

## Youth Classics in the Slovenian Curriculum (1869-2024)



### Comparative Literature

**Keywords:** Curriculum, children's literature, national literature, world literature, literary classics, youth classics.

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### Abstract

The paper deals with youth classics or authors and/or works proposed in the Slovene curriculum over time, from the first curriculum found to date (1869) to 2024. The paper presents a comparative analysis of the proposed authors and works from Slovene and world literature. For this purpose, 56 curricula (1,915 pages in total) were analysed chronologically in five periods: 1) Austria-Hungary 1848-1918, 2) Kingdom of the SHS 1918-1941, 3) the period during World War II, 1941-1945 (1944) 4) SFRY 1945-1991, and 5) independent Slovenia or Slovenia as an EU member: 1991-2024.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

M. Juvan, in his article “Kulturni spomin in literatura”[“Cultural memory and literature”] (2005) notes the following:

1) Selected authors and texts [...] are maintained in cultural memory, above all by education, ranging from primary school alphabet books to university lectures;

2) The power of the canon is dispersed in **curricula, textbooks, reading books, compulsory reading, exams, seminar papers and theses...**;

3) in the school establishment, canonised writings and their authors, as “central characters”, become above all the framework of **national identity**, since they act as the main carriers of the tradition of the literary language and as memorial witnesses of the specific historical experience of events, persons, places and mentalities that distinguish one nation from another (hence the Slovenian schoolchildren who follow the so-called **hidden curriculum** [...]) (Juvan, 2005: 379-400).

The curriculum defines the literary canon as the selected authors and texts that are primarily maintained in cultural memory by the education system, from primary to tertiary levels. In the educational system, the canonised authors and works become central nodes for the strengthening of national identity, since they are the main carriers of the tradition of the literary language and are the memorial witnesses of the historical experience that defines national identity. An analysis of the curricula for primary schools from 1869 to 2018 confirms that the same authors and texts are often proposed, but they may be interpreted differently in a new context. Juvan also mentions the concept of “reading and creative return” (Juvan 2005: 391) to the same texts, and the authenticity, inviolability and representativeness of canonical works,<sup>1</sup> which allow them to be transformed and adapted to new contexts of reflection.

<sup>1</sup> As an example of a canonical work in – to paraphrase Juvan (2005) a new framework, it is worth mentioning *Bambi*, written by the Austrian author Felix Salten, first published in 1923 and included in the Slovenian curriculum in 1959 and 1975. For the English edition, the renowned Slovenian illustrator Alenka Sottler created new illustrations in 2021 (in Slovene 2023) which were acclaimed internationally.

## 2. LITERARY CLASSICS

In the introduction to her comprehensive three-volume encyclopaedia on youth classics, Kümmerling-Meibauer and an international team analysed 532 books on children's and/or young adult literature from 65 countries in *Klassiker der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur: Ein Internationales Lexikon* (1999). Kümmerling-Meibauer lists the following criteria for youth classics (1999: XII-XV): innovation (Ger. *Innovativität*) representativeness (Ger. *Repräsentativität*) aesthetic language (Ger. *Ästhetische Gestaltung der Sprache*) simplicity (Ger. *Einfachheit*) the child's experiential world (Ger. *Darstellung der kindlichen Erlebniswelt*) imagination (Ger. *Phantasia*) ambiguity (Ger. *Polyvalenz*) and cross-writing). According to Kümmerling-Meibauer (1999: XV) there are three views of cross-writing:

- 1) Authors who write for children and also write for adults (e.g. S. Makarovič, B.A. Novak, A. Rozman Roza, etc.);
- 2) Authors whose texts address both young people and adults (e.g. Tone Pavček, Milan Jesih, Saša Vegri, etc.) – Kümmerling-Meibauer calls these *cross-writers*.
- 3) Adult texts adapted for young people (e.g. *The Judgement of the Goat in Wuthering Heights*) and vice versa (e.g. *Harry Potter*).

Kümmerling-Meibauer also reflects on so-called world classics, and is interested in which literary texts from national classics become international classics (e.g. *Alice in Wonderland*<sup>2</sup> (1865) *Treasure Island*<sup>3</sup> (1883) *Emil and the Detectives*<sup>4</sup> (1929) and *Pippi Longstocking*<sup>5</sup> (1945)). In the introduction, she lists literary historical periods and the number of works from them that have become children's classics. She also discusses the motives for and methods of canonisation, and explains how and why literary authors and their works primarily intended for adults became youth classics (e.g. Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*,<sup>6</sup> 1726). She defines children's literature as works written for children and works that became youth reading through the process of literary reception. For example, Levstik's *Martin Krpan*<sup>7</sup> (1858) fits this definition, especially in picture book form (the illustrations for the 1917 edition were by Hinko Smrekar and for the 1954 edition by Tone Kralj).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Curricula: 1975, 1984.

<sup>3</sup> Curricula: 1953, 1959, 1975, 1998, 2002, 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Curricula: 1959, 1962, 1975, 1998.

<sup>5</sup> Curricula: 1975, 1984, 1998, 2011, 2015, 2018

<sup>6</sup> First translated into Slovene in 1894, 1926, etc. The work was classified in the curriculum in 1953, 1954, 1958, 1959, 1962, 1975, 1984, 1998, 2011

<sup>7</sup> An adaptation of J. Swift (*Gulliver's Travels*, 1931) entitled *In the Land of the Dwarfs* (1965) has some intertextuality with Levstik's *Martin Krpan* (1855) which Ivan Bizjak published in picture book form under the title *Martin Krpan and the Dwarf* (2010) illustrated by Igor Ribič.

<sup>8</sup> Levstik's manuscript text, written in 1855, had two parts, the first being a folk tale, the second a fairy tale. They were published in the US in 1931 and 1956, and have also been published in picture book form (illustrated by Igor Ribič, 2009; illustrated by Sanja Zamuda, 2021).

## 2.1 World and Slovenian classics

### 2.1.2 Period 1848-1918

Slovenian youth literature began to emerge during the Enlightenment (1778-1850) but at that time it was mainly texts with religious content that were published. The beginning of (secular) Slovenian youth literature is represented by the magazines *Vedež* (1848-1950) and *Vrtec* (1871-1945) which were closely linked to education and the promotion of language, literature and culture in the context of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. At this time, according to the sources found so far, there were 19 curricula (including a curriculum/schedule). The emphasis was on reading, writing and literature, and various terms for such reading also appear, depending on the context and aims. The curricula were in German, and handwritten in Gothic script. In addition to the curricula, two other publications were relevant, namely *Knjige za slovensko ljudstvo* [*Books for the Slovenian People*] (1907) and *Schwentnerjev katalog slovenskih knjig: spisi za mladino* [*Schwentner's Catalogue of Slovenian Books: writings for the young*] (1911).

The following suggested authors and/or works (22 in total) can be identified from these curricula:

Slovenian authors	No. of occurrences	Foreign authors	No. Of occurrences
A. Askerc	1	J.W. Goethe	2
J. Cimperman	1	J.G. von Herder	1
F. Erjavec	1	F.G. Klopstock	1
S. Gregorčič	1	G.E. Lessing: <i>The Hamburg Dramaturgy; Laokoon</i> )	3
S. Jenko	1	F. Schiller	2
J. Jurčič	1	W. Shakespeare	1
F. Levstik	1	C.M. Wieland	1
F. Prešeren	1		
J. Stritar	2		
F. Vesel	1		
V. Guide	1		

Two of the proposed works are from the so-called German classics, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *The Hamburg Dramaturgy* and *Laokoon*.

### 2.1.3 Period 1918-1941

Slovenian authors	No. of occurrences	Foreign authors	No. of occurrences
J. Stritar	8	I. Gundulić	4
F. Levstik	5	J.W. Goethe	3
J. Jurčič	4	D. Obradović	3
S. Gregorčič	4	M. Kačić	2
V. Vodnik	3	J.J. Zmaj	2
F. Prešeren	3	F. Schiller	2
S. Jenko	3	M. Reljković	2
O. Župančič	2	B. Radičević	2
M. Valjavec	2	J.S. Popović	2
I. Prijatelj	2	P.P. Njegoš	2
D. Kette	2	V. Nazor	2
K. Meško	2	I. Mažuranić	2
J. Kersnik	2	G.E. Lessing	2
F.S. Finžgar	2	Homer	2
Pavlina Pajk	1	L. Gaj	2
		M. Držić	2
		V. Ilić	2

### 2.1.4 Period 1941-1944/45

The so-called “Provisional Curriculum” for lower primary grades 1, 2, 3 and 4, and for grades 1, 2, 3 and 4 of upper primary school (published in September 1944) was valid and compulsory for all primary schools “in the liberated and NOV- and POS-controlled<sup>9</sup> territory from the beginning of the school year 1944-1945”. The only surviving copy (cyclostyle, 34 pages) is in the Slovene National and Study Library, Trieste. The Slovene language was taught in all grades of lower and upper primary school, with the number of hours per week being higher for the earliest grades, at 10 hours a week for grade 1, nine hours for grade 2, six for grade 3, five for grades 4 and 5, then four hours a week for grades 6 to 10<sup>10</sup>. The subject consisted of initial instruction in writing and reading, and later in reading, narration, declamation, writing, grammar, spelling and writing.

Slovenian authors	No. of occurrences	Foreign authors	No. of occurrences
F. Erjavec	3	D. Defoe	1
V. Prežih	3	A. Shenoa	1
F. Levstik	2		
A. Askerc	1		
I. Cankar	1		
F.S. Finžgar	1		
J. Jurčič	1		
I. Tavčar	1		

### 2.1.5 1945-1991: Classics and Young People's Classics

The post-war period is characterised by the establishment of youth literature in all curricula, in particular with fairy tales (Andersen, Grimm, etc.) and picture books (especially for the beginning of school). Youth classics predominate (Bevk, Milčinski, etc.) as well as classics for adults, which, in the process of literary reception, especially in picture-book form, became the youth canon (Levstik) and traces of the world classics are still present (Dickens, Defoe, and Gogol, as well as Njogoš, Nazor, and Karadžić) but the share of world classics or classics from the common state (SFRY) gradually decreased.

Slovenian authors	No. of occurrences	Foreign authors	No. of occurrences
F. Bevk	59	H.C. Andersen	16
J. Jurčič	40	J. and W. Grimm	15
F. Milčinski	35	B. Čopič	14
F. Levstik	25	C. Dickens	13
I. Cankar	25	I.B. Mažuranić	9
F.S. Finžgar	23	D. Defoe	8
V. Prežih	20	E. Kästner	7
F. Erjavec	19	J.J. Zmaj	7
J. Ribičič	17	M. Lovrak	6
F. Prešeren	15	A. Lindgren	6
E. Peroci	15	N. Gogol	6
B. Jurca	14	P.P. Njogoš	5
J. Kersnik	13	V. Nazor	5
S. Makarovič	12	V.S. Karadžić	5
T. Seliškar	11	A. Daudet	5
L. Kovačič	11	K. Čapek	5
N. Grafenauer	11	C. Collodi	5
		J. London	5
		I. Andrić	5

<sup>9</sup> NOS and POS were the Narodnoosvobodilna vojska in partizanski odredi Slovenije, or National Liberation Army and Partisan Detachments of Slovenia.

<sup>10</sup> Religion was also taught for two hours a week to grades 1 to 8.

### 2.1.6 Period 1991-2024: Youth Classics

After independence, the emphasis on teaching Slovene increased, and the literature used for this until today has been based on a number of suggested texts, including summaries of longer works, diaries, fairy tales, and poems.

World literature is dominated by the world classics (Defoe, Dumas, Homer, etc.) which, in the process of literary reception, are supposed to become classics for young people. The recycling of world classics as youth classics is certainly justified since, for example, ancient literature is the at the foundation of European civilisation, but one has to ask what kind of literary form is appropriate for Homer's work (illustrated book and/or comic book). Moreover, there are too many proposed works and passages in this period. There is also a noticeable shift from school to home/family reading and/or literacy, which may be contributing to increasing illiteracy by enabling children to choosing playing over reading.

Slovenian authors	No. of occurrences	Foreign authors	No. of occurrences
N. Grafenauer	41	name	number
S. Makarovič	37	H.C. Andersen	24
T. Pavček	32	Homer	16
T. Partljič	28	A. Davis	12
D. Muck	23	J. and W. Grimm	12
B.A. Novak	23	F.H. Burnett	10
I. Cankar	22	A. Lindgren	10
F. Prešeren	22	W. Shakespeare	10
S. Kosovel	21	R. Dahl	9
V. Mal	21	A. Dumas	9
B. Novak	21	M. Ende	9
F. Levstik	20	E. Kastner	9
J. Kersnik	19	T. Konwicki	9
C. Kosmač	19	S. Townsend	9
P. Kovač	18	A.A. Milne	8
K. Kovič	17	R. Bach	6
S. Pregl	16	B. Doherty	6
I. Tavčar	16	A. de S. Exupéry	6
J. Menart	14	Z. Filipovič	6
B. Smolnikar	14	A. Frank	6
A. Černež	12	M. Gripe	6
L. Kovačič	12	A. Horowitz	6
K. Brenk	11	R. Kipling	6
F. Lainšček	11	C. and M. Lamb	6
E. Peroci	11	J. London	6
P. Suhodolčan	11	E. Petiška	6
F. Bevk	10	E.A. Poe	6
D. Muck	10	C. Robertson	6
A. Rozman	10	E.T. Seton	6
B. Štampe Žmavc	10	S. Shell	6
S. Vegri	10	R.L. Stevenson	6
P. Trubar	8	R. Tagore	6
F. Milčinski	7	L.N. Tolstoy	6
J. Snoj	7	D. Defoe	5
M. Tomšič	7	J. Hašek	3
L. Suhodolčan	6	B. Nušić	3

### 3. FINDINGS

On the basis of an analysis of the available curricula in the five periods from 1869-2024, the following phases of Slovenian youth literature are identified, which were reflected in the Slovenian curricula with some delay:

1) The magazine phase: in the period 1848-1918, Slovenian youth literature mainly developed in magazine form (*Vedež*, *Vrtec*, *Angelček*) and the curricula proposed mainly German classics for adults.

2) The monographic phase: in the period 1918-1941, the primary youth literature was being created, books for young people were being written, women writers also entered the literary space, writing fairy tales, picture books, and founding “fairy tale circles”, while Pavlina Pajk entered the curriculum.

3) Only one curriculum was available for the period 1941-1945 (September 1944) which proposed mainly national classics; interestingly, it also included religion as a subject (two hours a week for grades 1 to 8).

4) In the period 1945-1991, youth literature is established in the curricula, various world authors, fairy tales and picture books are used, and the ratio between Slovenian and world literature is almost 1:1.

5) In the 1991-2024 curricula there are too many proposed units (poems/fairy tales and/or collections) literature is focused on reading passages, the ratio between Slovenian and world youth literature is 2:1, the amount of folk literature is reduced, and reading (home, recommended, on a “rainy day”) is shifted from school to the home.

6) There are changes in the 2018 curriculum:

a) The first three-year educational period (VIO = *vzgojno-izobraževalno obdobje*), or triennial, of grade school proposes “getting to know authors and works”, including. Kovič, E. Peroci, S. Makarovič and L. Prap. The teacher’s choice of contemporary authors is added: e.g. F. Lainšček, A. Štefan, P. Suhodolčan, P. Svetina, and fairy tales by the Brothers Grimm (curriculum, 2018, p. 19).

b) The authors proposed for the second or triennial are P. Kovač, J. Snoj, A. Lindgren; M. Dekleva, B. Štampe Žmavc, L. Suhodolčan, R. Dahl; B. A. Novak, D. Zajc and H. C. Andersen, and contemporary authors of the teacher’s choice: M. Košuta, S. Pregl, M. Dolenc, D. Muck, D. Zupan, M. Tomšič.

In the third and final triennial, pupils “know [only] literary figures and works” (p. 47) including A. Lin Linz, A. Vodnik, F. Prešeren, J. Kersnik, I. Tavčar, A. Aškerc, J. Menart, N. Grafenauer, L.N. Tolstoy, P. Trubar, S. Gregorčič, I. Cankar, O. Župančič, J. Murn, D. Kette, S. Kosovel, C. Kosmač, and W. Shakespeare. From the point of view of professional ethics or ethical literary science (Virk,) the question arises as to why only these authors are proposed in this triennial (with all 23 authors being Slovenian). There are eight compulsory authors and nine compulsory texts: Pegam and Lamgergar (folk tales) T. Pavček (poems) F. Levstik (*Martin Krpan*) F. Prešeren (*The Waterman; Hail*) N. Grafenauer (*Life*) J. Kersnik, O. Župančič (*The Beggar*) I. Cankar (Bobby). The compilers of the curriculum for 2018 focused the strictly non-core literature in the third triennial, and suggest “getting to know contemporary authors”, such as S. Vegri, S. Pregl, T. Partljič, F. Lainšček, J. Vidmar, D. Muck and A. Rozman Roza.

The question of professional ethics arises in the criteria for selecting texts in literature lessons, such as quality, variety, relevance and individual differences between students. For the second criterion, the question of professional ethics is raised with regard to “the consideration of



[...] strictly credible lists of texts, e.g. the recommended lists of the Pioneer Centre for Youth Literature and Librarianship”<sup>11</sup> (p. 70) in the light of the controversies in the scientific and professional press (Blažič 2019: 1; 2018: 178-191).

In *Etični literarni vedi* [*Ethical Literary Studies*] (Virk 2017: 16) Virk writes about traditional approaches that consider the moral themes and values of literary works and their implicit authors; approaches that use literature for the purposes of ethical philosophy; deconstructive approaches – the ethics of reading; increased attention to the subject; cognitive scepticism; and increased awareness of professional ethics (Virk 2017: 16). He also reflects on the distinction between ethics and morality, noting that literature has aesthetic, cognitive as well as ethical values, e.g. the moral values of writers as expressed in their works (Blažič 2018: 178-191); the moral phenomena expressed in literary works; the moral effects of authors and their works on readers; the moral reach of authors and works and the impact on contemporary authors and works; and questions regarding the relationships among literature, ethics and society (ibid. 17). It is precisely with regard to the responsibility of society that the question of institutions in the youth literary system, or “the quality of texts (national awards for nationally significant awards for youth literature and professionally credible lists of texts, e.g. the Pioneer Centre for Youth Literature and Librarianship’s recommended lists” (Curriculum 2018, p. 70) when the “recommended lists” turn out to be questionable.

In *Etični literarni vedi*, Virk reflects on responsible reading (Virk 2017: 29). In the case of young adult literature, it is also reasonable to think about the professional ethics of the institutions (e.g. libraries) despite respecting the singularity of the author/text, as some adult books cannot be redefined as children’s or young adult literature. Virk asks “/whether/ a work that is controversial from a moral orethicalpointof view can even be consideredartistic” (Virk 2017: 23) especially when it comes to children or young people.

The analysis of 58 curricula (1,914 pages in total) carried out in this study gives an insight into the emergence of Slovenian youth literature under the influence of various very different social conditions (Austro-Hungary, SHS, World War II, SFRY, Slovenia). Historical awareness is pervasive – the authors of the curricula were mostly aware of the social situation and the influence of ideologies, but they overcame them by proposing quality national (youth) and international classics, and they had access to primary and secondary literature (a list of references is provided in the 1984 curriculum). Since Slovenia gained independence, and especially after it joined the EU, there has been no international dimension to the curricula, and the authors and works proposed are established Slovenian classics (Levstik, Prešeren, etc.) modern classics (Makarovič, Pavček, etc.) and contemporary names and titles (Svetina, Štefan, etc) but there are too many suggested units and passages, and reading is being neglected for playing. There has also been a process of commercialisation, and thus distinctions have to be made between bookish (commercial) library (past-oriented) and literary (future-oriented) motives when it comes to compiling the curricula.

The so-called ethical turn in literature and youth literature makes it necessary to question the professional ethics in this context, and the responsibility of the literary system (the bookish, the library and the literary approaches).

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.mklj.si/gradivo/2017-odklenjeni-kriki>

## 4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSES

Authors of Junior Classics in KJL <sup>12,13</sup>		Authors of Junior Classics in the Slovenian Curricula, 1968–2024	
Grimm, J. and W.	78	Andersen, H. C.	40
Carroll, L.	41	Grimm, J. and W.	27
Andersen, H. C.	39	Defoe, D.	20
Kipling, R.	33	Homer	18
Lindgren, A.	25	Kästner, E.	16
Twain, M.	25	Lindgren, A.	16
Dickens, C.	22	Dickens, C.	13
Kästner, E.	19	Wilde, O.	12
Nesbit, E.	17	London, J.	11
Collodi, C.	15	Shakespeare, W.	11
Lagerlof, S.	13	Dahl, R.	10
Burnett, F. H.	10	Davis, A.	9
Saint Exupéry, A. de	8	Ende, M.	9
Le Guin, U.	8	Konwicki, T.	9
Preussler, O.	8	Townsend, S.	9
Sand, G.	8	Wells, G. H.	9
Tolstoy L.N.	8	Milne, A. A.	8
Travers, P.	8	Bach, R.	6
Baum, L. F.	7	Burnett, F. H.	6
Frank, L. B.	7	Dumas, A.	6
Jansson, T.	6	Exupéry, A.	6
Swift, J.	6	Frank, A.	6
De la Mare, W.	5	Gogol, N.	6
Singer, I. B.	4	Gripe, M.	6
Spiry, J.	4	Horowitz, A.	6
Ferenc, M.	0	Kipling, R.	6
Switters, K.	0	Lamb, C., and M.	6
		Petiška, E.	6
		Poe, E. A.	6
		Robertson, C.	6
		Shell, S.	6
		Stevenson, R. L.	6
		Tagore, R.	6
		Thomson, E. S.	6
		Tolstoy, L. N.	6
		Verne, J.	6
		White, S.	6
		Čapek, K.	5
		Collodi, C.	5
		Daudet, A.	5
		Doherty, B.	5
		Goethe, J. W.	5
		Lessing, G. E.	5
		Schiller, F.	4
		Hašek, J.	3
		Queneau, R.	3

<sup>12</sup> Kümmerling-Meibauer, B. (2004). *Klassiker der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur: ein Internationales Lexikon*, (vol. 3). J. B. Metzler.

<sup>13</sup> Mentions of the authors in the Index [Personenregister] p. 1,211-1,235.



In the introduction to her encyclopaedia, Kümmerling-Meibauer highlights the following youth classics and authors:

Works	Authors
Alice in Wonderland (Carroll, L.)	Andersen, H.C.
A Christmas Carol (Dickens, C.)	Baum, L.F.
The Magic Chalk (Hopp, Z.)	Burnett, F.H.
The Wizard of Oz (Baum, L.F.)	Carroll, L.
Black Beauty (Sewell, Anna)	Collodi, C.
Dr. Doolittle (Lofting, H.J.)	Dickens, C.
Emil and the Detectives (Kastner, E.)	Exupéry, A. de S.
Gulliver (Swift, J.)	Ferenc, M.
Heidi (Spyri, J.)	Frank, A.L.
The Nutcracker and the Mouse King (Hoffman, E.R.A.)	Grimm, J. and W.
Huckleberry Finn (Twain, M.)	Jansson, T.
The Jungle Book (Kipling, R.)	Kastner, E.
The Little Prince (Exupéry, A. de S.)	Kipling, R.
Mary Poppins (Travers, P.L.)	Lagerloff, S.
Winnie the Pooh (Milne, A.A.)	Le Guin, U.
Moomins (Jansson, Tove)	Lindgren, A.
Narnia (Lewis, C.S.)	Nesbit, Edith
Nils Holgerson (Lagerloff, Selma)	Preussler, O.
Treasure Island (Stevenson, R.L.)	Sands, G.
Peter Pan (Barrie, J.M.)	Singer, I.B.
Pippi Longstocking (Lindgren, A.)	Spiry, J.
Pinocchio (Collodi, C.)	Swift, J.
The Midnight Garden (Pearce, P.)	Switters, K.
Robin Hood (Neset, M.)	Tolstoy, L.N.
Silas (Bodker, C.)	Travers, Pamela
The Secret Garden (Burnett, F.H.)	Twain, M.
	de la Mare, W.

The most frequent authors in the Slovene curricula (1869-2024) are the following, presented in parallel with their appearance in the Kümmerling-Meibauer's encyclopaedia:

International Classics in KJL	International Classics in the Slovenian Curricula
<i>Alice in Wonderland</i> (Carroll, L.)	<i>Alice in Wonderland</i> (Carroll, L.)
<i>A Christmas Carol</i> (Dickens, C.)	
<i>The Magic Chalk</i> (Hopp, Z.)	<i>The Magic Chalk</i> (Hopp, Z.)
<i>The Wizard of Oz</i> (Baum, L.F.)	<i>The Wizard of Oz</i> (Baum, L.F.)
<i>Black Beauty</i> (Sewell, Anna)	
<i>Dr. Doolittle</i> (Lofting, H. J.)	<i>Doktor Jojbolí</i> (Čukovski, K.) 1975 (similar themes, different authors)
<i>Emil and the Detectives</i> (Kastner, E.)	<i>Emil and the Detectives</i> (Kästner, E.) 1962, 1969, 1975, 1984, 1998, 2002, 2011
<i>Gulliver</i> (Swift, J.)	<i>Gulliver</i> (Swift, J.) 1953, 1963, 1984, 1998, 2002, 2011
<i>Heidi</i> (Spyri, Johanna)	<i>Heidi</i> (Spyri, Johanna) 1959, 1962
<i>The Rattlesnake and the Mouse King</i> (Hoffman, E. R. A.)	
<i>Huckleberry Finn</i> (Twain, M.)	<i>Huckleberry Finn</i> (Twain, M.) 1953, 1959
<i>The Jungle Book</i> (Kipling, R.)	<i>The Jungle Book</i> (Kipling, R.) 1911, 1953, 1954, 1959, 1975, 1984, 1998, 2002, 2011
<i>The Little Prince</i> (Exupéry, A. de S.)	<i>The Little Prince</i> (Exupéry, A. de S.) 1975, 1984, 1998, 2002, 2011
<i>Mary Poppins</i> (Travers, P.L.)	<i>Mary Poppins</i> (Travers, P.L.) 1975, 1984, 1998, 2002, 2011
<i>Winnie the Pooh</i> (Milne, A.A.)	<i>Winnie the Pooh</i> (Milne, A.A.) 1975, 1984, 1998, 2002, 2011
<i>Moomins</i> (Jansson, T.)	<i>Moomins</i> (Jansson, T.) 1975, 1984
<i>Narnia</i> (Lewis, C.S.)	
<i>Nils Holgerson</i> (Lagerloff, S.)	<i>Nils Holgerson</i> (Lagerloff, S.) 1953
<i>Treasure Island</i> (Stevenson, R.L.)	<i>Treasure Island</i> (Stevenson, R.L.) 1959, 1975, 1984, 1998, 2002, 2011
<i>Peter Pan</i> (Barrie, J.M.)	<i>Peter Pan</i> (Barrie, J.M.) 1975, 1984, 1998, 2002, 2011
<i>Pippi Longstocking</i> (Lindgren, A.)	<i>Pippi Longstocking</i> (Lindgren, A.) 1975, 1984, 1998, 2002
<i>Pinocchio</i> (Collodi, C.)	<i>Pinocchio</i> (Collodi, C.) 1959, 1975, 1984, 1998, 2002, 2011
<i>The Midnight Garden</i> (Pearce, P.)	<i>The Midnight Garden</i> (Pearce, P.) 1984
<i>Robin Hood</i> (Neset, M.)	
<i>Silas</i> (Bodker, Cecil)	
<i>The Secret Garden</i> (Burnett, F.H.)	<i>The Secret Garden</i> (Burnett, F.H.) 1998

## 5. CONCLUSION

As M. Juvan wrote in his article “Kulturni spomin in literatura”, “selected authors and texts [...] are maintained in cultural memory primarily by education, ranging from primary school alphabet books to university lectures. The youth literary canon is dispersed in curricula, curricular reading, textbook material, etc., based on bookish postulates (consumerism) library (manuals of quality books, etc.) and literary (youth literary studies, problem-creation classes, modernity, etc.) approaches.”

In the curriculum, canonised writings of youth literature and “central characters” become, above all, the essence of national identity in an international context, and vice versa, international youth classics also enter the national canon. The youth authors and/or works (classics, modern classics and contemporaries) enshrined in the Slovene curricula 1869-2024 are bearers of the traditions of language, literature, and culture, and memorial witnesses of a particular historical experience. They also have a responsibility based on professional ethics (T. Virk) encyclopaedic knowledge (M. Kmecl) and the meaning of the national in the international and the international in the national is borne by the institutions in the youth literary system (e.g. the Institute of Education, etc.) which should think ethically and not succumb to the economics of prestige.

In the article “Cross-writing as a Criterion for Canonicity: the case of Erich Kästner” (Beckett 1999: 13) the canon is defined as texts that are supposed to have lasting value because of their universality of themes, literary style and/or relevance. The literary canon is also defined as a selection of well-known texts that have value, are used in education and are references for literary scholarship (Kümmerling-Meibauer 1999: 13). Sandra Beckett argues that ideology also resonates in youth literature, which is developed from the literary canon. In literary scholarship, children’s/young people’s authors are often marginalised and consequently excluded from the canon. Whether or not an author and/or text is included in the curriculum determines whether or not a work becomes or remains part of the literary canon. The current curriculum does not propose a very extensive list of texts, which will undoubtedly have an impact on the formation of the literary canon of youth literature. It may be that literary works that have a significant impact on the value system of adolescents will be left out. As an example, *Anne Frank’s Diary*<sup>14</sup> is not included in the list of obligatory texts in the 2018 curriculum, despite being on the UNESCO Memory of the World list, and despite the fact that the Slovenian Institute of Education set up a special group almost at the same time to focus on teaching and learning about the Holocaust. It can be argued that the non-inclusion of this text in the 2018 curriculum is the result of various political factors, which are not only linked to Slovenia. As Juvan points out, literary canons are not a spontaneous choice, but are created by institutions and are the result of social consensus and socio-cultural circumstances that change, revise and/or create a new canon, which makes professional responsibility or “increased awareness of professional ethics” all the more important in the modern era (Virk 2017: 16).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.teof.uni-lj.si/uploads/File/Edinost/77/01/Blazic.pdf> Blažič, Milena. The Holocaust in Education – Removal of The Diary of Anne Frank from the Slovenian Language Curriculum (2018/2019). In: Skralovnik, Samo (ed.) Bedrač, Daisy (ed.) 2021: Judeo-Christian Sources and Dimensions of Dialogue.

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<sup>15</sup> Which authors/works are part of the national identity relevant to the international arena, which authors/works are part of the appropriate youth literature, especially in pictorial form, and have been nationalized in kindergartens and primary schools. Are linguistically, literarily and culturally important topics included in the curriculum, e.g. Butalci, Ciciban, Juri Muri, Krst pri Savici, Maček Muri, Makalonca, Martin Krpan, Mojca Pokrajčulja, My Umbrella Can Be a Balloon, Pedenjped, Peter Klepec, The Water Man, Menageries from Režija, The Sleeping Star Etc.

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