Eighth Grade Instructional Plan for Science

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Course Overview

Eighth grade science in Texas is an integrated science course to prepare students for the variety of science courses in high school. Students will explore various topics across biology, earth science, chemistry, and physics, 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:

- Conduct hands-on investigations: frequent TEKS-aligned labs
- Build interactive Notebooks: Used for vocabulary, diagrams, notes, and reflections
- Use modeling & simulations: Digital and physical models to support abstract concepts
- Collaborate in learning: Group activities, peer discussion, and cooperative lab work
- Participate in STEM challenges: Engineering design activities tied to real-world problems
- Get spiraling review: Reinforcement of previously taught standards across the year

Classroom Expectations

Our classroom is a safe learning place, which encourages teamwork, positive feedback, and academic achievement. All students will be respectful to others. We will be good listeners to the teacher and to other's 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 everyday

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

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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 filled out.

Attendance Policy & Its Importance

Regular attendance is vital to your child's academic development. Eighth grade is an important year in science - this year lays the foundation for high school science courses. When students attend daily, they stay current with new skills, deepen their knowledge of the world, develop thinking skills, and practice important habits that support lifelong learning.

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

Learning Objectives

By the end of the year, students will have developed science knowledge such as:

- Safety and how to conduct and investigation
- Traits of organisms
- Change and stability of environments
- Cell structure and function
- Relationship between force and motion
- How energy is transferred
- Properties of matter
- How matter is conserved through chemical changes
- Global weather patterns and their effect on living things
- Components of the universe
- Natural cycles that occur on Earth
- How climate change is affecting processes on Earth

Course Resources

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

Grading Policy

According to Midland ISD Grading Policy:

Students must receive feedback on every graded assignment within three to seven days. Major assignments will receive feedback within ten days. Teachers will, at a minimum, communicate with students and their guardians every ten school days regarding upcoming assessments, classroom reminders, learning topics covered in class, and/or expectations. Regular communication may be electronic through the adopted Student Information System or other messaging applications. Teachers will maintain a parent communication log during each grading cycle.

Major assignments - 60% Minor assignments - 40%
Semester exams count as 15% toward the final semester grade

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Classroom Supplies
1 Large spiral notebook (Mead 5 Star preferred with over 100 pages)
1 Plastic folder with brads
Pencils, colored pencils, scissors, glue
Donations of disinfectant wipes, tissue and duck tape would be greatly appreciated.

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

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

We acknowledge that we have read and that we understand the expectations in 8th 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:_____