



# Grade 7 Science

## 2024/25

MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

*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

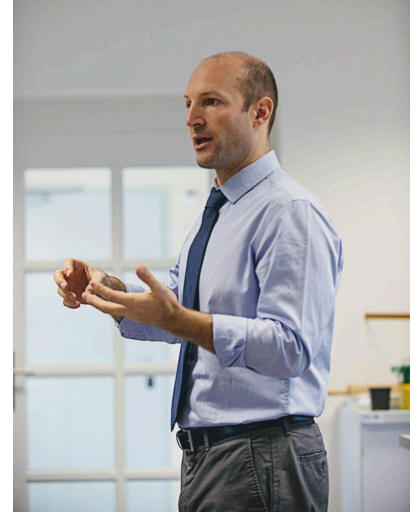
www.SCIENCEsEDiment.com

### INSTAGRAM

@SCIENCEsEDiment

### WEEKLY OFFICE HOURS

Wednesdays (Lunch recess)



### WHEN DOES MY CLASS MEET?

PERIOD	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
<b>B</b>	45 min	60 min	60 min	60 min	☒
<b>C</b>	45 min	60 min	60 min	☒	60 min
<b>H</b>	45 min	☒	60 min	60 min	60 min

### WHAT ABOUT MY SCIENCE GRADE?

Through the school year, TASIS issues two different types of student grades: *Academic & Effort*.

Academic Grade	Effort Grade
Dr. Merritt uses TASIS’s self-described “traditional A through F grading system” when assessing student work. The letters (numbers or ‘points’) and word descriptors your teacher associates with this grading system are provided below.  <b>A</b> (4.0) – Nearing mastery <b>B</b> (3.0) – Proficient <b>C</b> (2.0) – Emerging proficiency <b>D</b> (1.0) – Not yet proficient <b>F</b> (0.0) – No evidence of learning	<b>5</b> – Outstanding
	<b>4</b> – Very good
	<b>3</b> – Good
	<b>2</b> – Needs improvement
	<b>1</b> – Does not meet expectations



## 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...

- Matter
- Earth & Atmosphere
- Space
- Rock Cycling
- Chemical Reactions
- Metabolic Reactions
- Cells
- Human Body Systems
- Plants (reproduction, life cycle)
- Matter Cycling
- Genetics
- Humans (reproduction, life cycle)

## IS THERE A CLASS TEXTBOOK?



### YES, there are supporting textbooks!

But you'll never have to put them in your backpack because your teacher will show you how to access digital copies of them on your device. Our course texts include the **Exploring Science** series (books 7, 8, & 9) published by Pearson Education Ltd.

## 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.<sup>1</sup>
7. Put high-quality time and effort into your Science Notebook.<sup>2</sup>
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 *2024/25 TASIS MS Student Handbook*.

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

<sup>2</sup> 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!<sup>3</sup>

*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 (mathematics & 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 taught science courses 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).<sup>4</sup>

*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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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.")

<sup>4</sup> He is not a (Baby) Boomer.