

## English Department Grading Policy Thomas Wootton High School

Recognizing the varying needs and abilities of students at different proficiency levels, the English Department has three grading scales. As students acquire greater writing proficiency, the weight given composition increases.

Category	On-level	Honors	AP English
Homework/Classwork/Quizzes	30%	20%	10%
Oral Reports, Projects, Tests	30%	30%	
Composition	40%	50%	90% (60% out-of-class; 30% in-class)

What you see is that at each proficiency level, composition is emphasized. It counts for 40% of the grade in on-level classes, 50% in honors classes, and 90% in our Advanced Placement Language and Literature classes.

Composition is the key way we ensure that students are able to read and get at the meaning of the various texts that we have them examine. We practice and practice and practice these composition skills with our students because we want all students to be able to read critically, to think deeply about what they've read, and to write analytically. It is this ability to write analytically – to formulate a central idea and to document it with logical supports logically presented -- that is the key to writing the kind of academic arguments students will be asked to compose in college.

We think that all students should be able to construct a logical argument before they leave us. For us, it is a graduation skill and a life skill. By having your children structure writing assignments from the literature that we read, we develop and refine their reading, writing, and thinking skills, and we prepare them for the kind of writing they will encounter in college.

What we ask students to do is to sign up for the most demanding English course of which they are capable. **9th and 10th grade English courses are offered at the on-level and honors level.** 11th grade English offers on-level and honors level as well as AP Language. 12th grade English offers on-level and honors as well as an AP Language 12 course and AP Literature.

And while we're on the subject of writing, this summer we will offer a week-long course – Writing the High School Essay – for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders. Please look for this course and the dates on the Wootton web-site.