

Oak Crest Middle School
Honors English Program: A Guide for Parents and Students
8th Grade

At Oak Crest, each teacher wants every child to achieve his or her personal best, and this is more likely to happen if the child is placed into classes appropriate to the child's needs, abilities, and interests.

We offer two levels of English classes at both the seventh and eighth grade.

- 1). **College prep** classes provide a **rigorous** curriculum that meets the needs of the majority of students.
- 2). **Honors classes** are designed for students who *excel* in English language arts and *require a faster-paced, more in-depth, and challenging* course of study.

Both college prep and honors classes have the following attributes:

- Follow a rigorous curriculum.
- Require students to work toward mastery of the California Common Core State Standards.
- Prepare students for high school English.
- Develop critical thinking skills.
- Require students to write argumentative essays, narratives, responses to literature, and summaries.
- Provide opportunities for students to improve listening and speaking skills through Socratic Seminar and speech delivery.
- Select novels from the same board-approved list of titles.
- Use the same textbook.
- Utilize technology to help improve reading and writing skills.

Honors classes differ from CP in the following ways:

- Greater depth and complexity of study.
- Advance beyond current grade level standards and work on skills in the next grade level standards.
- Students work independent of teacher assistance more often.
- Pacing is quicker.
- Required course reading is more often done as homework outside of class rather than during class.
- Writing is more sophisticated (stronger vocabulary, more complex and varied sentence structure, greater depth of thought and analysis) and more extensively researched.
- Assigned readings may be at a higher level of difficulty.
- Homework typically requires students to think critically and **synthesize** the material that they learned in class that day. As a result, homework generally takes longer.
- Grammar techniques are more sophisticated and complex.

When making your choice, please consider:

- Students can move from Honors to College Prep or College Prep to Honors **within the first 4 weeks** of the school year.
- **After the 4 week deadline**, students must remain in their course of choice until the semester ends in January.
- **At the semester**, an Honors student may move to a College Prep course; however, we **do not** move from College Prep to Honors mid-year. In order to complete the expectations of second semester in an Honors course, students need the foundational knowledge and skills presented in the first semester. Students will need to wait until the following year to take Honors.
- We have open access. Students **may** take College Prep English in 7th grade and move to Honors in 8th grade, and it's not uncommon for students to take College Prep courses throughout middle school and move to Honors in high school.
- The ultimate goal is for your child to be happy, healthy, and **appropriately** challenged.

Checklist of General Expectations for Students ENTERING 8th Grade Honors Classes

Please use the following charts to determine which level of English is most suitable for your child.

Skills and Knowledge: When students **enter** a 8th grade Honors class, they are expected to be able to demonstrate **3 or more** of the following skills. **Please note:** This is where students currently are, **not** where they hope to be.

- How to synthesize multiple texts in a multi-paragraph, thesis-based essay.
- How to identify and state the function of the 8 parts of speech in sentences.
- How to identify and state the function of a subject and a predicate in a sentence.
- Describe the impact literary devices have in a work of literature.
- Advance beyond summary and analyze the deeper meaning of a passage by making connections between a passage and historical events, current events, and personal experiences.
- Discover common and recurring themes across texts.
- Recognize the elements that contribute to an author’s style

Academic Qualities: In addition to demonstrating many of the skills listed in the category above, an Honors English student will be most successful if s/he also demonstrates **at least 5** or more of the “Honors English Student” qualities below.

College Prep English Student:	Honors English Student:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Is strong academically in English. <input type="checkbox"/> Is hard working and self-motivated. <input type="checkbox"/> Learns best with thorough instruction and practice of new concepts. <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciates challenges, but also benefits from assistance and practice with complex, critical-thinking and non-routine strategies. <input type="checkbox"/> Thrives with structured guidance when learning applying, and extending new concepts. <input type="checkbox"/> Actively participates in the learning process. <input type="checkbox"/> Independently reads various genres. <p style="margin-top: 10px;">Disclaimer: If your child does not exhibit many of the qualities above, don’t worry. The goal of the goal of the College Prep English class is to get all students to these levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> English is one of his/her gifts or passions. <input type="checkbox"/> Has an exceptional work ethic, is highly self-motivated, and works well independently. <input type="checkbox"/> Masters concepts quickly without the need for much repetition; requires faster-paced, rigorous curriculum. <input type="checkbox"/> Values the challenges of complex, critical-thinking opportunities; can achieve this with minimal assistance and often takes ideas to a higher level. <input type="checkbox"/> Seeks out and actively contributes to classroom discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys reading higher level, complex texts in a variety of genres. <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys the writing process and understands the need for multiple revisions. <input type="checkbox"/> Is inquiry-driven, which is demonstrated by thinking critically about world issues related to the assigned reading and writings (goes beyond surface meanings, makes connections and inferences) <input type="checkbox"/> Manages time well (able to juggle school work, family obligations, and extra-curricular activities).

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Grade 7 Reading List

All students will read at least three selections from the following:

The Giver by Lois Lowry
The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton
Redwall by Brian Jacques
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain
The Pearl by John Steinbeck
Dragonsong by Anne McCaffrey
The Uglies by Scott Westerfeld
The Children's Story by James Clavell
Animal Farm by George Orwell
Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli
Gathering Blue by Lois Lowry
The Messenger by Lois Lowry
Kind of Shadows by Susan Cooper
Freak the Mighty by Rodman Philbrick
Downriver by Will Hobbs
The Pigman by Paul Zindel
Out of the Dust by Karen Hesse
Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan
A Mango Shaped Space by Wendy Mass
The Circuit by Francisco Jimenez
Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls
Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson
Bearstone by Will Hobbs
Old Yeller by Fred Gipson
The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien
A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare
Monsters are Due on Maple Street by Rod Serling
The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

All students will read short stories, poetry, and expository texts from the 7th grade literature book and other sources as needed.

Grade 8 Reading List

All students will read at least three selections from the following:

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor
Touching Spirit Bear by Ben Mikaelson
Milkweed by Jerry Spinelli
Call of the Wild by Jack London
Habibi by Naomi Shihab Nye
Holes by Louis Sachar
The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
Witness by Karen Hesse
All But My Life by Gerda Weissman
Night by Elie Wiesel
Red Scarf Girl by Ji-Li Jiang
The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank
Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare
Merchant of Venice by William Shakespeare
The Diary of Anne Frank (play), Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett

All students will read short stories, poetry, and expository texts from the 8th grade literature book and other sources as needed.

Grade 9 SDUHSD Reading list

All Students will read one of the following:

SDUHSD Nonfiction Reader – argument/persuasive exposition
I know Why the Caged Bird Sings, Maya Angelou
Black Boy, Richard Wright – biography/biographical exposition
An American Childhood, Annie Dillard **Supplemental**
Tuesdays with Morrie, Mitch Albom
Hiroshima, John Hersey
Freedom Writers Diary

All students will read at least one novel or epic poem from the following list:

<i>The Lord of the Flies</i> , William Golding	<i>Speak</i> , Laurie Anderson
<i>The Bean Trees</i> , Barbra Kingsolver	<i>Fahrenheit 451</i> , Ray Bradbury
<i>A Separate Peace</i> , John Knowles	<i>The Secret Life of Bees</i> , Sue Monk Kidd
<i>A Tale of Two Cities</i> , Charles Dickens	<i>House on Mango Street</i> , Sandra Cisneros
<i>Of Mice and Men</i> , John Steinbeck	<i>The Odyssey</i> , Homer
<i>Great Expectations</i> , Charles Dickens	
<i>The Red Badge of Courage</i> , Stephen Crane	
<i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time</i> , Mark Haddon	

All Students will read at least one play from the following list:

<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> , William Shakespeare	<i>Julius Caesar</i> , William Shakespeare
<i>Antigone</i> , Sophocles	
<i>The Piano Lesson</i> , August Wilson	

All students will read outside selections including expository texts, poetry, and short stories.

Grade 10 SDUHSD Reading List

All students will read nonfiction from the following:

SDUHSD Nonfiction Reader – argument/persuasive exposition

On Writing, Stephen King

All students will read at least one work of fiction from the following list:

The Catcher in the Rye, J.D. Salinger

The Kite Runner, Khaled Hosseini

The Stranger, Albert Camus

The Heart is a Lonely Hunter, McCullers

Crime and Punishment, Fyodor Dostoevsky- Pevlear/Vol. translation

Maus, Art Spiegelman

The Metamorphosis, Franz Kafka

The Perks of Being a Wallflower, Stephen Chbosky

The House of the Spirits, Isabella Allende

Obasan, Joy Kogawa

Interpreter of Maladies, Jhumpa Lahiri

All students will read at least one play from the following list:

Oedipus Rex, Sophocles

Cyrano de Bergerac, Edmond Rostand

The Taming of the Shrew, William Shakespeare

Much Ado About Nothing, William Shakespeare

Waiting for Godot, Samuel Beckett

A Raisin in the Sun, Lorraine Hansberry

All students will read short stories from at least one of the following texts:

The Eye of the Heart

World Writers Today

World Literature

All students will read one or more of the following works in a seminar:

Bless Me Ultima, Rudolfo Anaya

The Power of One, Bryce Courtenay

Life and Death in Shanghai, Nien Chen

One Hundred Years of Solitude, Gabriel Garcia Marquez

A River Sutra, Gita Mehta

Life of PI, Yann Martel

Sister of My Heart, Chitra Divakaruni

Anna Karenia, Leo Tolstoy

Free the Children, Craig Kielburger

Game of Thrones, George R. Martin

All students will read outside selections including expository texts, poetry, and short stories.

Grade 11 SDUHSD Reading List

All students will read nonfiction from the following:

SDUHSD Nonfiction Reader – argument/persuasive exposition
Black Elk Speaks
High Tide in Tucson
Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (1st Edition)
Nickel and Dimed Barbara Ehrenreich
Walden & Civil Disobedience, Henry David Thoreau
In Cold Blood, Truman Capote
Fast Food Nation, Eric Schlosser

All students will read one novel from the following list:

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain
The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald
Their Eyes Were Watching God, Zora Neale Hurston
The Awakening, Kate Chopin
The Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck
The Sound and the Fury, William Faulkner
Invisible Man, Ralph Ellison
The Scarlet Letter, Nathaniel Hawthorne
The Sun Also Rises, Ernest Hemingway
Once Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Ken Kessey
The Things They Carried, Tim O'Brien
The Tortilla Curtain, T.C. Boyle
The Color Purple, Alice Walker
Giovanni's Room, James Baldwin

All students will read at least one of the following works, or a work from the list above, in a seminar:

<i>Catch 22</i> , Joseph Heller	<i>On the Road</i> , Jack Kerouac
<i>Saint Maybe</i> , Anne Tyler	<i>Snow Falling on Cedars</i> , David Guterson
<i>Rain of Gold</i> , Victor Villasenor	<i>The Joy Luck Club</i> , Amy Tan
<i>Stranger in a Strange Land</i> , Robert A. Heinlein	
<i>A Prayer for Owen Meany</i> , John Irving	
<i>Summer</i> , Edith Wharton	

All students will read one play from the following list:

The Crucible, Arthur Miller
Fences, August Wilson
Death of a Salesman, Arthur Miller
The Laramie Project, *Moises Kaufman*

All students will read outside selections including expository texts, poetry, and short stories.

Grade 12 SDUHSD Reading List

All students will read nonfiction from one of the following:

SDUHSD Nonfiction Reader – argument/persuasive exposition
Into the Wild, Jon Krakauer
How to Read Literature Like a Professor, Thomas C. Foster
Man's Search for Meaning, Victor Frankl
The Color of Water, James McBride
A Room of One's Own, Virginia Woolf
Terror in the Name of God, Jessica Stern

All students will read at least one work of fiction from the following list:

<i>The Secret Sharer</i> , Conrad	<i>A Town like Alice</i> , Shute
<i>Heart of Darkness</i> , Conrad	<i>Frankenstein</i> , Shelley
<i>Cry, The Beloved Country</i> , Paton	<i>1984</i> , Orwell
<i>Wuthering Heights</i> , Bronte	<i>My Brilliant Career</i> , Franklin
<i>Childhood's End</i> , Clarke	<i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> , Atwood
<i>A Room with a View</i> , Forster	<i>Dubliners</i> , James Joyce
<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> , Austen	<i>V for Vendetta</i> , James McTeigue
<i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i> , Hardy	<i>Going After Cachiatto</i> , Tim O'Brien
<i>A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man</i> , Joyce	
<i>Jane Eyre</i> , Bronte	<i>The Dispossessed</i> , Ursula K. Le Guin
<i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> , Oscar Wilde	
<i>Brave New World</i> , Aldous Huxley	<i>Siddartha</i> , Herman Hesse
<i>Ishmael</i> , Daniel Quinn	<i>Never Let me Go</i> , Kazuo Ishiguro

All students will read at least one play from the following list:

The Tragedy of Macbeth, Shakespeare
The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, Shakespeare
The Tragedy of King Lear, Shakespeare
Othello, Shakespeare
Titus Andronicus, Shakespeare
Pygmalion, Shaw
The Importance of Being Earnest, Oscar Wilde

All students will read outside selections including expository texts, poetry, and short stories.