

Growing Students' Capacity Through Robust and Meaningful Work

Philosophy and Execution
Fall 2018

The “Why”

Teachers provide students multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of meaningful standards, and LOTS of feedback to help them improve.

Every assignment is clearly designed to help students practice and improve in at least one standard.

Students embrace freedom to take risks without fear that that will hurt their grades.

Standards	T1	T2
Writing	Polished Writing	Fluency
Thinking	Inquiry	Analysis
Speaking/Listening	Academic Discourse	Presentation
Academic Habits	Reflection	Continuous Learning

An Example From American Lit Honors

Inquiry Checklist

Category	Excelling	Got it	Keep Working
Generates questions that are worth pursuing			
Comes to insightful ideas through studying text(s)			
Develops further questions based on answers to lines of questioning			
Develops deep and nuanced understandings			

How it improves the culture of the classroom and the focus for the student

Manageable, clear expectations, not overwhelmed by “red ink.”

Kids are working for themselves and each other, not for the teacher.

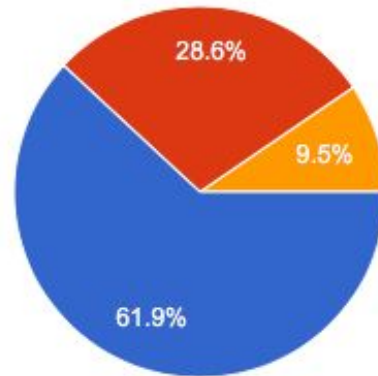
Grades are the result of growth over time, not a constant source of conflict.

“I learned more about my work ethic and my strengths and weaknesses throughout this course. By having more freedom, I took more risks to see what things work for me and what doesn't. I also could see the improvement in my analysis skills as well as my presentation skills”

Student Feedback

Overall, your growth in this class was

21 responses

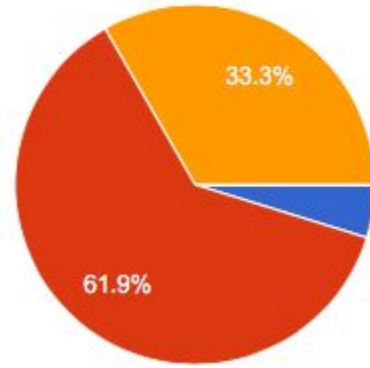


- Much greater than previous experiences
- A little better than previous experiences
- About the same as previous experiences
- A little less than previous experiences
- Much less than previous experiences

“I wasn’t supposed to be in honors, but when I saw how the class was structured I felt that I could be successful”

You expect your grade to be

21 responses



- Much higher than previous experiences
- A little higher than previous experiences
- About the same as previous experiences
- A little lower than previous experiences
- Much lower than previous experiences

“I’ve always felt like my grade is chasing me, or I’m chasing my grade. That letter was always hanging over me. In this class, that constant stress is gone, and I can focus on learning and improving myself.”

What You Can Expect

Increased student accountability and reflection in the learning process

Quality of work and continuous improvement related to trimester standards

Grades represent where they end up at the end of a trimester rather than averages along the way

Sample Parent Feedback

After a long conversation today with _____, I believe he now feels comfortable and is (as he should) ready to take ownership to be the *best* student versus average. He actually said, that he thinks in the long run this will be much better for him and will help him be a better student in English. Hummm. That's a first. He is and has always been someone who is comfortable with Math, Science, Chem rather than English, Reading, etc. Maybe that will change now.

I used to think... but now I think...