

ACADEMIC POLICIES OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Grades will be based on the student's performance in the following areas: daily quizzes, homework, objective tests (e.g., literary terms, grammar), and essays written in and out of class. In addition, class participation and/or an upward trend may be used as positive elements in the student's average. The teacher will define for the class weighting of these factors as well as the various levels of achievement on particular objective tests. For essays, the following descriptions will apply, assuming consideration of the nature of the assignment and the grade level of the student:

Honors/Very Good

- a) Content: The essay contains a significant thesis, clearly defined, and supported with concrete, substantial, consistently relevant detail.
- b) Organization: The essay is planned so that it progresses by clearly ordered and necessary stages, and is developed with originality and consistent attention to proportion and emphasis; paragraphs are coherent, unified, and effectively developed; transitions between paragraphs are explicit and effective.
- c) Sentence structure: Sentences are skillfully constructed (unified, coherent, forceful, varied).
- d) Diction: The diction is distinctive: fresh, precise, economical, and idiomatic.
- e) Grammar and mechanics: Clarity and effectiveness of expression are promoted by consistent use of standard grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Good/Pass

- a) The thesis is apparent but too general, trivial, or trite; it is supported with concrete detail, but detail that is occasionally repetitious, irrelevant, or sketchy.
- b) The plan and method of the essay are apparent but not consistently fulfilled; the essay is developed with only occasional disproportion or inappropriate emphasis; the paragraphs are unified, coherent, and usually effective in their development; the transitions between paragraphs are clear but abrupt, mechanical or monotonous.
- c) The sentences are correctly constructed but lack distinction.
- d) The diction is appropriate: clear and idiomatic.
- e) Clarity and effectiveness are weakened by occasional deviations from standard grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Unsatisfactory/Serious Failure

- a) The thesis is lacking or confused, or unsupported with concrete and relevant detail.
- b) The plan and purpose of the essay are not apparent; the essay is undeveloped or developed with irrelevance, redundancy, or inconsistency; the paragraphs are incoherent, not unified, or undeveloped; the transitions between paragraphs are unclear, ineffective, or non-existent.
- c) The sentences are not unified, are incoherent, confused, incomplete, monotonous, or childish.
- d) The diction is inappropriate: it is vague, unidiomatic, or substandard.
- e) Communication is impaired by frequent deviations from standard grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

(The preceding descriptions are essentially those formulated in the “Joint Statement on Freshman English in College and High School Preparation,” prepared by the Department of English at Ball State University, Indiana State College, Indiana University, and Purdue University, and published by the National Council of Teachers of English in *A Guide for Evaluating Student Composition*.)

WEIGHTING OF TERM EXAMINATIONS

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>
6	no exam	20%
7-9	20%	25%
10	20%	33 1/3 %
11	33 1/3 %	33 1/3 %
12	30%	33 1/3 %

The spring term will be weighted and the term and year grades will be averaged in accordance with the published St. Stephen’s grading policy.

LATE PAPERS

Late papers will be penalized one grade level per day; the twenty-four hour period will begin at the time the paper is due. Weekend days will be counted the same as any normal school day whether the student involved is a day student or not.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

We assume that any work handed in by a student is solely the work of that student unless specific alternative arrangements have been made with the teacher. Such exceptions might include a group project or an essay making proper use of secondary sources (see the following description of plagiarism). We strongly discourage the use of summaries (such as SparkNotes or CliffsNotes) since we want students to arrive at their own points of view through active engagement with the literary texts themselves. In addition, we worry that use of such aids might lead to unintentional plagiarism.

A student will receive an “X” on any piece of work which violates the principle of academic honesty. He or she will be required to redo the assignment. In the Upper School, the resubmitted effort will receive a grade to be determined by the teacher and department chair in conjunction with the Academic Dean; in the Middle School, resolution of the case will be determined by the teacher and the Head of Middle School.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the appropriation of another’s words or ideas and the use of them as one’s own. For a full discussion of plagiarism, see Hacker’s A Writer’s Reference, pages 331-334. A few simple guidelines follow:

- 1) Direct quotation -- if the words of a source are used, those words must be in quotation marks and the source cited;
- 2) Paraphrase -- if the ideas of a source are summarized or paraphrased, no quotation marks are required, but a citation is needed to establish the identity of the source.

A Writer's Reference presents full details of the proper forms for citation and bibliography on pages 327-378. It is important to note that, although plagiarism may occur unintentionally, perhaps through ignorance or carelessness, the writer's intent is not the issue. The test for plagiarism is simply whether or not the words and/or ideas are the writer's own or another's. If further guidance is needed, please see your teacher.

For the department,
Alan Fenton

Additional Expectations for Dr. Huth's Classes

- You must bring a pen or pencil, paper, and the relevant text(s) to each class. If you come to class without the text, you will be sent back to your locker to retrieve it and be penalized with a tardy.
- Except under special circumstances, homework assignments will not be accepted after the class for which they are due.
- No extensions will be granted the day before the due date of a major assignment or the day it is due. Please plan ahead and request any necessary extension well before the due date.