

## Frequently Asked Questions: **Freshman Portfolio**

### **Q. Will I have a final exam in this course?**

**A.** Yes, but it will only cover vocabulary, grammar and reading comprehension, and will be given as part of the school's regular final exam schedule in June. Writing will not be a part of the exam.

### **Q. But writing is a big part of what we worked on in class this year. Shouldn't that be part of my final exam grade?**

**A.** Yes, and writing will be a part of your exam grade. You just won't need to write anything new as part of the exam. At the start of June, you will submit a portfolio of your best pieces of writing. Your teacher will assess this and that will be your grade for the writing section of the final exam.

### **Q. What goes into the writing portfolio?**

**A.** Four things:

- A literary analysis piece
- A personal or creative piece
- Your response to an in-class writing prompt every freshman will complete at the beginning of May.
- A reflection of no more than two typed pages.

### **Q. Do we need to revise the pieces we wrote for class before we put them into your portfolio?**

**A.** You can revise the literary analysis and creative pieces, but you only for up to two weeks after your teacher hands them back (and you aren't required to do even that). We don't want pulling the portfolio together to be an overwhelming amount of work in May. The in-class essay won't be revised, and you will write the reflection for the portfolio itself.

### **Q. Why handle writing this way instead of just including an essay on the exam?**

**A.** We have a lot of different kinds of writing we want you to try out this year, and including all of them on one test is quite difficult. We also think a portfolio gives a broader, more accurate picture of you as a writer than one on-demand essay would.

### **Q. What should the portfolio physically look like?**

**A.** You should put the pieces into a folder that your teacher will provide. The pieces should be readable and look professional, but appearance is not part of the grading criteria. Your teacher will give you more specific instructions on this when we get closer to the due date.

**Q. Won't my grade just be the same grade I got the first time I handed the assignments in?**

**A.** Not necessarily. Your teacher evaluates individual pieces based on whether you learned the writing lesson he or she was emphasizing in class at the time. With the portfolio, your teacher will look at multiple pieces and ask whether you've met the overall writing goals for the course. You won't get individual grades for the pieces in the portfolio.

**Q. Will the reflection be graded?**

**A.** Not specifically. The reflection is your chance to have your thoughts and viewpoint present while the grading is being done, but the reflection itself will not be given a separate grade.

Here's what the portfolio will entail:

<b>Piece #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>When You Do This</b>	<b>Do You Have to Revise This?</b>
1	<b>On-demand writing:</b> all freshmen at both North and South will write an in-class essay about a passage you haven't seen before	Beginning of May	No
2	<b>Literary analysis:</b> a piece of writing about a book; could be any such piece you write this year for class. You choose.	Any time throughout the year	You can, but you have to do so no later than 2 weeks after receiving it back
3	<b>Creative or personal writing</b> Could be any such piece you write this year for class. You choose.	Any time throughout the year	You can, but you have to do so no later than 2 weeks after receiving it back
4	<b>Self-assessment:</b> no more than two typed pages about your writing, based on the rubric we will use to assess the portfolio	By <b>deadline at start of June</b>	No