



Mr. Dennis' 9th Grade Science Syllabus



Contact Information:

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About Mr. Dennis – This is my 15th year here at Tamanend Middle School. I am a 1998 Central Bucks East graduate and graduated from Villanova University in 2002. This year I am teaching a full 9th grade academic science course load. I greatly enjoy working at Tamanend and teaching science. I have two daughters, Maggie and Emily, that keep me busy in addition to being the Varsity Baseball Coach at CB East during the spring. My wife of 10 years is a school counselor in the Downingtown Area School District.

Contacting Mr. Dennis Email is the simplest way for me to answer any questions you or your parents may have. *Students must use their district provided email through Office365.* This ensures that I receive your email. All emails should be properly addressed to me with a proper salutation at the beginning (Dear Mr. Dennis, etc.) and signature, at the end. Please utilize appropriate grammar, capitalization and writing conventions. Sign your email with your full name and period number. I check my email multiple times a day and occasionally on weekends. I do not check my school voicemail on weekends.

Textbooks – Depending on the unit, students may or may not bring home a textbook. For some units, students will be given the option to take a book home, sign one out when needed, or rely on the online textbook. This information will be explained to students at the beginning of the year and may change as the year progresses. There will always be a class set of textbooks in the classroom for student use.

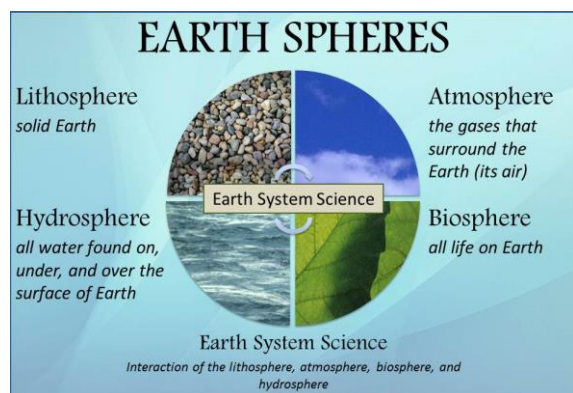
Supplementary reading(s) – Occasionally, students will be asked to read materials supplied by various books, magazines, websites or other sources. These will be used to supplement in-class discussions or to build upon students' topics of interest. These may be sent to students digitally or printed. If you need a printed copy, just ask.

Materials – Certain materials are required in order to ensure student success. The following materials should be brought to class daily:

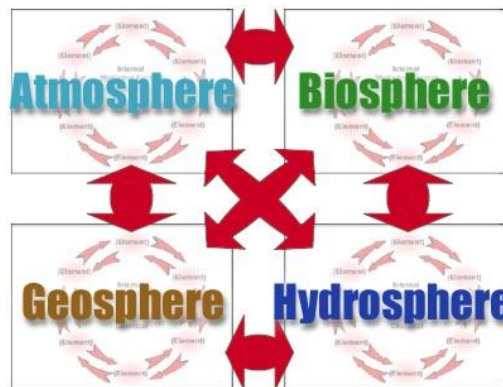
Pens (Blue or Black preferable)
Pencils
Assignment Book
3 Ring Binder



Course Description – Ninth Grade Science is an integrated course that explores Earth's four spheres and how they interact. The units of study include: biosphere, geosphere, atmosphere, and hydrosphere



Course Policies



Attendance – Woody Allen once said “80 percent of success is just showing up.” Over the past few years, I have never found a more appropriate quote. *Those students that attend school regularly have an easier time keeping up with their assignments and earn better grades.* Utilize the class website for worksheets, PowerPoint's, and notes. Extra copies of all classroom worksheets are available in the classroom as well.



Class participation -- If you are to learn to apply, analyze, synthesize, etc., you need to be an active member of class. Although there is no finite grade for classroom participation, it is essential for students to appropriately participate in classroom discussions in order to succeed. Asking questions when confused and answering questions when you understand are both equally important parts of learning.



Lab Safety -- Student safety is of the utmost importance. If any student is found to be mishandling any equipment, tools or supplies they will be removed from that assignment and will receive no credit. Further infractions will merit more severe penalties including removal from all lab activities or projects for that week, unit, or year.

Grading

(10%) Formative Assessments – Formative assessments are any formal or informal assessment tool used to evaluate students grasp of content. This may include small quizzes, in class activities, exit tickets, oral response, digitally collected data or other assignments. Most homework that will be assigned will be the result of students not completing their assigned work in class.

(90%) Summative Assessments – Summative Assessments are given at the end of instruction to evaluate student growth. These include tests, quizzes, performance assessments, projects and various other methods of assessing student growth, learning and how they are meeting standards.

Core Assessments - The 9th Grade Science course has 3 District Core Performance Assessments and 4 District Finals:

- District Core Performance Assessments:
 - “Ocean Acidification” – given during Hydrosphere Unit
 - “Land and Sea” – given during Atmosphere Unit
 - “Peppered Moth” - given during the Biosphere Unit.
- 4 District Core Finals:
 - The 4 grades are accumulated and reported as the final exam grade. These assessments are: Geosphere, Hydrosphere, Atmosphere and Biosphere Final exams. There is no large exam at the end of the school year.

Second Chance Learning

Second chance learning will be offered to students. A separate paper will outline this process in great detail. This policy has been developed by me and has been implemented for the last 4 years. I reserve the right to alter this policy as the year progresses and will keep students informed of any changes to the policy as it is described.

Please sign below to acknowledge that you, the student, and your guardian(s) have reviewed these policies.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____