



MSA Mentorship

"Academics & AP's"





Education Poll

Raise your hand if you go to...

Public High School

Islamic School

Private School

Home Schooled





Sources

BOOKS

Guidance Counselor

Mentors

Tutoring

After-school Programs





American Public Schools

The Challenges:



Overpopulated

Standardized

Lesser
Responsibility

Removed Push





Islamic Schools, Home-Schooling, & Private School

Resources

Expertise in the system of this country

Financing the education





Courseload & Honors

What exactly is the “rigorous” courseload?

Where did the concept of “Honors” classes come from?

When so many students are taking these kinds of classes, does that make the ones that don't feel inferior?





Advanced Placement Classes (AP's)

What are they?

“College-style” classes designed to prepare students for a College Board AP exam in one of 31 subjects. Initially designed to be an accelerated program for more capable students.

So what happened? Why are they all over the place now?

College Board figured out they could make a TON of money off of student's and parent's unquenchable thirst to “win” the academic game and prove they were a “gifted and talented” student. College Board sold **over 2 MILLION** of those SAT study guides you have, **thousands** of review books for AP's, and make **millions every year** on exam payments... Why? Because they can print some tests and stay organized.

College Board is a BUSINESS.

So they saturated the system, thrusting students into AP's under the premise they were “promoting a challenging learning environments”.





The College Board Monopoly

Standardized! But...

We can (and have to) use that to our advantage!

In reality, College Board is the ONLY truly credible and consistent source for academic material. If I am a college towering over the thousands of high schools across the US and abroad, how do I know YOUR AP class was actually “college-level” or that Honors class you took was on par with others?

I don't and I can't.

In effect, College Board owns all credible academic promise. It is only with **THEIR stamp of approval (AP and SAT scores)** that you can actually show your know your stuff.





The College Board Monopoly

Where does that leave me? Boycott!?

NO. The real question is, how do you deal with a broken system you have no control over?

You beat them at their own game. You don't settle for the standard. You seek out the truly amazing teachers to learn from. You learn to study for the exams at your own pace. You throw out this mentality that class and homework is your only study source.

It was only after stepping out of the exam room after a year of class preparation that I realized how ill-prepared I was. To see how my classmates, and tons of talented kids in future years who were taught to just follow the system blindly, would be just as unprepared for the exam.





AP ~~Courses~~ Exams

- Art History
- Biology
- Calculus AB
- Calculus BC
- Chemistry
- Chinese Language and Culture
- Computer Science A
- Macroeconomics
- Microeconomics
- English Language
- English Literature
- Environmental Science
- European History
- French Language and Culture
- German Language and Culture
- Comp Government & Politics
- U.S. Government & Politics
- Human Geography
- Italian Language and Culture
- Japanese Language and Culture
- Latin
- Music Theory
- Physics B
- Physics C
- Psychology
- Spanish Language
- Spanish Literature and Culture
- Statistics
- Studio Art
- U.S. History
- World History





AP Class vs. Exam

Start first by aiming to learn for the exam

This is the core content and the stuff that will truly matter later on and you NEED to know. Don't misunderstand me, you must maintain a healthy respect and desire to broaden your horizons with the subject matter, but it is extremely difficult to do so without a **firm base in the material first.**

Extracurriculars, internships, research etc.
provide the former

Coursework provide the latter (as well as the last month of school!)





AP Class vs. Exam

Time and time again, well-intentioned teachers aim to “expand student horizons” by broadening the course scope and drawing abstract and complex topics to their teaching. The result:

- 1) the material goes **above student's head** and/or they get bored by the class;
- 2) students become **frustrated** before the exam and even after think “why did I waste all my time learning the wrong stuff!?”
- 3) they **don't know the core material** enough to appreciate “recent advances”, “beautiful proofs”, or “further knowledge” the ambitious teacher wants to teach
- 4) Lower scores and **valuable time gone**





AP Books

Buy at the **BEGINNING of the year** and use as a resource throughout, instead of at the tail end like 95% of students will.

If you're like me and know that you forget easily and need to revise frequently, **quickly skim** through old chapters. Make this a habit and the end of the year will be a thousand times easier.

First aim to get through all the material once, so you **at least SEE everything**, maybe read the whole book quickly with 50% comprehension instead of 100%. Aim for the 100% by the exam date.

Students every year suffer from knowing NOTHING about a topic because they didn't read up on it and use the "my teacher didn't get to it" excuse to justify their low score.



AP Books

Princeton Review – most indicative of exam, succinct material, #1 recommendation

AMSCO – AP US = unarguably best! Must get!

SparkNotes – good || *Kaplan* – slightly added material

Cliffnotes – AP Lit & Lang good || *5 Steps to a 5* – Physics B good, Physics C bad, Lit & Lang good, usually not thorough enough

Barrons – extra hard tests & extra material – last thing to use once you've completed everything else - if you ace several of these tests, you're in good shape

College Confidential – read threads for advice on books for individual subjects (focus on books, don't get caught up reading all the other nonsense people write there):

<http://www.collegeconfidential.com/>

