

What are the differences between -1, -2, -4, and AP courses?

At William Aberhart, we have *four* course sequences that have been developed in order to accommodate the diverse range of student needs, interests and aspirations. All sequences are similar in that they all must address the following standards (as stated by our Alberta English Program of Studies):

- Maintain high standards to meet graduation requirements.
- Require that students write a diploma examination upon completion of the 30-level course (with the exception of the -4 sequence)
- Can be used toward the application of the Alexander Rutherford Scholarships
- Feature six language arts – listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing
- Encourage student metacognition, self-assessment, collaboration and teamwork
- Emphasize correct and effective communication in a variety of formats, including communication for pragmatic purposes
- Have a minimum requirement for Canadian content
- Connect with some of the information and communication technology outcomes
- Require students to apply inquiry or research skills
- Emphasize career development directions
- Emphasize the importance of context, including studying purpose, audience and situation, in the creation and comprehension of texts.
- Emphasize a definition of “text” that includes oral, print, visual and multimedia forms.

There are, however, important differences between the course sequences as well. These variances correspond to differences in student needs, interests, and aspirations. Please know that while, ultimately, it is a family’s decision which course their child should be in, the English teachers carefully write students’ course recommendations based on experience and understanding of students’ strengths, readiness, and needed areas of growth.

English 10-1, 20-1, 30-1

Students in the -1 sequence are expected to be independent learners with a thirst for enhancing their critical and creative analysis and written skills. They will be engaged in increasingly complex texts throughout their years in high school and should be excited about studying literature and exploring ideas.

Students who excel in the -1 sequence have an ability to deal with abstract ideas and concrete details, enjoy identifying themes and symbolic meanings of text, and will read for author’s purpose. They will have many assignments that focus particularly on critical analysis, though they will also be expected to create personal and creative representations that demonstrate an understanding of textual implied meaning (subtext), context, audience, form and structure.

Each year students study Shakespeare, modern drama, novel, film, short stories, visuals and poems with comprehensive ideas and extensive vocabulary. The courses are fast-paced with more assignments and homework expectations each consecutive year.

English 10-2, 20-2, 30-2

Students in the -2 sequence are strengthening their reading and writing skills, and will, therefore, have more supports for reading comprehension strategies. There is a greater degree of emphasis placed on the study of popular nonfiction (news stories, feature articles, reviews, interviews and other forms of informative and persuasive text, including technical writing) and film.

Students who excel in the -2 sequence have a propensity to deal with realistic and concrete ideas. They will often identify character traits and events and lean towards making personal connections to the situation presented in the literature. Students will leave this sequence with the ability to write effectively in narrative, connecting life understandings and experiences to text. They will also develop strong understanding of personal writing skills such as a personal essay structure, use of anecdote, emotional choice of vocabulary and the use sentence types to create effect.

Each year students study modern plays, novel, films, short stories, media images, media print, poems and visuals with central ideas and grade level vocabulary. The courses are slower-paced than the -1 sequence and have mostly in-class assignments, with some homework.

***According to the English Program of Studies,*

*Students who aspire to post-secondary education, but not necessarily to careers related to the English language arts, may register in this sequences. **HOWEVER**, not all post-secondary institutions accept ELA 30-2 for entry. In general, students who plan to attend a post-secondary institution regardless of their specific career aspirations need to familiarize themselves with the entry requirements of the institution and program they plan to enter”.*

***Please visit the link provided at the bottom of this page to find out the English Language Arts admission requirements for institutions in Alberta.*

Advanced Placement (AP) English 20-1, 30-1

The AP English Literature course is designed to engage students in the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature. Students are expected to engage in close reading and critical analysis of text on a grander scale than in the -1 sequence. By the end of the AP experience a student should have an intensive study of literature from a variety of genres and periods.

Students will be expected to read more in an AP course, though the actual number of assignments should not vary greatly from the -1 sequence. Writing is, however, an integral part of the AP course and will often focus on the analysis and interpretations of various texts *in comparison* to other texts the students have recently studied. Thus, according to the CollegeBoard AP website:

Some of this writing should be informal and exploratory, allowing students to discover what they think in the process of writing about their reading. Some of the course writing should involve research, perhaps negotiating differing critical perspectives. Much writing should involve extended discourse in which students can develop an argument or present an analysis at length. In addition, some writing assignments should encourage students to

write effectively under the time constraints they encounter on essay examinations in college courses in many disciplines, including English.

Students enrolled in AP English MUST write their Alberta English 30-1 Diploma, just like their counterparts in the -1 sequence. They may choose to write the AP exam (usually administered in May) if they feel ready. Students with an AP Exam grade of 4 and higher can earn advanced credit and/or placement at many colleges and universities. However, you must check with your child's university of choice to find out how AP affects the admission requirements.

Knowledge and Employability English 10-4, 20-4, 30-4

The Knowledge and Employability English courses (referred to as the -4 sequence) are designed to meet the educational needs of students who learn best by focusing on the development and application of reading, writing and essential employability skills. The core responsibility of English -4 courses is to foster and strengthen the development of language.

Thus, the -4 program is meant to develop the *foundational* skills of communication through experiential learning activities, develop the connections between schooling and personal experience, and ready students for transitioning from school to the workplace and community.

This sequence of courses assists students in determining their career goals by providing them with meaningful opportunities to develop the language necessary for success in their future employs. Students will earn a high school credential at the end of this sequence and *will not* write a provincial diploma exam at the English 30 level.