

English 11

Honors

In the English 11 Honors course, students examine the belief systems, events, and literature that have shaped the United States. They begin by studying the language of independence and the system of government developed by Thomas Jefferson and other enlightened thinkers. Next, they explore how the Romantics and Transcendentalists emphasized the power and responsibility of the individual in both supporting and questioning the government. Students consider whether the American Dream is still achievable and examine the Modernists' disillusionment with the idea that America is a "land of opportunity."

Reading the words of Frederick Douglass and the text of the Civil Rights Act, students look carefully at the experience of African Americans and their struggle to achieve equal rights. Students explore how individuals cope with the influence of war and cultural tensions while trying to build and secure their own personal identity. Finally, students examine how technology is affecting our contemporary experience of freedom: Will we eventually change our beliefs about what it means to be an independent human being?

In this course, students analyze a wide range of literature, both fiction and nonfiction. They build writing skills by composing analytical essays, persuasive essays, personal narratives, and research papers. In order to develop speaking and listening skills, students participate in discussions and give speeches. Overall, students gain an understanding of the way American literature represents the array of voices contributing to our multicultural identity.