

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science 2019-2020

**Kyle Kordon**

kordon\_k@4j.lane.edu

Welcome to a new school year! Those of you who are returning, it is nice to see you again, and those of you who are new to our school, welcome! This is my 8<sup>th</sup> year teaching at Kelly, and have taught Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, Science, AVID, and Leadership during my career. I grew up in the Eugene area, did my undergraduate studies at Chapman University in California, and returned to the University of Oregon for my graduate studies. I am one of the Pilot Program coordinators at Kelly, am one of the four track coaches, run the advisory program, and teach the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Pilot Leadership class. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my wife, Sarah, and our 5-year old daughter, Olivia – she just started Kindergarten! During the summer I also play for, and manage a baseball team, the Oregon Giants, in the local Eugene adult baseball league. Please don't hesitate to email me if you ever have any questions about class, something going on at school, or anything in between.

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Curriculum (Including, but not limited to)

- **Earth Science:** How is the Earth Changing?
- **Life Science:** Why Do Organisms Look the Way They Do?
- **Physical Science:** How Will it Move?
- **Chemistry:** How Does Food Provide My Body With Energy?
- **Engineering Design Projects**

We will continue to focus on using **claim, evidence, and reasoning** to explain scientific phenomena, and rebut other arguments through scientific **argumentation**. This will be accomplished through various labs, investigations, and engineering design projects based on the work I started through the University of Oregon's Content in Context STEM Program.

### Interactive Science Notebook

All of your work will be kept in your Interactive Science Notebook (INB). You must keep your INB in class and only take it home if you need to finish an assignment. We will use this almost every day, so please leave them in the crate unless you have make-up work.

### Supplies

You **must have** all your supplies every day at the beginning of class. If you come to class unprepared you will be considered tardy. I expect everyone to have all supplies by **Monday, September 9**.

- Your school binder with:
  - Pencil pouch
  - Eraser
  - Several pencils & pens
- Science Notebook – I have created these for the class
- iPad

### Grades: Daily Work – 50% of Grade

Most of our daily work from our labs, investigations, and experiments will be done in the Interactive Notebooks (INBs) that I have created for the class. This work will be given a proficiency score on Synergy based on completion, effort, and scientific understanding posted weekly (or close to it). Students may earn up to a score of 5 on each assignment, but each will only be scored out of 4. In order to earn a 5 on a given assignment students must demonstrate high proficiency in the topic along with going above and beyond in their level of detail & effort.

### **Grades: Assessments (Specific Labs, Experiments, Projects, Tests or Quizzes) – 30% of Grade**

Once every week or two, one of our labs or investigations in our Interactive Science Notebooks (INB) will be scored for more detailed check-in and feedback. Which labs or investigations will be given this summative feedback will be announced during class and will be given a proficiency score. This scoring will happen about 6-8 times during the trimester and will directly relate to our **Science & Engineering Practices**. Quizzes will be given for formative feedback, and a handful of tests will be given for summative feedback based on content-area knowledge and mastery of our Science & Engineering Practices. Students who score poorly on tests can either re-take the test or do test corrections which demonstrate how a given answer was incorrect and why the correct answer is in fact the right one; for both options students may earn back up to the 80% mark on the test.

### **Grades: Collaborative Study Groups, C-Notes, STEM-Related Projects – 20% of Grade**

Every week we will spend time working in small groups called Collaborative Study Groups. For those familiar with it, these groups have a very similar function and process to the AVID-style Tutorial. It gives students the opportunity to either address content that they are confused about in class or take their learning and understanding deeper in a small-group setting. Initially, questions will be assigned, however students will be able to bring their own questions as we develop proficiency in the process.

**Letter grades** will be awarded based on the standard grading scale. **You should check your grades on synergy at least every other week.**

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
Less than 60%	F

### **Make-up Work**

**If you are absent or miss an assignment for *any* reason**, it is *your* responsibility to complete all missed work. You will find what we did while you were gone in my science notebook and the class website. An assignment missed for any reason will be accepted for credit for **up to two weeks** after the initial assigned date (unless the end of the trimester occurs prior to the end of this two-week time period). Because this is a hands-on based class, making up labs and other activities will often require that you come in on *your own time* in order to complete it, or you may request an alternate on-topic assignment to be given at my discretion. The best times to come in will be before school, at lunch, or after school.

### **Class Website**

I have designed a class website as a resource for this upcoming year. This is where I will post resources, announcements, and a weekly schedule/newsletter. You will also get an email about once a week with an overview of the topics that we will be covering in the week ahead. I have found that this helps with generating discussion at home as to what is happening at school, as well as help keep families informed about how things are going in my class. Here is the URL for the website:

**[http://blogs.4j.lane.edu/kordon\\_k/8th-science/](http://blogs.4j.lane.edu/kordon_k/8th-science/)**

### **Contact**

The best way to contact me is via email. I will generally take no longer than 24 hours to respond to an email, and never any longer than 48 hours. If you need to schedule a one-on-one meeting for any reason, please contact me well in advance to set up a time. I am looking forward to this year! Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

## SAFETY LETTER

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians:

Middle school science consists of engaging topics for students to investigate in a lab setting. However, any science activity may have potential safety issues if not conducted properly. Safety in the science classroom is an important part of the scientific process. To ensure a safe learning environment, a list of rules has been developed and discussed with all students because science rules must be followed at all times. Additional safety instructions will be given for each activity. Please discuss the safety rules with your child and return the bottom of this letter.

No science student will be allowed to participate in science activities until the student and a parent or guardian have acknowledged their understanding of these safety rules by signing this document.

### *Science Safety Rules*

1. Conduct yourself in a responsible manner at all times in the science room.
2. Follow instructions carefully. Ask questions if you do not understand the instructions.
3. Use equipment (e.g., scissors and sharp items) only as directed by the teacher.
4. Perform only approved experiments.
5. Never eat, drink, chew gum, or taste anything in the science lab.
6. Keep hands away from face, eyes, and mouth while using science materials. Wash your hands with soap and water after the activity.
7. Wear safety goggles when instructed. Never remove safety goggles during an experiment. There are no exceptions to this rule!
8. Clean all work areas and equipment, and dispose properly of any waste materials.
9. Report any accident (spill, breakage, and so on), injury, or broken equipment to the teacher immediately.
10. If you have allergies, it is important that your teacher knows about them and that you avoid handling materials that could cause problems. For example, if you are allergic to latex, you can participate in activities that use balloons, but you should not be the one to handle the balloons.

# SAFETY AGREEMENT

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians:

We are providing the Science Safety Rules to keep you informed of the school's effort to create and maintain a safe science classroom/laboratory environment for all students.

Your signature on this letter indicates that you have read the Science Safety Rules, have reviewed them with your child, and are aware of the measures taken to ensure the safety of your son/daughter in the science classroom.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Important question – Does your child have any health issues or allergies? If yes, please list them here.