

Welcome to Humanities



Dear Humanities student and parents:

Welcome to McMillen Humanities! We're glad you've signed up for what we hope is one of the most rewarding experiences of your high school career. Please read this letter carefully and keep it in your notebook throughout the year because it will help you understand the course—its expectations, logistics, procedures, and peculiarities.

Humanities is the core class for 9th and 10th grade students in the PACE program. Over two years, we combine the curricula of three different courses: Honors English I, AP World History, and the Humanities. You will find as the year progresses that the three courses overlap and complement one another effectively; writing, reading, critical thinking, creativity, speaking, listening, and analysis—of historical documents, texts, artworks, or artifacts—are essential skills that permeate this course.

The class is organized chronologically following the periodization established by the College Board for the AP World History course. We will begin this year with the Ancient and Classical periods and finish up with Post-Classical and the beginning of the Early Modern period. In the other half of the course (next year for freshmen or last year for sophomores), we begin with the Early Modern period and continue to the present. While we're studying the world's history, we'll also explore the humanities of each period—the artistic and intellectual history of world civilization. The humanities portion of the course explores the literature, drama, visual arts, architecture, music, dance, and philosophy that form the foundation of our culture today.

For a more complete description of the AP World History course, check out the complete course description on the College Board's website:

[AP World History: Modern](#)

Our combined interdisciplinary emphasis on English, History, and the Humanities will provide students with a broader knowledge base and a more comprehensive skill set useful for success on the national AP World History exam.

CREDITS:

Although the curricula of AP World History, Humanities, and Honors English will be blended over the two-year cycle of the course, the students will receive the following credits:

- 9th grade: Honors English I credit (1.0 honors credit with maximum 4.5 GPA)
- 10th grade: AP World History credit (1.0 AP credit with maximum 5.0 GPA)

GRADING and HOMEWORK:

Each nine-week grading period your Humanities grade will be determined as follows:

60% major grades (tests, projects, papers, presentations)*

40% daily grades (reading quizzes, journals, daily assignments, quality of classroom interaction).*

The semester grade for Humanities will include the two nine-week averages (50% each).

Most of your homework for Humanities will consist of reading and note-taking on assigned readings. We will endeavor to keep “busy work” to a minimum. You should expect a daily-grade reading quiz as a follow up to your reading assignments. Keeping up with reading is essential for success on the tests (and eventually on the AP World History test at the end of your sophomore year) and for participation in class activities and discussions. Students who do not read the assignments should expect not to be successful in the course.

In addition to the routine homework, we will ask you to extend your classroom experience by completing **two Humanities Arts Experiences (HAEs) during the school year**. The HAE requires students to observe a professional artistic performance/exhibit and critique the performance or exhibit based upon their knowledge of the humanities. You will get extensive information about the HAE later in the semester, and your first one won't be due until December.

The national AP Exam will be administered on May 8th for sophomores who are in their second year of Humanities. The cost is approximately \$100. We encourage every sophomore to take the exam. We will spend three weeks reviewing immediately prior to the exam. Successful performance on this test may result in college credit; each college or university has its own standard for the credit awarded for AP test scores.

TEXTBOOKS:

We will use three textbooks in this course:

Strayer, Robert W.. and Eric W. Nelson. *Ways of the World: A Global History with sources*. AP Edition. 4th edition. bfw Publishers: Boston, 2019. (ISBN: 978-1-319-17349-4)

Gloria Fierro, *The Humanistic Tradition Volume 1: Prehistory to the Early Modern World* 7th Edition (978-1259360664)

Glencoe World Literature. McGraw-Hill: New York, 2009. (ISBN: 978-0-07-845605-3)

The Humanities and AP textbooks are frequently used in upper-level high school and college courses; thus, the reading will be more demanding than the textbooks in your other classes. You should be prepared for quizzes over the reading assignments and will be responsible for the material on tests and quizzes. If you are having difficulty, we will happily work with you to develop strategies for approaching challenging reading material.

In addition to the textbook, we will read several novels and plays, including Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*, *Romeo & Juliet*, Moliere's *Tartuffe*, *Things Fall Apart*, and a self-selected novel. We will also read numerous poems, short stories, literary excerpts, historical documents, and essays which will be made available in class or online.

SUPPLIES:

You will need the following supplies to be a successful participant in Humanities:

- something on which to take notes over reading and class lectures
- an AP World History review text (not required but strongly recommended)¹
- 1 community supply pick any
 - tissue
 - markers
 - colored pencils
 - hot or cold glue sticks

ABSENCES, and MAKE-UP WORK:

Because the curriculum in Humanities progresses quickly, you must be especially conscientious about completing assignments on time. Daily work will not be accepted late. For major assessments, students earn a maximum of a 75% if the assignment is turned in one day late. If two days late, then the student earns a maximum of a 50%. Major assessments are not accepted after the second day of being late.

If a student is absent, the student has one day to make up the assignment for each day absent. If an assignment was due on the day missed, then that assignment is to be turned in the day the student returns. Make-up work is to be completed at home or in tutorials; whether that is during Lions Lunch or during the teacher's designated before/after school tutorial time. Tests and quizzes must be made up in an expedient manner as our instruction often depends on using test or quiz information for remediation or review. For students who fail a test and/or quiz, retests and test corrections are not given in AP classes.

We believe strongly in the importance of academic integrity. **We will not tolerate cheating in any form.** Cheating includes any activity in which a student uses information from another student or from an outside source without acknowledging that assistance; this includes assisting others. Academic integrity violations include sharing answers during or after a quiz or test, copying assignments or answers, reproduction of others' work by any means, turning in work that is not one's own, using another person's notes for a reading assessment, and plagiarism. All parties involved in cheating or academic violations will receive a zero on the assignment in question.

TUTORIALS:

We offer tutorials on Mondays and Wednesdays before or after school. Tutorials in the mornings and any afternoon other days must be made through an appointment with the teacher. Any student wanting help on content or on study skills is encouraged to attend. The format and content of a tutorial session will be based on the needs of the students who attend, so if you have any special requests, let one of us know in advance.

STAYING IN TOUCH:

You may access up-to-the minute information about this course, including calendars, handouts, assignments, helpful web links, and more on the Humanities Google Classroom.

¹ There are many AP World History review books available from your local bookseller or online. Students have said the materials they've found most interesting and helpful are *Cracking the AP World History Exam* (The Princeton Review), *5 Steps to a 5* (McGraw Hill), and *AP World History* (Woodyard Publications).

We also communicate with students and parents via email.

Tips for Successful Humanities Students

- The textbooks are college-level texts, and the reading may be difficult. Practice active reading strategies including note-taking.
- If your present study strategy isn't working, try something different. Either of your teachers will be happy to work with you to improve reading and study skills.
- **Do not be afraid to ask for help before it's too late.** If you are confused, frustrated, overwhelmed, or want extra help, we are here to assist.
- Taking good notes throughout the semester will help you as you prepare for your final exam and your end-of-your-sophomore-year AP World History test.
- Don't forget to read (and comprehend what you read)! Some material on each test will be from the reading and may not have been covered in class. If you do not read, you are likely to fail!
- Plan ahead. Use the calendar to stay current with reading assignments and to allot time for homework.
- Some Humanities students find that studying for tests with another student is helpful. This can be effective as long as study time doesn't digress into social time.
- Study for the tests. You will not pass if you do not study.
- Get involved in class discussions. Active participation helps reinforce concepts and ideas and helps make class more interesting.
- **Humanities Tutoring Mondays - Wednesday before or after school or by appointment. Get help with content, writing, reading, or study skills! Additional tutorials may be available prior to tests and quizzes.**

In closing, we hope this year in Humanities is an exciting, challenging, and worthwhile one for you. If you or your parents have questions about the class, please call us or contact us via email.

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Please Complete the Google form