



# Biology A

## Tillamook High School



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### Course Description

Biology is, to put it simply, the study of LIFE. In this course, we will cover a wide range of fascinating topics, including the scientific method and scientific understanding; organic molecules - the building blocks of life; ecology - how living things interact with the world around them and each other; cellular structure and cellular processes and differentiation; the chemical structure and function of DNA in protein synthesis and heredity; and how scientists (each students now included) use evidence and critical thinking skills to demonstrate an understanding through scientific inquiry.

### Materials

- Pencil. Students are required to bring at least 2 functioning pencils to class each day. Students can use pens but I prefer students to use pencils on worksheets and on assessments.
- 3-ring binder or a section therein - for storing handouts, class assignments, etc.
- Spiral Notebook / or Notebook Paper in your binder.
- Calculator. A scientific calculator is nice to have - yet most of our various forms of electronica have these built in. If you have a calculator bring it...but don't sweat it if you don't.
- Game face. Be ready to work, participate, and experience the joy of learning biology and doing SCCCCCIENCE!!!

### Website

Mr. Sabora's website will be used extensively during this course both in and out of class. Daily assignments will be posted there along with a course calendar, all in-class presentations, videos, and additional study materials. Parents are encouraged to visit my website for more information and to help their student.

It is not mandatory that you have internet at home or access to a computer to be successful in this course! ALL materials will be provided and made available to ALL students in class.

### Textbooks / iPads

We have a classroom set of iPads and students will be using these on a daily basis. Advances in technology and information sharing have made it so that the most up-to-date textbooks and educational resources are available online and for free. We will be using ck-12 ([www.ck12.org](http://www.ck12.org)) to build our own online textbook that we will use in class, and this will be viewable on the course website. Print-outs will be made available for students to study from if they do not have internet at home. **iPad rules** and classroom

practices will be clearly posted, reviewed, and **strictly enforced** in class. Misuse or viewing off-task sites or apps on the iPads will not be tolerated.

## Student Expectations

- **This is an academically rigorous course and each student is expected to be on time, prepared, and ready to work each and every day of class.** The material covered will be detailed and complex at times, and students are expected to study on a daily basis and as new content is introduced.
- Bring the necessary materials to class each day (listed in Materials).
- When the bell rings at the start of class, be ready to go - have all necessary materials out and be working on the daily warm-up.
- Stay organized. Keep all handouts and class materials organized and in a 3-ring binder. Handouts, returned assignments, etc. are the students responsibility to keep organized.
- **Students will not talk while I am talking, while other students are talking - or in general be disrespectful to anyone in the class.**
- Cooperative Learning and Teamwork. We will be working in small to large groups on labs and projects throughout this course. These groups will be assigned by the instructor and you are expected to fully cooperate, work with, and show full respect to everyone in your group.
- Honesty, compassion, and respect for self and others at all times is a must.

## Classroom Agreements

- **10 and 10 Rule.** Students will not be allowed to leave class ten minutes after the bell has rung and ten minutes before the final bell rings. Use the bathroom before class starts.
- **Seating is assigned in our class.** Be in your assigned seat when the bell rings. There is expensive and fragile equipment used in the classroom - stay in your seat unless given permission to get up and roam about.
- **No Food** during regular class periods. Drinks are allowed with a lid, but no crunching or munching during class. You can eat in the classroom during lunch.
- **Specimens and Equipment.** Our classroom is full of expensive, rare, and even living scientific specimens and gear. Handling without the direct permission of Mr. Sabora is absolutely not allowed. Deliberately harming or destroying anything in the classroom is an automatic administrative referral...obviously.
- **Leaving Class and Restrooms.** You **MUST** ask my permission to leave the classroom at any point during the period. One student at a time will be allowed out of class to use the restroom with a student-handbook as a hall-pass.

## Cell Phones

Let's face it - cell phones are a reality...I have one and look it, use it, fidget with it all the time. But there are appropriate and inappropriate times to be using it, and we ALL know what these are despite our level of addiction to their flashy little screens.

Here are my rules for cell phones in the classroom:

- **Turn them to silent...**not vibrate, not volume down...but full-on silent **BEFORE** the bell rings at the start of class each day. It is disrespectful to everyone to be interrupted or annoyed by a buzzing phone.



- **NO TEXTING, games, Facebooking...** or any form of engagement with your phone while I am or others are talking in class. Period. If you absolutely need to respond to a text (like from a parent), then ask me for permission at an appropriate time.
- **Music** - you can listen to music while we are doing silent readings or you are working on write-ups. I know when you are selecting a song and when you are texting. Don't push it. Headphones out when I am talking or when I ask that technology be put away.
- You can text or do whatever silently on your phone **ONLY** after exams. I will let you have this.
- I think the above rules are fair, realistic, and equitable...soooo...**If you push it with your phone it will end up in my desk drawer and I will call your parent / guardian to come and retrieve it for you.**

### **Consequences for Disrespectful and Inappropriate Behavior**

Some days are better than others, but this is no excuse for disrespectful or inappropriate behavior - and it absolutely will not be tolerated in my classroom.

Consequences are as follows:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Conference with Student and possible parental/guardian contact.
3. Parental/guardian contact.
4. Parent/guardian and Administrative contact and potential meeting. Behavior contract agreed upon and signed by student, teacher, and parent/guardian.
5. Removal from class with disciplinary report.

### **Laboratory Activities**

Lab groups will be assigned to you. **Each lab activity will be graded 50% on group lab performance and 50% individual lab write-up.** Each lab that we do in class will require a written lab report that follows the standard laboratory report format:

**Question, Hypothesis, Background Information, Detailed Procedure, Data/Results, and Analysis/Conclusion.**

### **Independent and Group Projects**

During parts of this course, students will be expected to produce work samples and present their independent or group projects to the class. Community members and professionals in relevant fields may participate in the final analysis and presentations of these projects. These will be assigned and details will be given when sequentially appropriate.

**Please sign, detach, and return.**

Please print your child's name in the blank space below. Please print and sign your name at the bottom. **Have your child return this portion to class.**

My child \_\_\_\_\_ and I have read this letter, and I will do my best to help fulfill the expectations of the class. ***I have also received a copy of the Biology Proficiency Grading policy (parent/guardian please keep this).***

\_\_\_\_\_   
 print parent/guardian

\_\_\_\_\_   
 signature parent/guardian

\_\_\_\_\_   
 date

## **THS Biology Proficiency Grading**

- Each Unit that we cover is based on specific Oregon State Science Standards and aligned with Common Core Standards for Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects.
- Each standard covered in a Unit is further broken down into specific **Learning Targets** / Proficiencies. Each Learning Target addresses a specific piece of content that a student needs to know or do.
- **Students must demonstrate a Meets / Proficient score (equivalent to a C) for each individual Learning Target in order to pass the Unit.**
- Homework, labs, and class activities are designed to provide students with practice and help students meet proficiency on these standards.

### **Learning Target scoring rubrics**

These will be given to each student at the beginning of every unit, posted on Mr. Sapora's website, and clearly displayed in the classroom each day. Units are broken down into specific, numbered learning targets that clearly state what the student must know in order to meet proficiency.

### **Daily Assignments / Guided Practice**

Students will be given daily assignments in class: note-taking, writing prompts, worksheets, group activities, and exit slips. These will be entered into the grade book at the end of the week, will be counted as **complete / incomplete**. Students must have all daily assignments completed in the grade-book in order to retake a test. Each student has a folder at the back of class where they can keep their assignments if they do not wish to keep them organized in their binder.

### **Formative Assessments**

Formative Assessments are short quizzes based directly off of the Learning Targets and are used to help provide clear information to the student, teacher, and parent/guardian as to how student learning is progressing. These will be given on a regular weekly basis (both announced and unannounced) and are only a small percentage of the overall grade for the class. Students will be allowed to make up any missed Formative Assessments **ONLY** if their absence is excused and **ONLY** during appropriate office hours.

**Daily Assignments and Formative Assessments count for 20% of the total grade for the Unit.**

### **Summative Assessments**

At the end of each Unit a Summative Assessment will be given over each of the Learning Targets covered in the Unit. Students **MUST** attain a Meets (C) grade for each individual Learning Target in order to pass the Unit.

- Students can retake the Summative Assessment to attain a Meets grade as many times as needed **BEFORE** the end of the trimester.

- Students can retake the Summative Assessment to up their grade from a Meets to either Advanced or Mastery only ONE time.
- ALL Daily / Guided Practice Assignments MUST be complete before a student is allowed to retake any Summative Assessment.
- Summative Assessments can ONLY be made up during appropriate office hour times if you are absent.
- Students MUST complete any assessment on the day it is started.
- Students are NOT allowed to use notes on any Summative Assessment.

**Summative Exams count for 80% of the total grade for the Unit.**

## Grading

The grading system to be used in this course will be the ABCF/I format in the grade book.

**In my classroom, on Learning Target Rubrics, and on all Summative Assessments the following Proficiency Scoring Codes will be used instead:**

**BEG = Beginning (F)** - the student has little or no understanding or skill demonstrated yet.

**APP = Approaching (F)** - the student is occasionally demonstrating a working knowledge of the essential skills that encompass the learning targets, but there are still more weaknesses than strengths.

**MTS = Meets [C]** - the student generally meets the learning target and demonstrates a basic knowledge of the essential skills, some errors may be present, but the strengths are dominant.

**ADV = Advanced (B)** - the student consistently meets and sometime exceeds the basic level and demonstrates a complete understanding of the learning target.

**MAS = Mastery (A)** - the student demonstrates superior academic performance, an in-depth understanding of the learning target, and an ability to apply knowledge and strategies to complex problems.

## Parents Contact Me

The best way to contact me is via email, and I WILL respond promptly and quickly. Phone calls will be returned at the end of each day. Feel free to arrange a visit to the classroom to check things out, have a chat, and share any concerns or address any questions you have in person.

Thank you,

Mr. Sabora

THS Science Department

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[www.mrsapora.com](http://www.mrsapora.com)