

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT:

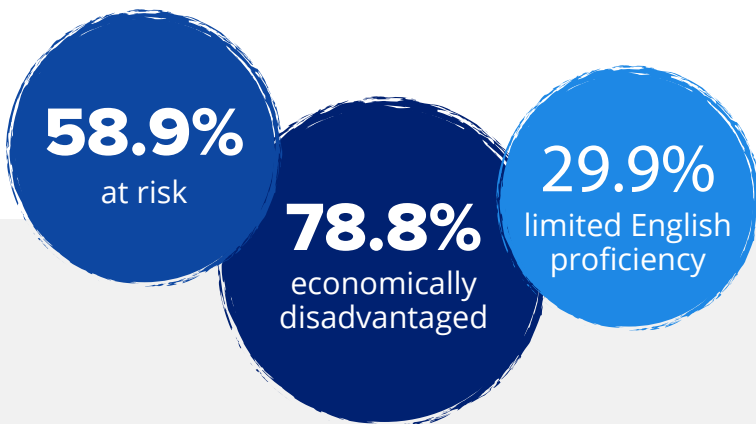
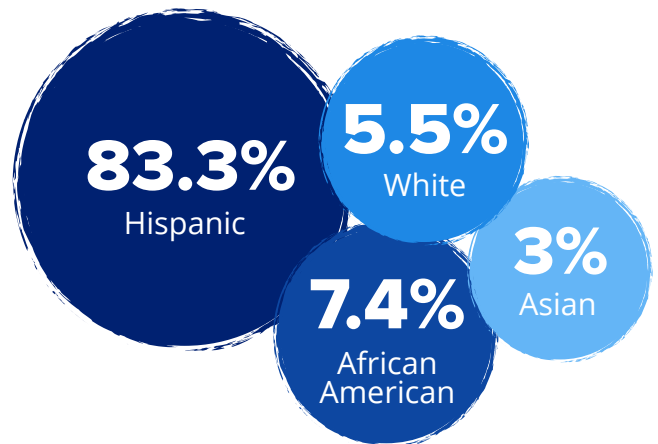
How One AP[®] Teacher Saved Time and Improved Student Performance



THE DISTRICT

Twice in the past 10 years, Pasadena ISD has earned the College Board[®] AP[®] District Honor Roll distinction, which recognizes school districts committed to increasing access to AP for underrepresented students while simultaneously maintaining or increasing the percentage of students earning AP exam scores of 3 or higher.

Pasadena ISD, TX Student Population



THE CHALLENGE

AP exam practice is often not aligned to the test material, and practice resources can be difficult to find.

THE SOLUTION: UWORLD'S LEARNING TOOLS FOR AP® COURSES

“Within the span of less than a year, UWorld has emerged to me as one of the most powerful ways to prepare students for the test,” said James Simmons, an AP World History teacher at Pasadena Independent School District, “because they’re written and styled just like the questions on the exam.”

The explanations students receive when they get an answer wrong also play a large role in his students’ improvement, according to Simmons. **“The detailed explanations that UWorld offers are 10 times better than what’s generally offered,”** he said.

Created to be easy to use and effective, the Learning Tools for AP® Courses use realistic and up-to-date questions modeled after College Board®-level content with answer explanations that are clear, concise, and complete, ensuring students understand why they got an answer wrong, retain the information, and master concepts.

The tight alignment between UWorld’s questions and the AP World History exam makes his job easier and ultimately helps students on the exam, Simmons said.

“Typically, we write our unit exam and then kind of backwards-plan our unit from there,” he explained. “But even doing that, students can sometimes still struggle with stimulus-based questions on the exam because the teacher has to select a stimulus that exactly matches the material they’re covering. UWorld has done that, but they’ve done it in a way without the teacher having to use material from multiple textbooks from different publishers or even from several AP teachers who have posted materials online, because they’re all aligned to the course and exam description.”

Developed using research-based educational strategies that incorporate individualized learning, active recall, test-enhanced learning, and immediate feedback, Learning Tools for AP® Courses feature content that is updated weekly to ensure alignment to current AP courses and exams. With these capabilities, Simmons is able to seamlessly assign content that supports his AP instruction, monitor student progress, and gauge performance to celebrate success and identify gaps.

“UWorld has a lot more **variety and choice in creating assignments and unit exams that put a good teacher in the driver’s seat** as far as being able to craft assessments that are tailored to the instruction that they’re offering,” Simmons said, “which can be a tremendous time-saver in the environment that we’re in.”

THE RESULTS

In the end, Simmons said the real value of UWorld and the Learning Tools for AP Courses isn’t how much time they save him, but how well they empower his students to succeed.

“The difference from last year to this year is about a **40% increase** in how well they’re scoring on the unit exams,” Simmons said, “because they are able to test, learn from their incorrect responses, and retest.”

“Whenever you see a kid get excited because they did well,” Simmons said, “because they got 10 points higher from the last time they took an exam or because they’re used to failing exams over and over again, and they haven’t failed one yet in an AP class this year, you know they feel good about where they’re at with their learning.”