

## Overview of Humanities Division II

The Sharon Academy  
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The primary focus of Division II humanities is to strengthen student abilities in language arts and social studies skills. This includes emphases on reading, geography, writing, public speaking, group discussion skills, organization, note taking, vocabulary, current events, and an understanding of culture.

Our guiding question, the issue we will be exploring throughout the year, is “What is the connection?” By exploring answers to this question in multiple formats throughout the entire year, we hope to instill an abiding sense of global awareness and our shared destiny as humanity. Our final exam/project will be the capstone of the year’s work, as we together present to the larger community a global fair.

Major countries to be studied as a class under direct teacher instruction will be China, Kenya, and Mexico. There will also be a special unit on the Middle East. that will be teacher-directed. In addition, each student will be given a specific country (non-European), for which they’ll be required to develop genuine expertise in understanding the country’s geography, economy, and most importantly, culture. These individual country pursuits will be shared with the rest of the class at regular intervals throughout the year, again reinforcing the connections concept.

Literature to be studied as a class includes “The Examination”, “Things Fall Apart”, “Other Voices, Other Lands”, and perhaps “Ali and Nino” and a South American novel yet to be named. In addition, all students are required to read literature from assigned geographic regions each quarter independent of daily work.

In a break from recent practice, we are going to try to structure each week in a somewhat predictable pattern, as indicated below:

**Mondays** Separate instruction in social studies and English

**Tuesdays** Same as Mondays

**Wednesdays** Current events in social studies, writing workshop in English

**Thursdays** Connection Discussion Days, joint class

**Fridays** Country presentations, joint class

Many of the skills and attitudes we want to stress are absolutely critical, but very tough to measure and evaluate objectively. Being able to focus on a task at hand, asking questions when confused, using teachers as resources and not just as judges, knowing when to participate and when to listen actively, having the courage to share your own thinking, establishing and following an effective study plan, balancing the demands and requirements of long-term assignments and overnight work as well as a fulfilling and fun personal social schedule, developing an awareness and appreciation of your learning style, coming to class truly prepared for the day with materials needed. . . this is just a partial list of what we plan to address with each of you.

We have a dream that we share as we build this class. That dream is to work in partnership with you to honestly help you become an articulate, knowledgeable and confident member of a global community that will deeply need your insights, your connections, and your energy. The key word is partnership. Use us to help you climb to new heights.