

Mr. Godfrey's room 32 Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Why are your expectations for students so high?

A: I insist that my students develop the skills and the ability to choose what they want to do later in life, rather than be stuck with whatever is left over. There are three types of people in our society – those that make it happen, those that watch it happen, and those that wonder what happened. I try to encourage students to avoid choice number three. You will find that I am your student's greatest fan and cheerleader.

Q: I added up all my student's scores for the trimester, and I don't have the same percentage you do. Are all grades equal in your class?

A: No. Your student is graded in three categories, with each category making up a different percentage of the total grade. For sixth graders, 50% of their grade is made up of a total score of their Independent Practice, 30% of the total grade comes from Key Assignments (quizzes, projects, etc.), and 20% from tests. To better prepare students for high school and beyond, eighth graders have 40% of their grades made up of a total score of their tests, 30% of the total grade comes from Independent Practice, and 30% from Key Assignments (quizzes, projects, etc). If a category does not yet exist to be graded, the percentage is fanned out among the current existing categories. The math is calculated automatically using our current grading program.

Q: My student says you only allow two bathroom breaks per trimester. Does this ever become a problem?

A: No. Students with a medical condition that becomes known to me have unlimited bathroom breaks. Others learn to manage their time wisely (wash hands at the end of lunch, not after checking in to the classroom; use the bathroom during breaks) and minimize classroom distractions. If more than two breaks are needed (rarely, in my experience), students may "purchase" bathroom breaks by bringing in an essay on time management the following day. The length of the essay varies by grade level and the amount of breaks the student requires.

Q: Why do I need to keep a 3-ring binder of all notices and returned work during the school year?

A: The student's grades are copied from assignment, quiz or test sheets into a handwritten book and then transferred into our grading program. While all efforts are made to minimize errors, humans are involved in all three processes (grading, entering into the book, entering into the grading program). When a mistake is made, it is a great example to the students to see me apologize and fix the problem. I can only do this by verifying the paper that has been handed back to the student. Some High School students in the past also reminded me that they take U.S. History again, and this binder can be used as a resource to save them time in the future.

Q: Why do you spend time telling eighth graders what to expect when they get to High School?

A: I do this to better prepare them for High School and beyond. We are not only mastering subject matter in eighth grade, we are also practicing time management and organizational skills (that's why your student was issued an Agenda this year). Please ask High School siblings and neighbors who have gone through my class, and they will assure you that I speak the truth. I'm at an age where I've had a lot of life experience, and like to share what I've lived and what I've observed.