

A.P. African American Studies 2025-2026: Summer Assignment

The Course

The AP African American Studies course is described very well here, so take some time this summer to take a look at the link below:

<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/media/pdf/ap-african-american-studies-course-and-exam-description.pdf>

Course Description

AP African American Studies is an interdisciplinary college-level course that examines the diversity of African American experiences from 3000 BC to the present day. Students will study through multiple disciplines (history, literature, music, visual arts, politics, diaspora studies, philosophy, etc.). everything from early African kingdoms through to today's many Black communities in the United States within the broader context of Africa and the African diaspora.

Goals

- Learn about African American history, culture, and contributions from Africa to today
- Analyze texts, images, music, and video to understand different perspectives.
- Understand how African American Studies became a field and why it matters.
- Write clear, thoughtful arguments using strong evidence.
- **Prepare for and successfully complete the AP Exam offered by the College Board**

Expectations

- APAAS students can expect homework daily and as needed over extended breaks
- You will have at least one project and large assessment every quarter
- You will write essays that include analysis of primary and secondary sources required by College Board for your understanding for the AP Exam
- In January 2026, you will complete the Individual Student Project, which includes research, analysis of multiple sources, and the development and submission of a research project that will culminate in a presentation and oral defense
- All tests and quizzes will be comprehensive (includes all previous material). Students must continually add to their base of knowledge and reinforce prior learning in order to succeed on the College Board Exam. (For example, tests from Unit 4 may require knowledge from Unit 1.)
- The key to success in AP African American Studies combines strong understanding of concepts, events, and sources with the ability to think critically thinking across disciplines and construct well-reasoned historical essays.
- Completion of the Summer Project is mandatory!

Questions or Concerns? E-mail me!

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AP African American Studies Summer Project

1. Identity, Resistance, and Community Portfolio

- Choose 3 works of art, music, poetry, or film by Black creators (any medium) in the 20th and/or 21st century.
 - Examples:
 - Amy Sherald's portrait, *First Lady Michelle Obama* (2018)
 - Historic Portraits and Photos of Harriet Tubman (1868–1908)
 - Billie Holiday's song, *Strange Fruit* (1939)
 - Beyoncé's visual album, *Lemonade* (2016)
 - Spike Lee's film, *Do the Right Thing* (1989)
 - Jordan Peele's film, *Get Out* (2017)
 - For each work, provide:
 - 1st slide = Summary (4-5 sentences). Include a mini-bio of its creator (1-2 sentences)
 - 2nd slide = Analysis of its messages and themes in your opinion (3-4 sentences)
 - Final format: PowerPoint or similar digital presentation of each of the 3 works
 - You will have 6 slides total (2 slides x 3 works)

2. Watch 3 Short Documentaries

- Take notes on these three short documentaries from Unit 1 and 2 of our class
 - First video: *Queen Njinga Mbande* (2 minutes)
 - <https://youtu.be/TPyy9gsu86Y?si=Rr23Cb1foOFDpztJ>
 - Second video: *The Ezana Stone* (1 minute)
 - <https://youtu.be/PXAHX7nQE4Y?si=KzBDfKSo0BUPDuZS>
 - Third video: *The Beginning of Black History* – Juan Garrido (2 minutes)
 - <https://youtu.be/ucW4SP5Bu0k?si=oWnnVneGXYYy9TvV>

3. This is an SAQ (Short-Answer Question), which a part of our AP exam.

Do not use ChatGPT. Your answer is opinion-based from the 3 short videos above.

Using the (3) videos, write about this topic: Traditional historical narratives often overlook the complexity and agency of early African and African-descended individuals and societies.

Identify = 1 sentence

Describe = 2-3 sentences

Explain = 3-4 sentences

- a. Identify one African leader or artifact from the pre-1700 period that demonstrates African resistance, power, or cultural sophistication.
- b. Describe how this example challenges common Eurocentric assumptions about African societies.
- c. Explain how the story of Juan Garrido contributes to a broader understanding of African presence in early American history.