Honors English 9 Proficiency Test

Initial Date: Wednesday, April 22 from 3:30-5 p.m.
Makeup Date: Tuesday, April 28 from 3:30-5 p.m.*

Eligibility and Test Information:

This test is for incoming freshmen who wish to enroll in Honors English 9. All students are invited to take this test, however we recommend it for students who meet the following criteria:

- Scored at or above the 75% percentile on the reading and verbal sections of the HSPT (if scores are available)
- Have a strong interest in English, including reading and writing.

The English test will last 75 minutes, with additional time allotted for instructions and settling in. Students who are also taking the World History test will have the opportunity to complete both exams within this period.

The English test will include one reading passage. Students will answer multiple-choice questions on the passage that focus on close reading skills. They will also write a response to a prompt that requires information from the passage to make an argument about the reading.

Topics include:

1. Students will be asked to read a passage or article, discern what is important, and articulate what the passage is about.
2. The multiple choice portion assesses basic reading comprehension skills including: reading a nonfiction or literary passage or poem, identifying the author's meaning, identifying specific evidence to support a claim, and interpreting meaning from context clues.
3. There will also be a written component asking students to make arguments about the reading as well.

**Please make every effort to test on one of these dates.*
If you are unable to, please contact the Scheduling Coordinator, at scheduling@presentationhs.org.

Honors English
Proficiency Test Practice Questions

The following five questions represent the types of questions you may see on the Proficiency Test for Honors English. There will also be a written component asking students to argue about the reading. Both tests are assessments of skills, not content, so there is no particular content to study for the test.

Use this passage from “The Things They Carried” to answer the following two questions:
“Grief, terror, love, longing -- these were intangibles, but the intangibles had their own mass and specific gravity, they had tangible weight. They carried shameful memories. They carried the common secret of cowardice barely restrained, the instinct to run or freeze or hide, and in many respects this was the heaviest burden of all, for it could never be put down, it required perfect balance and perfect posture” (O’Brien 368).

1. What is the main idea, or theme of this passage?
    a. The boys are all scared of death.
    b. Falling over is a constant fear in war.
    c. Living life to the fullest will stop regrets when in a combat zone.
    d. The emotional weight is more than the physical weight of their gear.
    e. The leaders must focus on the tasks at hand for the safety of their men.

2. What particular phrases lead you to believe this?
    a. The repetition of the word “carried”
    b. The lack of respect for physical objects
    c. “The instinct to run, freeze or hide”
    d. “Grief, terror, love, longing”

Use this passage from “My Name” by Sandra Cisneros excerpted from *The House on Mango Street* to answer the following questions:

“In English my name means hope. In Spanish it means too many letters. It means sadness, it means waiting. It is like the number nine. A muddy color. It is the Mexican records my father plays on Sunday mornings when he is shaving, songs like sobbing. It was my great-grandmother's name and now it is mine. She was a horse woman too, born like me in the Chinese year of the horse--which is supposed to be bad luck if you're born female-but I think this is a Chinese lie because the Chinese, like the Mexicans, don't like their women strong. My great-grandmother. I would've liked to have known her, a wild, horse of a woman, so wild she wouldn't marry. Until my great-grandfather threw a sack over her head and carried her off. Just like that, as if she were a fancy chandelier. That's the way he did it. And the story goes she never forgave him. She looked out the window her whole life, the way so many women sit their sadness on an elbow. I wonder if she made the best with what she got or was she sorry because she couldn't be all the things she wanted to be. Esperanza. I have inherited her name, but I don't

want to inherit her place by the window. At school they say my name funny as if the syllables were made out of tin and hurt the roof of your mouth. But in Spanish my name is made out of a softer something, like silver, not quite as thick as sister's name Magdalena--which is uglier than mine. Magdalena who at least- -can come home and become Nenny. But I am always Esperanza. would like to baptize myself under a new name, a name more like the real me, the one nobody sees. Esperanza as Lisandra or Maritza or Zeze the X. Yes. Something like Zeze the X will do" (Cisneros 10).

3. Which of the following describes a central theme of the text?
    a. Names can often empower and/or influence one's own identity.
    b. Identity is strongly influenced by what language or languages one speaks.
    c. Relationships with one's family can alter how an individual sees the world.
    d. Individuals who do not have a middle name cannot embrace their heritage.

4. Which of the following best explains the comparison between the speaker's name and the "Mexican records her father plays" in the first paragraph?
    a. The speaker compares her name to the "Mexican records her father plays" to illustrate her love for her father and his daily routines.
    b. The speaker compares her name to the "Mexican records her father plays" to describe how language connects us with all cultures
    c. The speaker compares her name to the "Mexican records her father plays" to depict the connection between her name and her family heritage.
    d. The speaker compares her name to the "Mexican records her father plays" because she loves her name, just as she loves Mexican music.

5. A simile is a figure of speech comparing two unlike things often using *like* or *as*. Which of the lines below is an example of a simile?
    a. It means sadness, it means waiting.
    b. It is like the number nine.
    c. It is the Mexican records my father plays on Sunday mornings when he is shaving.
    d. I would like to baptize myself under a new name.

Key: 1.D 2.A 3.A 4.C 5.B