

GNMS 7th Grade Life Science Syllabus

Debbie Cox

coxda@troup.org

Course Description: This course is designed for students to gain the knowledge and skills of a life scientist by experiencing the different techniques of learning through phenomena activities, research, literacy activities, hands-on lab activities, projects, and assessments.

Text Sets: A text set is a collection of sources that support a common theme, issue or topic. Text sets are resources of different reading levels, genres, and media that offer perspectives on a theme or topic. By collecting materials ranging from fiction, nonfiction, and poetry to maps, charts, historical documents, photographs, songs, and paintings, teachers can add voices and perspectives to the study of any complex issue. **Topic teaching** utilizes text sets embedded within the life science content to enhance not only life science for students, but also their reading abilities, level of engagement with the content, and active involvement with building their skill base. Throughout the week, students will engage in various texts, vocabulary, and discussion, which leads up to a performance task utilizing or extending upon a challenge text (main focus).

Course Curriculum: The student will...

- Investigate and use the scientific method
- Understand and apply lab safety skills and practices
- Investigate the characteristics of scientific knowledge and how it is achieved
- Investigate the features of the process of scientific inquiry
- Explore units of study including Organization of Living Organisms, Human Body, Genetics, Classification, Natural Selection, Ecology and Biomes

Notebook: Students are required to keep an organized, 3-ring binder that contains the following tab dividers: Bellwork, Notes, Metacognition Journal, Classwork - Study Guides, and Labs.

Bellwork:

Students will be required to keep all bellwork in a 3 ring binder, folder, or spiral/composition notebook. At the beginning of each period, students will come in to find an open-ended question written on the board or displayed on the screen. Questions could be to activate prior knowledge, reinforce what was taught previously, or promote independent thinking. Bellwork will be graded in the form of a quiz, quick check, or a 9 week grade.

Phenomena Based Curriculum:

We will begin our units this year with phenomena texts, videos, activities or labs. Natural phenomena are observable events that occur in the universe and that we can use our science knowledge to explain or predict. The goal of building knowledge in science is to develop general ideas, based on evidence, that can explain and predict phenomena. By centering science education on phenomena that students are motivated to explain, the focus of learning shifts from learning about a topic to figuring out why or how something happens. For example, instead of simply learning about the topics of photosynthesis and mitosis, students are engaged in building evidence-based explanatory ideas that help them figure out how a tree grows. Explaining phenomena and designing solutions to problems allow students to build general science ideas in the context of their application to understanding phenomena in the real world, leading to deeper and more transferable knowledge.

Major Assessments: Major grades (45%) are Tests, Benchmarks, and Major Projects, Essays.

Minor Assessments: (55%) can include Quizzes, minor projects, or Labs, minor writing assignments.

Feedback: (0%) Classwork, Independent Practice, participation, and signed papers.

Grading scale: 90-100 (A), 80-89 (B), 70-79 (C), below 70 (F)

Grading Policy:

- 1) Students will receive a “0” for work not attempted or not submitting an assignment. Students are required to make up all missing work. All work must be turned in with at least half of the task completed to receive the minimum grade of 50.
- 2) Students who are absent, regardless of reason, may schedule to make up any work missed within five days of their return to school. (Refer to Board Policy)
- 3) Students who fail a performance assessment will be **NOT** be able reassess, however at the end of each *semester*, a final exam over all standards that have been taught will be administered as a replacement grade. **Zeros and missing assignments are not eligible for replacement.**

PBIS Positive Behavior Interventions and Support

- PBIS will be used to teach students appropriate life skills to become responsible and respectful citizens.
- GNMS Students are ***respectful, responsible, and ready to learn.***
- Mustang Bucks will be given for students exhibiting Positive Behaviors.

Procedures/Expectations

All students will respect authority, the individual rights of others, and the learning environment as demonstrated by:

1. Entering the classroom quietly, taking your seat, and beginning the assignment given by the teacher.
2. Staying quiet and seated until given alternative directions.
3. Preparing for class by bringing all teacher required materials.
4. Actively participating in your learning experience in a positive manner.
5. Using technology in the classroom appropriately and only as directed.
6. Transitioning or moving in an orderly fashion, throughout the building.

Remind / Google Classroom

Remind is a text messaging **app** that helps teachers, students, and parents communicate quickly, efficiently, and will be utilized to keep you informed of upcoming assignments, projects, and tests. In order to receive messages via text, **text @ba082 to 81010**. I encourage each of you as a **parent and student** to join as this is one of the tools that will be used to keep you informed throughout the year.

Google Classroom will be utilized this year and makes it easy for learners and instructors to connect—inside and outside of schools. Classroom enables us to post assignments, organize folders, and view student work in real-time. Students will sign up in class.

All students should regularly monitor **Infinite Campus** for updated grade information as well as information on upcoming due dates and missing assignments.

Student Name

Parent Signature and Date

Parent email

Parent Cell Number

I have read and understand the syllabus as is stated. If I have any questions or concerns, I am able to contact my 7th grade science teacher at (706) 883-1535 or through email: coxda@troup.org