

Austin-East High School

African American Studies

Instructor: Ms. Kara Glenn
Room: PA103

Email: kara.glenn@knoxschools.org

INSTRUCTION

Course Description: African American Studies is a literature focused Humanities course, intended to educate students on the evolution of the African American culture through oral and written language, as well as other media and technologies. The major purpose of this course is to provide students with the literary and skill background needed to read, comprehend, and analyze literature and informational texts at an advanced level. These skills will be valuable not only in other high school courses, but beyond high school in your college and career endeavors.

Curriculum Standards: Please refer to the Knox County Curriculum and tested Student Performance Indicators (SPI's) at:
http://la.knoxschools.org/modules/locker/files/get_group_file.phtml?gid=503629&fid=3732589&sessionid=1a177b2406059cd6e5f3ef732e2da256

Materials Required

Composition Book
Plenty of lined paper
Pencils
Pens (blue & black ink only)
Highlighter(s)
~ Project supplies as assigned

Major Works to be Read:

12 Years A Slave by: Solomon Northup
A Raisin in the Sun by: Lorraine Hansberry
To Be Young, Gifted, & Black by: Lorraine Hansberry
Warriors Don't Cry by: Melba Beals

Other Readings and Media Include (but not limited to):

Various poems by Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Countee Cullen, Claude McKay, etc
Various speeches by MLK Jr, Malcolm X, Horace Mann, etc.
Video clips from Selma, 12 Years A Slave, Eyes on the Prize, The Butler, etc.

Parents:

If anything is to be added to this list, I hold myself responsible for giving you at least two weeks' notice before. I doubt this will happen, but in the event that it does-you will be in the loop.

MODULE BREAKDOWNS

Organization is important to me. Below, I've given you overviews of each Module to be taught this semester. More in-depth descriptions of weekly plans will be discussed in class.

Module I: Slavery

Overarching Text: *12 Years a Slave*

In this module we will analyze and breakdown various slave narratives from a man and woman's perspective. In addition to this, we will learn the "why" concerning the establishment of such an institution and apply everything we've learned to a holistic analyzation of Solomon Northup's *12 Years a Slave*.

Essential Question (s): What affect did slavery have on the African American family and how do we still see those today?

Module II: Harlem Renaissance

Overarching Text: *A Raisin in the Sun & To Be Young, Gifted, and Black*

In this module we will analyze the cultural development of African Americans in the 20th century and the historical impact of Harlem Renaissance. This module will be heavy in poetry and also heavy in media (clips of Louis Armstrong, Cab Callaway, Billie Holiday, etc).

Essential Question (s): How does art communicate one's historical perspective? What impact did the Harlem Renaissance have on society in the 1920's and beyond?

Module III: Harlem Renaissance

Overarching Text: *Warriors Don't Cry*

In this module we will analyze legalized segregation and how it deprived the minority of human rights. In addition to this, we will examine the role that young people had in the Civil Rights Movement and how important that role was. This module will be heavy in Speech and Rhetoric Analysis.

Essential Question (s): How does art communicate one's historical perspective? What impact did the Harlem Renaissance have on society in the 1920's and beyond?

Module IV: Modern Issues

Overarching Text: *TBA*

In this module we will analyze the progress of African American rights in America and to engage in discussions about race and discrimination with tact and respect. This analyzation will lead into an organized debate that will stand as the final project for this course and will be lead by Mr. David Goff. I want students analyze the impact of historical and contemporary events on self-identity as well.

Essential Question (s): How does one develop a sense of self identity in this world? What role does the government and those in positions of power influence self/community identity?

Alternate Assignments/Activities

All texts and components of this course have been approved by Administration and proper Knox County persons. However, if you do not approve of a specific resource listed in this syllabus, please make your request to me in writing and an alternative assignment and/or materials will be provided. The request should include your name, the child's name, the specific activity/materials in which you do not want your child to participate or to which you do not want them exposed, and the nature of your objection.

ASSESSMENT

Skills Assessment: Because of the variety of skills covered in this course, a variety of techniques will be used to assess them. A mix of both formative assessments (such as quizzes and other checks for understanding) and summative assessments (such as unit exams and other written products) will be utilized. Students will also complete research, timed writings, and unit exams for each module.

Class Participation: This class aims to amplify the reading and writing skills already learned through previous English courses. In addition to this, this class is meant to educate students on the rich culture and evolution of the African American race. In order to succeed in this class, students will need to work hard from the beginning and maintain a solid work ethic throughout the semester. A portion of your grade will depend upon class participation. Most assignments will require and in depth analysis of history and its application to pressing issues today.

Grading

Your grade is on percentage-based scale:

EOC – 25% Daily work/Homework – 15%

Formative Assessments (quizzes, learning checks) – 20%

Summative Assessments (Unit Exams) – 40%

Rubrics will be used for essays and group assignments. These will be provided to the student when the assignment is given. The following grading scale will be used for this class:

Knox County Grading Scale

A 100-93%

B 92-85%

C 84-75%

D 74-70%

F 69% and lower

Makeup Work

If you are absent, you will always have the opportunity to complete any missing assignment. However, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU MISSED. If you missed a quiz or test, you will need to see me to set up a time to take the test. **Please note: all lessons connect! Every week there is a “theme” with an end goal (Friday), please keep this in mind.**

Late Work

The first late assignment will be forgiven. Additional late assignments will result in a point-based reduction. AEHS Policy states work MAY NOT be made up after the close of the grading period in which it was assigned.

Portal Post Policy

One way in which I am able to communicate with the student and parent is through Parent Portal. In order to give timely feedback, I will update grades at least once per week.

Student Expectations

Attendance: I expect students to make attendance a priority. If you are not present, you miss out on valuable learning opportunities and end up playing “catch-up” The simplest solution: attend class.

Tardy Policy: To assist in lowering student tardies, AEHS has created an additional warning bell set to ring exactly one minute before classes start. **AEHS policy mandates students are tardy if not seated and working on the bell ringer when the tardy bell sounds.**

CELLULAR PHONES: Students are permitted to use cellular telephones during non-instructional times between classes and at lunch. For this reason, ***I have a strict “OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF HEARING” policy.*** There will many opportunities to use cell phones and other electronic devices in conjunction with many lessons. Aside from this, please respect my time and keep cell phones away.

Ms. Glenn’s Expectations:

These will be discussed in class & students will play a role in creating the ground rules for this course. Once created, I will share copies with students that parents may access

Honor Code/Plagiarism Policy

According to Harbrace Handbook, 15th edition,
“Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else’s ideas, research, or opinion as your own without proper documentation, even if it has been rephrased. It includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. copying verbatim all or part of another’s written work;
2. using phrases, figures, or illustrations without citing the source;
3. paraphrasing ideas, conclusions, or research without citing the source;
4. using all or part of a literary plot, poem, or film without attributing the work to its creator.”

Consequences for Plagiarism:

As plagiarism is a form of stealing and academic fraud, committing such an act carries both a grade penalty and disciplinary action. **Countywide, students** found guilty of plagiarism will receive a zero on the assignment, have an alternate assignment due, and be referred to the office for academic dishonesty.

Teacher Expectations

Communication: The best way to reach me is by email, kara.glenn@knoxschools.org. I check it several times a day and will respond quickly. You may also call the school phone, 865- 594-3792 & dial ext. 1049. If you would like to request a conference, please call guidance and the counselor will schedule one. In addition to this, I am currently looking into creating a group, specifically for this course, within the cell phone app “Remind 101” when we begin delving into the Civil Rights module. This is to send any breaking news articles or reminders to kids pertaining to class. *This class is an excellent way to communicate without children having my cell phone number and vice versa.*

Tutoring/Extra Help: I am available for extra help if notified in advance. Please see me personally, or email me at the above address to set up a tutoring or extra help session. I prefer at least one day’s notice.

A note: I am Kara Glenn, the African American Studies teacher at Austin-East. I love our school, our students, and participating in this community; I am thrilled you and I will have the opportunity to work together on your academic journey. We have a great semester ahead of us filled with culture, enlightenment, and fun—and a lot of things to get started on! This class will feel challenging and admittedly monotonous on some (but very few) days, but I promise to help every single one of you finish this class feeling better and more knowledgeable than you did when you came in.

In this syllabus, I hope you have found information regarding what to expect for the class and of me as the instructor. The key goal for success this semester is communication and parental involvement, so please ask your child about his or her day in class, don’t assume it’s bad when I call, and let me know if there is ever anything I can do to help you become more involved.

Sincerely,

Kara Glenn