

## Honors American Humanities KAP - New Albany High School

### Overview

Students at New Albany High School begin taking Humanities in the ninth grade. They are introduced to interdisciplinary learning with a strong emphasis on connections between disciplines and critical thinking. During their first year of Humanities, students learn to organize their time, their research, and their writing. They come to appreciate both the richness of in-depth cultural study and the dimensions of the human experience. Many students find the course extremely challenging, but the end result for many is a new appreciation of their own ability to learn and to grow. As a consequence, a significant number of students select a humanities approach to learning in the tenth grade. Honors American Humanities offers students to continue receive Kenyon credit for this course. learning in an interdisciplinary environment. This course of offered at New Albany High School through Kenyon College's "KAP" (Kenyon Academic Partnership) program. New Albany students may

### Honors American Humanities will:

- build from a strong base in the ninth and tenth grades;
- provide an opportunity to expand the highly successful Humanities program;
- provide students an additional learning option for the eleventh grade;
- provide students with Kenyon College credits;
- expand available resources for students through Kenyon College;
- offer a course that emphasizes . . .
  - experiential learning through field research as well as traditional research,
  - performance based learning and assessment,
  - hands on activities that get the students involved in discovering, analyzing and creating cultural artifacts;
- create a learning experience that adds depth and diversity to the students experience.

### Unit Structure

- Each unit will be interdisciplinary and thematic,
- For each unit students will read a number of different sources (primary, secondary, etc.) and write in a number of styles,
- Students will pursue their learning through:
  - art      - music      - literature      - guest speakers      - history
- Students will conduct research using various electronic databases, including JSTOR, Facts on File, and Gale (all of these are available through the school library website).
- Students will study history from many perspectives.

## Major Units of Study - Honors American Humanities

### 1. America at the Crossroads: The 1890's

3 to 5 weeks

#### Objectives

- The students will experience a modern American cultural event (summer assignment).
- The students will understand the complexity of 19<sup>th</sup> century American culture by sharing their research on various aspects of American life in the 1890's (summer assignment).
- The students will see social, political, literary and economic forces as having an influence on the future course of the American experience.

#### Assessments and Activities

- In-class writings and essay examinations
- Oral presentation about a cultural event attended during the summer
- Socratic Seminar
- Students rewrite Sandburg's poem "Chicago" with reference to the Columbian Exposition of 1893.

#### Readings and Works Studied

- Devil in the White City - Larson (summer reading)
- Chicago Poems - Sandburg

#### Major Themes and Topics

- The Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893.
- The role of women at the turn of the century.
- The history of the city of Chicago as it parallels or symbolizes trends in wider American history.
- The development of urban architecture.
- The process of urbanization in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century
- The influence of muckrakers in exposing the ills of a rapidly changing society.
- The development of progressivism as a response to the cultural change of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- The nature and scope of social divisions in the United States.
- The railroad as both a symbol of the age and as an economic and social force.
- Manifest Destiny as a belief in the exceptionalism and destiny of America.
- Hamiltonianism and Jeffersonianism as two basic political philosophies.

## 2. America Goes to War and a Nation of Immigrants and Dissenters Rebels

6 to 8 weeks

### Objectives

- Students will understand the causes of and the responses to the Great War and the Vietnam conflict.
- Students will understand how American values and national interests work to shape national policy.
- Students will understand how the arts -- music, visual arts, and literature -- reflect the varied American response to war.
- Students will be able to perform effective research.
- Students will be able to write in a clear, well-organized manner about issues of national policy.
- Students will understand the impact and aftermath of the Great War on the American South.
- Students will learn the culture of wartime effort and resistance by studying the music and art of the periods.
- Students will read and analyze fictional and non-fictional accounts and perspectives of American war efforts.
- Students will analyze the government's rationale for and policies to mobilize the nation;

### Assessments and Activities

- In-class writings and essay examinations
- Oral presentation
- Group presentation
- Students will complete a written research and analysis component.

### Readings and Works Studied

- The Things They Carried - Tim O'Brien
- The Sound and the Fury - Faulkner
- The Century - CBS News video
- Selected poetry: "Facing It" - Komunyakaa, Song of Napalm - Bruce Weigl; M-80 - Jim Daniels
- Three Days in October - PBS Video based on the book, They Marched Into Sunlight by Maraniss

### Major Themes and Topics

- The public responses to World War I and the Vietnam Conflict, compared.
- Guest speakers will provide first hand accounts.
- The causes of the Great War and the Vietnam Conflict
- The government's rationale and strategy for mobilizing the economy and the public.

### 3. The People's Movement: Labor and Agrarian Reform

6 to 8 weeks

#### Objectives

- Students will learn the various resources that were available to both management and labor.
- Students will understand the impact of the Great Depression on the American workers.
- Students will understand the various goals and aims of each group seeking reform.
- Students will understand the causes of the rise and decline of factory and farm workers.
- Students will appreciate the art and music of the laboring class as a way of understanding its impact on American culture.
- Students will analyze and understand fictional accounts of the American Depression and labor experience to gain richer insight into American folk culture.
- Students will understand, through first-hand field experience, how large, impersonal trends in American history effect particular communities.
- Students will read and appreciate the impact of literature of new Americans to increase awareness of cultural differences and commonalities.

#### Assessments and Activities

- In-class writings and essay examinations
- Oral presentation
- Group presentation: Student Drama - Labor Union Meeting and Grange Meeting
- Students will understand the rise and decline of American industrialism by visiting Southern Ohio coal towns such as Shawnee and Glouster.

#### Readings and Works Studied

- The Jungle - Upton Sinclair
- A River Runs Through It - Maclean
- The Grapes of Wrath - Steinbeck
- The Worst Hard Times - Timothy Egan
- Selected poetry: Walt Whitman, Carl Sandburg, Kettle Bottom - Fisher
- Selected essays: Emerson, Thoreau
- Selected short stories: Edgar Allan Poe, Gillman
- Historical accounts: Lattimer Massacre, Great Upheaval of 1877
- Film: Documenting the Face of America - PBS; The Plow that Broke the Plain - Lorentz

#### Major Themes and Topics

- The importance of the agrarian ethic to the evolution of American values.
- The importance of the labor movement to the evolution of American values.
- The response of institutions of government, interest groups, and individuals to the economic hardships of the Gilded Age and the Great Depression.
- The strategies used by management and labor to gain or maintain economic, political, and legal power.

- The Populist Movement as an expression of perceived American values.
- The Progressive Movement as a response to perceived victimization brought on by industrialization and urbanization.
- Challenges to the homogenized, "WASP" culture by the "New Immigrants" from Asia, Eastern Europe, and Southern Europe.
- The impact of immigrant populations on American society, culture, and economics.
- The struggle and contribution of immigrants.
- The differences between the literary movements of Romanticism and Realism.

#### 4. The Struggle for Civil Rights – African Americans, Immigrants, Women, and Other Marginalized Peoples

12 to 14 weeks

##### Objectives

- Students will understand the various ebbs and flows in the quest for political and social enfranchisement.
- Students will understand the major events, people, and forces associated with the progress in and resistance to the American civil rights movements.
- Students will learn the significance of art, music, and the spoken word to civil rights movements.
- Students will study and understand the literature of civil rights movements as a way of gaining insight into personal and cultural experience and perspective.
- Students will understand the process and benefits of literary criticism.

##### Assessment and Activities

- In-class writings and essay examinations
- Oral presentation: Marginalized Person Presentation
- Group presentation: Protest Groups in American History

##### Readings and Works Studied

- “The Cult of True Womanhood” - Welter
- “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” - Dr. Martin Luther King
- Eyes on the Prize video series documenting the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950’s and the 1960’s.
- Song of Solomon - Morrison
- The Joy Luck Club - Tan
- Their Eyes Were Watching God - Hurston
- The Hunger for Memory - Rodriguez
- Literary Criticism
- The Way to Rainy Mountain - Momaday

##### Major Themes and Topics

- The “flappers” of the 1920’s as a reaction to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century social environment.
- The push for voting and social rights in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- The emergence of the “Women’s Movement” during the 1960’s.
- “Reconstruction” and “Redemption” following the Civil War.
- The Great Migration
- The foundation of the civil rights movement: Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, the NAACP, Charles Hamilton Houston and the Howard Law School, Marcus Garvey and the UNIA.
- Black civil rights movements following both 20<sup>th</sup> century “World Wars”
- The influence of major figures (e.g. Martin Luther King) and less well-known figures (e.g.

Mose Wright) on the course of the Civil Rights Movement.

- The techniques, strategies, and philosophies of civil rights movements in the United States.
- The struggle to find a synthesis between the forces of “Law and Order” and the forces of “Social Revolution” in the 1960’s.
- The literary explanation of a search and struggle for cultural identity.