

WELCOME TO MISS ZIEMS' BIOLOGY CLASS!

"Take chances, make mistakes, get messy!" - Miss Frizzle

Welcome to my Biology classroom! My name is Miss Ziems, but you may call me Miss Z if you like. This syllabus details the important parts of my classroom in greater detail!

Miss Ziems' Class Norms!

1) RESPECT

- a) Me as your teacher - follow my directions and rules, and don't be a jerk or rude to me or anyone else
- b) Each other - I get the humor of poking fun at friends, but keep it to a minimum please; if I hear anything that is suspicious or inappropriate, there'll be problems
- c) School property/things that are not yours - unless given instructions, do not touch and **LEAVE IT ALONE**

2) Be prepared and on time

- a) This means that you have all your supplies necessary for class including writing utensils, notebooks, binders, notes/handouts, folders, planners, etc.
- b) This also means that when the bell rings you are in your seat, if not you are tardy (see attendance policy); this is especially important this year as I plan to do a group hand washing before we start class

3) Be an active listener

- a) Actively try to focus on and concentrate on what someone is saying, even if you don't think it is "correct" or think they aren't right
- b) Listen to reasoning and explanations for where an idea is coming from
- c) Be certain to allow someone to speak a complete thought, and take notes on points you agree/disagree with in order to understand their entire idea
- d) Don't interrupt!

4) Be an active participant

- a) You will only get out of this class what you put in - meaning if you actively participate you'll have a lot more fun, things will be a lot more interesting, and we will learn a lot more
- b) Follow directions for sharing ideas, so that everyone gets a chance to speak

- c) Have a backup when you share ideas with partners/groups/classes, so that even if your first idea is said, you can contribute
 - d) Use your talk moves! These are great little sentence starters that can help get a conversation started so that EVERY student is clearly hear and understood
- 5) Challenge the idea, not the person
- a) Not every idea, from your point of view, will be correct; that's okay!
 - b) Focus on agreeing or disagreeing with the conclusion, thought, idea, reasoning etc, not on personal attacks or things of that nature (i.e. did you think of this when you said X, or I'm not sure I agree with Y because . . . as opposed to hey dodo brain that's not right)
 - c) If everyone has been agreeing, perhaps try to think of a question that will ask the person to dig in deeper to the idea, or ask a question that might provide more evidence or information to help provide a more clear idea for our class; surface agreements are nice, but don't help us as scientists truly learn about the world
- 6) MAKE MISTAKES
- a) No one is perfect! You will mess up, and that's okay!
 - b) You learn more from your mistakes than you do your successes
 - c) This class is not about the "right answer" - I want you to be accurate, certainly, but I'm more interested in you learning science as opposed to memorizing answers; often times there is no clear cut or one "right answer", so it's okay if your thinking is different from others'

Attendance Policy

- 1) Be in your seat when the bell rings (or before if we have bell work)
- 2) If you are not in your seat, and have no note, you are tardy
- 3) 3 tardies equals a detention, you will receive a warning each time you have a tardy so you are aware of where you stand

What Do I Need For Your Class Miss Ziems?

Excellent question! You'll need the following supplies:

- 1) Composition or spiral notebook for note taking; either works, but you'll be drawing and scribbling notes and graphing so make sure that it's something you can keep clear and neat

- 2) Binder/folder! I find a binder is easier to keep organized, but sometimes it's a bit cheaper to get a folder; either way, something to store materials when we aren't working in our notebooks (worksheets, notes, articles, etc)
- 3) Writing utensils - I tend to prefer pencil because it makes it easier to correct things if I misspell or something, but pens are acceptable; however only blue or black will be permissible (please don't write in red, or another color)
- 4) A positive attitude/willingness to try - this is VITAL not only in the classroom but in life, so I expect it! Plus class gets a lot more interesting when people are willing to venture out and try new ideas and things
- 5) A MASK - must be worn properly at all times, meaning it covers your nose and mouth; THIS IS NON NEGOTIABLE

This Is For A Grade?!

Some of it is! Here is what you'll be graded on:

- 1) In-class assignments - these are things such as exercises, labs, activities, colorings, group discussions, and various other things we do, and will count as formative in the gradebook; the due dates for these assignments vary but will be given when the assignment is given
- 2) Homework - On the uncommon occasion I give homework, it will be one of the following:
 - a) One or two problems from an activity we worked on in class, or post-lab questions we didn't get to in class
 - b) Bringing something in - i.e. a picture, a signed document, etc
 - c) Looking for information - seeking out further ideas on a topic we've been discussing in class
 - d) Study - this is usually given the week before a test, so everyone is aware of the upcoming assessment

Homework counts as formative. In the case it is something you complete, I will walk around and check it while you work on warm-ups and before we get started for the day

- 3) Projects - these will count as summative in the gradebook, and usually involves research, crafting various things i.e. amusement parks, paper mache examples, creative assignments like making a song or something, etc.
- 4) End of unit tests/occasional quizzes - the other summative grades, these focus on allowing you to demonstrate your knowledge and your ability to analyze and apply that knowledge we've learned; many times your quizzes during the unit will

not have one single “correct” answer and I’m more interested in seeing your thought process and how you apply ideas and explanations to things

Your homework and in-class assignments total together to make 20% of your grade, however, there will be many of them, and they are all aimed at building your mastery of the content we cover in class. Thus, the remaining 80% (projects, quizzes, tests, and the mid-term and final exams) will be completely dependent on your effort with these everyday activities. Therefore, it is a **Very Good Idea** to do and try everything in my class to the best of your ability.

What Happens If I Am Absent Or Will Be Absent?

If you’re absent, it’s your job to come to me and get what you missed! If you know you will be absent, please email me and I will be happy to give you an idea of what we will be doing, though you will still need to come to me afterwards to get any handouts, and may want to take pictures of notes you missed so that you can put them into your notebook. If you are absent on a quiz day, it is your responsibility to come to me and work out when to make it up.

I Didn’t Do So Great On That Test . . .

First of all, take a breath. It’s okay! Sometimes these things happen. My tests and quizzes are designed for me to investigate your understanding of our material. I would much rather you know that there’s a bit of a hiccup in your knowledge now than later!

Second, look at the feedback I gave you. You will need to write the question you got incorrect and your revised answer on a separate sheet of notebook paper. You **MUST** do ALL the questions you’ve missed, excluding bonus questions. Then staple that paper(s) with your questions and revised answers to the front of your test and turn it back in. For doing this, you can earn back up to half the credit that you missed.

For example, if you miss 10 points on a 20 point quiz, then you’d earn back 5 points, moving you from a 10/20 to a 15/20, and from an F to a C.

Cell Phones?

Occasionally I may have you use your cell phones for timers when doing group chats or the like. Otherwise, during active class time, it shouldn't be out. If we get through everything we need to get through and you'd like to get on it, or you want to listen to music when doing an exercise, that's fine. However, the phone is to be on your desk, face down, ear buds in, and I should not hear it - if I see you do anything other than change a song, no one will be allowed to listen to music.

First offense is a warning. Second is a detention.

What's The Ultimate Goal?

The purpose of my class is to encourage and develop not only scientific literacy (familiarity with content and vocabulary, science processes, etc) but to also teach you to think critically and analytically as well as important communication skills. It's great if you learn biology along the way, but I'm really teaching you how to listen and speak to others, how to work together, that it's okay to change your mind when presented with new evidence, how to use readings and articles to back up your arguments, etc.

Punishments? Ew!

No one likes punishment, but we gotta talk about it. The first time you break a norm, cause a problem, have your phone out when you shouldn't, etc, I'll give you a warning. I believe you are old enough to understand that your behavior is wrong, and I will give you a chance to change it. You only receive one warning the entire year, so once you are warned, that's it. No more chances.

The second offense is a detention. I don't like giving these, and I'd prefer not to, but I'm not afraid to do it if it means focused and active students in my classroom. You will serve it after school or at lunch on a day we have detention, and your parents will be notified you received a detention as well as what the issue was.

Third offense is another detention, and a conference between you, me, and your parents, and if the offense warrants it, potentially also Mr. Bates, Mrs. Trainor, Mr. Traviss or Mrs. Spicer, to discuss the problem at hand and ways that we can change this behavior.

The only time I will give you a detention right off the bat is if you violate a rule on our lab safety contract. This is something that forms the foundation for your future science learning, and is something I take very very seriously. If any rule is broken, it is an immediate detention.

It should be noted that if you aren't in your seats when the bell rings, I will mark you tardy. Three tardies also equals a detention.

General Classroom Notes

You should never be using the back door to enter or leave my classroom.

DO NOT leave my classroom without asking me first. I need to make sure I know where you are in case of an emergency. Along with that, this year because of the pandemic, you'll be staying in your seats until you are dismissed from class, yes even if we have time to ourselves at the end of class. Gotta maintain social distancing guidelines :D

I only allow one person out at a time for any reason (bathroom, drink, etc). You will sign out on the sheet on my desk with your name, the date, and time. When you come back, you will sign in with the time. Then the next person may go. This is in case something were to happen I know exactly where everyone is.

The only windows that should be open are the back two, because they are screened! I am not a bee fan, so this will help minimize that.

I'm Really Confused . . .

Any questions can be emailed to me at ziems@eriemason.k12.mi.us - I check my email frequently throughout the day and will respond as promptly as I am able to, usually within the same day. If you do not feel comfortable asking questions in class, or pulling me aside during activities to ask, you can email me here. Further, I will make it a point to be available fifteen minutes before school begins and after school for a half hour every day. Please do not hesitate to come in and have me help you through a problematic area for you - I would rather have you come in and figure things out now rather than tell me the day of the test!

Tips For Succeeding In Miss Ziems' Class

- 1) Participate, participate, participate - if you agree, explain why, if you disagree, explain why, ask questions if you don't understand someone's reasoning, offer ideas to help expand our understanding, etc. Class will be much more interesting and fun if you participate.
- 2) Take your time, it's not a race! I will give you plenty of time to focus and complete the various objectives we will have as a class. Some people may need more, some less. That's okay.
- 3) A positive attitude - I know you'll be frustrated by this class, because of how often you may feel stumped or like you aren't sure what's up. I know you may not like science or want to be in school. I understand that. Please try to keep a positive attitude anyways. Leave all drama or anger or what have you at the door, you can pick it up when you leave.
- 4) Get your assignments, notes, etc. you missed from being absent. This is key to understanding where we created our new thoughts!
- 5) Take a moment when you get frustrated. Close your eyes, take a deep breath in through your nose, hold it for a second or two, and let it out. Do this a couple times and then try again.

I have read the above syllabus and understand the policies described therein.

Student Signature:_____.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____.