

Radicalizing student curiosity one lesson at a time.

TEACHER

Dr. Brett Merritt

LOCATION

Campo Science Building - Lab Left

E-MAIL

brett.merritt@tasis.ch

CLASS WEBSITE

www.SCIENCEsEDiment.com

INSTAGRAM

@SCIENCEsEDiment

WEEKLY HELP CENTER

Wednesdays (Lunch recess)



WHEN DOES MY CLASS MEET?

PERIOD	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
C	45 min	60 min	60 min	☒	60 min
D	45 min	60 min	60 min	☒	60 min

WHAT ABOUT MY SCIENCE GRADE?*

Academic Grade	Effort Grade
<p>Dr. Merritt bases 100% of a student's Academic Grade on their demonstrated proficiency of specific learning targets made available to them prior to the start of each unit. Learning target assessments are always scored according to the following 4-point proficiency scale:</p> <p>4 - Nearing mastery (A); 3 - Proficient (B); 2 - Emerging proficiency (C); 1- Not yet proficient (D); 0 - No evidence of learning (F).</p> <p>While it's true Dr. Merritt will assign any number of tasks to students <i>in support of</i> the learning targets, these assignments will not factor into the Academic Grade either positively or negatively. Instead, they will be reported in the online gradebook so parents can help support their child's learning. These assignments will also help determine a significant portion of a student's Effort Grade (<i>scale at right</i>).</p>	5 – Outstanding
	4 – Very good
	3 – Good
	2 – Needs improvement
	1 – Does not meet expectations

* For students enrolled in the TASIS Learning Resource Center (LRC), testing and classroom accommodations will be provided as stipulated by the TASIS Learning Support Plan (LSP).



WHAT WILL WE STUDY THIS YEAR?

During our Grade 7 science journey, we will touch nearly all of the major scientific disciplines including **physical science**, **life science**, **earth and space science**, **environmental science**, **computer science**, and **engineering**. Our main topics include...

- Particle Model
- Particulate Nature of Matter
- Physical & Chemical Changes
- Atoms, Elements, & Compounds
- Chemical Reactions
- Plant Cells & Organization
- Photosynthesis
- Inheritance, Chromosomes, DNA, & Genes
- Plant & Human Reproduction
- Ecosystems: Interactions, Interdependencies, & Relationships
- Earth & Atmosphere
- Earth in Space

IS THERE A CLASS TEXTBOOK?



YES, there are three! BUT...

You never have to put them in your backpack because your teacher will show you how to access digital copies of them on your electronic device(s):

- <https://www.kerboodle.com/users/login>

WHAT ARE SOME WAYS TO HAVE A GOOD YEAR IN SCIENCE?

1. Strive to 'Be good, do good.'
2. Always try to show respect to people (and other life forms), property, and the planet.
3. Don't fear failure. Failure is an important part of all meaningful learning.
4. Working hard is vitally important, but so is working *smart*.
5. Three things Dr. Merritt loves to see in his science students: *creativity*, *curiosity*, and *passion*.
6. Don't be afraid to let science come home with you.¹
7. Put high-quality time and effort into your Science Notebook.²
8. Let Dr. Merritt know when life becomes difficult for you (whether inside or outside of school). He might not be able to solve your problem or issue, but at least he can try to make class more manageable for you.
9. Know that the scientific worldview is a very rich and interesting worldview. There are other worldviews, however, and many of them are very rich and interesting too.
10. When it comes to classroom policies regarding **academic honesty**, **plagiarism**, and **timeliness/punctuality**, students should familiarize themselves with those sections of the *2023-24 TASIS MS Student Handbook*.

¹ For example, continue practicing your scientific noticing/wondering outside of school.

² If/when you do, Dr. Merritt will think that you're the bee's knees.



FAQ

(FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS)

Is Dr. Merritt really a doctor?

- Yes, but he's not a medical doctor (so don't ask him to cure you of some rare disease). He earned a Ph.D., which stands for **D**octor of **P**hilosophy.

Can I call him "MISTER Merritt?"

- Yes, you can as he uses pronouns for himself such as *he/his/him*. It is widely considered to be a sign of respect, however, to refer to someone by their earned academic title, so he prefers you to call him "Dr. Merritt" or, more simply, "Dr. M." He worked very hard to earn his doctorate degree!

Are there two Dr. Merritts at TASIS?

- Yes, Dr. Merritt is married and it just so happens that his wife is also a TASIS teacher. She also earned a Doctorate in Philosophy. To keep things from getting too confusing on campus, you can call Dr. Merritt's wife, "Dr. Kelly," if you wish.

Is Dr. Merritt nice?

- Yes, VERY, VERY, VERY nice!³

Is Dr. Merritt mean?

- See above.

Will Dr. Merritt assign me lots of homework?

- Not really, actually, but in return he insists his students work very diligently--and thoughtfully--during class.

Will Dr. Merritt make me take tests this year?

- Most likely, but think of tests as opportunities to show how smart you are, and know that you will also have other opportunities to show what you've learned by creating end-of-unit products such as Formal Investigation Reports (FIRs), museum displays, photographic exhibitions, podcasts, blogs/websites, documentary films, and other cool projects.

Was Dr. Merritt born a science teacher?

- Well, not quite, but his father worked as a professional scientist and his mother was a middle school teacher (math/history), so it sort of makes sense that he became a science teacher.

Has Dr. Merritt ever been a high school science teacher?

- Indeed, he has, and he has also been a science teacher at the college/university level.

How old is Dr. Merritt?

- That information is highly classified, but know that Dr. M is considered a member of **Gen X** (aka. Generation X).⁴

Do the Drs. Merritt have children?

- No, they do not, but they are uncle and aunt to nine nieces and nephews (mostly girls!) who all live in the United States.

³ Many past students will tell you that Dr. M has very high expectations of his science students, so they frequently describe him as, "Strict, but fair," and, "Funny, but serious." (He will tell you he is a "Nerdy science geek.")

⁴ He is not a (Baby) Boomer.