

Earth and Environmental Science Syllabus

Spring 2026

Mr. Endres

I. Course Description and Requirements

Earth and Environmental Science is designed to develop students' understanding of Earth systems and human interactions with the environment, as outlined in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The course emphasizes the interconnected nature of the geosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere. Instruction includes Earth Science units such as Earth's internal and surface processes, plate tectonics, rock and mineral formation, weather and climate patterns, ocean systems, and space science. Environmental Science units focus on ecosystems, biogeochemical cycles, natural resources, population dynamics, human impact on the environment, sustainability, pollution, and climate change, with an emphasis on evidence-based decision-making and environmental stewardship.

Students should be prepared to conduct projects and complete a formal lab report. Instruction centers around inquiry-based learning that is incorporated into class activities. Learning activities include teacher-lead instruction, group work, student seatwork, project-based learning, and lab exercises with both student-choice and teacher-choice grouping.

Students can expect to start each day with a bell ringer assignment followed by learning activities and/or lecture. At times students will work independently from the teacher in order to achieve student autonomy that will be expected of high school students. Classes are structured to utilize every minute for learning and assessing understanding. Real world application is a daily objective. Higher-level thinking will be incorporated into each lesson as well as use of technology when applicable to increase student achievement. Students are expected to participate in all activities and actively engage and ask questions during teacher-led lecture. Students are also expected to review and study the content covered in class outside of school on a daily basis.

II. Class Expectations

- Students are expected to **be present** and active members of the classroom each and every day.
- Students are expected to come to class **prepared** with all necessary materials and completed assignments to learn and participate in all lectures and activities.
- Students are expected to **be respectful** of the teacher, the classroom, and their peers.

III. Class Discipline

Students who are not acting present, coming prepared, and being respectful will earn one or more of the following consequences:

- Warning in class
- Teacher/Student conference during or after class
- Parent contact
- Removal from activity or class
- Written disciplinary referral

Any student caught cheating on an assignment will receive a zero and a written referral.

IV. Required Materials

All students must come to class each day with the following materials:

- *A notebook and paper to take notes and complete assignments*
- *Writing and coloring utensils (pen, pencil, colored pencils, highlighter, etc.)*
- *Corded earbuds or headphones for use with school-issued chromebook (no airpods or wireless headphones)*
- **School-issued chromebook.** There will be very few opportunities to charge computers in class, so please make sure your chromebook is fully charged every day when you arrive at school.

V. Assessment

We will cover eleven units over the course of the semester. Each unit will have multiple opportunities for assessment. The number of minor assessments varies per unit. Students will have a daily open-note quiz each day that will add up to a cumulative minor grade. All unit tests are cumulative and may include both

multiple choice and open response questions.

Note: Assignments checked for completion will not be accepted late. Assignments collected and graded for accuracy will be accepted late with a penalty of 10% off every day late.

****Under no circumstances will late work be accepted after the completion of the unit the work is from, unless the student had an excused absence, in which case they receive 5 days to turn in the work.**

Assessments

- *Classwork/Informal labs:* Each unit will have engaging activities and practice to help master the content. These assignments range from 15-100 points, depending on the length and depth of the material.
- *Daily quizzes:* At the start of each day the students will complete a small quiz (warm-up or “bell-ringer”) over content covered during the previous class period. Their grade on each day’s quiz will be added up for one weekly warm-up grade at the end of each week.
- *Unit tests:* Most units will have a comprehensive test to assess the student’s understanding of the unit material. Students should make every effort to review material on a daily basis, rather than “cramming” for the test the day before. Evidence shows that students who engage in regular review consistently outperform students who only review material immediately before a test or quiz.
- *Projects:* There will be several large assignments throughout the semester that require students to use knowledge from multiple units, as well as critical thinking skills and creativity. These assignments may be individual or in groups and usually take multiple days to complete.

Units

Unit 1: Intro to Earth and Environmental Science	Unit 7: Minerals, Mining, and Soil
Unit 2: Ecology, Food Webs, and Earth’s Spheres	Unit 8: Renewable and Nonrenewable Energy
Unit 3: Species and Populations	Unit 9: The Water Cycle
Unit 4: Biomes, Succession, and Biodiversity	Unit 10: Marine Biomes, Wetlands, and Pollution
Unit 5: Atmosphere, Weather, and Biogeochemical Cycles	Unit 11: Urbanization, Forestry, and Agriculture
Unit 6: Plate Tectonics and Landforms	

The final semester grade is calculated according to the following percent values:

1st six weeks = 25% of final grade

2nd six weeks = 25% of final grade

3rd six weeks = 25% of final grade

Final exam = 25% of final grade

VI. Communication

I will regularly post on my google classroom updates, announcements, lecture notes, and assignments for students and parents to access. Students and parents are encouraged to contact me via email. The easiest way to schedule a phone call with me is to email me first so we can arrange a time that works for everyone.

Email: sendres@haywood.k12.nc.us