

**Thurgood Marshall Middle School 2009-10**  
**7th Grade SYLLABUS AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

INSTRUCTOR: Elaine Palmer-Gillum COURSE TITLE: 7th Grade Science  
Phone Number: 858-549-5400 x 2136 e-mail: MrsG9064@aol.com or egillum@sandi.net  
Web Page address: <http://mrsgillumscience.com> TEXT: Glencoe Science, Holt Life Science

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

7TH Grade Science is a one year introductory course that focuses on Life Science and scientific methodology and in addition instructs and utilizes computer technology.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. To achieve the state bench marks and district standards for 7th grade science in the areas Life Science, technology and scientific methodology.
2. To provide knowledge of facts, processes, basic concepts, principles and applications of science.
3. To develop skills of observation, descriptions, rational and creative thinking processes.
4. To develop skills in collecting, organizing, and communicating scientific data and information.
5. To develop those values, aspirations and attitudes which underlie the personal involvement of the individual with the environment and with mankind.
6. Utilizing all the skills that are the course objectives, completing a independent long term scientific investigation (Invention Convention Project)
7. To prepare these students for high school chemistry, physics, earth and life science studies, while developing the mastery for scientific methodology, research, and oral presentations.
8. To nurture a love of science through classroom success, home work reading, Invention Convention projects and interesting labs which will inspire these students to continue in science.

**STATE STANDARDS BEING ADDRESSED THIS YEAR:**

State Standards for 7<sup>th</sup> grade science can be found at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/scgrade7.asp>

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES:**

This will be my 15th year in the classroom. During the past 14 years I have learned that one of the most important keys to success is treating my students with respect and giving them responsibilities and ownership of their success.

Each student is given a 4+ week syllabus the first day of class. This syllabus contains the daily in-class labs, discussion, homework, web & on-line computer work, test dates, notebook turn-ins and field trips. It also has my web site address (which has my syllabus posted), and my e-mail address. I am extremely accessible to my students, which I know they enjoy! There are NO surprises, there are NO tricks. I am honest with my expectations of them and in return I receive their trust and hard work.

All text reading is to be outlined, or complete the section tours. All class lectures are to have notes taken. Daily agendas and journals ARE to be completed. All labs are to have INDIVIDUAL lab write-ups. All units have take home tests, which are to be completed and turned in ON TIME for full credit. For all tests the students are allowed to bring a "cheat" sheet with them that contains the important notes that THEY feel will help them successfully complete the test. All science notebooks are to be turned in ON time.

**Classroom tardies are not tolerated.**

All students are expected to be in their seats and writing the agenda when the final bell rings. If this fails to occur: The first tardy is recorded. The second tardy the student and I "have a date for lunch".

The third tardy a parent/teacher/student conference is held. However, in 7 years this conference has never occurred! The students know that I have ZERO tolerance for tardies! On the first day of class I ask them what they call a person who is consistently late for work?? The answer: UNEMPLOYED!!

I stress that being successful students is THEIR jobs, and they must follow these few rules.

## **GRADING:**

Academic grades are based on a point system. Take Home tests, study guides, reading and outlining, and homework notebooks are weighted very high and have a major impact on a student's grade. Unit tests, while important, do not carry as high of a point count as the 2-3 weeks worth of work that is represented by the notebooks. The students will receive cover sheets for all notebooks and are to put the work in the order presented on this sheet. The due dates are listed on the syllabus. Late work is accepted with a loss of 50% the 1st day and none accepted after 1 week. Special situations are considered on a person by person basis.

Grading is as follows:

A= 89-100% B=79-88.9% C= 69-78.9% D= 59-68.9% F=58.9% or below

Citizenship grades are based on following school, classroom, and science safety rules & guidelines.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Many activities in a science class are difficult or impossible to make up. These include labs, films, videotapes, guest speakers and class discussions. If a student is absent, it is **THEIR responsibility to see me and find out what they missed on the first day they return to school.** This can be done before / after school, during lunch, by e-mail or phone. Parents, please feel free to contact me if your student will be out an extended period of time. I will copy lecture notes and provide as much data as I can for their absences. You can also check my web site. It has my lectures with "student notes" and "teacher notes."

Homework (notebooks & projects) are due on the date stated in the syllabus. If they are absent, their work/test make up is to take place THE FIRST DAY they return to school. After 3 days of non completion, or failure to turn in an assignment, the assignment will be recorded as a zero. Please note, some of these assignments/projects will need to be brought to school by a friend or parent on the due date if the student is unable to attend that day.

Students absent for extended periods of time due to illness will be considered on a case by case basis.

It is important for students to establish good study habits because it will lead to success in high school.

Having a case of "homework flu" on due dates is unfair to the rest of the student body who are in class.

## **CLASSROOM VISITS**

All parents are invited to visit the classroom at any time. Parents who are involved in their students education contribute a great deal to the success of the student in school. In addition, I'd like to know each of you as we work together to help students grow academically, socially and emotionally.

## **Web Page and Web Photos**

During the past 10+ years I photographed the kids doing labs, working on computers, etc. The kids, parents AND grandparents love it, BUT...if you would rather I didn't photograph your student, please send me a note stating that. (The student's names are NEVER placed with their photos)

## **WEEKLY UPDATES**

Every Saturday I send out an e-mail "newsletter" that gives parents an update of what we did, and where we are going. I also include the next week's syllabus. This letter has been EXTREMELY useful for those parents who consistently seem to be pushed out of the "loop" by their darling student! Please e-mail me with your name, your student's name and class period, and the e-mail address you would like me to use for this weekly update. I also have the students on an e-mail list and send them updates. This establishes a wonderful means of communication for me, the kids, and their parents!

Please e-mail me (MrsG9064@aol.com) to set up your e-mail newsletter! In the subject box please type: your student's class period & their last & first name. In the letter area please type YOUR name and phone number. If you, and your student (if they have a separate email address) do this on the first day of school they will earn 10 extra credit points!

Thanks and welcome to 7<sup>th</sup> grade science!

Elaine Gillum

(MrsG)