



Some Facts about FACT

Since 1998

Why has my child been invited to be a part of FACT?

Freshmen entering Rancho Alamitos High School with Honors English and a math class of Algebra II/Trig Honors proficiency on the California State Standards Tests and district writing assessments are invited to be a part of the FACT class.

What is the purpose of FACT?

The purpose of FACT is to offer advanced and high-achieving students opportunities to strengthen their learning by integrating their thought across the disciplines of English, History, Science, and Math and by helping them develop and strengthen skills vital to success in advanced high school courses and college.

What is different in FACT classes?

In addition to instruction in the California State Content Standards, the FACT teachers cooperate to help students develop skills such as writing and critical thinking that are aimed at success in all curricular areas. The teachers also cooperate to emphasize connections between the subjects so that students can see how literature, history, science and math are connected in the real world and through time.

Also, the students spend the core of their academic day together, this allows the students opportunities to work in teams on long term projects and to develop an academic support group which many former FACT students say they have carried through high school.

What are the benefits of FACT?

Because the instructors can focus on the needs of advanced and high-achieving students FACT helps develop skills that build towards future academic success. Also, the integration of the subjects builds thinking skills that support the life-long learning of our strongest students. For instance, in 2004, 60% of the passing scores on AP exams were earned by former FACT students. These students make up less than 7% of the student body.

Is there more work in FACT?

There is generally more work in high school than in middle school. Besides the addition of one group project each quarter the assignments and grading in FACT are the same as for other freshmen honors classes.

How are the subjects connected?

The subjects are integrated through a weekly timeline, quarterly projects, and other lessons that connect between two or more subjects. One example of a quarter project is the "Plague Project." This was a group project in which students incorporated knowledge of immunology (Biology), medieval culture (World History), analysis of historic

documents (English/Language Arts), and graphing of population changes (Math) to understand the causes and effects of the Black Death.

What other schools offer the FACT program?

Rancho Alamitos High School is the only school in Garden Grove Unified School District with a special program directed at high-level freshmen.

Why don't more schools have a program like this one?

We're not sure. The program has attracted attention from the California Association for the Gifted (CAG), which has invited FACT teachers to present at their conferences and to be model teachers at their summer institute. We have had visitors from neighboring school districts as well as from as far away as Australia and the Ontario, Canada Ministry of Education. At the CAG conferences we have been told that the difficulty in having this type of program is getting teachers, counselors, administrators and the school district to work together. In our case, all of these groups are very cooperative and have helped create, build, and maintain our successful program.

What some of our former students have to say:

“I've learned so much about how important it is for children to be exposed to an integrated curriculum and I just wanted to thank you for all the hard work you put into the FACT program. I'm just beginning to realize how much time and effort needs to be put in to run a successful program. The FACT teachers did an AMAZING job teaching us how to view one subject through different lenses, so that we may integrate the knowledge we take in.”

– Arlene Ortiz, Class of 2002, NYU, majoring in Education and Psychology

“Years after completion of the program I still use the skills I incorporated during my participation in the FACT program. Comparison, cross-analysis, and analyzing subject relationships were all skills I learned through the program. The FACT teachers are top notch and work very closely with the students to provide a unique curriculum experience.”

– Kavi Vyas, Class of 2003, Stanford University

“I love FACT. I miss FACT.”

– Deanna Lam, Class of 2007