

AMERICAN STUDIES
HONORS LEVEL

1 CREDIT AMERICAN HISTORY JUNIOR LEVEL
½ CREDIT AMERICAN LITERATURE ONE-YEAR COURSE
½ CREDIT COMPOSITION

DOUBLE PERIOD CLASS EVERYDAY

AMERICAN STUDIES

TEXTS

- A. Kinsella, Kate, et al. Prentice Hall Literature: Timeless Voice,
Timeless Themes: The American Experience. Glenview,
Illinois: Pearson Education, Inc., 2002.
- B. Hammack, Loraine, et al. English Workshop: Fifth Course.
Chicago, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1995.
- C. Twain, Mark. Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. New York:
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1995.
- D. Paulsen, Gary. Nightjohn. New York: Dell, Publishing, 1993.
- E. Hesse, Karen. Out of the Dust. New York: Scholastic Press,
1997.

PREREQUISITES

All students taking English at the junior level must have passed both semesters of L.A. 9 and sophomore L.A.10 English classes. However, it is highly recommended that students have taken Honors LA 9 and Honors LA 10 and/or Civics Honors previously. These classes provide experiences in research, writing, and test-taking that will serve well in American Studies.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The HONORS AMERICAN STUDIES course is a one-year elective for juniors surveying the American experience through the study of related historical-literary concepts and trends. The material is

presented in a chronological sequence from Colonial through contemporary times.

American Studies English is combined with American Studies History to form a two-credit honors class. American Studies English is the honors level of the American Literature credit that is required for graduation. It is a college preparatory class that should equip students with the research, writing, and critical thinking skills necessary to be successful at the college level.

Some activities for the American Studies course may include: exploring the influence of art and music; providing opportunities for small discussion groups and seminars; working on individual projects; and writing expository, creative, and position papers. Research reports and the research paper will be documented using the MLA format.

VI. COURSE CONTENT

General Goals

- **To articulate the course content presently taught in American history and American literature.**
- **To emphasize common themes in American history and American literature so that the American experience can be seen as a whole.**
- **To have more opportunities to develop critical thinking skills.**
- **To gain experience in gathering, organizing, and writing research papers.**
- **To encourage student responsibility for oral presentation of historical and literary concepts to the class.**
- **To encourage student acquaintance of the total American experience as seen in art and music, as well as in American literature and American history.**

Major units of study in this year-long class include: the National Period, the Flowering of New England, Civil War Era, Realism & Naturalism movement, Modern Literature, and Modern poetry.

Details regarding specific course content are as follows:

A. American Literature

1. Colonial/Revolutionary Periods

a. Native American selections

- b. William Bradford – *From History of Plymouth Plantation* (optional)
- c. Anne Bradstreet
 - (1.) “To My Dear and Loving Husband”
 - (2.) “The Author to Her Book”
- d. Edward Taylor – “Housewifery”
- e. Thomas Paine
 - (1.) Common Sense
 - (2.) *From Crisis Papers* (optional)
- f. Patrick Henry – “Speech in the Virginia Convention”
- g. Benjamin Franklin – *From Autobiography*
- h. Michel – Guillaume Jean de Crevecoeur – “Letters from an American Farmer”
- i. de Tocqueville – “Why Are Americans so Restless”
- j. Turner – *from The Frontier Thesis*

2. Age of Nationalism

- a. James Fenimore Cooper – *From Deerslayer*
- b. Washington Irving – “Devil and Tom Walker”
- c. William Cullen Bryant
 - (1.) “Thanatopsis”
 - (2.) “Embargo”
- d. Edgar Allan Poe - “The Fall of the House of Usher”

3. Flowering of New England

- a. Ralph Waldo Emerson
 - (1.) Selected essays
 - (2.) Selected poems
- b. Henry David Thoreau
 - (1.) *From Walden*
 - (2.) *From Civil Disobedience*
- c. Nathaniel Hawthorne

- (1.) "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment"
- (2.) "The Minister's Black Veil"

- d. Herman Melville – *From Moby Dick*
- e. Emily Dickinson – selected poems (optional)

4. Civil War Era

- a. Walt Whitman – selected poems
- b. Karen Hess - Nightjohn
- c. Ambrose Bierce – "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"
- d. Stephen Crane - "An Episode of War"
- e. Frederick Douglass – *From My Bondage and My Freedom*
- f. Mary Chestnut – *From Mary Chestnut's Civil War*
- g. Warren Lee Goss – "Recollections of a Private"
- h. Randolph McKim – "A Confederate Account of the Battle of Gettysburg"
- i. Stonewall Jackson – "An Account of the Battle of Bull Run"
- j. Rev. Henry M. Turner – "Reaction to the Emancipation Proclamation"
- k. Sojourner Truth – "An Account of an Experience with Discrimination"

5. Realism and Naturalism

- a. Mark Twain – Novel – The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
- b. Bret Harte – "The Outcasts of Poker Flat"
- c. Jack London

- (1.) "The Rebel"
- (2.) "To Build a Fire"

- d. Kate Chopin – "The Story of an Hour"
- e. Willa Cather - "A Wagner Matinee"
- f. Edwin Arlington Robinson – selected poems (optional)
- g. Edgar Lee Masters – selected poems (optional)

6.

7. Modern Short Stories

- a. Sherwood Anderson – “The Corn Planting”
- b. Sherwood Anderson – “Brother Death”
- c. F. Scott Fitzgerald
 - (1.) “Winter Dreams”
 - (2.) “Bernice Bobs Her Hair”
- d. Sinclair Lewis
 - (1.) “Land”
 - (2.) “Number Seven to Sagapoose”
- e. Ernest Hemingway
 - (1.) “In Another Country”
 - (2.) “Big-Two Hearted River”
- f. John Steinbeck - “Migrant People”
- g. Eudora Welty – “A Worn Path” (optional)
- h. William Faulkner – “The Bear” (optional)
- i. Katherine Porter – “Jilting of Granny Weatherall” (optional)
- j. Bernard Malamud – “The First Seven Years” (optional)
- k. John Updike – “The Life You Save May be Your Own” (optional)
- l. Alice Walker
 - (1.) “Everyday Use” (optional)
 - (2.) “Beauty” (optional)
- m. Tim O’Brein – “Ambush” *From The Things They Carried*
- n. Karen Hess – Out of the Dust
- o. Karen Hess - Witness

8. Modern Poetry

- a. Robert Frost (optional)
- b. Carl Sandburg
- c. Ezra Pound (optional)
- d. William Carlos Williams (optional)
- e. E.E. Cummings (optional)

- f. W.H. Auden (optional)
- g. Langston Hughes
- h. Claude McKay
- i. Countee Cullen
- j. Arna Bontemps
- k. Jean Toomer
- l. William Stafford (optional)
- m. Gwendolyn Brooks (optional)
- n. Sylvia Plath (optional)
- o. Hajney

9. Modern Drama

- a. Arthur Miller – The Crucible
- b. Thornton Wilder – Our Town (optional)

B. Grammar

- 1. Punctuation
- 2. Capitalization
- 3. Agreement
 - a. Subject-verb
 - b. Pronoun-antecedent
- 4. Sentence structure
 - a. Clauses
 - b. Verbals
 - c. Smooth-running sentences
- 5. Pronoun case
- 6. Use of modifiers

C. Writing

- 1. Thematics (short research-based analytical writings)
- 2. Research paper
- 3. Essays

VII. COURSE FORMAT

This course includes a wide variety of presentation formats including: lecture/discussion, group activities and presentations, student-led discussions, multi-media presentations, and team teaching activities.

VIII. COURSE EXPECTATIONS

American Studies English is a challenging, honors-level class that places a strong emphasis on high order thinking skills. Students will be expected to read not only textbook passages, but also, a wide variety of primary sources and other handouts. Students will be expected to complete all reading, writing, grammar, and speaking assignments and fulfill all tasks for daily homework. All will be expected to contribute to discussions and in-class activities as well as individual and group presentations. There is also a heavy emphasis on the development of writing skills through essays on tests, group research presentations, as well as regular individual research projects.

IX. GRADES

While separate grades are given for English and history portions of the American Studies class, most assignments and all major projects/tests are recorded for both English and history. The American Studies class places a greater emphasis on tests and projects requiring more time and a greater use of higher order thinking skills than those activities in standard classes. Grades are based upon a wide variety of assessments including, but not limited to, tests, quizzes, daily assignments, group work, projects, class participation, and a research paper (during 2nd semester).

X. COURSE OBJECTIVES

A. Literature

- 1. The student will be able to trace the concept of the American dream as it develops and changes throughout the various literary periods.**
- 2. The student will be able to compare and contrast the way of life of the Puritan and Cavalier.**
- 3. The student will be able to recognize the major kinds of Colonial literature and the important Colonial writers.**
- 4. The student will be able to identify and define the conceit.**
- 5. The student will be able to name and explain the major ideas/themes found in selections studied from the Colonial Era.**
- 6. The student will be able to recognize the elements and purpose of persuasive writing of deistic/Revolutionary writers.**

- 7. The student will be able to name and explain major ideas/themes found in selections studied from the Revolutionary Era.**
- 8. The student will be able to define and explain satire.**
- 9. The student will be able to define classicism.**
- 10. The student will be able to define romanticism.**
- 11. The student will be able to recognize romantic qualities in romantic literature.**
- 12. The student will be able to define/explain the characteristics of a romantic hero.**
- 13. The student will be able to identify/define blank verse.**
- 14. The student will be able to name and explain major ideas/themes found in selections studied from the period of romanticism.**
- 15. The student will be able to define transcendentalism.**
- 16. The student will be able to explain the ideals of Emerson and Thoreau.**
- 17. The student will be able to name and explain major ideas/themes found in selections studied from the period of transcendentalism.**
- 18. The student will be able to recognize the importance of Walt Whitman in the development of modern poetry.**
- 19. The student will be able to name and explain the major ideas/themes found in the selections of Walt Whitman that were studied in class.**
- 20. The student will be able to define realism.**
- 21. The student will be able to identify the viewpoint of a realistic writer.**
- 22. The student will be able to name and explain the major ideas/themes found in realistic works studied.**
- 23. The student will be able to define naturalism.**
- 24. The student will be able to identify the viewpoint of a naturalistic writer.**
- 25. The student will be able to name and explain the major ideas/themes found in naturalistic works.**
- 26. The student will be able to recognize the characteristics of local color writing.**
- 27. The student will be able to analyze the five parts of a plot of fiction.**
- 28. The student will be able to explain how the modern short story deals with contemporary themes.**
- 29. The student will be able to recognize revelations about the author as a person from his/her work.**
- 30. The student will be able to recognize the function of setting in a literary work.**

31. The student will be able to analyze an author's methods of characterization.
32. The student will be able to explain the function of tone in a specific literary work.
33. The student will be able to analyze the function of point of view in a specific literary work.
34. The student will be able to name and explain the major ideas/themes found in modern short stories studied in class.
35. The student will be able to recognize the power of suggestion of figurative language.
36. The student will be able to recognize free verse.
37. The student will be able to recognize experimental forms in modern poetry as opposed to traditional.
38. The student will be able to name and explain the major ideas/themes found in modern poetry studied in class.
39. The student will be able to state and explain the major ideas/themes found in novels and plays studied in class.

B. Grammar

1. Student will be able to use punctuation correctly.
2. Student will be able to use capitalization correctly.
3. Student will be able to differentiate between a correctly constructed sentence and an incorrectly constructed sentence.
4. The student will be able to use the appositive phrase as a subordinating technique in writing.
5. The student will be able to use the participial phrase as a subordinating technique in writing.
6. The student will be able to use the gerund phrase as a subordinating technique in writing.
7. The student will be able to use the infinitive phrase as a subordinating technique in writing.
8. The student will be able to use the adjective clause to vary sentence structure.
9. The student will be able to use the adverb clause to vary sentence structure.
10. The student will be able to use the noun clause to vary sentence structure.
11. The student will be able to write sentences with correct subject/verb agreement.
12. The student will be able to write sentences with correct pronoun/antecedent agreement.

- 13. The student will be able to use adjectives and adverbs correctly when making comparisons.**
- 14. The student will be able to place modifiers correctly.**
- 15. The student will be able to use pronouns correctly according to case.**
- 16. The student will be able to write sentences with clear pronoun reference.**

C. Writing

- 1. The student will be able to restrict a topic.**
- 2. The student will be able to write an effective thesis statement.**
- 3. The student will be able to write a paper which has an effective introduction, body, and conclusion.**
- 4. The student will be able to create effective transitions within his/her writing.**
- 5. The student will be able to paraphrase source material.**
- 6. The student will be able to apply correct documentation within a research paper.**
- 7. The student will be able to create a correct works cited page for a research paper.**
- 8. The student will be able to create timed in-class writings that show analysis of course content.**