

Characteristics of Effective Learners

(adapted from Skip Downing's *On Course*)

STUDENT NAME _____ Classroom Teacher _____

Students: Review this list of characteristics of effective learners. Check how each one describes you.

Effective Learners...	Usually	Some- times	Seldom
DISPLAY A WILLINGNESS TO LEARN , taking information taught and applying it in ways that are meaningful to them; expanding upon the information to make it fit into their interests and surroundings.			
SET GOALS , knowing what they want to achieve, identifying they have to work on, seeing their progress toward each goal, and taking pride in achieving each goal.			
ACCEPT SELF-RESPONSIBILITY , seeing themselves as the primary cause of their outcomes and experiences.			
DISCOVER SELF-MOTIVATION , finding purpose in their lives by discovering personally meaningful goals and dreams.			
MASTER SELF-MANAGEMENT , consistently planning and taking purposeful actions in pursuit of their goals and dreams.			
EMPLOY INTERDEPENDENCE , building mutually supportive relationships that help them achieve their goals and dreams (while helping others to do the same).			
DISPLAY INDEPENDENCE , feeling comfortable in a learning environment that places emphasis on individuals taking responsibility for their learning process.			
GAIN SELF-AWARENESS , consciously employing behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes that keep them on course.			
SELF-ADVOCATE AND COMMUNICATE , taking responsibility for their learning by asking questions and voicing their confusion, frustration, concerns, absences, etc.			
ASK QUESTIONS , willing to ask for and accept assistance; realizing that there is always more to know.			
DO NOT FRUSTRATE EASILY , showing perseverance, resilience, and a willingness to work hard, make mistakes, and even fail; learning from setbacks.			
ADOPT LIFE-LONG LEARNING , finding valuable lessons and wisdom in nearly every experience they have.			
DEVELOP EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE , effectively managing their emotions in support of their goals and dreams.			
BELIEVE IN THEMSELVES , seeing themselves capable, lovable, and unconditionally worthy as human beings.			
MEET DEADLINES , turning in assignments on time and taking time to produce work that looks good and shows pride in their work.			

INTEREST IN ADVANCED WORK (Circle One) Low Medium High
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COURSE REQUESTING (Circle One) 8 th Grade English Advanced English
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Student Signature _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Advanced Language Arts Pathway

**Alternative pathways exist, but students must fulfill graduation requirements).*

8th: Advanced English

9th: Lit and Comp

10th-12th: Variety of Advanced and AP Courses

Directions for Staff:

1. Provide each student a hard copy of the learning characteristics document with the Advanced English course description on the back. Request that this document be returned during the first week after Winter break with their decision as to take Advanced English or not.
 - a. *Does this need to be integrated into any registration documents or timeline?*
2. Review all requests to screen for “misguided efforts”
 - a. Example: Students who are academically struggling wanting to take the advanced course.
 - b. Discuss with team any students who you will need to have further conversations about advanced placement.
3. Provide student selections to counselor.

<p>Advanced English</p>	<p>ENG802 This advanced course will provide priority time for students to engage in the language processes of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students will study classic and contemporary literature in a variety of genres. Instruction and practice in the writing process with assignments ranging from narratives based on personal experience to explanatory essays. The emphasis is on developing an individual voice and on learning through reading, discussion, and expository writing—to shape experience, discover ideas and communicate effectively in a variety of rhetorical situations. In the context of the students’ own writing, matters of grammar, punctuation, and usage are reviewed as necessary.</p>	<p>Deciding to take an advanced class is a challenging and exciting decision to make. Most often the best decisions are made when they are well informed and considerate of as many sources of information as possible. Prospective students are encouraged to consider input from their parents/guardians, current and former teachers, counselors, and administration. Please consider the following when weighing a decision to take an advanced class.</p> <p>Students should anticipate that Advanced courses are often conducted at a quicker pace with compacted learning experiences. Students should expect a rigorous learning environment.</p> <p>Key Learner Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High interest in learning academic subject at an advanced level ● Positive attitude about engaging in challenging academic work both at school and outside of school ● Successful managers of their time (able to multitask, to prioritize activities, to make deadlines, and to balance academic & extracurricular activities well) <p>Enrollment Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A pattern of strong classroom performance ● Supportive assessment performance
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		<p>Examples: Iowa Assessments, Cognitive Abilities Test, Belin-Blank, Summative Assessment Tools (Final Course Exams)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student ability to self-advocate
<p>Literature and Composition</p>	<p><i>Literature and Composition</i> is a <u>compacted</u> 2-credit course, fulfilling the graduation requirements of two semesters of <i>Language and Literature</i> and one semester of <i>Fundamentals of Writing</i>. The course moves at a rigorous pace, exposing students to multiple genres of literature with varying complexity and all of the modes of writing. Required summer coursework will be assigned and must be submitted on the first day of school. Literature will be analyzed for craft, structure, style, character development, and themes, including short stories, novels, poetry, and drama. An emphasis will be placed on Pre-AP literary analysis. Writing will include a full-length MLA style research paper, expository, personal narrative, literary analysis, and argument. Poetry will include original writing and explication of poetry with advanced analysis. Students will have weekly requirements for vocabulary development through the web-based program <i>Membean</i>. Students will also complete independent reading assignments based upon classic, college bound novels.</p>	<p>Deciding to take an advanced class is a challenging and exciting decision to make. Most often the best decisions are made when they are well informed and considerate of as many sources of information as possible. Prospective students are encouraged to consider input from their parents/guardians, current and former teachers, counselors, and administration. Please consider the following when weighing a decision to take an advanced class.</p> <p>Students should anticipate that Advanced courses are often conducted at a quicker pace with compacted learning experiences. Students should expect a rigorous learning environment.</p> <p>Key Learner Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High interest in learning academic subject at an advanced level ● Positive attitude about engaging in challenging academic work both at school and outside of school ● Successful managers of their time (able to multitask, to prioritize activities, to make deadlines, and to balance academic & extracurricular activities well) <p>Enrollment Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A pattern of strong classroom performance ● Supportive assessment performance <p>Examples: Iowa Assessments, Cognitive Abilities Test, Belin-Blank, Summative Assessment Tools (Final Course Exams) Student ability to self-advocate</p>

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Frequently Asked Questions:

- Q1: Is the teacher making the final decision on students being placed in Advanced English?
 - A1: No- The final decision is in the hands of the parent and child. Teachers are to assist in providing evidence relative to predicting student success.
 - Reference page 2 of Self-Assessment tool.

- Q2: Can you still be in the Honors Program if you do not take Advanced English in the 8th grade.
 - Q2: Yes. Although the challenge of Advanced English will help to prepare students for Literature and Composition, the course is not a prerequisite for the advanced 9th grade course.
 - Traditional Pathway (8 credits)
 - 8th Grade English
 - 9th Grade- Lang and Lit. Students may also choose to take Speech in 9th grade.
 - 10th Grade- Fundamentals of Writing and Speech and/or language arts elective*
 - 11th Grade- Language arts electives* including Advanced and AP Options
 - 12th Grade- Language arts electives* including Advanced and AP Options

*At least one 10-12 elective must be a literature elective
 - Advanced Pathway (8 credits)
 - 8th Grade - Advanced English
 - 9th Grade- Lit and Comp. Students may also choose to take Speech in 9th grade.
 - 10th Grade- Advanced Composition and Advanced Contemporary Literature or Advanced World Literature
 - 11th Grade - AP Lit and Comp or AP Lang and Comp
 - 12th Grade - AP Lang and Comp or AP Lit and Comp

- Q3: What are the Language Arts Scholars Pathway requirements?
 - A3: Must take 8 credits of Language Arts, from an approved list (see page 67 of Valley course catalog); complete 2 AP courses (Lit and Comp and Lang and Comp); maintain overall GPA of at least 3.5; maintain GPA of 4.0 in all language arts courses; take all semester exams without Pass/No Pass; take the AP exam of each AP course; complete a “Capstone” experience.

- Q4: Does Advanced English count towards their high school transcript?
 - A4: No

- Q5: What courses are required for graduation?
 - 9th: Lang and Lit (2 credits) or Literature and Composition (2 credits) NOTE: Lit and Comp fulfills the Fundamentals of Writing graduation requirement.
 - 10th: Fundamentals of Writing (1 credit) and Speech (1 credit) or Speech/Comp (2 credits)
 - 10th-12th: 4 additional language arts credits, one of which must be a literature elective from the list on p. 64 of the [Valley Curriculum Handbook](#).
 - Note: Students may take Speech anytime during grades 9, 10, 11, or 12. Most students typically fulfill this requirement during 9th or 10th grade. Debate I/Public Speaking also fulfills the Speech requirement.