

Harbord Collegiate English Department



What English courses do students have to take?

Students must complete four compulsory English courses - one at each grade level - to earn their high school diploma. Harbord also offers some optional English courses in the senior grades.

What are the optional English courses?

In recent years, Harbord has offered The Writer's Craft and Studies in Literature as optional credits to senior students. An interdisciplinary course on pop music is also offered which weaves together expectations from the English, history and music curriculum.

What skills are developed in the compulsory English courses?

The compulsory courses build skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, media analysis and media production. Our teachers equip students with the skills they will need to be successful in the post-secondary pathways of their choosing.

What texts will students read?

Students will read a range of texts in their English courses: novels, memoirs, non-fiction, short stories, poems, essays, infographics, etc. Our courses include opportunities for student to choose texts that interest them for independent reading. Most courses feature literature circles, in which students choose a book to read with a small group of peers. Each class will also read some whole class texts. We strive to include highly engaging books that represent a range of diverse perspectives.

What are some examples of books that students might read in grade nine?

This year's grade nine students are either studying *Brother* by David Chariandy or *Funny Boy* by Shyam Selvadurai as whole class texts. Literature circle selections include *Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo, *Ball Don't Lie* by Sean De La Pena, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie, *Girl in Translation* by Jean Kwok, *Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky, *Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld and *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers. Students also select independent reading from our amazing school library.

What are some examples of media products that students might produce?

Depending on their course and grade level, students may produce infographics, posters, podcasts, websites or short films.

I've heard that students need to write a literacy test in high school. What's that?

To receive an Ontario Secondary School Diploma, students must complete a literacy requirement. Most students will achieve this by writing the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test in grade 10. This test features reading passages with multiple choice questions, short writing exercises and two longer writing passages (a newspaper article and an opinion piece). If students do not pass this test in grade 10 or 11, they will take the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course.

Thank you for checking out the English program at Harbord Collegiate. We look forward to supporting your children in the future!