

Science with Mrs. Fischer at Bret Harte Middle School Course Description & Expectations

LAB SAFETY- Proper behavior and safety are very important in a lab class. Any student who is unprepared, lacks prerequisite requirements, or who fools around or behaves in an unsafe manner in laboratory activities will be removed from the activity and may receive zero points for each lab missed. Students must follow instructions and show respect for others in the classroom. **No student will be allowed to endanger themselves or others, misuse equipment, or interfere in the work of others.** Labs and lab activities are a privilege, not a right. The Bret Harte Lab Safety rules are attached.

SCIENCE FOLDER, HOMEWORK, DIRECTIONS & NEATNESS: Assignments and any ongoing work will be kept neatly, organized and complete in the folder. Homework is given almost every night, including Fridays. Students are expected to bring their folder to class each day. Unfinished class work is homework unless otherwise stated. **Students should spend 30 minutes per night per class (including Friday nights), if homework takes longer on a daily basis, please let me know.** Homework assignments often involve reading from the textbook, taking notes, completing activities in the Science Notebook workbook, or Reading Essentials workbook, as well as worksheets or short assignments, such as completing thinking maps or other work from class. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified. **Follow directions!** Always assume that homework from the textbook must be done in full complete sentences (FCS) that restate the question (RSQ) or students may write out the question (WOTQ) and leave space for the answer if they have difficulty answering the question so they may still receive full credit for attempting their homework IF the student makes additions when we go over the assignment using red pen. Students will organize all notes, handouts, worksheets, homework, and other assignments in a folder dedicated to Science. Work from this will be checked and graded periodically by the teacher. If an assignment (graded or un-graded) is missing, or is incomplete the work receives zero points for the check. Show self-confidence in your work ... keep papers neat by putting them away, avoiding unrelated doodles & having the correct heading on your paper. Also use proper spelling, grammar, while keeping the work and corrections neat and complete. Be sure to read and **follow directions** on assignments - these all can have an impact on your grade. **Pages in the Science Notebook must be done in pen.** Make sure your work reflects the quality of your ideas and effort!

QUIZZES/TESTS/FINAL TEST- Quizzes are short exams to check for understanding and may be given unannounced. Tests are announced in advance and students should use their homework and class work to help them study in preparation for the test. Students will review for tests in class and must also study at home. Students will take a cumulative final test near the end of each semester.

LABS & PROJECTS- We will be doing frequent hands-on labs/activities in small groups as we explore scientific concepts. We will do several longer projects throughout the year. Students may be given time in class to work on some projects, usually they will need to complete the project as homework. Students may also need to coordinate with other students work on a project outside of school. Grading of work done in groups may be individualized for each member based on his or her participation and contribution. *If there is an absence on a project due date, please make arrangements for the project to be brought to school on the date it is due (work may be delivered to the office or can be delivered to myself before / after school).*

GRADES

The San Jose Unified School District mails report cards to reports to students after each 6 week grading period. It is important for students and parents to check grades and assignment credit on the Portal. I try to update the grade book weekly; collected assignments should be entered from the previous week by Thursday. Letter grades for this class are based on a percentage of total possible points. Students are responsible for doing all of their own assignments, which must be turned in on time. Extra credit is offered on some assignments. Students are expected to avoid plagiarism by using quotes or paraphrasing AND accurately citing their resources in bibliographies using the MLA format. Students are expected to complete all assignments on time.

LATE WORK- As students move into middle school, they need to take responsibility for turning in their work, complete and on time. Missing assignments are recorded as a "Z" or zero points. There will be one amnesty day for the year (October 31st), when any late work may be turned in and will be given partial credit (70% of the score that the paper merits). **After October 31st, late assignments will NOT be accepted.**

ABSENCES/MISSED WORK- Students are expected to be in class on-time each day they are well. Absent students must check class website and/or call a Study Buddy for assignments and missed notes. Some assignments missed during excused absences can be made up upon return (prior arrangements are appreciated when possible), it is the student's responsibility to arrange a time to make up the missed assignments with Mrs. Fischer. **Students are responsible for obtaining any worksheets and notes given during absences.** Absent work from illness is due # days absent after return to school. (If you are absent for 2 days due to illness, your work is due 2 days after your return). Students who participated in independent study should realize that the work assigned cannot adequately take the place of all class activities that occurred while they were gone.

CONTACT INFORMATION- I'm usually available to work with students before and after school if I know in advance; otherwise, students and/or families may drop-in Fridays from 2:50-3:20. It's best to make an appointment to make sure we'll meet up. The best way to reach me is through e-mail: jill_fischer@sjusd.org (there is an underscore between the first and last name) or to telephone the school office at (408) 535-6270 and leave a message.

Above 100% A+;
100% to 93% A;
92.9% to 90% A-;
89.9% to 87% B+;
86.9% to 83% B;
82.9 to 80% B-;
79.9% to 77% C+;
76.9% to 73% C;
72.9 to 70% C-;
69.9% to 67% D+;
66.9% to 63% D;
62.9 to 60% D-;
below 60% F

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Welcome to Bret Harte Middle School and Science with Mrs. Fischer! Many questions can be answered about our year-long course by exploring my class website, it contains course information, homework (updated weekly). There are interesting links to various resources. When looking at the classroom website, make sure you are looking at information for your student's class since there will be information for both 6th and 7th grade science classes this year. The class website can be accessed from the Bret Harte teacher's pages or by entering the address: **<http://UnderTheMicroscope.MicroFisch.com>**

6th grade Earth Science concepts: Tools of a Scientist, Lab Safety & Metric System, Earth's Structure & Plate Tectonics, Shaping the Earth's Surface through earthquakes, volcanoes, weathering & erosion), Ecology & Resources (natural resources, and the transfer of energy on Earth, Earth's water and weather). Textbook: *Focus on Earth Science*.

7th grade Life Science concepts: Lab safety & metric system, Systems of the body, Cell biology, Genetics & evolution, History of the Earth and life on Earth, Structure and function in living things, and Classification. Textbook: *Focus on Life Science*.

Additional details for each grade level are outlined in the California Content Standards (a link is provided on the class website). Our Science textbooks are the California editions published by Glencoe McGraw-Hill in 2007. Through San Jose Unified School District's Opportunity 21, we will be emphasizing the 21st Century Skills (which include: critical thinking & problem solving, collaboration, creative thinking, communication, & global citizenship) as we shift to the Common Core Standards.

Bronco Attitude Behavior Expectations:

	<u>RESPECT</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>	<u>HONESTY</u>	<u>SELF-CONFIDENCE</u>	<u>COOPERATION</u>
Classroom Rules (see back for more details)	<p>Show respect for each other, all school staff and property.</p> <p>Turn in work on time.</p> <p>Follow all district & school rules, including the dress code.</p>	<p>Be in your assigned seat with the appropriate materials BEFORE the bell rings.</p> <p>Keep track of assignments in a planner and binder/folder.</p> <p>Follow the Science Student Lab Safety Contract.</p>	<p>Always do your OWN work.</p>	<p>Participate in class by answering and asking questions & during group work.</p> <p>Put your heading on papers & keep them neat.</p> <p>Ask for help when needed.</p>	<p>Listen carefully to the person in charge.</p> <p>Follow all the directions.</p> <p>Obtain & complete work on time (includes make up work).</p> <p>Follow the Science Student Lab Safety Contract. (Has details about gum & food.)</p>

Students who do not follow these rules and expectations can expect to earn additional assignment, phone call/email home, classroom detention, and/or a behavior referral to the school administration. If necessary, a parent, teacher, and student conference will be scheduled. Disruptive behavior in class will result in disciplinary actions in accordance with school policy. Similarly, school policy will be followed in and out of the science classroom with regard to bullying, academic dishonesty, tardies, gum and cell phones.

All school district and school rules must be followed. Bullying is unacceptable; all students deserve to be safe and feel safe. If a student is being bullied, report it to an administrator. Students are NOT allowed to chew gum on campus. Cell phones are NOT to be used while students are on campus (this includes before/after school, during passing time, lunch, making or receiving calls, text messaging, etc.); they are to remain off and out of sight. Confiscated phones are turned over to an administrator/ the office for a parent/guardian pick up. Personal electronic devices should stay at home along with other items that are easily distracting.

Details on \$6 lab donation to follow in a few days.

REQUIRED MATERIALS TO BRING TO SCIENCE EVERY DAY *If providing these supplies presents a hardship, please let me know.*

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| <input type="checkbox"/> a two pocket folder with prongs specifically for Science (<i>please avoid plastic versions; I recommend buying at least 4 of these now but your student will use one at a time; should cost about 15 cents each if on sale</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/> plastic sheet protector (<i>will need 4 total</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/> 8 1/2" by 11" white lined binder paper (<i>refill during the year</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/> Bret Harte <u>planner</u> (or other consistent method for writing homework)
<input type="checkbox"/> SSR book, | <input type="checkbox"/> black, dark blue, AND red ink pens,
<input type="checkbox"/> sharpened #2 pencils AND eraser
<input type="checkbox"/> at least one highlighter (pink, blue, yellow and/or orange)
<input type="checkbox"/> a pouch, box, pocket or bag in backpack to organize the items listed above.

<input type="checkbox"/> <i>optional items: dry White-out tape, calculator, coloring items, tape, glue, safety scissors are optional. AVOID liquid white-out & AVOID permanent markers.</i> |
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Due to the generosity of our Community Club in providing class sets of textbooks in Science, students should take care of their textbooks at home.

If lost or damaged, the Glencoe McGraw- Hill Textbook cost is \$75, the "Science Notebook" student edition is \$25, "Reading Essentials" student edition is \$30.

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