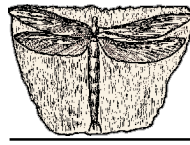


**Science 8 Syllabus:** Class Introduction and Information



**Teacher:** Melissa K. Herliczek, M.Ed.

**Class website:** <http://bfccps.org/faculty/melissa-herliczek/>

**E-mail:** [mherliczek@bfccps.org](mailto:mherliczek@bfccps.org) (preferred)

**Phone extension :** (508) 541- 3434 Ext. 112 (voice mail only)

**A. 8TH GRADE SCIENCE DESCRIPTION**

The eighth grade science course will focus upon aspects of **Life Science, Earth Science, and Technology and Engineering**. The variety of topics and skills studied in 8th grade science is intended to both prepare students for success with the Massachusetts state assessments and higher level science courses.

The eighth grade science curriculum at BFCCPS is designed to assist students in further developing critical thinking skills through inquiry and the engineering design process. There is a strong focus on **research, scientific writing, problem solving, collaboration, and communication skills**. Students will be regularly asked to complete tasks and projects in small groups and in an independent fashion. They will also be required to share their knowledge with their classmates, and, in some cases, with the school community. The end of the school year allows for an in-depth preparation for high school biology through the independent research of specific biology topics.

**B. SCIENCE TOPIC CALENDAR**

First Trimester	Second Trimester	Third Trimester
*Introduction to Science Fair  * Project: What would happen if the Earth did not have an inner core?  Project Content: Earth’s Layers, Heat Transfer, Plate Tectonics and Earth’s Changing Surface (partial review from last year)  *Engineering Project: How could the sun create the perfect s’more?  Engineering Project Content: Heat Transfer, Engineering Design Process, and the Greenhouse Effect  *Structure and Function of Cells	* Continuation of S’more Project  * Completion of Science Fair Projects  * Structure and Function of Cells continued  *Systems in Living Things (Systems of the Body)  * Reproduction and Heredity (includes genetics)  * Evolution and Biodiversity (includes genetic variation and adaptation, evidence for evolution, and extinction explanation)	* Living Things and Their Environment (includes ecology and food webs)  * Classification of Organisms  * Energy and Living Things (includes photosynthesis and role of decomposers in ecosystems)  * Changes in Ecosystem Over Time  * MCAS Review  *HS Biology Prep and Preview of HS course offerings

**C. CLASS EVALUATION**

Grading Category	Percent of Overall Grade
Homework and Class Participation	25%
Quizzes (includes short-term projects)	25%
Tests (includes projects of moderate length)	25%
Exams (includes long-term projects)	25%

**Evaluation will be based on:**

1. Class participation, including completion of classroom activities
  2. Completion and accuracy of homework
  3. Mastery of the course content as measured on quizzes, open responses/essays, and projects.
  4. Mastery of the course content on tests and exams (1-2 large assessments per trimester)
  5. A Science Fair Project completed during Trimester I and Trimester II
- All assignments submitted on time will be entered into the grade book up to a total score of 100%.
  - An exam that has received an undesirable score can be revised by completing a revision worksheet and attaching it to the original test or exam. The revision needs to be completed within one week of the original assessment. Students will receive complete instructions of the revision process in class.
  - Exams can be revised for a score up to 100% and will be averaged with the original score.

**Grading Scale:**

Fractions of grade points will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Grades are calculated as follows:

A+ 97-100%	B+ 87-89%	C+ 77-79%	D+ 67-69%
A 94-96%	B 84-86%	C 74-76%	D 64-66%
A- 90-93%	B- 80-83%	C- 70-73%	D- 60-63%

**Homework:**

Homework is due on the assigned due date at the beginning of class. Students have **three days** to turn in homework assignments for partial credit. Each day late will cause the assignment's grade to decrease 10 points. After the **three day** period, no credit (0%) will be entered into the grade book.

**Other Assignments:**

All assignments are due on the due date. An assignment which is turned in after the due date will result in a grade reduction of 10 points for each 24-hour period unless specific permission has been given by Ms. H. to submit the assignment on another date. An incomplete assignment will receive a 0% in the grade book.

### **Writing Quality:**

All submitted work must be a finished product that is the result of participating in the writing process and steps as instructed by the teacher. It is expected to be high quality work. Students will be provided rubrics and specific correction areas for graded writing assignments.

### **Work Integrity:**

Assigned work submitted to fulfill course requirements will be entirely that of the individual students and/or that of the group with whom he/she has worked cooperatively. All sources of facts, quotes, and images must be properly cited in papers and slideshow presentations. Students will be properly guided and instructed on how to create citations for images and background research. See student handbook for further information.

## **D. TEXT AND MATERIALS**

Students will be using the following text in the classroom:

Prentice Hall: Science Explorer

“Cells and Heredity” and “Inside Earth”

(A variety of science articles, newspaper articles, and other text materials will be used in science class as well.)

## **E. SCIENCE FAIR**

Students will be expected to participate in science fair by completing a science fair project. This includes a laboratory experiment or engineering design project, lab report, laboratory journal, display board and background research. Specific information regarding science fair will be distributed to both parents and students a few months prior to science fair. Each student's science fair project will be graded as an exam grade.

## **F. OTHER CLASS INFORMATION**

### **Attendance/Participation:**

All students will receive a “weekly overview” or “weekly” each class on Monday that will review the week's lessons, activities, goals, and homework. The weekly will also be posted to the class website on Monday by 4 pm (or Tuesday by 4 pm, depending upon their class schedule).

**Please note:** Any changes to the weekly overview or homework will be reviewed in class with the students.

Class attendance is very important. Active participation in class discussion and small groups is expected. For every day of class missed students will be expected to retrieve their late work/materials and find out the deadline for their late submission(s). **In general, incomplete work from an absence will be due in five days.** All work for absent students will be organized and available for student pick up in the science classroom. In the case of extended absences, I will provide materials for pick up in the main office. It is the responsibility of the student to pick up and complete their work from an absence. **I strongly suggest that all students speak to me after an absence to make sure they have all of the necessary materials to complete the missed work.**

**Classroom Behavior:**

I am committed to creating and maintaining an interactive and positive learning environment. Positive classroom behaviors will be expected at all times. Students are expected to add to the learning environment with a respectful and supportive mindset. Students that exhibit behavior that is not enhancing the learning environment will be redirected as instructed by the teacher. Please contact me with any questions or concerns regarding behavioral expectations.

**Technology Information:**

The scientists will be regularly working with the inquiry-based online science simulations known as “Gizmos” through [www.explorellearning.com](http://www.explorellearning.com). It is very important that all students have access to the use of “Gizmos” at home. This may require that you update plug-ins on your computer or tablet. Please contact me with any questions.

**Signature Page**

I understand and agree to the course syllabus for 8th grade science. I will ensure that I can access and use “Gizmos” on [www.explorelearning.com](http://www.explorelearning.com) at home. In the case that I have any questions about the course syllabus, I will be sure to contact Ms. Herliczek. Thank you!

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_