

PUSD Ethnic Literature [Course Description](#)

\*This course will be taken for PUSD English credit. It is NOT required. Students may choose from a variety of English course offerings in 11th and 12th grade to fulfill their English credit.

The PUSD Ethnic Literature course has been submitted to UC for A-G approval as an English “b” credit.

[PLEASE USE THIS FEEDBACK FORM](#) to provide input on each unit.

Course Overview	
<p>Ethnic Literature is a course that promotes cultural understanding and empathy through a deep analysis and examination of how systems of power and privilege in the United States have affected the following groups: Indigenous/Native American, African American, Asian American, and Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x. In addition, the course will examine the intersectionality of gender and sexual orientation. The course aligns with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts through the analysis of fiction and nonfiction texts. Students will engage in Socratic discussions, conduct college level research, synthesize different mediums from poetry to film, examine rhetorical devices, write first person narratives, and craft analytical essays in order to understand the social and political systems that have shaped different marginalized groups in America. Students will deepen their understanding of self and others through exploring their own histories, identities, and those of marginalized groups from the 19th century to present day.</p>	

Unit 1: Identity, Race, & Ethnicity	
<b>Unit overview</b>	<p>In this unit, students will explore key concepts of race, identity, prejudice, and discrimination. Through this, students will acknowledge and examine how race and ethnicity impact and shape society. Students will also dive into self-discovery as they think critically through the lens of identifying their intersectionality of race, ethnicity, and identity through research of their own history. Through close readings of a range of stories and backgrounds, students will explore the impact of race narratives, as they have shaped modern society.</p>
<b>Essential Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● What is my identity and power?</li><li>● How do my racial and ethnic experiences shape my identity?</li></ul>
<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● “Everyday Use” by Alice Walker</li><li>● Uzo Abuda clip</li><li>● Intersectionality <a href="#">Kimberle Crenshaw TED Talk</a></li><li>● <a href="#">“Don’t ask me where I’m from; ask where I’m local” TED Talk</a></li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various readings from <a href="#">Uncharted Territory: A High School Reader by Jim Burke</a></li> </ul>
<b>Sample Assignment</b>	<p><b>"Humans of Ethnic Lit"</b></p> <p>After reading various passages and doing self-reflective work, students will reflect on their experience of learning who they are by exploring the following questions: "Who are you? What have you discovered about yourself through the process of unpacking your identity in these first few weeks of this course?" Students will create a first person narrative essay where they explain the discovery of their identity and sense of self. They will orally present this piece. A self-portrait will also be specifically created to accompany their narrative, either a photograph that represents how they wish to be viewed, or it can be artwork they create of their face to best represent the content of their essay.</p>

<b>Unit 2: History &amp; Systems of Power</b>	
<b>Unit overview</b>	In this unit, students will take their understanding of identity and explore its relationship to power. Students will learn about and discuss various types of power, actual and perceived, and identify the ways in which power is given to or denied from certain groups. Students will have the opportunity to read a novel of their choice and to engage with peers in discussion of the topics of identity and power as they arise in their reading. Analysis of various supplemental texts, both fiction and nonfiction, will allow students to build upon the ideas formed in the analysis of their chosen novel. Ultimately, students will practice crafting Level 3 (synthesis and evaluation) questions as they produce a student podcast to discuss their understandings of identity and power.
<b>Essential Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the relationship between identity and power?</li> </ul>
<b>Readings</b>	<p><a href="#">Choice Novels</a> (including, but not limited to)</p> <p><a href="#">From Uncharted Territory</a> (Unit 3: Power):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The Danger of a Single Story" by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie</li> <li>• "For the Love of Pretty Things: The Radium Girls and 'Dying for Science'" by Robert R. Johnson</li> <li>• "Power" by Adrienne Rich</li> <li>• "Graffiti" by Julio Cortazar</li> <li>• "The Psychology of Evil" by Philip Zimbardo</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “The Terror” by Junot Diaz</li> <li>● “Dear John Wayne” by Louise Erdrich</li> <li>● from “ Quiet: The Power of Introverts” by Susan Cain</li> </ul>
<b>Sample Assignment</b>	<p><b>Student Podcast - Identity and Power</b></p> <p>After reading and discussing their choice novels in small groups, students will design their own Socratic Seminar and record it in the format of a podcast. Students will utilize their novel, analysis activities, supplemental texts, and more to craft a Level 3 discussion question regarding the topics of this unit - Identity and Power. Students will share their discussion question with the members of the group, and will then prepare for discussion by outlining speaking points and preparing evidence from their novel and supplemental texts. Groups will orchestrate and record the audio of their own discussion, then edit and produce the audio file into a podcast “episode,” complete with a title and intro/outro music. Students will then have the opportunity to listen to the podcasts of other groups and reflect.</p>

<b>Unit 3: Institutions, Structures, and Power</b>	
<b>Unit overview</b>	In this unit, students will continue building on the last two units, this time diving into the role of institutions and structures in our society in regards to power. Students will examine historical documents, such as the Declaration of Independence and the Emancipation Proclamation, as well as major US policies and laws surrounding race and ethnicity in order to establish a foundation of knowledge. An all-class study of <i>Just Mercy</i> , by Bryan Stevenson, will provide opportunities for students to consider and discuss current issues of racial inequity in our criminal justice system, and will serve as a springboard for discussion of power inequities in other institutions and social structures (i.e. education, media, etc.).
<b>Essential Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To what extent do institutions and structures contribute to the power given to identity groups?</li> <li>● How do political, legal, economic, educational, cultural, and familial systems work to create power imbalances?</li> </ul>
<b>Readings</b>	<p><i>Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption</i> by Bryan Stevenson</p> <p>From <i>Uncharted Territory</i> (Unit 7: Freedom):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Declaration of Independence</i> by Thomas Jefferson</li> <li>● from “Our Declaration” by Danielle Allen</li> <li>● <i>Emancipation Proclamation</i> by Abraham Lincoln</li> <li>● from <i>Twelve Years a Slave</i> by Solomon Northup</li> <li>● “Under the Influence” by Ted Greenwald</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Saturday at the Canal” by Gary Soto</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sample Assignment</b></p>	<p>“Literary Legacy Project”</p> <p>Students will evaluate whether or not the novel they read in Unit 2 is worthy to be adopted by the PUSD Board of Education, then create a multimedia presentation of their evaluation process. Following the Poway Unified School District Instructional Materials Evaluation Form Review Criteria, students will evaluate their chosen novel on the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the material support District standards, state frameworks, or other appropriate standards? (Attach a copy of highlighted standards and/or course outline.)</li> <li>2. Does the material address the essential knowledge and skills required in this course of study?</li> <li>3. Does the material support sound instructional practices as delineated in the Poway Continuum of Teaching Standards?</li> <li>4. Is it of significant educational, social, or artistic value?</li> <li>5. Does it complement other instructional materials used in the course?</li> <li>6. Will the material stimulate and maintain the user's interest and lead to further study/discussion in the course?</li> <li>7. Is the material authentic and historically accurate and/or does it reflect current research?</li> <li>8. Does the material depict the contributions of ethnic groups with historical accuracy and/or in a manner reflecting current scholarly research?</li> <li>9. Does the material avoid expressed and implied stereotyping of groups of people by age, gender, ethnicity, religion, or occupation?</li> <li>10. Does the material cover issues fairly and objectively?</li> <li>11. Is it timely or pertinent to curricular needs and/or community issues?</li> <li>12. Are the format, vocabulary, and concepts appropriate for the intended purpose?</li> <li>13. Are materials appropriate to the age, grade, and maturity level of the students for whom they are selected?</li> <li>14. Are materials primarily for instructional purposes and substantially free of advertising?</li> </ol> <p>Students will present their findings to the class, and together determine whether they would like to propose one or more titles for district adoption. A written rationale of the novel evaluation will also be included in the assignment.</p>

**Unit 4: Intersectionality of Oppression**

<p><b>Unit overview</b></p>	<p>In this unit, students will continue to learn about Kimberle Crenshaw’s work regarding intersectionality. Students will also gain knowledge of key terms used by various groups (e.g. LGBTQIA2+) and the Four I’s of Oppression. By reflecting on one’s own identity and implicit biases, students will examine how oppression manifests itself in various ways. Joy and excellence of oppressed groups will be highlighted to prevent a deficit model of teaching. Students will read expository texts, graphic memoirs, and poetry to learn about other people’s experiences with oppression, such as the LGBTQIA2+ community, individuals with disabilities, women of color, and those of nondominant religious groups. Students will analyze the rhetoric used by an author when discussing oppression. In addition, students will make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.</p>
<p><b>Essential Questions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Other than race, in what ways does oppression manifest itself today?</li> <li>● How does oppression impact a person’s sexual orientation, gender, class, and/or religion?</li> <li>● What is the relationship between oppression and different facets of one’s identity?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Readings</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Alone and All Together” by Joseph Geha</li> <li>● “Yiddische Baby” by Rivka Galchen</li> <li>● “Passing the Bread” by Veera Hiranandani</li> <li>● “The Convocation” by Marjane Satrapi</li> <li>● “Speech at the Youth Takeover of the United Nations” by Malala Yousafzai</li> <li>● “The Matrix in Me” by Brooke Gladstone</li> <li>● “The Fire on the 57 Bus” by Dashka Slater</li> <li>● “The Myth of the Latin Woman: I Just Met a Girl Named Maria” by Judith Ortiz Cofer</li> <li>● “Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou</li> <li>● <a href="#">Four I’s of Oppression</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Sample Assignment</b></p>	<p><b>Resisting Images Video Project (media literacy)</b></p> <p>After reading multiple genres from graphic memoirs to expository texts, students will select a group to research in order to learn more about how oppression affects various facets of a person’s identity. This will culminate in a video project that demonstrates how specific groups are able to resist controlling images in the media. Students will gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources as evidence of their claim(s). Working in collaborative groups,</p>

	students will produce a short, informative video examining a group’s intersectionality, as well as evidence of the group’s resistance to oppression and their excellence.
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<b>Unit 5: Resistance &amp; Liberation</b>
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<b>Unit overview</b>	In this unit, students will learn about tools of liberation used by marginalized groups. This unit focuses on the joy and excellency of the contributions that various nondominant groups have continued to add to society through resistance and liberation. Students will analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of a text. Prominent resistance groups and events such as the Third World Liberation Front, Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), East Los Angeles school walkouts, Black Lives Movement, etc. will be analyzed.
<b>Essential Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What tools have ethnic groups used to liberate themselves?</li> <li>● In what ways have ethnic groups resisted and overcome oppression?</li> <li>● What types of cultural capital have ethnic groups contributed to society?</li> </ul>
<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Examining Transformational Resistance academic journal article</a></li> <li>● “The Circuit” by Francisco Jimenez</li> <li>● “Drum Kiss” by Susan Power</li> <li>● “Thank You, M’am” by Langston Hughes</li> <li>● “Korematsu v. United States” Supreme Court</li> <li>● “Coming into Language” by Jimmy Santiago Baca</li> <li>● “The Terror” by Junot Diaz</li> <li>● “Dear John Wayne” by Louise Erdrich</li> <li>● “My Beloved World” by Sonia Sotomayor</li> <li>● “A Breakthrough” by Francisco Jimenez</li> </ul>
<b>Sample Assignment</b>	<p><b>Counterstories</b></p> <p>After learning about tools of resistance and liberation of various groups, students will practice a liberatory tool in the form of a counternarrative project. Students will pick a facet of their identity that may be oppressed by the dominant master narrative and come up with a creative way to demonstrate their own form of resistance. For example, students could perform their own original poetry to highlight the myth of the model minority as a student who only excels at math and science. Students will write a proposal demonstrating understanding of the use of counterstories. Students will use technology to produce,</p>

	publish, and update individual products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
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Unit 6: Agents of Change	
<b>Unit overview</b>	In this unit, students will explore the presence of their power in society to help address discrimination and serve as an ally. Through the look at various current and historical social change movements, students will present findings on an issue within their community to promote equity and justice. Ways in which students will evaluate how to approach the issue include a deeper look at the challenges various ethnic groups face day to day through interviews, excerpts from memoirs, and various talks. This unit will require students to reflectively think about the power and impact that their identity possesses to bring forth a change.
<b>Essential Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How can students be agents of change in their communities?</li> <li>● How do I become an ally using my power?</li> <li>● How does this connect to identity?</li> </ul>
<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">National Museum of African American History</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man</a> YouTube link</li> <li>● <a href="#">A black man undercover in the alt-right (Theo E.J. Wilson)</a></li> <li>● Various excerpts from <i>Uncharted Territory</i></li> </ul>
<b>Sample Assignment</b>	<p>"Campus Campaign"</p> <p>After a full term of reflection, learning, and discovery, students will work in groups to create a week-long campaign for the high school campus that focuses on a specific social issue on campus. The campaign will include student-led activities, marketing (social media content, etc), and resources for teachers. Students will engage in research to build and create the complexity of thought that is required in building a social awareness campaign. This campaign will be pitched to the class/panel as an oral presentation, intended to be considered for adoption by the school administration. This assignment would require students to submit a written research proposal with an annotated bibliography, along with a portfolio of content and resources created. The Campus Campaign is designed for students to reflect on their own high school's campus culture and should fit the needs of the student population.</p>