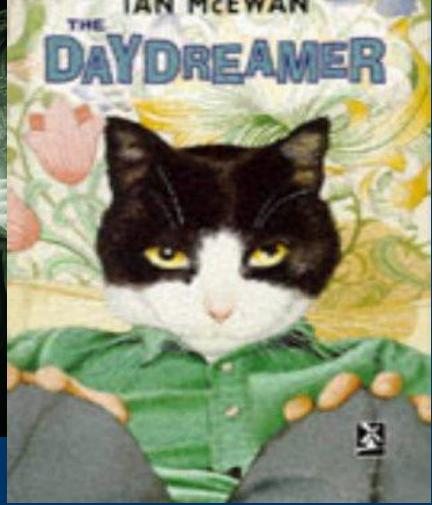
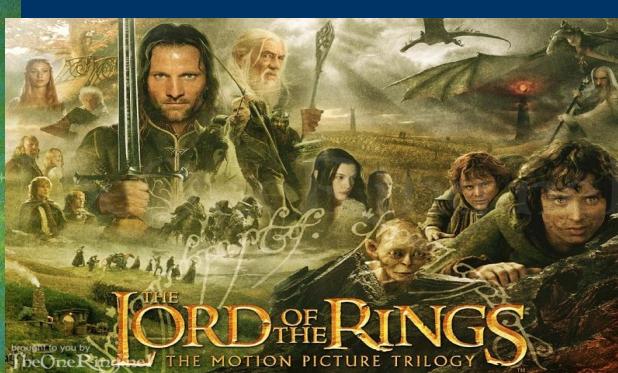
Daniel Defoe, (1719)

Jonathan Swift, (1726)

Charles Dickens, (1837-39)

(1849-50) (1855-57)

Lewis Carroll, (1864)



@@ century

J. M. Barrie, *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*
(1906)

J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of Rings* (1937-1949)

C. S. Lewis, *The Narnia Chronicles* (1950)

J. K. Rowling, *The Harry Potter Series* (1997)

Postmodern fiction: I. McEwan, *The Daydreamer*
(1993)

The British Peter Pan complex



In most nations there is nothing specially wonderful about being a child of school age. For the first five or four years they are pampered and spoiled

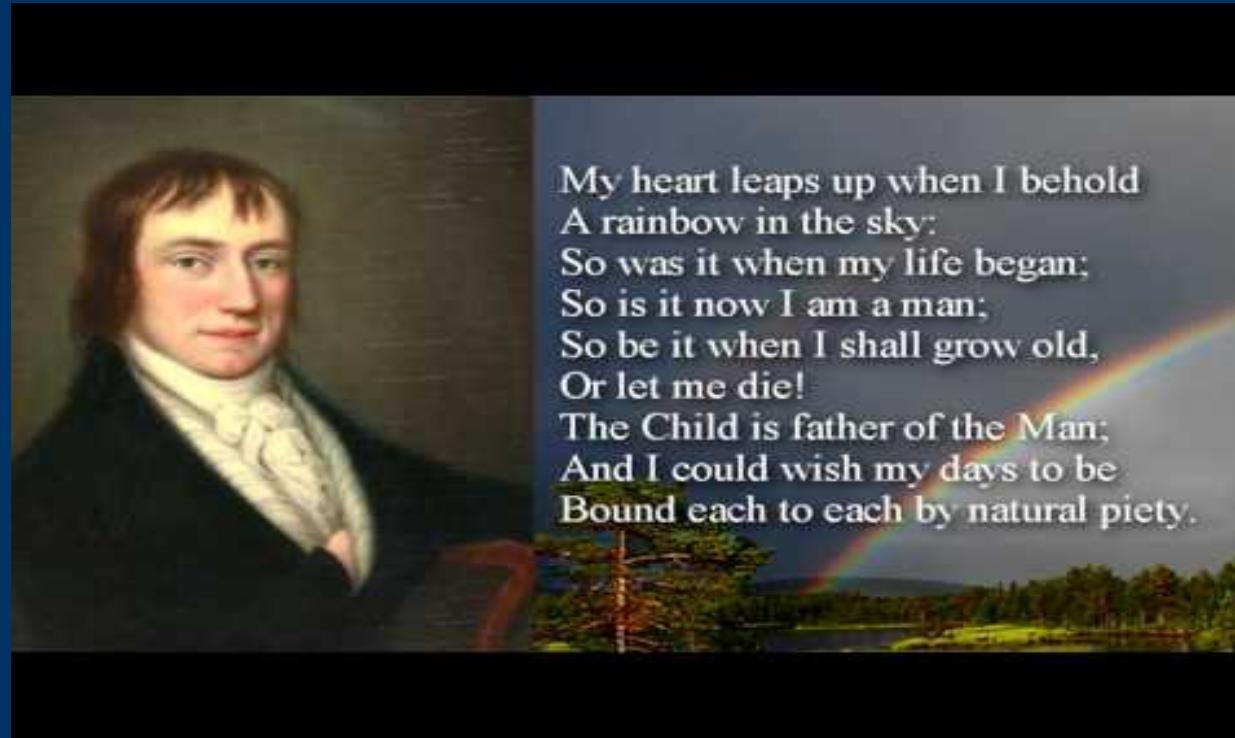
but.....

When they begin school, they are expected to be like small adults: responsible, serious, future-oriented.

Nonetheless....

Since the XVIIIth Century, in English-speaking countries poets, philosophers and educators have believed that there is something magnificent, unique and superior about childhood.

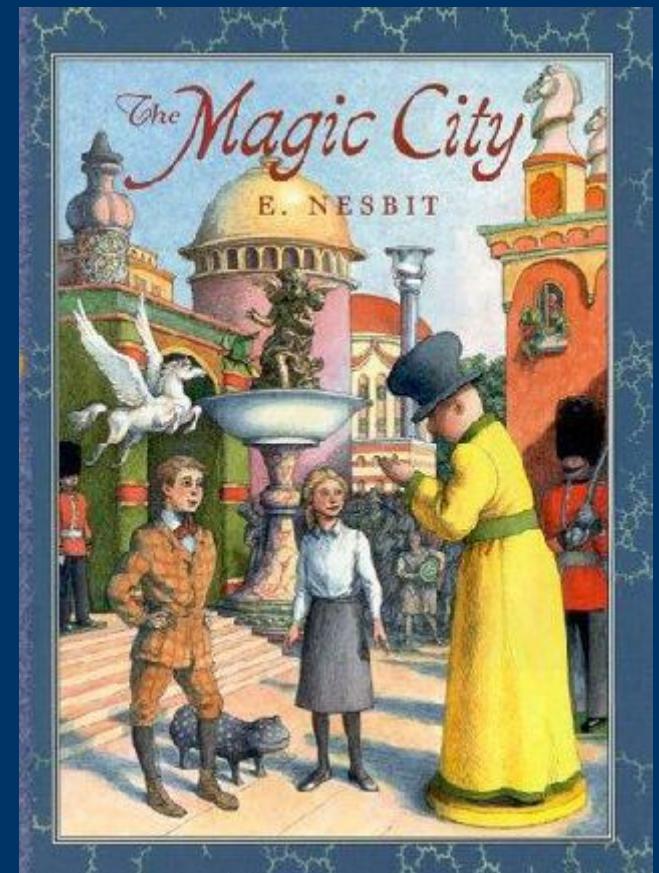
Especially in the Romantic Age, childhood was considered as superior to adulthood.



Authors...

...of great children's fiction, regardless of their nationality, often continue to think and feel like children: spontaneous, dreamy, imaginative, unpredictable.

- Edith Nesbit wrote *The Magic City* after spending many hours building a toy city out of blocks and kitchenware
- Laurent de Brunhoff, inventor of Babar, is over seventy years of age now and he continues to climb trees.



The Case of Lewis Carroll (1832-1898)

The author of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) was known because he preferred the company of little children rather than that of adults.

Alice in Wonderland was inspired by the young girl Alice Liddell, the little daughter of the Dean of Christ Church College in Oxford where Carroll himself was a Deacon. He used to spend much of his free time with little children and had a special admiration for Alice Liddell's wild imagination and intelligence.



Many classics of children's literature in English share common features



- ✗ Belief in children more than in adults
- ✗ Making fun of grownups, emphasizing their defects
- ✗ Portraying children heroes as often endowed with special powers developing a parallel life in an imaginary world where they can escape everyday routine, break adults' rules and avoid impositions
- ✗ Representing children as more courageous, more intelligent, more curious and alive than adults
- ✗ Often presenting aspects of Utopia or Dystopia criticizing contemporary society and its limits *through the Looking-Glass of children's eyes*
- ✗ _____

J. K. Rowling (1965 -)

- ! learly continues this tradition
- ; as created a world in which children have special powers while conventional adults are either stupid, or cruel, or \$oth.
- her stories pertain to a traditional and never) ending Anglo)American series of fantasy literature, that \$egins with Tolkien and !. 4. *ewis and continues with many other contemporary authors.



Harry Potter's story: peculiarities

- *ightness and richness of the story
- 4udden inspiration
- “*Harry Potter strolled into my head fully formed*”.
- -owling says that one day in AA9 while she was taking a train, the full idea of ;arry +otter,s character and his world and adventures came to her mind as a whole. "or si& years, even \$efore she \$egan to write the first \$ook in the series, she imagined and ela\$orated his fantastic world.



Harry Potter



- ; as the powers of a wi3ard \$ut he doesn,t know it at the \$eginning of the story
- When we first meet him he is ten years old and in a typical Cinderella-like situation(a poor orphan, forced to live with relatives who mistreat him (a typical pattern of many of Dickens, novels as well#
- ; e lives with uncle and aunt, Mr and Mrs Dursley, and their horri\$le son, Dudley.
- They live in a small town in the North of England, called *ittle Ohining, which sounds like /piccola lagna1 in 2talian.

In this wizards' world...



Those who do not have supernatural powers are called /Muggles/ (translated into Italian as /Babbani/)

"From the glossario di Harry Potter (Wikipedia) **Babbano** is an Italian term pejoratively meaning *babbeo*, mainly diffused in Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna and Marche, but now known in Italy and progressively being accepted in the Italian language as a neologism thanks to the translation of *Muggle* in the Harry Potter series.

And from Wikipedia again:
In the Italian translation the **figli di Babbani** (or **Nati Babbani**) are wizards born from Muggles (parents, called in a denigrating form "Mud-blood" or "half-blood").



- Harry Potter's Muggle-relatives are cruel with him, like all stepmothers and stepfathers of all fairy tales.
 - They hardly feed him
 - They give him ridiculous clothes to wear.
 - They make him sleep in a dark, spider-infested closet.
 - They destroy any mail he receives.
 - His cousin, Dudley, a spoiled, fat, gluttonous and arrogant boy, makes his life a hell both at school and at home.
-
-

Typical situation in children's literature of all times

- Children conceive the world as full of “Muggles” that don't understand them and don't want to have anything to do with what is unpredictable and invisible.
- Harry's story, like Alice's one, embodies one of the most common childhood fantasies: terrible adults and siblings that are not their real family, and children who have the ability to do magic in order to change things.

J. K. Rowling: the fairy tale of her life



- ★ She wrote her first Harry Potter book while being alone with a small baby and too little money to support them both.
- ★ She had no heating in her apartment so she would take her child to a cafe and while the baby slept used to write her book.
- ★ The first book in the series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, was rejected by nine different publishers before being accepted by Bloomsbury and soon becoming an incredible editorial success and a bestseller translated into 80 languages, among which Icelandic and German!

It is interesting to know that...



- In England a special edition with a non-descript cover has been published for adults who were ashamed of being seen reading a book for children.
- In some Southern parts of the United States, Christian fundamentalist educators and parents, who object to the teaching of evolution and the Big Ben Theory of creation, are complaining that the stories make wizardry and witchcraft seem like a positive thing and advocate Rowling's books being taken out from school-libraries and forbidden to children. Publishers of course fight back and consider this publicity for their products.