

Approved for use in

Summary of the Work:

“Marianne Dashwood wears her heart on her sleeve, and when she falls in love with the dashing but unsuitable John Willoughby she ignores her sister Elinor's warning that her impulsive behaviour leaves her open to gossip and innuendo. Meanwhile Elinor, always sensitive to social convention, is struggling to conceal her own romantic disappointment, even from those closest to her. Through their parallel experience of love—and its threatened loss—the sisters learn that sense must mix with sensibility if they are to find personal happiness in a society where status and money govern the rules of love.” - Goodreads

Rationale:

The AP Literature course requires students to be capable readers of 19th century literature. To prepare for the test, students need to read a variety of 19th century literature, written by as diverse a range of authors as possible. *Sense and Sensibility* fits this category, while also being a book that is written by a female author, and most importantly, a satirical comedy. Past students have remarked that all the books in this course are dark and depressing, so the lighter tone and classic comedy structure of this book helps to round out the course offerings. *Sense and Sensibility* is an accessible prompt for discussing gender roles and class division both in society and in the writing/publication world of the early 1800s. It also allows for productive discussion of societal norms, expectations and limitations of today.

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

“Jane Austen’s views of class, and it’s myriad divisions, were both of their time and timeless. ... Despite the passage of centuries, what she admired and applauded is extraordinarily close to what we admire and applaud today.” Trollope, Joanna. "What Jane Austen knew about class: pretension remains the greatest social crime--and authenticity the greatest virtue." *New Statesman*, vol. 142, no. 5182, 1 Nov. 2013, p. 37+. *Gale Literature Resource Center*, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A349905811/LitRC?u=mtlib_2_1037&sid=LitRC&xid=4466376f. Accessed 2 Sept. 2020.

“To read and absorb Austen’s works is to understand virtue and vice, as her characters aide the reader in identifying good and bad habits which either redeem or condemn them.” Payton, Bry. “Why Reading Jane Austen is Essential to Understanding Virtue and Vice” *The Federalist*. 24 August, 2018. <https://thefederalist.com/2018/08/24/why-reading-jane-austen-is-essential-to-understanding-virtue-and-vice/>.

Notes on the Text:

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

Noted Distinction:

- Jane Austen’s 1st novel

Readability

- Lexile Score: 1180 L
- Readability Level:

Learning Resources Guidelines

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: [\(link\)](#)

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption:

Connection to the Curriculum:

Sense and Sensibility lends itself well to application of Literary Theories such as Marxist Criticism and Feminist Criticism, which makes it a great fit for practicing the AP Literary Argument Essay.

Additional Connections:

(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)

There are myriad film adaptations of Sense & Sensibility which could enhance the reading of the book, including the 1995 film with Emma Thompson, directed by Ang Lee and the 2008 BBC series directed by John Alexander. There are also modern adaptations including *From Prada to Nada* and theatrical productions such as Kate Hammil’s Off Broadway hit.