

Bullitt East High School Multicultural Literature Syllabus 2018-2019

**Teacher:** Ms. Smythe

**Contact:** Laura.Smythe@bullitt.kyschools.us

**Planning:** 6th Period

**Website:** MsSmytheEnglish.weebly.com

**Overview:** Welcome to Multicultural Literature! How is culture defined? Are smaller ethnic and cultural groups truly accepted by mainstream Western culture? How are cultures stereotyped? This elective will challenge you to think about the impact of cultural definitions. The study of multicultural literature is an examination of national literature and its significant impact on American culture, society and values as expressed, developed, and critiqued in a multicultural arena. We will analyze and evaluate literature from a variety of different races, ethnicities, backgrounds, classes, genders, and orientations represented in authors and the major themes of their work. Specifically, we will study issues of identity, representation, and culture in **Native American, African American, Asian American, Latinx, and LGBT literary works**. This is a reading intensive course. Emphasis is placed on close textual analysis, class discussions, collaborative projects, and synthesis of course experiences through oral and written reflection, exposition, persuasion, and narration. You should be prepared to share your opinions and work through your difficulties with each text. Participation is vital!

This class is about more than just literature. You will learn about literature, but you will also learn about yourselves. You will learn about how you learn. You will also un-learn some things. You will learn history. You will also learn how to communicate your thoughts more clearly. This class *requires* discussion about issues and topics that, although they may at times be difficult or uncomfortable to address, need to be confronted in order for us to be effective learners. We need to hear each others' voices. You can learn a great deal from each other. I will help provide a safe place for you to speak your mind. In return, you can help me make the room safe for others as well. Together, we can support each other in expanding our cultural awareness and preparing us to navigate our diverse landscapes.

**Objectives:**

- 1) **EXPOSURE:** to form and express critical opinions about American traditions of literature by diverse cultural sects;
- 2) **MAKE CONNECTIONS:** to demonstrate a critical understanding about recurrent themes and issues in literature by diverse cultural sects; or, in other words, to understand the impact of culture on literature;
- 3) **QUESTION STANDARDS:** for students to question notions of literary value based on timeless universals and/or historical specifics; or, in other words, to understand the impact of culture on literary criticism;
- 4) **UNDERSTAND DIFFERENCE:** for students to become aware of and to think critically about the variety of literary responses by authors who occupy differing subject positions; or, in other words, to become aware of the differences that culture, ethnicity, class, sexuality and religion have on writing;
- 5) **EXPRESSION:** for students to develop original, creative and critical thought through writing

**Expectations:**

1. **Respect:** Respect each other, personal property, space, and beliefs.
2. **Listen:** When others are talking, have open ears and a closed mouth.
3. **Learn:** Participate in class activities.
4. **Prepare:** Bring required materials to class and sit correctly in your seat.
5. **Enjoy:** Have a positive attitude.

**Materials:**

- 1 Subject Spiral Notebook
- 2 Pocket Folder
- Writing Utensil
- Box of Tissues
- *The Hate U Give* - Angie Thomas
- *Aristotle & Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* - B.A. Saenz
- *American Born Chinese* - Gene Luen Yang (\*)
- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* - S. Alexie (\*)

Students are expected to keep a working notebook and folder. Their folder will contain their classwork and homework; their notebook will contain their class notes. Students are also expected to come to class prepared with a sharpened pencil or a pen. Unprepared students may write their names on the board for a pencil. DO NOT make this a habit! Please donate a box of tissues. We run through them quickly!

\* I have PDF versions available for both *American Born Chinese* and *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, so it is not required for you to purchase these texts. Nevertheless, if you do not prefer to read on your Chromebook, please purchase physical copies of the texts.

**Policies:**

1. **Chromebook:** Students' Chromebooks should be fully charged each day & used appropriately for classroom activities ONLY.
2. **Bell Ringers/Exit Slips:** The beginning and end of class every day will be designated for students to complete their bell ringers/exit slips on their Chromebooks. Absent students will receive the bell ringer/exit slip grade that they earned the day before for the day that they missed.
3. **Late Work:** I WILL assign reading for homework! Reading assignments are to be completed by the due date. Assignments that are not completed during class time will also be considered homework. The potential point value of a late assignment will drop a letter grade for every day that it is late.
4. **Make Up Work:** If a student is absent, it is his or her responsibility to get make-up work from the class folder. Make up work must be completed in a timely manner (see BEHS handbook). Make up tests will be completed after school in my classroom. Absent students will have one week to stay after school to make it up.
5. **Organization:** Students should keep all work in their class folders. All classwork and homework will assist in preparing them for a cumulative final exam or project at the end of the semester.
6. **Academics:** Academic detention or lunch RTI will be assigned if a student is failing to turn their work in, sleeping in class, or failing the class. Failure to attend academic detention or lunch RTI will result in ISAP.
7. **Plagiarism:** DON'T CHEAT! Students will earn a zero for any assignment that is copied from another student, the internet, or any other source. Students will also earn a zero if they allow another student to copy their work.
8. **Bathroom:** Students will have 2 bathroom passes that they may use any time during the semester. Once their passes have been used, they may no longer take bathroom breaks during class time.
9. **Phone Use:** I do not allow phones to be out during class time under any circumstances. I have a designated safe place for students to store their phones every day. Students may use their Chromebooks for research, note taking, etc.
10. **Earbuds:** Students may listen to music during independent work, but earbuds should be put away at all other times.

**Units of Study:**

1. Intro to Multiculturalism / *American Born Chinese*
2. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*
3. *The Hate U Give*
4. *Aristotle & Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*

**Google Classroom codes, Remind codes, and lesson plans are all available on my website.**