

Post-Colonial Literature, level 4

Year: Senior (12)

Prerequisite: AP Lang or American Studies, level 4

Course Code: W239534

Course Code (Short): PCL4

Post-Colonial Literature is the study of contemporary non-western literature from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Course themes and essential questions explore post-colonial trauma, political instability and the rise of authoritarian governments, suppression and resistance, war and occupation, displacement and migration, and the impacts of industrialism on the land and environment.

The first two, foundational texts below will introduce students to concepts and terminology that establish their understanding of the structure of colonialism and the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Other texts and films will examine how non-western writers contend with the effects of colonialism in their works; how they negotiate between cultural tradition, colonizing forces, and the impact of westernization; and how they create a literary tradition that reclaims their voice and identity.

Core texts: *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (Memmi), *Heart of Darkness* (Conrad), *The Mountains Sing* (Que Mai), *Death and the King's Horseman* (Soyinka), *Annie John* (Kincaid), *The God of Small Things* (Roy), *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress* (Sijie), *Floaters* (Espada), *The Devil's Highway* (Urrea), and *How Beautiful We Were* (Mbue).

Through reading journals, shared inquiry discussions, writing, creative expression, film study, and collaborative projects students will develop their cultural literacy and awareness and reflect on how patterns of colonialism and postcolonialism apply to our positionality as Americans. *Student will be prepared to take the AP English Literature and Composition exam in the spring.*

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Summer Reading: The Mountains Sing, Que Mai

Vietnam

I. First Semester

In the first semester, students write a literary analysis essay on the summer reading, a comparison/contrast essay on *Heart of Darkness* and *African Apocalypse*, a synthesis essay exploring a motif, discussion board entries on their independent reading book, and an opinion-editorial on a global human rights crisis.

A. Empire, Colonialism, and Post-Colonial Trauma

Core Texts:

The Colonizer and the Colonized, Memmi
Heart of Darkness, Conrad

Algerian-French-Jewish
Poland-Britain

Options (select one)

Annie John, Kincaid
Death and the King's Horseman, Soyinka
The God of Small Things, Roy

Jamaica
Nigeria
India

Film Options:

Congo: White King, Red Rubber, Black Death
African Apocalypse
Water

Britain-Niger
India

B. War, Occupation, and Censorship

Core Text:

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress, Sijie

China

Film:

For Sama

Syria

Independent Reading:

Independent Reading Options:

The Sympathizer, Nguyen
Pachinko, Lee
House of Spirits, Allende
One Hundred Years of Solitude, Marquez
House of Spirits, Allende
Black Rain, Ibuse
Human Acts, Kang
The Island, Hislop

Vietnam
Korea
Chile

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II. Second Semester

In the second semester, students keep a reading journal of poetry annotation and analysis and create a visual essay that they adapt into a culminating presentation to the class.

A. Displacement, Migration, and Exile

Core Text:

Floaters, Espada

Puerto Rico

Selected essays from The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives, Nguyen

Selected poetry by Neruda, Lorca, Paz

Options (select one):

The Devil's Highway, Urrea

Mexico

Film Options:

Human Flow

B. The Environment, Industrialism, and the Climate Crisis

Core Text:

How Beautiful We Were, Mbue

Cameroon

Film Options:

Honeyland

Macedonia

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Ancillary Materials:

Title	Author	Source	Genre	Country
"Vietnam Wasn't Just an American War"	Cao	New York Times	Op-Ed	
"When the Camera Was a Weapon of Imperialism"	Cole	New York Times	Article	
"An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness"	Achebe		Essay	Nigerian
"Edward Said's Orientalism: Forty Years Later"			Video	
"Latent and Manifest Orientalism"	Said		Article	Palestine
"The Value of Teaching from a Racist Classic"	Davis		Essay	
"Algeria Unveiled"	Frantz Fanon			Algerian
The Wretched of the Earth	Frantz Fanon			Algerian
Excerpt from School Days	Chamoiseau			Martinique
Colonial Advertisements				
"Colonialism Made the World. Let's Remake It"		New York Times	Article	Ethiopian
"Monsters Inc.: The Taliban as Empire's Bogeymen"		Al Jazeera	Article	
"The Great Divide: The Violent Legacy of the Indian Partition"		New Yorker	Article	India
"Teacher Don't Teach Me Nonsense"	Fela		Song	Nigeria
"Forty Years On: Partition Stories"		BBC Videos	Video Series	

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"My Father, the Englishman, and I"	Farah		Short Story	Somai
"Africa Kills Her Sun"	Saro - Wiwa		Short Story	Nigerian
"How to Write about Africa"	Wainaina		Satire Essay	Kenya
"The Education of a British Protected Child"	Achebe		Memoir	Nigeria
"Black Beauty and Self Love"	Nyongo		Speech	Kenyan - Mexican
"Three Ways to Speak English"	Lyiscott		Ted Talk	
"The Lost Empire"	Walcott		Poem	West Indies
"The Trauma of Colonialism"		New York Times	Op-Ed	
"The Erasure of Islam from the Poetry of Rumi"		New Yorker	Article	
"The Myth of Yama and Yami"			Scripture	Indian - Sanskrit
"In India, Dalits Still Feel Bottom of the Caste Ladder"		NBC News	News	India
"On Delhi's Toxic River, Prayers to Sun Struggling to Shine Through Smog"	Marshal & Kumar	New York Times	Article	India
"We are Witnessing a Crime Against Humanity"	Roy	The Guardian	Op-Ed	
"The Point of the Writer is to Be Unpopular"	Roy	The Guardian	Interview	
"In One Child Nation, Nanfu Wang Confronts China's History, and Her Own," Zhang	Zhang	New Yorker		China

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Title	Author	Source	Genre	Country
"My Young Mind Was Disturbed By a Book. It Changed My Life"	Nguyen	New York Times	Op-Ed	China
"Voices from China's Cultural Revolution"		New York Times		China
NPR Interview with Dai Sijie	Dai Sijie	NPR	Interview	
"The Refugee Crisis Isn't About Refugees. It's About Us"	Wei Wei	The Guardian	Op-Ed	
"Home"	Warsan Shire		Poem	
"Lament for Syria"			Poem	Syria
"A Lesson on Immigration from Pablo Neruda"	Dorfman	New York Times	Op-Ed	Chile
"What We Can Learn From Neruda's Poetry of Resistance"	Eisner	The Paris Review		France
"I am a Rohingya: Poetry from the Camps and Beyond"	Byrne & Doja		Poem	
"DMZ Colony"	Choi		Poem	South Korea
"Afterland"	Vang		Poem	Vietnam