

UNDERAGE PAGE

Songs for season

■ The Temple Symphony Orchestra will cap a week of Christmas celebrations with "A Song for the Season" concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at Temple College's Mary Alice Marshall Performing Arts Center.
— Please see story, Page 1D



Grades: What are they good for?

BY JOY OGUNMUYIWA
HOLY TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL

Would a student study for a huge exam tomorrow if they knew they wouldn't get a grade for it? Would a student bother to do their homework, if the teacher gave A's either way. The answer is no.
Grades are used not only as indicators of progress in school but as motivators to keep up the good work or improve the work. The idea of grades is to show that the student is actually

learning the material taught in school. "Grades are a way to keep you focused on our studies and do more with them," senior Laraine Perrin said. According to Ron Kurtus, author of "The Power of Positive Character" and "Tricks for Good Grades," grades are based on tests, homework, and teacher relationship.
"Questions that you may have should include, What is needed to excel in tests?, What will the homework help me on?, and Does my teacher really know what materials I

struggle on?" Kurtus said. The greatest part of a grade is dependent on test and quiz scores. For people who don't work well under pressure, test taking may be their weak points.
Having good study habits and practicing working under timed situations can help improve test scores.
"Grades shows you if you're progressing in school. If your grades are high you are obviously doing well. If it's low, then you are not," junior Lynze Manes said.
Homework is important in the learn-

ing process for many reasons. The reason to do homework is that is the method used to learn 50 percent of the subject matter material. The other 50 percent is learned in the class. The percentages vary dramatically to the teacher and the subject matter. The teacher also plays a role.
The teacher has extensive knowledge in your strengths and weaknesses in the classroom. Grades are a way to evaluate the student theoretically.
"Personally I would prefer no grades, but it's all part of the job,"

Holy Trinity English teacher Pam Oman said.
Learning is important because it allows the student to explore new horizons. A student sitting in Texas could discover the ancient tomb of King Tut in Egypt or walk among the ruins of Stonehenge.
Grades encourage the learning process because they are a quick indicator of lack of understanding or mastery.
Though they sometimes hurt, they are important to learning.

Objective, subjective grades differ

BY TORI ARELLANO
HOLY TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL

As the year goes by, classes gradually get more difficult. By the middle of the school year, a student should be able to recognize the different qualities of an objective and a subjective assignment.
The differences between an objective and a subjective assignment is that in a teacher's perspective, "An objective assignment is always easier to give and to grade. There is always a right answer," said Karen Kacir, who teaches AP history. For a student, an objective assignment may be easy or difficult to succeed in depending if you are good at reading and memorizing specific information that needs to be stated explicitly. "Subjective assignments give a student the opportunity to display their understanding of the subject better than an objective assignment would," Mrs. Kacir said.

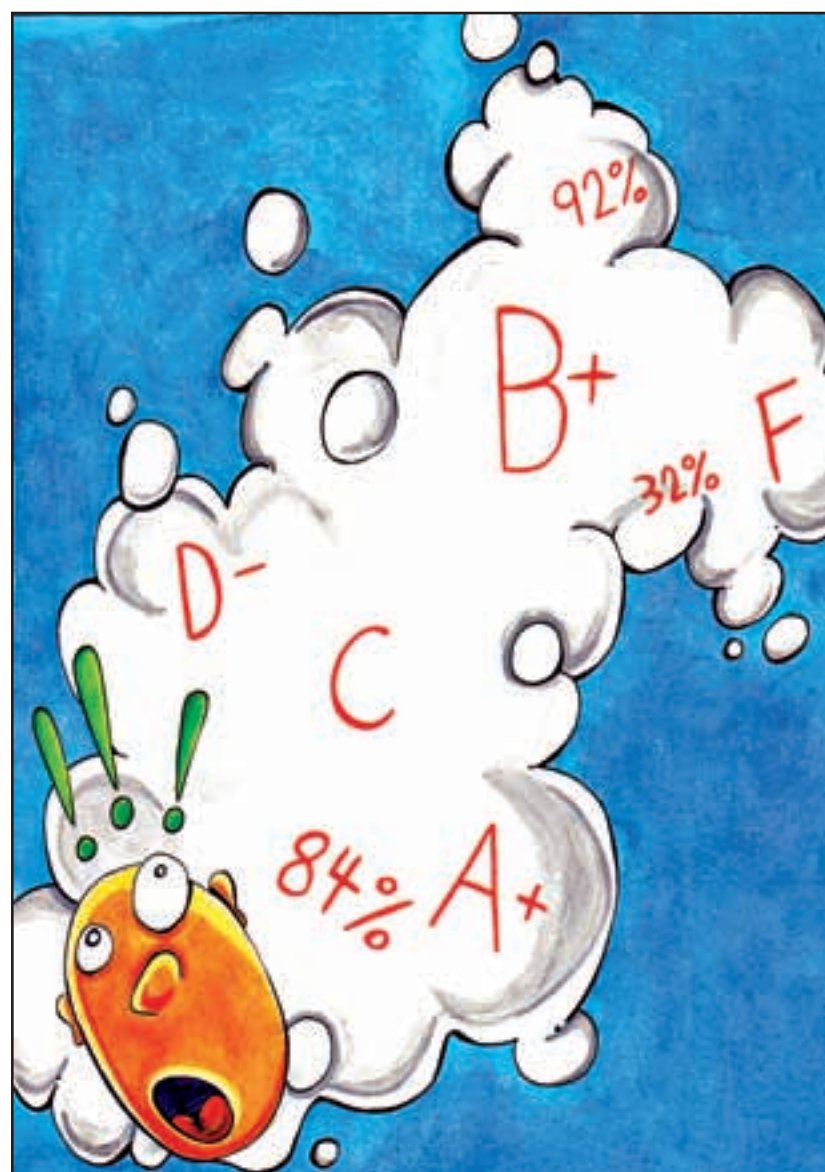
they will have feedback that is returned quickly. With a subjective assignment, the teacher has a much more broad assessment of what the student perceives, therefore there can be multiple correct answers, which is beneficial to a student. Other benefactors of subjective assignments are that a student can focus on a bigger picture other than having to memorize simple details. Also, in a subjective essay or writing assignment, teachers can pick out the main points the student stated even if they write a paragraph with poor sentence structure.

It is a good thing that students' overall grades are composed of both types of assignments and tests.
"Because of the length of classes, I separate objective and subjective tests into two days," said Mrs. Kacir, proving that teachers understand that students need both types of assignments. If a student is awful at one type but fantastic in the other, the different types of assignments give students the opportunity to improve their skills in what they are struggling in.

Subjective grades aren't just hard to earn by the student, subjective grading is difficult for a teacher in terms of time in spent in the classroom and time grading the assignments. Teachers have to give more insight to how they grade because there is no specific rubric to follow.
"Subjective grades are given by the standard you and your peers set into giving an answer or writing an essay," Mrs. Kacir said.

Karen Kacir, Advanced Placement U.S. history teacher at Holy Trinity High School in Temple, grades objective assignments. An objective assignment is easier to give and to grade than a subjective assignment.

Tori Arellano/ Holy Trinity High School



Jonathan McGinnis Illustration

While students often stress about grades, having a way to measure their academic success is a way to help them know about their abilities to complete projects in the future.

Good report cards help in long run

BY TORI ARELLANO
HOLY TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL

When report cards coming out, there is a lot of talk about grades. Good grades help you in the long run. In today's world, getting a good job requires a good education.

"Maintaining good grades give students a concrete objective way to chart themselves to see where they are academically," Holy Trinity counselor Barbara Parks said.

Getting good grades will also help you financially, "Colleges with tuition scholarships depend on good grades in high school," Mrs. Parks said.

Applying yourself to different learning techniques is a key to earning a good grade. Mrs. Parks explained that it may be hard to earn good grades in school because the world is a competitive place, and to some students this may motivate or discourage them to make better grades.

"A way to find encouragement is through your family and friends," Mrs. Parks said.

Some ways to ensure a good grade on your report card are to be attentive in the classroom, and asking questions even if you feel like everyone else understands. Always complete the homework that is assigned to reinforce the learning lesson. "Knowing what subject you are strong in and consistently receiving good grades is an aspect of good grades," Mrs. Parks said.

Group projects can be good, bad

BY HAILEY MEINEN
HOLY TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL

Projects are a natural part of school work. Occasionally, teachers give students the opportunity to work with their classmates in a group project.

Group projects can have advantages and disadvantages. They can also affect a student's work and motivation. The overall outcome can have a large impact on a student's grade.

"You get more support from your group and you have a lot of different contributions put into it," freshman Jessica Mata said in favor of group projects.

However, not all students agree. "It's often hard to meet, and most of the time the work gets dumped on one person," sophomore Stephanie Haas said on the disadvantages of working in groups.

Teachers have different rea-

PROS AND CONS OF GROUP WORK

PROS

- Group projects can be more fun
- More people to consult with
- More people means more ideas
- There is less work per person
- There is access to more resources

CONS

- Students may have a bad group
- Getting everyone together may be hard
- Groups have a harder time agreeing on issues
- It is harder to communicate with everyone
- One student affects the whole group

sons for assigning projects in groups.

"I assign group projects because there are several important things that students can learn from them," English teacher Mary-Susan McGarr said. She explained that students learn how to work with different people and how to compromise with other students. Skills they learn include delegating tasks, being responsible for their tasks, and working with

difficult people.

Biology teacher Diana Gunlock also believes group projects build skills, including working with different personalities.

Group projects prepare students for college, where students will have to work in groups, as well as life after school.

"You have to learn, because professors in college do not care. They expect a group project to be done on time.

And well," Ms. McGarr said.

Unfortunately, one student can bring down the entire group. If one student does not cooperate, the rest of the group has to do more work, and grades can suffer from it.

Some teachers try to make sure an individual does not hurt the entire group.

Ms. Gunlock gives her students surveys after projects to make sure everyone did their share. "If there is a member of the group who is just not doing their end of the work then they're going to be docked off significantly," she said.

Ms. McGarr also works with students to avoid unfair group grading. She gives students two grades. One grade is for their individual work, and the other is a grade for the entire group. With this method, part of the student's grade can be brought down, but their whole grade does not necessarily suffer.



Get involved.

This page is all about teenagers – their interests, their activities and what they want to read. We accept stories, photos, graphics and ideas from any area teenager.



Submit your stuff to telegramteens@yahoo.com or call Jerry Prickett at 778.4444 x225
For more info visit www.temple-telegram.com/nexgen

TEMPLE DAILY TELEGRAM