

# Studying humanities

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It is very difficult to imagine students not being educated about humanities while in school. Currently, it is accustomed in this nation that humanities are taught throughout all generations of students. These generations include the basic elementary school, middle/high school, and college. For example, in elementary school, children create art and briefly learn about language and the history of the United States.

However, in middle and high school, the instructors expand into more details about these subjects with the students.

More specifically, high school students learn about famous, classic literature in the past and also learn about world history. While in college, a student may have to take a required humanities course, most likely a social science such as philosophy or sociology. So, why is there so much focus of learning and studying humanities within education? Because, whether people realize it or not, humanities affect everyone in their daily lives. The study of humanities is essential nowadays in order to both survive and succeed in today's society.

Especially with this nation's current economic situation. For people that are dealing with poverty now, it is urgent for them to gain knowledge of these resources. In Earl Shorris' essay, he speaks to a female prisoner named Viniece Walker about the necessity of learning humanities. Walker says that children should learn about "...the moral life of downtown..." and be taken "...to plays, museums, concerts, [and] lectures...". Still, Shorris asks an important question, which is "how could a museum push poverty away. Studying humanities may help make a person rich, but "...in terms of life" (Shorris 232 & 235).

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Some of the greatest benefits that come from studying humanities are that people learn how to become more marketable and cross-cultural. In order to become a part of a certain world or culture, it is necessary to reflect on the background of that life. A person has to “ walk a mile in someone else’s shoes” to fully understand that person. The same notion applies to learning about different countries, political parties, or religions.

This is where humanities especially come in handy. If a person of poverty wants “...real power... [He or she] must understand politics” (Shorris 235).

Still, daily concerns and struggles, such as paying bills, overpower concerns about world events and issues. Because of today’s society, due to the popularity of information technology, it is the American citizen’s responsibility to have the ability to tell the difference between the meaningless and meaningful in the media press. How do citizens determine what to believe in the media?

Humanities help people to develop a global perspective and deepen their understanding of their surroundings. Humanities also help society see how far they have come and what steps to take to create a better future. In college, it is up to the students to mature and to decide whether or not to continue take information at face value like in high/middle and elementary school. Like it was said in Plato’s “ The Allegory in the Cave”, it is more important “...to be able to see the sun...” than the shadows (201).

Currently, American citizens are being treated like “...prisoners...” and it is the media and government that have all the control now (Plato 201). It is up to the citizens to learn about the impact of today’s world. It is also their

responsibility to learn about differing interpretations of life and history. A person should also study humanities because it gives that person a keener sense of self and a clarification of their values. Overall, Humanities create diversification, discovery of interests, and development of thought.

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