

English Grades 10-12

My Grading Philosophy

In this English Language Arts class, we will be studying various topics surrounding reading, writing, speaking, listening, and the visual arts which are important in *any* context outside of the classroom. In order to be able to read, write, speak, and listen effectively, the grades and activities in this course will be based on how well you demonstrate these abilities and participate in class. To meet these learning objectives, it is vital that you come to class, put forth effort in each activity, and reflect on your progress throughout the year. I am here to help you become more confident in different aspects of English, but I need your cooperation for us to make the most of our time together. To help you be successful in my English class, I will provide *all* assignment guidelines, expectations, examples, and grading information to you ahead of time before asking you to work independently on an assignment. If you have questions or concerns about any grading criteria, assignments, or expectations, do not hesitate to ask!

Grading Scale & Percentage Breakdown

The grading scale used in my class is a relatively traditional scale used school and district wide to determine the letter grade for a particular assignment or average.

The grades in my class will be broken down based on the types of work I assign; therefore, some assignments will contribute to your overall average more so than others. Although some types of work are weighed more heavily, you are still required to complete all assignments as asked and take responsibility for your grade as if it were a job for an employer.

Grading Scale:
A = 100 – 90
B = 89 – 80
C = 79 – 70
D = 69 – 60
F = 59 – 0

Grade Categories & Percentage Breakdown:

Research Papers, Projects, & Presentations	40%
Tests & Essays	30%
Journals & Daily Grammar Practice	15%
Homework & Classwork	10%
Participation & Discussion	5%
Total:	100%

Grading Category Requirements:**Research Papers/Projects/Presentations (40%)**

To be able to engage with different types of literature, analyze ideas through writing, develop healthy research habits, collaborate, and practice public speaking skills, you will complete a research paper, multiple projects (independent and collaborative), and presentations on your findings for these papers or projects. While this category contributes the most to your grade, smaller assignments will be embedded in each process and graded in other categories as well. As each assignment will differ based on the research/project/presentation topic for each unit, rubrics, assignment directions, and guidelines will be provided in paper and electronic versions at the beginning of the process. A few critical skills that are addressed and assessed within these assignments include:

- Writing critical responses to literature and supporting ideas with research
- Working alone and with others to produce creative projects on a variety of topics
- Researching and evaluating academic resources
- Adapting written information into oral presentations
- Speaking clearly and effectively
- Using correct spelling, grammar, and mechanics in each

Tests/Essays (30%)

In order to gauge reading comprehension, vocabulary knowledge, information recall, and expression of understanding, tests and essays will be used at the conclusion of specific units of study. My tests will include: Multiple choice, matching, true-false, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and essay questions. Before *every* test I will review information, hold Q&A sessions, and offer study sessions based on student demand before and after school to help you succeed. I will NEVER give a test on a Monday morning without allowing for adequate study time and explanation. Depending on the essential questions from the unit, some tests will be given in complete essay format in which you will respond to a provided prompt; any tests that will require extended writing will be reviewed and discussed in detail ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Throughout the school year, you will write a total of eight essays divided up across the grading periods. Each essay will be graded differently depending on the topic or unit, but all essay grades will focus on organization, clarity, grammar, and punctuation. The different essay styles we will study before writing include:

- Descriptive
- Narrative
- Argumentative
- Explanatory/Informative
- Persuasive
- Reflective

Journals/Daily Grammar Practice (15%)

To become a good writer, one must practice and write often; therefore, in this class, we will practice different grammar skills daily through Daily Grammar Practice sheets (DGPs) and respond to a variety of informal writing exercises through journaling. DGPs and Journal entries will be collected at different times throughout the semester/grading period, but I will post reminders ahead of time to allow for peer checks. Although all work in this class should be dated, **dates must be included on journal entries and DGPs** to earn full credit! Journals will be graded on a designated number of entries, effort, and legibility. DGPs will be graded on effort, completion, and correctness. In addition to the writing prompts I will provide for journals, other ideas for journal entries could include:

- Creative writing – short stories, poetry, comic strips, illustrations, etc.
- Assignment progress updates/learning reflections
- Song lyrics & quotes that inspire you
- Your “Bucket List” & explanation of these items

Homework/Classwork (10%)

In order to practice new skills learned in this English class, classwork and homework will be given on a regular basis. Classwork will include, but is not limited to: brief group activities, short responses, practice quizzes, and peer reviews to help prepare for tests, projects, or presentations. Homework may consist of vocabulary practice, components of a research paper/project, or readings that need to be completed independently. Anytime I assign homework, I will review it in class and send reminders through our class website, learning management system, and school email.

Participation/Discussion (5%)

Since two of the major elements of English Language Arts are speaking and listening, we will focus on improving these skills through class discussion, participation, and group activities. Class participation includes: attendance, bringing your textbook/novel, notebook, and pen/pencil every day, asking/answering questions when applicable, and completing activities as assigned. Class discussion includes contributing your thoughts to a discussion, actively discussing and responding to group members during group work, and discussing progress with me during student-teacher conferences for different assignments. I will use a standard checklist when grading for participation and discussion throughout the year. If there are any issues that prevent students from participating or discussing, alternative assignments will be determined on a case-by-case basis at my discretion.

Absences & Extended Illness – Make-up Work

If you must miss school or class for any reason, such as family obligations, court, sickness, etc., you will be allowed to make up any missed work as long as the absence(s) is excused. Once you have returned to school and received an excused

absence slip from the main office, please bring it to me for my signature, and I will give you any make up work you need to complete. The timeframe you have to make up any missed work due to absences follows the district's policy, which is **five days** from the date of return. If I am not here when you return, a list of assignments from the previous day(s) can be found in the "Makeup Work" bin along with copies of any handouts. For all participation/discussion/classwork activities that are to be made up, I will provide students with an alternative assignment to complete on the same material for the same amount of credit.

For extended illness or extended absences, parents/guardians will be contacted and a plan of action will be determined based on the circumstances. If a student is 18 years of age, the student and teacher will work together to develop a plan based on the amount of work and the situation. If absences are unexcused, I cannot enter any grades until this matter is resolved. For more information on excused/unexcused absences, please see the district attendance policy in the school handbook.

Late & Missing Work

Any work that is not turned in at the **beginning** of a class period (unless otherwise stated by me) will be considered late. If you are going to be late from another class because you are helping a teacher, please ask that person to call or instant message me, or provide you with a tardy note, and I will allow you to turn in your work without penalty. If you are making up work due to absence/extended illness, the late penalty will not count towards your grade as long as it is made up in the five day time period.

If you do not miss class, but turn in any assignment late, a 10% reduction will be applied for each day it is late. In the event that your work or an assignment goes "missing" or I find one without a name, students will have the option to redo an assignment for partial credit or claim their paper from the "no name" folder for partial credit after the due date. The only assignments I will **not** allow to be turned in late for partial credit when a student was present during the activity include class and group discussions. In order to practice listening and speaking skills and engage responsibly, you must put forth the same amount of effort in discussions as in other assignments in this class.

Grade Calculation Guide:

To help you calculate grades in this class, I have provided an example list of assignments and the formula to calculate each category percentage. The total scores reflect the average score from all items in the category; for example, the summary score for the research paper, one project, and two presentations could be 0.87. The total scores for each category will be different per grading period depending on the units, but all categories will be represented each period. The total scores will be multiplied by their corresponding weights, and then multiplied by 100 to get a percentage. The percentage totals after calculations will be added up to reach the current overall average in the

class. After calculations, you can find your letter grade equivalent by referring to the grading scale chart above.

Grade Summary Calculation Example:

Assignment Categories:	Total Scores:	Weight Percent:	Weighted Score: (Total score x weight % x 100)
Tests & Essays	.93	30%	$(.93 \times 30\% \times 100) = 27.9$
Research Paper, Projects, & Presentations	.87	40%	$(.87 \times 40\% \times 100) = 34.8$
Journals & DGPs	1.00	15%	$(1.00 \times 15\% \times 100) = 15.0$
Homework & Classwork	.89	10%	$(.89 \times 10\% \times 100) = 8.9$
Discussion & Participation	.95	5%	$(.95 \times 5\% \times 100) = 4.75$
		Grade Total: (Weighted scores from each category added)	$(27.9 + 34.8 + 15.0 + 8.9 + 4.75) =$ $91.35 = A$