



Read. Write. Repeat.

Literacy Matters!

The DESK (Davis Essential Skills and Knowledge) standards for English Language Arts (<http://www.davis.k12.ut.us/Page/50617>) are more rigorous than the previous state curriculum. Students are expected to understand and analyze more complicated text than in the past. Reading-level expectations are increased. In writing, the elements of argumentation have replaced mere persuasion and narration. This should not pose a problem for Honors English students, who are presumably performing above grade-level, but it does mean that they will be doing a substantial amount of reading *on their own time*. All English classes at Fairfield encourage and require students to read, but for this class, the reading assignments are not only more complex but more specific, and they come with an equally specific reading schedule. Those who ignore the reading will struggle with all other aspects of the class. While they may not always find the readings captivating, students still need to give them their thoughtful attention. Simply put, **parents should see students reading at home on a regular basis**. Also, the DESK standards call for writing of a more sophisticated nature: formal argumentation and analysis based on complex informational texts. Honors classes will therefore require more thoughtful consideration of material, higher quality finished products, and a strong focus on class discussion. It is important that students participate, question, and share ideas both in writing and aloud. Year-end tests (now called SAGE) are no longer just multiple-choice comprehension quizzes, nor are they all administered at the end of the year. Students must write multiple essays on topics from all subject areas, and the writing section will be given in February. **Students in this class will practice writing every day.**

Attendance/Citizenship

Regular attendance is crucial for success in Honors English. Absence from class does not excuse missing assignments or extend deadlines. Be in class every day!

- √ Students must be in their assigned seats at the tardy bell and must remain in class until the final bell.
- √ Excessive absence or tardiness will result in loss of citizenship credit. (See school attendance policy.)
- √ Failure to follow the classroom policy (described below) will also result in loss of citizenship credit.
- √ A student may make up lost citizenship credit *at my discretion* only if the student meets with me *at least one week before the end of the grading period* and completes the make-up requirements.

****Athletes, cheerleaders, and officers should NOT take this class during a period they will miss to attend sporting events and/or extracurricular activities. English is a core requirement for high school credit.***

Class Supplies

These must be brought to class every day!

- ☺ Writing Paper (with lines)
- ☺ Notebook/Folder/Handouts
- ☺ Blue or Black Pen
- ☺ Assigned Reading Book
- ☺ Homework (completed)
- ☺ Flash Drive (USB)
- ☺ Questions to Ask
- ☺ Ideas to Contribute

The Massive Purple Text

When/If textbooks are assigned, they should remain at home. We have a set at school for classroom use.

Classroom Policy: Personal Responsibility

Students are responsible for their own work, their own behavior, and their own interactions with others. This requires three things:

Respect, Cooperation, and Honesty

Students are expected to exhibit these qualities.

Cheating: Any attempt to earn academic credit without engaging in the intended learning process is cheating. Examples include but are not limited to copying another's work, allowing another to copy your work, plagiarism (submitting writing, electronically or printed, that has been copied from any other source), and using book summaries like Cliff's Notes and Shmoop instead of reading the original texts of assigned books. Cheaters will receive a "U" in citizenship for the term and lose all credit for the assignment in question. *Do not cheat!*

Life's Great Equations

Freedom = Responsibility

Choice = Consequence

With Freedom comes Responsibility, and with Choice comes Consequence. Those who accept responsibility for their freedom and accept the consequences of their choices will succeed in this class.

Homework/Reading

Students will sometimes have homework. The amount depends on what we are working on in class, how much the student finishes during class or Intervention time, and whether or not s/he has procrastinated on a long-term task. **Reading, however, is always an assignment!** Even if no homework is due, Honors English students always have a reading assignment to complete on their own time. *Literacy matters!*

Grading

- √ Grades are calculated as a percentage of possible points.
- √ Points are assigned based on evidence of learning, *not* just completion. (quality of writing, participation, and test scores = evidence of learning)
- √ *A student's objective should be LEARNING, not grades – but I am required to assign grades; therefore, I will try to make grades in this class reflect LEARNING. If a student does not turn in assignments, I have no evidence of learning and therefore cannot issue a passing grade.*

Grade Scale

A = 95-100%	C = 74-76%
A- = 91-94%	C- = 70-73%
B+ = 88-90%	D+ = 67-69%
B = 84-87%	D = 64-66%
B- = 80-83%	D- = 60-63%
C+ = 77-79%	F = below 60%

Resources

Book List

Honors classes may study these books:
Treasure Island by Robert L. Stevenson
Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte
A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens
Great Expectations by Charles Dickens
Romeo and Juliet by Shakespeare
Animal Farm by George Orwell
Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
Anthem by Ayn Rand
Profiles in Courage by John F. Kennedy
The Pigman by Paul Zindel
The Yearling by Marjorie Rawlings
To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
Mythology by Edith Hamilton
The Odyssey by Homer
Across Five Aprils by Irene Hunt
Spoon River Anthology by E.L. Masters
Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli
Collections by Ray Bradbury: *Dandelion*
Wine, Martian Chronicles, The
Illustrated Man, Something Wicked This
Way Comes, possibly others
Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech

Online Resources/Lab Fee

Honors English Students will maintain an online account on **StudySync**, for which there is a \$10 lab fee. Many parents paid the fee with registration, but those who did not will need to pay in the office and return the receipt with the signed disclosure form.

Online environments are private and strictly monitored.

Movie List

These movies (or short clips) may be viewed in class:

Meet the Olympians
Hercules
Shakespeare by Miramax
Shakespeare: Biography
To Kill a Mockingbird
Fahrenheit 451
The Odyssey
Romeo and Juliet
Taming of the Shrew
The Cask of Amontillado
Terror of the Soul: Poe Biography
Various short literature-based films
and (G-rated) video clips

Late Work/Extra Credit

Assignments not turned in on the due date are late. Late credit is ½ of the total points for the first week, and it drops after that amount of time, depending on the assignment. If the student was legitimately absent on the due date and the assignment is turned in upon the student's return, the lateness will be excused and full credit given, but *it is the student's responsibility to get and complete assignments missed due to absence*. Extra credit may be offered only to students who have completed all the regular class work. If a student's grade is suffering because s/he failed to turn in assignments, s/he must complete the missing work (for late credit) before requesting extra credit work.

Classroom Website: <http://wolfmanenglishteacher.com>

Assignments, schedules, links, and projects students will complete for this class are available on the class website. Many assignments will be Internet-based and will be submitted electronically.

This resource is the best way for students and parents to keep track of what is happening in class.

E-mail: mrthompson@dsmail.net

Have a great year!

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Honors English Course Description

*Caveat Discipulus**

Students who are not highly self-motivated and persistent should not take 9th Grade Honors English. This course covers more complex material at a much faster pace than a traditional English class. In order to participate in the class discussions, students must complete daily informational and literary reading assignments *on their own time*. There is no way to “make up” these reading assignments. In-class discussions and activities will proceed as scheduled, so students who are not willing or able to complete the assigned reading *on time* will not be successful. *Please consider reading expectations carefully before registering for this course.* Honors English will focus heavily on argumentative writing. Students will complete daily writing assignments in class as well as two formal term papers each quarter. Students will post their writing in a variety of online environments (StudySync, Utah Compose), and peer review will play a significant role in the writing process. Grading is based on total percentage of points earned, but simply completing the assignments does not guarantee a good grade: Thoughtful, complete, on-time, honors-caliber work is required. Students who are more concerned about grades than about challenging themselves should not take this class. Excellent citizenship is expected, as there will be many class discussions that require respectful attention to classmates and teachers. Consistent attendance is a must, as missed class discussions cannot be made up. Besides the abundant above-grade-level reading and writing challenges, students in this course will learn the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage, build vocabulary through systematic word study, and understand the nuances of figurative language via more advanced and faster-paced analysis and synthesis. Greater emphasis will be placed on critical thinking, research as evidence to warrant written claims (argumentation), and synthesis of ideas. In order to increase oral communication skills, students will present work to the class individually and in small groups. Honors English is profoundly challenging even for the brightest students, but those who are academically engaged and willing to participate will find it extremely rewarding.

School Statement Regarding Honors Courses

It is a privilege to be in an honors class. Space is limited, and students are selected based not only on desire but on proven aptitudes and abilities. All the students registered for honors courses are intellectually capable of succeeding in them, but intellectual capability is only part of what makes an *honorable* person. A student must work diligently and take the challenge of an honors class seriously in order to remain in the class. In order to maintain the necessary rigor, minimum academic and behavioral standards are required of all students. Failure to live up to these standards will provide justification to transfer a student into a traditional class. Students removed from the class may still receive an honors designation through the Honors Designation/Intervention Program, and students currently in that program can then be drawn into the Honors class.

Minimum Performance Standards for Honors Classes

- Attendance: **90%** or better (including excused absences)
- Assignment Completion Rate: **90%** or better
- Projects/Major Assignments (e.g., term papers, History Fair, DBQs): **100%**
- Citizenship: Satisfactory (**S**) or better (**G, H**) in the honors class *and* administrative (i.e., no serious behavior issues within the school)
- Attitude: Students must illustrate high interest and a desire to be challenged.
- Academic Grade: **B- or better** in the honors class
- Term/Semester Test Score: **80% or better**

**Let the Student Beware*

District Statement Regarding Honors Readiness

Junior High Honors Courses Indicators for Student Success

Please thoughtfully consider the following criteria as you are making a decision about whether or not junior high honors level courses will provide the most appropriate learning environment. A student should:

1. Typically be performing at **85% or above** on the **Criterion Referenced Test (CRT)** in a specific subject area before considering enrolling in an honors level course in that subject area.
2. Typically be performing in the **80th percentile or above** on the **Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)** in a specific subject area before considering enrolling in an honors level course in that subject area (currently, the ITBS is no longer administered, but past scores can be used as a guide).
3. Consistently earn an **"A" or "B" (or a "3" for 6th graders)** for the subject in which they desire to take an honors course.
4. Have a **high level of interest** and **strong desire to be challenged** in the subject in which they would like to take an honors course.
5. Consistently exhibit most of the following characteristics:

Learning/Intellectual Characteristics:

- Enjoys tasks that are more challenging than average
- Has a ready grasp of underlying principles and can quickly make valid generalization about events, people, and things
- Tries to understand complicated material by separating it into its respective parts; reasons things out
- Analyzes problems and considers alternatives
- Enjoys complex concepts and processes

Motivational/Affective Characteristics:

- Becomes absorbed and truly involved in certain topics or problems
- Needs little external motivation to follow through in work completion
- Often requires little direction from teachers
- Is highly self-motivated and persistent
- Has high expectations of self and others

When deciding whether or not to enroll a student in a particular subject area honors course, please consider the following subject specific characteristics:

Math/Science:

- Is interested in numerical analysis
- Has a good memory for storing main features of problem and solutions
- Reasons effectively and efficiently
- Organizes data and experiments to discover patterns or relationships
- Is flexible in solving problems

Social Studies/Language Arts:

- Has advanced vocabulary for age or grade level
- Reads a great deal; does not avoid difficult material
- Enjoys language/verbal or written communication; has advanced communication skills
- Organizes ideas and sequences in preparation for speaking and writing
- Likes study and research in areas of interest