

IB Environmental Systems Year 1 Curriculum Guide

My goal for this course is to present material in a variety of formats to enable all types of learners to access the curriculum and successfully complete the requirements for IB certification in Environmental Systems. Standards are designated in IB Environmental Systems Syllabus (reference copy in classroom).

Labs are integral parts of the curriculum, used to explain complex concepts while allowing for hands-on experience of science. Labs comprise the internal assessment component of the IB requirements and are evaluated per rubric required by the IB. Your grade on IB labs and IB tests will be progressively curved throughout the year, as you become more adept with the format. Skills assessed by labs include identifying research questions, stating hypotheses, devising a method to collect relevant data and control variables, performing data collection, processing and presentation, demonstrating manipulative and personal skills, drawing conclusions based on the data and relevant to the hypothesis and evaluating the entire procedure. (Not every lab is assessed for all these criteria at once.) Labs are always due the same day in the next cycle; seven school days after the lab. The lab grades will be reduced if turned in late; **ASK QUESTIONS BEFORE THE DUE DATE!!!** If there is a real problem with turning your work in, see me to set up a plan. Do not hide or avoid the issue.

Lab bookkeeping is essential. Labs are compiled throughout the year in a folder for each student. Folders are kept in a locked file cabinet in my room. At the end of the two years, these labs will be sent to an external moderator at another IB school. Labs have disappeared in the past so it is critical to your success to make a copy of the lab to keep at home before you turn it in. I will return your graded rubric to you so that you may attach this to your copy of the lab. I will attach a copy of the graded rubric to your lab in the file folder.

You will have weekly homework assignments given out on Thursday; due the following Thursday. As you enter the IB program, you will find the workload, particularly homework, increased. With a week to do your homework assignment, you may schedule yourself. Note that labs, which often require several hours to write up are in addition to weekly assignments. Late homework will not be accepted. We will go over the homework in class on Thursdays, after it has been collected.

If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get missing assignments and make up missing work. You have 3 days after your return to complete it (school policy).

You will have a weekly quiz, every Friday, which will cover the last week's work. Occasionally a classroom activity will be assessed in lieu of a quiz. Each quarter will end with a standard IB-type test in order to prepare all students for the certification exam at the end of the 2-year course. Tests attempt to equally represent multiple choice paper, data interpretation paper, and essay section of IB exams. Students with diagnosed learning differences are assessed by similar criteria, but with emphasis recognizing their strengths and accommodating their weaknesses per IEP or 504 instructions. If I am failing to meet your accommodations or if they aren't working, tell me right away so that we can adapt the instruction to your learning needs.

Grades will be calculated according to the following weighting:

Weekly homework: 20 pts

Weekly quiz: 30 pts

Lab/project: 200 pts each

Quarterly test: 200 pts

Resources include:

Texts: Living in the Environment, Miller, G.T., Jr., Brooks-Cole, Canada, 2004

Biology, the Living Science, Miller, K. and Levine, J., Prentice-Hall, N.J., 2000

Reference texts: Oceanography, Garrison, T.S., Brooks-Cole, Canada, 2004

National Audubon Society Field Guide to New England, Cassie, B. & Alden, P., Alfred A. Knopf Publishers, NY.

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