

9th Grade English Honors Program

English classes at ARHS are heterogeneous; students of all abilities learn together. However, students can choose to earn Honors credit by completing outside projects. They will have this option in every English class they take in our department, through their senior year. In 9th and 10th grade, these projects are called Honors projects. In the 11/12 elective English classes, the literature classes are designated AP, while the writing and oral communication classes are designated Honors. All involve outside reading and writing, but the AP designation follows the College Board guidelines for AP work (thus, the different name).

The Honors projects in Writing and Literature A & B (9th grade English), as in all of our English classes, are completed independently, with the support of the teacher. In order to receive Honors credit, students will need to:

- Maintain a B- average.
- Meet all deadlines for regular and Honors coursework.
- Be prepared to read outside texts and to write additional assignments.

Writing and Literature B Project

Imaginative Writing. This project will require students to:

1. Read and annotate independently a text from a list provided by the teacher.
2. Write journal entries on the writing style.
3. Write a 4-6 page short story.
4. Write an essay analyzing the writing style of both the independent text and of one's own story.
5. Revise story and essay for course portfolio.

Writing and Literature A Project

Literary Analytical Essay. This project will require students to:

1. Read and annotate independently a text from a list provided by the teacher.
2. Write journal entries focused on characterization or theme.
3. Write a 4-5 page analytical essay that argues an assertion using supporting evidence.
4. Revise essay for course portfolio.

Which students should take Honors English in 9th grade?

Our College Prep English curriculum challenges all students to become stronger readers, writers, and thinkers. However, for students who like to read and write, who manage their time well, and who desire deeper engagement with texts and with writing, the Honors option provides the opportunity for further challenge. If the above projects sound

intriguing, then students should definitely do the Honors projects and plan the rest of their courses accordingly.

Do students need to register for Honors English?

In 9th grade, students simply register for Writing and Literature A & B. Once students begin their English class, the teacher will discuss the Honors program, explaining it in detail. The students will then decide if they want the added challenge of Honors work. Partway through each trimester, close to midterm, the students will make a final decision, to which they are then bound for the trimester. The teacher rosters are changed accordingly at that point, so that Honors students and CP students, while in the same class, are listed separately. The transcripts will reflect their Honors level English work. If they do not complete the project, their grades will be reduced significantly.

How do students handle the workload?

We designed the Honors program to ensure that students are challenged without being overwhelmed. We space the deadlines so that students are working steadily throughout the trimester. Of course, certain times will demand more time and effort, such as when they are approaching deadlines.

In our experience, the most common reason students choose *not* to do the Honors projects in English is that they have overloaded themselves by taking Honors classes in all *other* departments. If students are considering Honors English, they should plan their other course selections accordingly so that they can pursue deeper study of reading and writing.

Can students take Honors English in future years if they opt in 9th grade?

Absolutely. Students are never trapped into one track in the English department. Many students take Honors one year and not the next, or vice versa. We have had students in their senior year decide to take English classes for Honors / AP credit for the first time.