



Maria Montessori Academy Junior High 2016-2017

Social Studies – Geography For Life Syllabus

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Room: P1-C1

Course Description:

Geography is described as the study of the “why of the where.” This class will explore how to use geography as a tool to better understand the world in which we live. Students will learn to evaluate and question the why and where of spatial perceptions that are read, seen and hear. The six standards identified below are best understood when using the following geographic themes: location, place, movement, region, and human-environmental interaction.

Students will understand:

The world in spatial terms

The human and physical characteristics of places and regions

How physical processes shape the earth’s surface

How human activities shape the earth’s surface

The interaction of physical and human systems

How geography connects to today’s world

Our class topics will fit in within the cycle theme:

Orientation: August 15th- September 23rd

Community: September 26th- November 11th

Structure: November 28th- January 20th

Patterns: January 30th- March 17th

Balance: March 27th- May 12th

Course Expectations:

Students will need to be prepared to work each class period (having writing utensils available, follow directions, and bring their notebooks and planners each day. Students will also be expected to use speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills in this class. It is the responsibility of the student to talk with the instructor if they cannot turn in assignments and projects prior to expected due dates.

Textbooks and Materials:



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Students will use the World Atlas along with National Geographic and Smithsonian magazines in the classroom. Other useful resources and/or web links will be provided on the Geography blog page listed above.

Grading Plan:

Grades are posted daily on "ASPIRE." Parents will be able to view grades and contact teachers if applicable. Grading percentages and the grading scale is listed below:

What the Student Knows	Score	Traditional Letter Grade
Exceeds Proficiency: In addition to Score 85, the student uses inferences and applications that go beyond what was explicitly taught in class.	95	A+
In addition to Score 85 performance, partial success at inferences and applications that go beyond what was directly explicitly in class.	90	A
Meets Proficiency: No major errors or omissions regarding any of the information and/or processes (simple or complex) that were explicitly taught.	85	B+
No major errors or omissions regarding the simpler details and process and partial knowledge of the more complex ideas and processes.	80	B
Approaching Proficiency: No major errors or omissions regarding the simpler details and processes but major errors or omissions regarding the more complex ideas and processes.	75	C+
Partial knowledge of the simpler details and processes but major errors or omissions regarding the more complex ideas and procedures.	70	C
Developing Proficiency: With help, a partial understanding of some of the simpler details and processes and some of the more complex ideas and processes.	65	D+
With help, a partial understanding of some of the simpler details and processes but not the more complex ideas and processes.	60	D
Even with help, no understanding or skill demonstrated.	59	F



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Course Policies:

Student Work:

Students will use communication, creative thinking, problem solving, critical thinking, research and presentations, social participation and cooperation. Plagiarism is not allowed at all in the classroom. If plagiarism is used in written/oral assignment or exam, that student will receive a failing grade on that assignment and possibly the entire course.

Portfolio:

Work from journals, handouts, assignments/projects, reports, or tests can all be used in student portfolios.

Group Activities:

Students are expected to participate in group activities. Using problem solving, communication and cooperation skills, students will work together to present a final product.

Homework Expectations:

Homework is applicable if a student did not finish his/her work in the classroom. There will be occasional reading, research, worksheets, and study material that students are expected to complete and turn in the next day.

Grading Guidelines:

1. Entries in the grade book that count towards the final grade will be limited to course or grade level standards.
2. Extra credit will not be given at any time.
3. Students will be allowed multiple opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of content standards in various ways. Retakes and revisions will be allowed. However, a student must prove he/she has mastered the content prior to the retake. This retake will need to be scheduled at a time that is convenient for the teacher.
4. Teachers will determine grade book entries by considering multiple points of data emphasizing the most recent data and provide evidence to support their determination. Students will be provided multiple opportunities to practice standards independently through homework or other class work. Practice assignments and activities will be consistent with classroom standards for the purpose of providing feedback. Practice assignments, including homework, will not be included as part of the final grade.

Absences:

Please tell the instructor in advanced if you plan on being absent from class. You will have three days after the day you missed to turn in any work you might have missed.

Citizenship Grade:

Students will be observed using their courtesy and kindness on a daily basis.

Class Rules:



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Note: Students will help create class rules, expectations, and consequences the first couple weeks of school. Below are some examples:

Raise your hand to speak

Walk to the person to speak to them

Slow deliberate movements

Be aware of what you are doing

Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated

Class Materials:

All students will need the following: pencil or pen, 2 composition or spiral notebooks, index cards, and a water bottle

Donations of the following items are much appreciated: compasses, maps of any kind, liquid glue, colored construction paper, any postcards, small dry erase boards

I have read and understand the rules for _____ class.

Parent/Guardian Signature:_____ Date:_____

Parent/Guardian's Email Address:_____ and/or _____

Student Signature:_____ Date:_____