**AR Johnson Health Science and Engineering Magnet School**

**7th Grade Life Science Syllabus for 2024-2025**

My name is Kristina Istre (pronounced “East”) and I will be teaching the 7th grade Life Science class this year.  I have been teaching for twenty-seven years and am a very proud mother of a son, Nicholas, who recently graduated from Georgia Southern with a Computer Engineering Degree. I am also honored to be the current President for the Georgia Science Teacher Association.

I am excited to start this year with the fantastic opportunity of teaching all of the amazing 7th grade students here at A.R. Johnson.  I believe that teachers need to work closely with parents and students to provide a positive atmosphere of communication and consistency. I will work diligently to educate your child so that this year will be a time of growth and success. I thank you in advance for your support, and I look forward to a terrific 2024-2025 school year here at AR Johnson Magnet School!

Sincerely,

Ms. Kristina Istre

Email: istrekr@BOE.Richmond.k12.ga.us

Remind message class code:  Parents/Guardians: @arj7scipar    and      Student Remind Code: @arjscistu

**Course Overview:**

The goal of a life science course is to teach students about the diversity of life on Earth, including human biology, animals, and plants. Life Science helps students develop scientific knowledge and ways of exploring the world. This class will require you to perform numerous hands-on activities (Science Fair projects, presentations and experiments), as well as weekly quizzes and monthly tests. Successful completion of this course is a team effort including the student, parent/guardian, and the teacher.   My goal is for students to want to participate by creating a more exciting and enjoyable learning experience!

**Life Science Units to be taught:**

* Unit 0= Think Like a Scientist (Lab Safety and the Scientific Method)
* Unit 1 = Stability and Change in Living Systems (Ecosystems, Artificial selection, Biomes, and Human Impact on an Ecosystem)
* Unit 2A= Structure and Function in Living Systems (Cells, Level of Organization, and Body Systems)
* Unit 2B: Structure and Function in Living Systems (Genetics)
* Unit 3= Patterns in Living Systems (Classification Systems)

**Launch Pad, Canvas, and Textbook**

* Launchpad is our single sign on platform. All the apps/webtools that students will access throughout the school year, in all their courses, can be found here. You may also download the Classlink app to your device to access Launchpad from your phone or tablet.
* Our learning management system, Canvas, can be found in each student's Launchpad. The courses they are registered for will be displayed on the Dashboard in Canvas. Click on each course to find announcements, assignments, and all online instruction. You may also download the Canvas app for parents and the Canvas app for students to your cell phone or tablet.
* Students will use consumable textbooks (like workbooks) that they will keep in the classroom. However, sometimes pages may be torn out to be used for homework. There is also an online textbook in the LaunchPad.

**Supplies Needed:**

* Blue or Black pens and pencils
* Binder to be used for Math, Science, and Social Studies
* 4 Composition books or spiral notebooks (2 for Science, 1 for ELA, and 1 for Math)
* Loose Leaf paper
* Dividers for the binders
* Colored pencils and Markers (for at home projects)
* Inexpensive headphones (only to be used during specific times, as directed by the teacher)
* Locker Rental- sold during for $10.00
* Charged laptop daily- the laptop is issued by ARJ to all students after the technology usage forms are completed (Purchasing the inexpensive technology insurance is highly recommended).
* Agendas will be provided by ARJ- this is a reminder that students should carry these to every class every day to write down their homework and other important deadlines.
* ID badges will also be given to students during the first week of school. The ID badges should be worn at all times while at school.

**Grading Policy**

Middle and High school student performance will be recorded and reported in all courses by numerical grades, based on a 100-point scale.

* Calculation of Final Grades Final grades will be determined by the cumulative semester average using the following criteria:
* **Minor Grades** = 60% Examples include quizzes, labs, and other graded assignments to assess certain standards in a unit of study. Minimum number of minor grades per 6-week progress report period = 5
* **Major Grades** = 40% Examples include unit tests, daily question notebooks, research papers, project-based assignments, and other culminating assessments to measure mastery of standards that comprise a unit of study. Minimum number of major grades per 6-week progress report period = 2

**Late/Missing Assignments**

Late work is defined as assignments that are submitted after the specified deadline. This does not apply to work submitted late due to absence from school. Students are expected to submit assignments on time.

Multiple incidents of late work may result in teacher-student-parent conferences to examine and correct the student’s work habits through an academic contract.

Scores may be reduced by 5% per school day for a 25% maximum reduction (five school days).

Late work submitted after the fifth school day will only be accepted at the teacher’s discretion.

**Relearn/Reassess**

Students who perform below 70% on a major assignment will be given the opportunity to relearn and reassess to show improvement in their mastery of the standard.

Students will submit a Relearning Plan as part of this process. This plan should include:

* Analysis of their errors or misconceptions on the previous major assignment.
* Complete assignments provided to relearn the content for mastery. Students may also attend a tutoring session.
* Complete and turn in any missing assignments.
* Commit to date(s) and time(s) to redo the assignment or retake the assessment.
* Share the plan with their parent and teacher for approval and signatures.

Upon satisfactory completion of the plan, as determined by the teacher, student should be given a minimum of one opportunity to be reassessed.

Teachers should have discretion to determine if R&R opportunities will be given for any minor assessment.

**Tutoring**

Tutoring is available as needed by appointment only. Please contact teacher if you are interested.

**Classroom Rules and Consequences**

Please remember the 5 important P words: Be Polite, Prompt, Prepared, Patient, and Productive!

 Also, remember to follow the specific guidelines as discussed in detail in the Student Code of Conduct.

And of course, the biggest change this year…………Cell phones are not allowed to be used at all during school hours.

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Failure to follow class rules may result in the following **negative** consequences: warning, lunch or after school detention, parent notification, time-out with another teacher, loss of privileges, or an office referral.

* Students may also be rewarded for their excellent behavior and work ethic in the following **positive** ways: verbal praise, extra privileges, candy or prizes, positive notes home, Panther Bucks, and a HAPPY teacher and parent. ☺

**Parent/Guardian:** Please send me a message through Remind to let me know that you have read this 2024-2025 Life Science Syllabus. I appreciate your support and I look forward to an amazing year with your child.