



Fifth Grade Instructional Plan for Science and Social Studies

Course Overview

Fifth-grade science in Texas is an integrated science course with a strong emphasis on Physical science. Students will explore various topics across scientific and engineering practices, matter and energy, force and motion, earth and space, and organisms and environments, while developing critical thinking, scientific inquiry, and problem-solving skills.

Instruction is based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), with a focus on building a deep understanding of key concepts through hands-on lab investigations, STEM experiences, and real-world application. Students will engage in scientific practices, use evidence to construct explanations, and learn how science connects to everyday life.

Throughout the year, students will:

- Hands-On Investigations: frequent TEKS-aligned labs
- Interactive Notebooks: Used for vocabulary, diagrams, notes, and reflections
- Modeling & Simulations: Digital and physical models to support abstract concepts
- Collaborative Learning: Group activities, peer discussion, and cooperative lab work
- STEM Challenges: Engineering design activities tied to real-world problems
- Spiraling Review: Reinforcement of previously taught standards across the year

Contact Information

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Classroom Expectations

Our classroom is a safe learning place that encourages teamwork, positive feedback, and academic achievement. All students will be respectful to others. We will be good listeners to the teacher and to others' ideas. All students will be hard-working contributors in the process of getting their education in order to be successful and reach their full potential.

Expectation 1: Be prepared with supplies

- Prioritize attendance
- Be ready to learn every day

Expectation 2: Participate actively and take responsibility for your learning

- Complete all assigned tasks
- Engage in class discussions, writing tasks, labs, and learning opportunities
- Complete work on time

Expectation 3: Be safe

- Handle lab equipment and materials with care
- Walk at all times
- Report problems to an adult

Positive reinforcement and clear routines will help students learn and meet these expectations. If expectations are not met, the teacher will first reteach and remind the student(s) of expectations. If a student continues to fail to meet expectations, they will be redirected, then parents will be contacted. If a student is unable to meet expectations after these preventative measures, an office referral will be made.



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Classroom Behavior:

Entering and Exiting the Classroom:

- Students enter the classroom on a Zero Level/ No Talking.
- To exit the classroom: students will be called, 1 table at a time, to line up, push chairs under the table, line up on a Zero Level/ No talking, and wait on a level zero for class to leave.

Consequences for disrupting the classroom while entering or exiting the classroom:

- 1st time: Student will be politely asked to correctly reenter, line up, or exit the classroom.
- 2nd time: Student will be politely asked to correctly reenter, line up, or exit the classroom, and parents will be contacted by us.
- If a student has not corrected the behavior after the parent contact, a parent/student conference will be requested.

Chairs:

- Students will sit with feet on the floor, facing the correct direction.
- Students will sit with hands on top of the table. Hands will not be in lap, on face, or touching other students.
- Chairs have 4 legs, and the legs are expected to remain on the floor at all times. We do not lean our chairs/stools back on 2 legs; students can fall and get hurt. This is a hazard to the safety of your student and others around them.
- The exception is if a student has a 504, IEP, etc.

Consequences for disrupting the classroom by leaning back in a chair or not sitting correctly:

- 1st time: student will be reminded quietly on how to properly sit in a chair/stool.
- 2nd time: student will be asked to remove chair/stool and stand for the remainder of the class period. Loss of 15 minutes lunch detention for student to practice how to sit correctly.
- If a student has not corrected the behavior after the parent contact, a parent/student conference will be requested.

Communication within the classroom Expectations:

- Asking Questions: Raise hand and wait to be called on.
- Small Group Work: Whisper within the group; other groups should not be able to hear your conversation.
- Whole Group Class Work: Eyes on the speaker, listening to what the speaker is saying, build on the conversation, and always encourage, not discourage, classmates.
- Be Respectful when communicating: we speak to each other; we do not yell or call people disrespectful names.

Consequences for disrupting classroom communication within the classroom:

- 1st time: Individual student will be spoken to quietly and reminded of the expectations.
- 2nd time: Student will be spoken to, and parent will be contacted about behavior.



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- 3rd time: Student will be spoken to, and parent will be contacted about behavior, and 15 minutes for lunch detention will be taken so the student can practice how to communicate respectfully during class.
- If a student has not corrected the behavior after the parent contact, a parent/student conference will be requested to discuss why the student is disrupting class and how we can work together to help correct the behavior.

Moving Around the Classroom:

- Sharpening pencils: can be completed before class or after all instructions have been given. Students can not get up to sharpen pencils during a lesson; no exceptions.
- Students are not allowed to move around the classroom unless they have asked to get something after directions are given or have been given permission to do so.
- Bathroom: We go as a group during the class period. Students will not go individually to the bathroom unless it is an emergency.
- Nose bleeds: GET A TISSUE, then let the teacher know.

Chromebook Expectations:

- **Assigned Numbers:** Each student will be assigned a specific Chromebook number corresponding to their period and seat number to easily track accountability and care.

Classroom Policy

Cell phones are not allowed in the classroom at any time. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Phones must remain in a backpack at all times. They are not allowed in a hoodie or pockets.

- District Policy: Students are permitted to have cell phones on school premises, but devices must be turned off and stored away at all times. Use of cell phones and other electronic devices is not permitted at any time during the school day; this includes during dismissal.
- A fee of \$20.00 will be collected if the campus confiscates a personal cell phone. The student or the student's parent/guardian may retrieve the device after paying the fee.

Consequences:

- 1st time/Every time: phone will be taken to the office and 15 minutes for lunch detention will be taken, and parents will be contacted.
- If a student has not corrected the behavior after the parent contact, a parent/student conference will be requested.
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Attendance Policy & Its Importance

In Texas, the **attendance policy for 5th-grade students**, like for all public school grades, is governed by the **Texas Education Code (TEC)**. The state emphasizes regular attendance as crucial to academic success and has specific laws to ensure students attend and participate in school.

Types of Absences



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Excused Absences – Illness, medical appointments, family emergencies, religious holidays, etc.

Unexcused Absences – Skipping school, unexplained absences, or those not approved by the district

Legal Consequences for Poor Attendance

Texas takes truancy seriously:

Parents can face legal consequences if their child is absent without a valid excuse for 10 or more days (or parts of days) within 6 months.

Schools may refer cases to **truancy court** or **file a complaint against the parent** for contributing to nonattendance.

Schools are required to **notify parents** after a student's 3rd unexcused absence.

Please notify the school if your child will be absent. Frequent or extended absences may make it more difficult for your child to learn the foundational skills necessary for success this year and in future school years.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the school year, students will be able to:

Using SAVVAS and Science Penguin, students will develop science knowledge such as:

- Safety and how to conduct an investigation
- Comparing and contrasting properties of matter
- Distinguishing between physical and chemical changes
- Analyzing the effects of balanced and unbalanced forces
- Patterns and effects of different forms of energy and the behavior of light
- The effects of Earth's constantly shifting surface and natural resources
- Relationships between the Earth-Sun-Moon
- Relationships, cycles, and systems within ecosystems
- Distinguish between inherited traits (e.g., cactus spines) and acquired traits or learned behaviors

Course Resources

- Chromebook (provided by Midland ISD)
- Journals and writing utensils (part of the school supply list)
- SAVVAS
- Digital Science Penguin

Science STAAR Vocabulary Quizzes – Important Information

This year, we will be preparing for the Science STAAR test, and as part of our preparation, students will have a **weekly vocabulary quiz every Thursday**.



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- Each student will have a **vocabulary folder** that they will take home **every night** to study and review their words. They will also be shared through Google Classroom.
- Students are expected to **pass each quiz with a grade of 80 or higher**.
- If a student scores below 80, they will be required to complete **corrections on Friday**.
- If corrections are **not completed by Friday**, the student will be required to **complete them during lunch detention** to finish them.

Please help support your child by ensuring they review their vocabulary words nightly. Consistent practice will help them succeed on both the quizzes and the STAAR test!

Social Studies

By the end of the school year, students will be able to:

Using SAVAAS Education, students will develop social studies knowledge such as:

- Colonization → Revolution → Constitution → Civil War → Modern U.S.
- Map skills, U.S. regions, settlement patterns, humans & environment
- Free enterprise, supply & demand, historical economic activities
- Colonial government, Constitution, democracy, rights, civic participation
- Arts, diverse contributions, innovations shaping U.S. society
- Critical thinking, research, communication, decision-making with

Course Resources

- Chromebook (provided by Midland ISD)
- Journals and writing utensils (part of the school supply list)
- SAAVAS Education

Grading Policy

According to Midland ISD Grading Policy:

The summative evaluation of a student's grade during a recording period should be based on sufficient data collected in class in the form of various assessments. Regular and periodic assessment of student progress ensures a student has ample time for remediation.

Major assignments - 40% Minor assignments - 60%

Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns. We are excited to work together to make this a successful year of learning!

Retake & Late Work Policies

- **Retakes:** Students who fail an assignment or assessment have an opportunity to retake or correct within 5 school days, with a maximum reassessment grade of 75



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- **Extra Credit:** Extra credit assignments will not be offered.
- **Make-Up Work:** Students receive at least one day to make up work for each excused day absent.
- **Self-Management:** Teachers will not notify parents of needed corrections; students are expected to manage their own responsibilities.
- **504 plan or an Individualized Education Program (IEP):** Please know that their specific accommodations will be fully implemented and respected in our classroom. My goal is to support every student in reaching their full potential.

****In grades 2-5, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 or above in reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.****

Please fill out the portion below and return this portion to your teacher.

We acknowledge that we have read and that we understand the expectations in 5th Grade Science. We agree to contact the teacher should we have any questions or concerns regarding this instructional plan.

Parent Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Cell Phone Number: _____

E-Mail: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____