

Syllabus

Earth Science

Heritage Academy
A University-Model School®

The mission of Heritage Academy, a Certified University-Model School®, is to partner with Christian parents to prepare college-worthy, character witnesses for Jesus Christ.

I. Course Purpose and Content

This is an introductory science course. It includes fundamental concepts for understanding science and scientific investigation. Student will survey the physical (non-living) universe in four major divisions: the celestial sphere (astronomy), the atmosphere (meteorology), the lithosphere (geology), and the hydrosphere (oceanography). A variety of activities will help students to recognize cause-and-effect relationships and to think critically regarding God's creation. Students will learn to analyze scientific information, consider important questions regarding the topics studied, and apply acquired knowledge in problem-solving activities and scientific experiments. All materials will affirm the young-Earth and creationist views of earth's history.

Pre-requisites: Successful completion of the preceding course in Heritage Academy's science sequence.

II. Worldview Integration

Heritage Academy is committed to teaching all subjects in such a way that students develop a Biblical worldview out of which to think and act. The following are foundational, Biblical truths that undergird the study of all science: God is ultimate reality (Gen. 1:1; Ps. 90:2) and is infinite, omnipotent, and omniscient; He is the Creator (He spoke all things into existence) and sustainer of the universe (Ps. 148:1-5; Col. 1:16-17); He is wise, good, creative, and generous, which is reflected in the order and design observable in His creation (Rom. 11:34); God has chosen to disclose His power and His Godhead in nature (Ps. 19); as rational beings, created in the image of God, we can observe God's order and use our powers of intellect to make reasonable predictions and test those predictions. Good science showcases God's eternal power and divine nature (Romans 1) and may move the observer to worship, creativity, innovation, and more responsible citizenship.

"It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out" (Proverbs 25:2).

III. Required Texts and Materials

Please reference *Required Text Book List* and *Course Supplies List* for the appropriate academic year to identify the textbooks and supplies students will need for this course. Both the Required Text Book List and Course Supplies List are accessible online.

IV. Course Guidelines/Student Responsibilities

A. Attendance

During on-campus class periods, we will focus on elements of the course that are difficult to complete in a home setting (e.g., experiments, demonstrations, and group discussions). Students are expected to attend class and contribute positively to the classroom environment. Attendance is imperative as concepts cannot be learned if a student is absent. Tardiness is disruptive to other class members. Please arrive on time and prepared. All absences and tardies are considered unexcused unless accompanied by a note from a parent or guardian. Please remember that three tardies generate one absence.

As communicated in Heritage Academy's Family Manual, a passing grade awarded at the end of the semester generally requires that a secondary student has attended at least forty-two class periods during the semester. Failure to meet this minimum attendance requirement may result in an F being awarded and recorded on the student's transcript.

Students are expected to be in attendance during all on-campus class periods. As communicated in Heritage Academy's Family Manual, a passing grade awarded at the end of the semester generally requires that a secondary student has attended at least forty-two class periods during the semester. Failure to meet this minimum attendance requirement may result in an F being awarded and recorded on the student's transcript.

B. Absences and Late Work

In the case of planned absence(s), homework that is due during the student's absence must be completed and submitted to the instructor in advance.

A student who is unexpectedly and unavoidably absent due to ill health must submit late assignments within two course periods after the student's return to school. **When an unexpected absence must occur, please be sure to notify the school office and the instructor of the students' absence as quickly as possible, preferably before the involved class occurs. This contact may occur by phone or by email.**

Late work that is submitted simply "late" will be graded and penalized with a **ten percent grade reduction for each course period that it is late**; homework will not be accepted more than three course periods (1 week) past its due date, unless previous arrangements between the teacher and the student's parent have been agreed to in light of peculiar circumstances that are occurring beyond the family's control.

If a student must be absent during a laboratory procedure, written work with a similar point value may be assigned.

C. Student Conduct and Preparation for Learning

For the sake of promoting a safe and focused learning environment, each student is expected to conduct himself/herself in keeping with the following expectations:

- 1) Arrive on time to each class period with the appropriate class materials available for access (e.g., organized notebook with dividers and filed materials, paper, writing tools, texts, and other tools as directed)
- 2) Arrive prepared to submit completed at-home assignments at start of each class period.
- 3) Arrive ready to listen, learn, take notes, and participate in teacher-directed classroom discussions and activities.
- 4) Ask for clarification or further explanation when a concept or direction remains unclear.
- 5) Demonstrate a spirit of cooperation, kindness, and respect toward the teacher and fellow classmates, demonstrating respect to Heritage Academy's Code of Conduct.
- 6) Refrain from horseplay or irresponsible behavior, particularly during laboratory exercises. **Note: Students will only be warned once if their classroom behavior is irresponsible or distracting. They will be removed from the classroom, with a zero grade for the day, for the second infraction. Safety in the classroom - during lab exercises, especially - must be a priority for all.**
- 7) Help keep the classroom area clean and orderly.
- 8) Cooperate with the parent-educator and the Heritage Academy teacher to complete homework in a timely fashion
- 9) Communicate concerns regarding schoolwork to both the Heritage Academy teacher and the parent-educator, so that these concerns can be addressed quickly.
- 10) On the whole, conduct himself or herself in a manner that is worthy of Christ and reflects the life of the Holy Spirit in him/her: "... that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the

Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light” (Colossians 1:12).

D. At-Home (Satellite Classroom) Investment

Daily home-assignments will be outlined on the weekly Home-Communication Sheet the student will receive each Monday. The student can expect to invest approximately 2.5 to 4 hours each week completing coursework at home in preparation for class periods. Course assignments may include any of the following:

- **Reading**
- **Completing questions from the text, lab pages, or handouts given by the teacher in class.**
- **Memorization Work** (e.g. definitions, names, dates, scripture verses, etc.)
- **Lab Exercises:** preparing for experiments or finishing lab write-ups.

- **Maintenance of Course Binder:** The contents, divided by subject divider pages, should include weekly homework sheets, completed homework assignments, class notes, lab write-ups, and returned examinations. Students may choose to maintain a separate file at home which contains work from completed chapters. *They will need to keep completed work to prepare for the comprehensive semester finals.*

- **Writing:** All short essay assignments must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font, and include a full heading and title. Margins should be 1 inch. Plagiarism is never acceptable.

- **Conducting Research /Completing Special Projects:** Students may be directed to research various topics throughout the semester for the purpose of presenting information or arguing a point. This may include web work. Plagiarism is never acceptable.

- **Dialog:** Student may be instructed to discuss and/or explore certain topics or concepts with a parent. These assignments will be given purposefully and should not be dismissed.

- **Preparation for Tests:** Students may be instructed to review notes, various texts, previously completed tests, scripture verses and/or to complete review questions and practice problem etc, in preparation for tests.

- **Other Assignments:** additional types of assignments may be given throughout the semester at the discretion of the instructor.

F. Assessments

A written examination, or equivalent, will be administered at the end of each unit. At the end of each semester, a comprehensive, semester final will occur, in keeping with Heritage Academy’s Semester Exam Schedule.

G. Grades

Students will be awarded points for completed assessments, written assignments, laboratory exercises, and special projects (such as essays, portfolios, presentations, etc.)

Grade Apportionment

Homework 45% Tests 40% Semester Exam 15%

Grading Scale

100-95.... A	86-83B	76-73.... C	69-60.... D
94-90 A-	82-80.... B-	72-70.... C-	59 or belowF
89-87 B+	79-77.... C+		

The course grade the student is awarded at the end of the semester will indicate the grade that will also appear on the student’s transcript. Because this course is a junior high course, it will not generate high school credit; to maintain eligibility for promotion into the next science course in Heritage Academy’s science sequence, the student must achieve a percentage grade of 70% or above (which translates to a letter grade of C- or above) and fulfill attendance requirements.

V. Parent Responsibilities

A. Embrace the University Model

University-Model Schooling at Heritage Academy is driven by two guiding principles:

- to preserve and strengthen God-ordained family relationships;
- to offer students the opportunity to achieve a high degree of academic excellence.

Heritage Academy operates as a University-Model School[®], designed for families who want their students to flourish from a life anchored in the home yet still gain from the best aspects of traditional, classroom education. Courses offered at Heritage Academy occur every-other-day so that students may realize the benefits of qualified teachers and a focused learning community, yet continue to experience home as the primary, consistent base where parents remain their foremost guides for spiritual, social, academic, and character formation.

Parents, please consider ways you may maximize the benefits University-Model Schooling offers to your family. How can you as parents utilize the at-home study time this model provides to nurture deeper relationship and impart the faith, values, and life-patterns you desire your student to embrace?

B. Fulfill Parent Role

Within the University-Model School[®], **parents commit to fulfill a specified role related to each course** in which their student is enrolled, as prescribed by the course's description. Each role identifies specific responsibilities that the teacher relies on the parent to perform, thus facilitating effective home/school partnership whereby students are assured of receiving needed support. For this course, Heritage Academy has designated parents the role of "**Guide for Dependent Study.**"

This role recognizes that many courses at this level will begin to cover subject matter that may be unfamiliar to many parents. At the same time, the student is at a dependent age where disciplined study habits must be developed, not by parental force, but through positive encouragement and through the student's growing awareness of personal consequences. In order for this class to be successful, I, as a teacher, am depending upon you, as parents, to ensure that your son or daughter keeps up with the course material and to communicate with me should any difficulties or concerns arise.

In this course specifically, please be purposeful in helping your student with the following:

- Help your student learn the time management tools and advance planning methods they need to accommodate school, family and church activities.
- Help your student maintain a complete and organized course binder.

C. Monitor Engrade and View Seven-Week and Thirteen-Week Engrade Reports

As your student earns grades for completed tests, quizzes, and various projects and homework assignments, these will be recorded on **Engrade.com** for you to view at your convenience. My general goal will be to post grades online within a week of their being awarded.

In Engrade, missing assignments will also be noted by an "M." Please take time to follow your student's progress on Engrade so that you can quickly recognize and explore/address areas of patterns of difficulty or concern that may appear and affirm positive accomplishments.

Directions to register for Engrade are accessible on Heritage Academy's website under "Resources" and "Engrade", or may also be received from the office. If you need aide setting up Engrade (it should only take about two minutes), please contact Heritage Academy's office.

Engrade Reports, which will include parent-directed comments related to your student's behavior and progress in class, will be ready for parents to view at the seven-week and thirteen-week point in the semester.

D. Attend Parent/Teacher Fellowship

I hope you will take time to come to Parent/Teacher Fellowship scheduled during the 7th week of each semester. This will give you and I brief opportunity to connect face-to-face and discuss your student's progress, making the most of the partnership that is so vital to students' success within the University Model[®].

VI. Contacting the Instructor

Teacher contact information will be provided on the weekly communication sheets that will be distributed in class; it may also be found in the school directory.