

American Literature

Course Description: Why do we read? People do not merely read to earn good grades in English class so that they can go to a prestigious college and get a high paying job. So, why do people read in their spare time? Why do people read, years after graduating from school? Why do people gravitate towards some authors and stories, earning these stories so much praise that society decides that the novel, drama, poem, etc. is vital to our community, so vital that it becomes part of school curriculums? Similarly, what motivates writers to create? They don't write just for the paycheck – in fact, some of the iconic writers we will study didn't receive acclaim until after their demise, never enjoying the wealth and status that accompanies such success.

This American Lit course will continually examine these questions to help us gain a better understanding of American Literature, ultimately the problems and fears that Americans have been confronting for centuries. We will examine diverse perspectives, writing styles, and social issues. In each unit, we will analyze how writers try to develop and maintain their identity in the United States. While these American authors celebrate their cultures, they also focus on exposing our country's problems, ameliorating social injustices, and persuading readers to take action through their genre, diction, literary devices, etc. Our goal is to gain a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences of cultural experiences by analyzing these texts.

Core Texts:

Unit 1: Intersectional Literature

- *The House on Mango Street* chapter by Sandra Cisneros

Unit 2: Mexican American Literature

- *And the Earth Did Not Devour Him* by Tomas Rivera

Unit 3: Chinese American Literature

- *American Born Chinese* excerpts by Gene Yang

Unit 4: African American Literature

- *March* Book 1 by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell
- *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry

Assignments:

- Analytical Discussions
- Journal Entries
- Study Guides
- Quizzes
- Benchmarks
- Op Ed Letter
- 100 Word Vignette
- 1 Page Visual Story-telling
- Multimedia Projects