

Course Overview

Environmental Science is designed to enhance the student's understanding of the natural world by incorporating concepts from the biological, physical, and earth sciences. This course is aligned with California State Standards.

The following themes will be emphasized throughout the course:

1. Science is a process.
2. Energy conversions underlie all ecological processes.
3. The Earth is one interconnected system.
4. Humans alter natural systems.
5. Environmental problems have a cultural and social context.
6. Human survival depends on developing practices that will achieve sustainable systems

Course Goals

The main goals of this course are for students to:

1. Demonstrate analytical thinking skills by working cooperatively on labs and research assignments
2. Demonstrate the ability to rework complicated facts and concepts into models that students understand
3. Recognize the interconnectedness of Earth's systems
4. Develop skills necessary to make informed decisions as scientifically literate adults

Course Objectives

In this course you will:

1. Become familiar with the scientific principles, concepts, and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world
2. Identify and analyze environmental issues, both natural and manmade
3. Evaluate the relative risks of environmental problems and examine alternative solutions for resolving and/or preventing them
4. Utilize diverse note taking techniques to organize information: including concept maps, flow charts, comparative data tables, outlines, and diagrams
5. Be held responsible for knowledge gained from independent reading assignments through written and oral responses

Materials

You will need to bring the following materials to class everyday:

- ❑ 3-ring binder for THIS CLASS ONLY, with separate sections for class notes, labs, and graded assignments that have been returned
- ❑ Loose-leaf, 3-hole, ruled notebook paper (not spiral bound)
- ❑ Pencils and Pens
- ❑ Colored Pencils
- ❑ A basic calculator for labs and grading calculations

Text and Readings

Each student will be assigned a copy of Holt's Environmental Science, written by Dr. Karen Arms. Additional supplementary reading will be distributed as needed throughout the year.

Notebooks

The ability to keep a complete and organized notebook is one of the most important skills that high school students should master. It is essential that you keep all of your assignments organized in your 3-ring Environmental Science binder. Never throw away (or recycle) any of your work. You will need all of your assignments for notebook quizzes several times throughout each quarter.

Assessments

A variety of assignments will be given including (but not limited to) quizzes, tests, papers, lab write-ups, review questions, and projects. At the end of each quarter, your grade will be calculated by dividing the points earned by the total points possible. You will monitor your own grade throughout each quarter by recording your scores as assignments are returned.

The following grading scale will be used:

A+: 97.5 and above	A: 93.5 to 97.5	A-: 89.5 to 93.5
B+: 87.5 to 89.5	B: 83.5 to 87.5	B-: 79.5 to 83.5
C+: 77.5 to 79.5	C: 73.5 to 77.5	C-: 69.5 to 73.5
D+: 67.5 to 69.5	D: 63.5 to 67.5	D-: 59.5 to 63.5
F: 0.0 to 59.5		

Mid-term and Final Exams

Comprehensive exams will be given at the end of the second and fourth quarters. Scores on the mid-term and final exams will be averaged into the student's overall grade for the quarter in which they are given.

Science Fair Requirement

Completion of a science fair project is a requirement of this class.

Students, and parents, will be given more information about the science fair project several weeks into the first quarter.

Classroom Rules

All WCS rules apply in the science classroom. In addition:

1. Be in your seat and silent at the start of class.
2. Only one person talks at a time.
3. Behavior that interferes with another student's learning or the teacher's teaching will not be tolerated.
4. Follow all safety instructions the first time they are given.

The consequences for choosing not to follow the rules are:

1st incident - Reminder

2nd incident – Reflection (blue slip)

Major infractions of school or classroom rules will result in a referral (orange slip).

Absences

If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get and complete any work you have missed. In general, for EXCUSED absences due to illness or emergencies, you will have one day for each day you are gone to complete the work. If you are absent for more than 2 days, please call the school to request make-up assignments. If you know that you will be absent ahead of time, please arrange to get your work before you go. In any case, upon your return, you will need copies of all the class notes and handouts you have missed for exams and future assignments.

If you are absent from science class (for any reason)

- 1st Find out what we did and what was for homework
- 2nd Check the HANDOUT BINDER for any Handouts you may have missed
- 3rd Complete and TURN IN all missing assignments

If you are absent on the day of a test or quiz, you should plan on making up the test or quiz during the next science tutorial following your absence. Science tutorials are every Monday after school. If this is not possible, you are responsible for making other arrangements. Except in the case of an extended EXCUSED absence, all missed tests or quizzes must be made up within one week of the original test date.

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted for credit unless accompanied by a late work pass, which can be found in the student planner. Each student will be given 2 passes each semester that may be used, during that semester, at the student's discretion. With a late work pass, an assignment will be accepted without penalty for up to 5 school days after the due date. Lost late work passes will not be replaced.

Lab Information

A portion of this science course will consist of hands-on science activities that involve inquiry, observation, analysis, and write-up. Safety is of the utmost importance during science lab. Please be aware that you may be asked to secure long hair or loose clothing during lab time. For some labs, safety goggles and/or gloves may be required. Any student not following safety directions during lab time will be removed from the lab and will earn zero points for that activity. Remember, there is no eating, drinking, or chewing gum in a working science laboratory.

Assignments

Readings, chapter questions, and other homework assignments will be due every **MONDAY**. Other assignments, including more long-term projects, will have specific due dates that may not necessarily fall on a Monday.