

**Conceptual Framework Questions:**

1. How has the quest for The American Dream contributed to the definition of being American?
2. How have the values and principles embodied in the Constitution shaped the American voice?
3. What role does the American voice play in furthering the ideals contained in the Declaration of Independence?
4. How do American authors contribute to the historical dialogue that engages the American voice?

**Unit Connection Questions:**

1. What does it mean to be American? What qualities make an individual an American?
2. What does it mean to be a member of a nation, specifically the nation known as America? By fulfilling the definition of “being American,” does that automatically make an individual “an American”?
3. What is “The American Dream” and how does it coincide with “being American”?
4. How does individual perspective change the language of the American voice?

**Unit Scope and Sequence:**

- This unit will serve to introduce students to the literary periods of American Literature as well as introduce students to the idea of the evolution of the American identity.
- This unit will serve to introduce students to the goals and objectives of the AP Language & Composition course.
- Students will read, analyze, and discuss mentor texts representing various American authors & time periods.
- Students will begin developing a conceptual framework for how to best define “being American” and having an “American” voice.

**Learning Outcomes**

Students will:

- ❑ understand the qualities associated with American literary genres
- ❑ become familiar with common tropes and themes used in these genres
- ❑ be able to identify genres and time periods of works
- ❑ be able to respond to prompts based off the texts
- ❑ be able to identify and discuss authorial role in crafting texts
- ❑ be able to defend their opinions by incorporating evidence into their writing

**Mentor Texts** (possible selections):

- ❑ Colonial & Revolutionary
  - ❑ Bradstreet poetry
  - ❑ John Adams & Hewes
- ❑ Civil War
  - ❑ “Emancipation Proclamation” – Abraham Lincoln
- ❑ Romantic (including Gothic and Transcendentalism)
  - ❑ “The Devil and Tom Walker” –Washington Irving
  - ❑ “A Dream within a Dream” – Edgar Allan Poe
- ❑ Realism (including Regionalism and Naturalism)
  - ❑ “I Hear America Singing” - Walt Whitman
- ❑ Harlem Renaissance
  - ❑ *Their Eyes Are Watching God* (summer reading)
  - ❑ “A Dream Deferred”; “Dream Variations” – Langston Hughes
- ❑ Modernism
  - ❑ *Catcher in the Rye* (summer reading)
  - ❑ “Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” – T.S. Eliot
  - ❑ “anyone lived in a pretty how town” – E.E. Cummings
  - ❑ “What is an American” – Harold Ickes
- ❑ Post-Modernism/Contemporary
  - ❑ *As I Lay Dying* – William Faulkner
  - ❑ “The American Dream” – anonymous
  - ❑ “I Have a Dream” - MLK
  - ❑ “The Myth of the Latin Woman” – Judith Ortiz Cofer
  - ❑ “Notes of a Native Speaker” – Eric Liu
  - ❑ “On Being a Cripple” – Nancy Mairs
  - ❑ “Shame” – Dick Gregory
- ❑ Visual Texts
  - ❑ Video Clip – “Defining the American Dream” – nytimes.com
  - ❑ Video Clip – “Consumerism: The Musical”
  - ❑ Video Clip – “A Dream Deferred” – Nike Ad
  - ❑ Video Clip – “Deepening the American Dream” - PBS
  - ❑ Video Clip – “Pink Houses” – John Cougar Mellancamp
  - ❑ Video Clip – Interview with Will Smith on *Pursuit of Happyness*
  - ❑ Video Clip – “What Happened to the American Dream” – ABC News