

STEVENSON

English Placement Requirements Returning Students 2022

All grade 9 students take English 1 at Stevenson, and the majority of students continue with our regular courses, which focus on building students' ability to read and write with care, courage, and creativity. Students who place into honors courses are equipped with comparatively advanced skills in literary analysis and a clear commitment to their English coursework, such that they can manage heftier assignments at a swifter pace. Honors classes aim to assign four hours of work (for the average honors student) per cycle.

As is the case in other departments, students may move between levels in succeeding years. For example, a student who thrives in English 2 might choose to take on the challenge of English 3 Honors in the following year. Similarly, a student who succeeds in English 2 Honors might choose to take English 3 in the following year because another class or co-curricular commitment promises to demand more time and attention. The Stevenson English Department recommends a student for an honors or AP course for the next year only if a student has demonstrated the skills and behavior outlined in the Criteria section below.

Process:

- 1) Grade 9: In March, teachers distribute this handout, and all students are assigned a placement reflection to ascertain whether they hope to be placed in English 2 or English 2 Honors for their sophomore year. Any student who wishes to make a shift from regular to honors must additionally do the following:
 - a) Submit an essay along with their reflection. If the student does not have an essay to submit, they need to sit for a timed writing assignment.
 - b) After the teacher reads the reflection and reviews the essay, the student and teacher discuss placement during a follow-up conversation.
- 2) Grades 10-11: In March, teachers distribute this handout, and all students are assigned a placement reflection. Any student who wishes to make a shift from a regular to an honors/AP class must additionally do the following:
 - a) Initiate a conversation with the current English teacher to discuss placement.
 - b) Schedule a meeting with the current teacher of the honors/AP course in which the student wishes to enroll.
 - c) In advance of the meeting, request that the current English teacher submit a representative essay to the current teacher of the honors/AP course in which the student wishes to enroll.

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- 3) If a current teacher is not yet certain of the correct placement for a student, the teacher may delay approval until the end of the spring semester and outline concrete goals that the student must meet in order to be placed in an honors or AP class. The current teacher may also suggest that the student meet with current teacher of the honors/AP course.

Criteria for honors/AP:

- 1) *Concise, clear, and organized writing in both prepared essays and in-class writing, especially in the analytical mode.* While a student's ability to craft essays will surely improve over the course of their studies, even the rising English 2 Honors student must be able to produce original assertions about the text and support claims with proper quotation integration and analysis of the text.
- 2) *Daily, active and purposeful engagement in class.* This student is eager to engage in class discussion, via dialogue with the student's classmates and teacher, active listening, note-taking, and/or notable participation in online discussion. The student habitually refers to the text for support and mostly avoids tangential remarks.
- 3) *Consistent preparation for class.* This student rarely, if ever, comes to class without having thoroughly completed the writing or reading assignment with annotations, and arrives ready to share her or his thoughts. The student is diligent in discovering what was missed in case of an absence.
- 4) *Comparatively strong reading ability.* This student is able to keep up with consistent and lengthy reading assignments, genially and with strong comprehension.
- 5) *A genuine enthusiasm for language and literature.* This enthusiasm could be expressed by reading during breaks and vacations, demonstrating a commitment to personal writing (through activities such as participation in *Vailima*), or engaging with course texts and topics beyond the assignments. This enthusiasm will also be expressed in class via steady interest in classroom texts.
- 6) *Consistently high grades in English, notably on original drafts of analytical assignments (i.e., not rewrites) and in-class essays.* These essay marks generally fall in the B+/A-/A range for non-honors classes and B and above in honors classes.

The decision to recommend a student to the honors or AP English program is based upon the evaluation of a student in accordance with these criteria, and not based solely upon grades.