Reading Questions


As you read Rose’s chapter, don’t let yourself be distracted by the children’s books she quotes and which we have not read (such as Garner’s). Nor let yourself be confused by the difficult and sometimes overly complicated language she uses. Instead read the text for its ideas and the questions it raises – they have been incredibly influential in the field of children’s studies!

Please answer in writing the following questions:

1. Throughout her book Jacqueline Rose seeks to uncover the hidden assumption that we, in Western society, hold about children and children’s literature. What are those assumptions? Why are they problematic in her view?

2. What is Rose’s method of argument? How does she know that our ideas about children and childhood are mere constructions? For those of you majoring in English and others versed in theory: What school/theoretical tradition does Rose belong to?

3. Which of Rose’s questions did you find most interesting and why? What points did you find most convincing? Why? What points did you find least convincing? Why?

4. What would Jacqueline Rose say about Jerry Griswold’s approach to childhood and children’s literature? How would you characterize Griswold’s approach?
To question
1. Children and Children’s literature as something which can save us from what is most socially and culturally degenerate (43)

Rousseauian notion that “nature is a quality in the child which must be cultivated. children are in a “natural state and “exist outside of culture” (44) and “writing for children can contribute to prolonging or preserving” nature which culture has destroyed.” (44)

“For Rousseau, education preserves nature in the child, nad it recovers nature through the child.”