

STEVENSON

English Course Eligibility Criteria New Students 2024

Eligibility for an Honors (grades 10 or 11) or AP English (grade 12) course for a student new to the Pebble Beach Campus is based on a review of

- his or her transcript
- SSAT, PSAT, and/or SAT scores, when available
- the writing sample found in the student's admission file
- an additional writing sample: an analytical paper written for an English course that has been turned into a teacher and that ideally includes the teacher's comments and corrections. This allows the department head to ascertain not only the quality of the student's writing but also the rigor of his or her current curriculum. The paper should be accompanied by a brief description of the assignment for which the paper was written, and notes about whether the paper is a rough or final draft.
- a note from the student to the department head indicating why he or she believes an honors English course would be a good choice for him or her

There is no Honors English option for grade 9 students, and in subsequent years the majority of students enroll in 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 returning student for an honors or AP course only if he or she demonstrates the qualifications in the list below. It is difficult to evaluate these criteria in a student who is new to the Pebble Beach campus, but the department head, in consultation with the teacher of the relevant honors/AP course, will make an effort to do so by means of communicating with the student, reviewing the writing samples and transcripts, and looking at standardized test scores.

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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 his or her 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 A-/A range for both non-honors and 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, weighing more heavily their writing skills and interest in engaging with their peers and teacher in small and full-class discussions.