

## Quinton Owens, M.A.E. B.A. English, 2013

*By Madelyn Chambers*

### English Teacher, Apollo High School

*“Use literature as a tool to get to know people that are different from you.”*

Quinton Owens graduated from Western Kentucky University with a bachelor’s degree in English in 2013. He earned his Master’s in Education degree, concentrating in school counseling, from the University of the Cumberland in 2019. Owens is currently an English teacher at Apollo High School, located in Owensboro, Kentucky.



Owens’ life-long passion for literature made English the perfect major for him, and his love of reading, writing, and grammar pointed him to the right career. “I wanted to be a teacher – I always knew that,” said Owens.

Owens values the support and mentorship he received from his English professors at WKU. “[My professors] were there for encouragement and mental support, and [they] simply had so much passion for what they do that it inspired me in numerous ways,” said Owens. He feels that his linguistics courses are particularly helpful in teaching students today. “With our diverse student population in public education in 2019, the ability to be able to understand and break down language is useful for teaching ELL [English Language Learner] students,” said Owens.

While student teaching during his last year at WKU, Owens accepted an offer to teach at Apollo High School, where he has worked since Fall 2013. Owens teaches Freshman English, Sophomore English, African American Literature, and Public Speaking. “I hope to add more diverse literature to the curriculum,” said Owens. “We owe it to our diverse student population.”

Owens also has a passion for school counseling, which inspired him to pursue his Master’s in Education. In the future, Owens hopes to use his degree to become a high school guidance counselor, so he can encourage students to grow and succeed in and outside of the classroom.

When he isn't teaching, Owens enjoys spending time with his niece and nephew, traveling, and watching reality television. He also enjoys reading biographies and watching documentaries that expand his cultural knowledge. "My favorite genre is nonfiction," said Owens. "That passion stems from my love for history." He highly recommends Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*.

Owens encourages WKU students to pursue diverse literature electives and take courses that broaden their view of other cultures. "Current English students should be open and appreciate all types of literature," said Owens. "Use literature as a tool to get to know people that are different from you. Cherish the present and try not to rush time away. You will want it back after it's gone."

