The Stories We Believe

The Ogress and the Orphans

HAW-LIT-OG-06 · 2027 seminar offerings · 8–12

Live seminar	Scheduled live hours	Regular tuition
6 × 45 minutes	**4.5 hours**	**$475**

Live online · Up to six scholars · Discussion-led
Hawthorne Institute · contact@hawthorneinstitute.com

How do communities decide what to believe, and what makes trust worth rebuilding?

How does a repeated story become accepted as true? The Ogress and the Orphans gives children a community to investigate. Across two bounded inquiries, they trace the sources of a claim and test a town plan, connecting evidence, generosity, and responsibility to choices in the novel.

Learning aims

- Interpret the novel's narration and patterns of trust using specific passages.
- Trace a report to its source and distinguish repetition from independent support.
- Compare evidence, inference, persuasion, and a claim about motive.
- Build a feasible civic proposal with a correction route and a way for residents to be heard.
- Revise a judgment or public arrangement after a challenge, while naming remaining uncertainty.

Shared reading and preparation

Read six approximately equal narrative windows, beginning before meeting 1 and finishing before meeting 6. This is a substantial novel over a compact calendar; supported reading is welcome. Boundaries follow natural scene or chapter breaks.

Read or listen and bring a question, passage marker, sketch, or spoken note. Any brief observation invitation has a supplied fictional alternative. Activity design, testing, portfolio selection, and final sharing take place in seminar; no extended home project is required.

Reading estimate 60–90 minutes during active reading weeks; later selected rereads generally 5–15 minutes.

Independent study estimate 6–9.5 hours over the seminar, separate from 4.5 scheduled live hours.

Planning ranges, not speed targets or completed hours. Reading pace and support vary; log actual time separately. Optional extensions are excluded.

Included Primary literature, secondary readings, and all hands-on activities are included in the course.

Selected secondary readings are encountered together and activity materials or supported ways to participate are provided within the course. Families do not need to purchase companion books or activity kits. Included does not mean that every secondary title is supplied as a separate physical book.

Meeting sequence

MEETING 01

What makes a story believable?

Before or together First of six narrative windows, before meeting 1.

Read narrator and reputation closely; distinguish a claim from a reason to accept it.

Evidence Initial claim and a question.

MEETING 02

How can we check a report?

Before or together Second narrative window; LOC routine and a short Gravel selection.

Begin a bounded source investigation, separating observation, interpretation, and repeated reporting.

Evidence First source map.

MEETING 03

What should make us revise?

Before or together Third narrative window.

Add evidence to the same investigation and explain why the finding changes or remains provisional.

Evidence Corrected finding with a reason.

MEETING 04

What does a community owe its members?

Before or together Fourth narrative window; Late Today shared.

Begin a modest town proposal within a token budget; compare personal help and collective arrangements.

Evidence Proposal with a stated tradeoff.

MEETING 05

Who can question a town’s choices?

Before or together Fifth narrative window.

Test one correction or participation route and revise the proposal during seminar.

Evidence Practical revision and book connection.

MEETING 06

What would make trust deserved?

Before or together Finish the novel in the sixth window.

Final colloquium: connect the ending to the source record and town proposal, using two passages.

Evidence Individual argument, revision, and open question.

Academic coverage

These areas describe the work offered. The individual learning record identifies what a scholar actually demonstrates.

Literature and close reading

Advanced principles: narrative perspective · interpretive ambiguity · textual warrant · comparative interpretation

Work Passage or panel inquiries throughout the seminar; Final colloquium and town proposal and source record

Evidence An interpretation supported by two specific book references; A companion connection and a plausible alternative reading

Core assessed practice

Composition and rhetoric

Advanced principles: claim and evidence · audience · counterargument · revision as reasoning

Work Scholar notebook explanations; Final commentary in spoken, written, drawn, or dictated form

Evidence A coherent claim with reasons and an acknowledged limit; An initial and revised explanation showing what changed

Core assessed practice; written-composition claims require an actual writing sample

Inquiry and research literacy

Advanced principles: observation and inference · source purpose · attribution · limits of evidence

Work Comparison of the primary text with selected secondary material; Evidence notes supporting the final artifact

Evidence A named source or passage and an explanation of its relevance; A distinction between text, inference, and an unsupported assumption

Applied source use, not a full independent research course

Media and information literacy

Advanced principles: source dependency · corroboration · persuasion · correction

Work Source-chain investigation

Evidence Trace shared origins and revise a finding without treating repeated claims as independent proof.

Assessed analytical practice

Civics and political philosophy

Advanced principles: legitimacy · public accountability · participation · collective responsibility

Work Town proposal and correction route

Evidence Explain who can question a decision and how a mistaken public claim can be corrected.

Applied civic inquiry

Economics and quantitative reasoning

Advanced principles: scarcity · public goods · budget constraints · opportunity cost

Work Token-budget town model

Evidence Keep the plan within a stated resource limit and justify what remains unfunded.

Bounded applied mathematics and economics

Dialogue and metacognition

Advanced principles: intellectual humility · fair representation · transfer · self-assessment

Work A peer question or alternative interpretation; Baseline, midpoint, and final reflection

Evidence A fair account of another view; A named change in reasoning and an appropriate next learning step

Individual evidence within collaborative work

Scholar portfolio and final colloquium

Scholar notebook

A small collection of passage markers, questions, claims, drawings, dictated notes, and reasons for revision; format is flexible.

Town proposal and source record

A source map, a supported correction, a modest town proposal, two novel references, a companion connection, and a limitation.

Final colloquium

An individual explanation during the final meeting, using selected evidence and a prepared question. A recorded, drawn, dictated, or privately rehearsed contribution can provide equivalent evidence.

Evaluation and evidence standards

Feedback is descriptive and individual. A shared artifact is followed by each scholar’s own explanation. Speaking frequency, speed, handwriting, artistic polish, agreement with the facilitator, and disclosure of personal experience are not measures of academic achievement.

Baseline · meeting 1 Retain an initial claim or interpretation and one supporting reason; record the response mode and support used.

Midpoint · meeting 3 Compare a current explanation or test record with the baseline; give one precise strength, one next step, and a check on preparation load.

Final · meeting 6 Review the final artifact and individual colloquium explanation against the criteria; record a gain supported by dated work and a limit that remains.

Interpretation and evidence

Makes a defensible claim; identifies a specific passage, panel, observation, or result; explains how it supports the claim.

Distinctions and source judgment

Separates observation from inference; identifies a source or assumption; avoids claiming more than the evidence establishes.

Alternatives and objections

Represents another interpretation fairly and names a relevant counterexample, tradeoff, or limitation.

Application and revision

Applies an idea to a design, model, procedure, or new case; explains what changed after a test or challenge.

Communication and reflection

Makes the reasoning understandable in an accessible format; identifies a meaningful gain and a next question.

Use demonstrated independently, demonstrated with support, developing, or not yet observed for each relevant criterion. Record support separately from the quality of reasoning; one excellent response does not establish mastery across contexts.

The individual evaluation connects strengths and gains to dated seminar evidence, subject-level observations, participation supports, and documented hours. Individual learning record

Reading and source bibliography

Primary works are read in full. Secondary materials are selected and shared in seminar; references identify the source rather than reproduce its text.

The Ogress and the Orphans

Kelly Barnhill · Primary fantasy novel

Complete primary literature, read in the stages below.

Primary Source Analysis Tool

Library of Congress · Source investigation method

Distinguish observation, interpretation, and an unanswered question.

Killer Underwear Invasion

Elise Gravel · Selected media-literacy nonfiction

Use selected spreads on sources, repetition, and emotional persuasion.

Late Today

Jungyoon Huh; illustrated by Myungae Lee; translated by Aerin Park · Shared literary comparison

Compare individual intervention with a community’s responsibilities.

Framework connections

Common Core ELA anchor practices

CCRA.R.1 · CCRA.R.6 · CCRA.R.9

Passage evidence, viewpoint, and comparison across texts.

Common Core speaking and listening anchor practices

CCRA.SL.1 · CCRA.SL.4

Collaborative inquiry and a supported colloquium explanation.

Standards for Mathematical Practice

MP2 · MP3 · MP4

Quantitative models, reasoned comparisons, and scrutiny of a proposal’s constraints.

NCSS thematic strands

Individuals Groups and Institutions · Power Authority and Governance

Fictional institutions, participation, and accountable decision-making.

These practice-level connections support family documentation. They do not assert completion of a grade-level standard, an entire subject course, or an NGSS performance expectation; actual achievement is evidenced in the individual record.

Seminar calendar

All times are Central time in America/Chicago. The same local start time is retained when daylight saving time changes. Read only the row for the selected cohort.

Sparks ages 8–10 · Jan 12, 2027 to Feb 16, 2027

Tuesday · 11:00 AM–11:45 AM Central

Meetings: Jan 12, 2027; Jan 19, 2027; Jan 26, 2027; Feb 2, 2027; Feb 9, 2027; Feb 16, 2027.

Cohort reference: stories-we-believe:january:sparks:a-sparks

Lanterns ages 10–12 · Jan 12, 2027 to Feb 16, 2027

Tuesday · 12:00 PM–12:45 PM Central

Meetings: Jan 12, 2027; Jan 19, 2027; Jan 26, 2027; Feb 2, 2027; Feb 9, 2027; Feb 16, 2027.

Cohort reference: stories-we-believe:january:lanterns:a-lanterns

Sparks ages 8–10 · Jan 14, 2027 to Feb 18, 2027

Thursday · 5:00 PM–5:45 PM Central

Meetings: Jan 14, 2027; Jan 21, 2027; Jan 28, 2027; Feb 4, 2027; Feb 11, 2027; Feb 18, 2027.

Cohort reference: stories-we-believe:january:sparks:b-sparks

Lanterns ages 10–12 · Jan 14, 2027 to Feb 18, 2027

Thursday · 6:00 PM–6:45 PM Central

Meetings: Jan 14, 2027; Jan 21, 2027; Jan 28, 2027; Feb 4, 2027; Feb 11, 2027; Feb 18, 2027.

Cohort reference: stories-we-believe:january:lanterns:b-lanterns

Sparks ages 8–10 · Jan 16, 2027 to Feb 20, 2027

Saturday · 8:30 AM–9:15 AM Central

Meetings: Jan 16, 2027; Jan 23, 2027; Jan 30, 2027; Feb 6, 2027; Feb 13, 2027; Feb 20, 2027.

Cohort reference: stories-we-believe:january:sparks:c-sparks

Lanterns ages 10–12 · Jan 16, 2027 to Feb 20, 2027

Saturday · 9:30 AM–10:15 AM Central

Meetings: Jan 16, 2027; Jan 23, 2027; Jan 30, 2027; Feb 6, 2027; Feb 13, 2027; Feb 20, 2027.

Cohort reference: stories-we-believe:january:lanterns:c-lanterns

Sparks ages 8–10 · Feb 9, 2027 to Mar 16, 2027

Tuesday · 5:00 PM–5:45 PM Central

Meetings: Feb 9, 2027; Feb 16, 2027; Feb 23, 2027; Mar 2, 2027; Mar 9, 2027; Mar 16, 2027.

Cohort reference: stories-we-believe:february:sparks:b-sparks

Lanterns ages 10–12 · Feb 9, 2027 to Mar 16, 2027

Tuesday · 6:00 PM–6:45 PM Central

Meetings: Feb 9, 2027; Feb 16, 2027; Feb 23, 2027; Mar 2, 2027; Mar 9, 2027; Mar 16, 2027.

Cohort reference: stories-we-believe:february:lanterns:b-lanterns

Sparks ages 8–10 · Feb 10, 2027 to Mar 17, 2027

Wednesday · 11:00 AM–11:45 AM Central

Meetings: Feb 10, 2027; Feb 17, 2027; Feb 24, 2027; Mar 3, 2027; Mar 10, 2027; Mar 17, 2027.

Cohort reference: stories-we-believe:february:sparks:a-sparks

Lanterns ages 10–12 · Feb 10, 2027 to Mar 17, 2027

Wednesday · 12:00 PM–12:45 PM Central

Meetings: Feb 10, 2027; Feb 17, 2027; Feb 24, 2027; Mar 3, 2027; Mar 10, 2027; Mar 17, 2027.

Cohort reference: stories-we-believe:february:lanterns:a-lanterns

Participation and access

Bring a question, listen for another interpretation, offer a reason, and be willing to reconsider. Quiet preparation, pass-and-return, movement, and facilitator scribing are available. No personal disclosure is required; social and ethical investigations use characters or openly fictional situations.

Read in print, ebook, unabridged audio, or with an adult. Graphic narratives require access to the images as well as the words; shared visual description, magnification, and supported viewing are welcome. Explain thinking through speech, drawing, dictation, a model, or writing. A brief recap can support participation; record a synopsis separately from direct reading.

Content considerations

Orphanhood, separation, a missing child, fire, deprivation, unfair accusation, and manipulation by authority. Late Today includes animal peril. Both versions encounter the complete novel’s difficult events.

Academic record

Retain this syllabus, the scholar notebook or portfolio, the individual evaluation, and actual attendance and independent-study logs together. Academic coverage identifies what the course studies; demonstrated learning is recorded separately with dated evidence. The college-style seminar format does not confer college credit. The family or receiving program determines transcript classification and any credit award.

Version November 2026 · Retain the calendar and syllabus version with completed work. Enrollment terms and Founders Circle eligibility are described in the current website policy.