

8th Grade Science Syllabus and Classroom Procedures

Ms. Wong Room 104 cwong@smusd.us

Class websites: Schoology - Science 8

[Ms. Wong's HEHMS page](#) (General information only)

Course Description

8th Grade Science is an integrated course that explores topics of earth science, life science, physical science, and engineering. Learning will build upon prior experiences, content knowledge, and skills. We will use a Science curriculum aligned with the CA Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) to guide our learning, lessons, and inquiry. Students will use the science and engineering practices: asking questions, defining problems, making predictions, planning and carrying out investigations, collecting and analyzing data, constructing explanations, designing and evaluating solutions, developing models, engaging in argument using evidence, communicating information, using computational thinking, and participating in discussions to share findings and debate claims. Integration of technology will be embedded throughout the course.

Course Goals

1. Gain a better understanding and appreciation for science.
2. Apply science to the world around them.
3. Provide data and evidence to support conclusions, refute claims, or explain concepts and phenomena.
4. Ask questions, seek solutions, think critically, and problem solve.
5. Be proactive and self-advocate.
6. Manage time accordingly and be on task.
7. Persevere through challenges.
8. Maintain a positive "can do" attitude.
9. Collaborate and work productively together.
10. Communicate respectfully and effectively.
11. Be organized.

Suggested Daily Materials

1. 2-3 Science Notebooks (7.5" x 9.75") approx. 100+ pages, wireless composition book
2. SMUSD Chromebook & charger
(No personal computers or tablets)
3. Wired earbuds/headphones
4. Blue AND black ink pen
5. Colored ink pen other than blue or black
6. Pencil
7. Eraser
8. Self-contained manual pencil sharpener
9. Highlighters
10. Ruler
11. Standard basic calculator
12. Pack of colored pencils and/or markers
13. Post-it-notes



HMS Student Binder Reminder

Each student is highly encouraged to record their assignments and upcoming assessments into their HMS agenda, which may be verbally discussed or from Schoology.

Classroom Expectations

1. Be respectful of each other and school property.
2. Be responsible for your own safety and learning.
3. Be prepared to learn.
4. Be on time.
5. Be honest.

Classroom Policies and Procedures

1. Be in your assigned seat when the tardy bell rings or be marked tardy.
2. Take out all necessary items before the bell rings.
3. Follow directions and safety rules at all times. A safety test must be passed at the beginning of the year. Failure to follow safety rules will result in a loss of lab privileges and a zero for the lab.
4. Tasks like sharpening pencils and throwing away trash are to be accomplished before/after class discussions or when the teacher is not addressing the class in order to avoid distracting others.
5. **No personal electronic devices, smartwatches, tablets, or phones.** All personal devices must be turned off and put away prior to class or they will be confiscated. No recording (photos, audio, or videos) will be taken without being instructed to do so by the teacher. Technology will be utilized in the class at times and only specific devices may be used. Abuse of electronic devices and/or media will result in disciplinary action.
6. No food, gum, or drinks (except bottled water) are allowed.
7. Use the restroom before school, during passing periods, during break, during lunch, and after school. Using the restroom during class time should be reserved for emergencies ONLY. Signing in/out is required if students MUST leave the room.
8. Supplies that are borrowed must be returned to their proper place after use.
9. Keep personal belongings under the table. No backpacks are allowed in class.
10. Keep the classroom clean. The classroom must be clean for the next period before dismissal.
11. Push in all lab stools and align all tables before dismissal.
12. The teacher dismisses the class, not the bell.

Discipline Consequences

Students are required to follow district, school, and classroom policies in order to create an ideal learning environment. Each student has the right to learn and it is not fair to disrupt or distract from another's learning. The following steps will be taken depending on the severity of the action:

1. Warning
2. Student conference and/or move seat
3. Email and/or phone call to parent/guardian
4. Parent/guardian conference, behavior contract, and/or referral to office

Grades

Grades will be determined by the percent of total points earned based on the following scale in the following categories:

101%	A+	73-76.9%	C
94-100.9%	A	70-72.9%	C-
90-93.9%	A-	67-69.9%	D+
87-89.9%	B+	63-66.9%	D
83-86.9%	B	60-62.9%	D-
80-82.9%	B-	0-59.9%	F
77-79.9%	C+		

- Assignments
- Labs, activities, and projects
- Participation/contribution to class and discussions
- Assessments

Refer to the [Grading Rubrics](#) for detailed breakdown of how assignments will be graded.

Assignments

Unless specifically indicated by the teacher, all assignments must be completed individually and independently on the day assigned and turned in on the day they are due in order to be prepared for the class discussion. Assignments must follow the format described and provided by the teacher.

- Most of the work in the year will be completed in the student's Interactive Science Notebook (ISN). Students will take notes from discussions and complete assignments in the ISN. Students may use their ISN on assessments. The ISN must be neat and organized. An electronic teacher's ISN version will be provided to help students stay organized. ([ISN Guidelines](#))
- Classwork will be due at the end of class.
- Projects may occur 1-2 times per year. Projects may include individual and group components.
- Real-world applications will occur throughout units.
- Notes will vary from student to student and will be the student's responsibility. Notes will not be written or provided for the students to copy down word for word. Students must listen, summarize, and write their own personal notes from class activities and discussions in their ISN. Notes should be tailored to meet each student's individual needs. The class will be based heavily on class discussions and student inquiry.
- Approximately 25 minutes per night should be spent on 8th grade science. Homework should be minimal since the majority of the work should be finished during class. This may involve finishing classwork, reading, IXL skills, and/or independently studying and reviewing concepts.
- Formative and summative assessments will occur in each unit. Benchmark assessments may occur during the year. Any information from discussions, the ISN, labs/activities, projects, assignments, readings, or videos will be included. Students must apply concepts on assessments.
- Students may have options to retake an assessment or submit ISN assignments for a maximum score of 75%. Assessment scores below 50% will only have the option to retake the assessment on a designated day/time.

Students are responsible for checking with the course calendar on Schoology daily, even during absences.

Absences/Late Work

- If absent, it is the student's responsibility to check Schoology for the course calendar and the daily ISN assignment on the day of the absence ASAP. The student should set an appointment with the teacher through email to earn make-up participation points and go over concepts
- The student has the number of days absent plus one additional day upon return to turn in make-up work or it is considered late.
- If absent on an assessment, the student must set up a time with the teacher to take the assessment on the day the student returns to school.
- If absent on a lab/activity day, the student will make up the lab/activity or get a zero.
- Late work acceptance and point deductions will be determined on a case-by case basis by the teacher. All late work must be individually discussed with the teacher and an appointment made through email is highly suggested. Any late work submitted after the end of a unit or a grading term will not be accepted.
- Make-up opportunities will be available on a weekly basis.

Academic Honesty

Any student involved with cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, allowing another student to copy his/her work, or using a cell phone or other electronic device to gain an unfair advantage is not acceptable and will receive a zero for the assignment/assessment. Offenders will be subject to the school's honesty/integrity of student work policy WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

Group/Pair Work

Cooperative group/pair work is a large part of this class. Group/pair work will help foster a community, help to learn from each other, and develop social skills. Guidelines for group/pair work are:

1. Respect each other.
2. Groups/Pairs are determined by the teacher and may be changed.
3. Each person is responsible for contributing to the learning, understanding, and success of their group/pair.
4. Each person is responsible for his/her own success.
5. If there is a question, ask your partner(s) first, then ask the teacher. "Ask three, before me."

Group and Class Discussion Etiquette

1. Respect each person's thoughts and statements.
2. Discussing includes both speaking and listening. Students should be able to summarize each person's statement.
3. One person should not dominate the discussion. Each person is responsible for and required to share their thoughts and statements.
4. Do not talk over one another or cut off another person's statements.
5. Fulfill your group role to ensure group success.
6. Be prepared to share out to the class the group/pair's main ideas.

Citizenship and Attendance

Citizenship grades are determined by attendance, punctuality, conduct during class, attitude, contribution to the class, and [Class Dojo](#) data.

PowerSchool

PowerSchool is a student information system for students' course grades and attendance. Students must check PowerSchool for the course grade, not Schoology.

Schoology

Schoology is a Learning Management System which hosts the course website. Students will submit assignments, take assessments, participate in online discussion posts, access course resources, and view the course calendar through Schoology.

Class Dojo

Class Dojo is an online communication system that helps teachers, students, and parents/guardians manage, monitor, and provide feedback on class participation and behavior. The scores from Class Dojo will be entered into PowerSchool as a participation grade. It is highly suggested for students to earn 8 participation points each week. Students and parents/guardians will need to create separate accounts with a specific online class access code to monitor student behavior and points.

Online Etiquette

Student conduct must be in an academic manner. Schoology, Class Dojo, and collaborative Google application tools are not forms of social media. Cyberbullying, inappropriate language, unrelated blogging, copying, providing or using explicit answers to assessment questions, impersonating another student, etc. will not be tolerated and consequences will ensue.

Technology Security Tips

Many aspects of the class (assignments and grading) involve using PowerSchool, Schoology, Google applications, Class Dojo, and other pieces of technology that may require logins. Protect your work by being aware of the following:

- Always manually log out of each application, program, website, and Chromebook.
- Never allow a website or device to remember your password.
- Never share your password with other students.
- Do not allow other students to use your device while you are logged in.

Contact/Individual Assistance

Good communication and self-advocacy skills indicate your commitment to improvement and sense of responsibility. A conversation with your teacher about your strengths, academic needs, and how to improve is an important step in your growth and success. E-mail is the best form of contact. Students must email from their SMUSD email.

8th Grade Science Syllabus Contract

Student and Parents/Guardians:

Student and parents/guardians understand the following:

- This course syllabus is available on the HMS website and Schoology
- Student expectations on assignments
- In-person/Online classroom policies, procedures, and conduct
- The absence, late work, and make-up procedures
- Grades are posted regularly on PowerSchool
- Participation and behavior are posted on Class Dojo
- Any form of academic dishonesty is strictly prohibited
- The course calendar is provided online on Schoology and should be viewed regularly
- Individual assistance is available outside of class time

Student:

As a class, we have reviewed the course guidelines. By signing this electronic contract, the student understands the entire syllabus and will follow all the class rules, policies, and procedures set by the syllabus for the duration of the school year. The student promises to be diligent in his/her daily effort, demonstrate a positive attitude, and behave responsibly and respectfully. The student also understands that it is his/her responsibility to communicate with the teacher immediately regarding questions, clarifications, or to schedule make-up items.

A link to the electronic contract form ([click here for student contract](#)) will be provided on the HMS website and on Schoology. Please answer all of the questions appropriately and provide a digital signature (you will type your name in the space provided).

Parents/Guardians:

All work will be graded according to the grading rubrics and distributed by the percentages set on the class syllabus. Each semester, there will be two progress reports, a quarter grade, and a semester grade given to the student according to the

grade reporting schedule set by the school. Please see the HMS and/or course calendar for grade reporting dates. Grades will be uploaded periodically on PowerSchool gradebook, which is a convenient way for parents/guardians to check a student's progress. *If questions arise regarding a student's grade, it is recommended to discuss the matter directly with the student and ask them to review the graded assignment. Students should also be encouraged to take responsibility for their education and speak directly with the teacher on their own and ask for help.*

By signing the parent/guardian portion of this electronic contract, the parent/guardian understands the entire syllabus and the rules, policies, procedures, and expectations set for the student. The parent/guardian agrees to monitor the student on a regular basis and communicate with the student and teacher. Frequent contact with parents/guardians will help to encourage the student's achievement. Please provide the most current contact information in the electronic contract form.

I appreciate that you have taken the time to read through this syllabus with your child. I am looking forward to an exciting and rewarding year and building our teacher-parent/guardian-student relationship.

A link to the electronic contract form ([click here for parent contract](#)) will be provided on the HMS website and on Schoology. Only the adult(s) directly responsible for the student need to fill out the form. Please answer all of the questions and provide a digital signature (you will type your name in the space provided).