

# 2020-2021 Syllabus – Biology

Mr. Jonathan Lowe

## **Waltrip Mission Statement**

Waltrip High School fosters a safe and challenging learning environment, preparing students for post-secondary education and a competitive global workforce through rigorous core academic instruction, comprehensive social-emotional supports, an array of quality fine arts and athletics programs, and comprehensive career and technology education.

## **Classroom Objectives:**

- Maximize learning opportunities for all students via diverse and data-driven instruction
- Foster a community of respect, integrity, and inclusion both in and out of the classroom
- Share personal experiences and knowledge to help students succeed in all aspects of life

## **Information on the Biology STAAR:**

Freshman Biology is a STAAR assessed course. Barring unforeseen changes, the test will be administered at Waltrip in May of 2021. Students must pass the STAAR to graduate from High School. Students who do not pass the STAAR in May of 2021 will need to retake the assessment in subsequent years until they pass.

The STAAR test will cover all the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Biology. Therefore, the Waltrip Biology Curriculum is designed to ensure students have time to learn and practice all TEKS. In addition, a STAAR-prep “bootcamp” is embedded to review material prior to the STAAR exam.

## **Academic Unit Schedules:**

<b>Cycle</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Major Topics</b>
1	Sep 8 – Oct 16	Biomolecules, Enzymes, Cells, Virus, Cellular Transport
2	Oct 19 – Dec 4	DNA, Cell Cycle, Cancer, Protein Synthesis
3	Dec 7 – Jan 29	Mutations, Genetics, Evidence of Evolution
4	Feb 1 – Mar 12	Natural Selection, Taxonomy, Animal Body Systems
5	Mar 22 – Apr 30	Plant Systems, Energy Cycles, Ecology, STAAR Prep
6	May 3 – Jun 11	STAAR Prep, STAAR Exam, Project, Finals

**Teacher Contact Information:**

Jonathan.lowe@houstonisd.org

(409) 241-6120

"Remind" App Code: @lowebio20

**Non-Instructional Time Summary:**

Description	Days / Times	Purpose
Office Hours	<u>M: 3:25 – 4:10</u> <u>Tu-F: 1:50 – 2:35</u>	Students can seek teacher assistance on any topic
Conference Period	M: 11:00 – 11:45 W/F: 10:05 – 11:35	Parent / Teacher conferences, instructional planning, administrative tasks
Flex Time	M-F: 4:15 – 5:00	Available for assistance or conferences by appointment (use contact info above)
Quiet Time	5:00pm – 8:30am, Weekends	Mr. Lowe's time away from work

**Classwork and Grading Policy**

- Assignments for Biology will include reading, labs, and other homework
  - Assignments will be listed in the HUB but may utilize other digital resources
  - Students need to acknowledge completion of assignments in the HUB even if they submit assignments in other platforms
  - This is a STAAR course; students should expect rigor and thoroughness
  - Students should expect to spend time on the class OUTSIDE of class hours
- Each assignment will include a due date to ensure content is learned at the appropriate time
  - Assignments completed on or before the due date will have a maximum score of 100%
  - Assignments completed after the due date will have a maximum score of 80%
  - Assignments will not be accepted later than one week past the original due date
  - For extenuating circumstances such as unforeseen absences, alternative due dates may be arranged at the discretion of the teacher
- Grading
  - Students should complete all assigned reading and questions; however, every question may or may not be graded
  - The teacher will not announce ahead of time which questions are graded
  - Re-takes / Re-dos
    - Consistent with school policy, students that fail an assessment or assignment will have the opportunity to re-take the assessment or re-do the assignment
    - Re-takes / re-dos will have a maximum 80% score
    - Re-takes / re-dos must be completed within one week of the original due date or the end of the 6-week grading period (whichever comes first)
  - Grade weight by assessment type:
    - Exams & Quizzes – 35%
    - Labs – 30%
    - Classwork and homework – 25%
    - Participation – 10%

**Tardy Policy:**

- The purpose of the tardy policy is to maximize instructional time with every student
- Students are expected to arrive in the classroom (or in line to enter) before the tardy bell rings
  - Students arriving less than 15 minutes late on Mondays or less than 30 minutes late Tuesday - Friday will be considered tardy
  - Students arriving greater than 15 minutes late on Mondays or greater than 30 minutes late Tuesday - Friday will be considered tardy
  - A signed pass from a teacher or administrator will be accepted, though these occurrences should be minimized
- Late arriving students will be “charged” two Personal Hall Passes (see below)
- The "2-4-6" policy will be utilized:
  - After the second tardy, the parent will be notified to seek support
  - After the fourth tardy, a parent-teacher conference will be scheduled and the student will be issued a detention
  - After the sixth tardy, the teacher will seek support from the administration to correct student behavior
  - Tardy counts will reset at the beginning of each six-week grading cycle
- VIRTUAL NOTE – during virtual instruction, students still need to join the Teams Class on-time

**Restroom Policy:**

- The purpose of the restroom policy is to maximize instructional time with every student
- Students are expected to use restroom facilities during passing periods or lunch and should plan accordingly
- Students should use the restroom during class time sparingly
  - No students may use the restroom during the first 15 minutes or last 15 minutes of class time
  - Only one student (regardless of gender) may use the restroom at a time
  - Each time a student uses the restroom, he or she must turn in a personal hall pass
- Personal Hall Passes
  - In the beginning of each semester, every student will receive a piece of paper including 8 personal restroom passes
  - Each time a student uses the restroom, he or she must turn in a personal hall pass
  - Any unutilized hall passes at the end of the semester may be applied for a 2-point bonus on the final laboratory assignment (maximum 16 points)
  - Students are responsible for securing and maintaining their personal hall passes; no extra copies provided
- VIRTUAL NOTE – students should plan to avoid using the restroom during live class instruction and instead make use of time during breaks or asynchronous instruction

**Electronics Policy:**

- Students will put away phones and earbuds in their bags prior to entering the classroom
- Failure to follow teacher directions regarding electronics will result in temporary confiscation of devices consistent with school policy
- Special notes on laptops:
  - Students will need laptops every day for lectures, assignments, labs, and assessments

- Laptops should only be used for appropriate activities as directed by the teacher
- "Laptops at 45" means that the lid of the laptop should be partially closed (45-degree angle)
- VIRTUAL NOTE: While attending live classes on Teams, students need to put away electronic devices other than laptops to avoid distraction

### **Other Classroom Policies**

- Food and drinks
  - Students are allowed food and drinks except during:
    - Labs
    - Some assessments
    - Other times specifically directed by the teacher
  - To maintain food and drink privileges, students must ensure that their tables and areas are clean at the end of each class period using cleaning supplies provided
  - Students should bring a water bottle to avoid asking to use the water fountain during class (water fountain requests follow the "Restroom Policy")
- Entering the classroom
  - Students should only enter the classroom upon being greeted with a handshake or fist-bump (or other greeting mutually agreed) from the teacher
  - Students should wait in line in the hallway until they enter the classroom
  - Only the door in the front of the classroom will be unlocked for entry
  - All materials aside from the student laptops should be placed on the side counters or the floor in the back of the classroom, including backpacks and work from other classes
    - Nearly all the coursework will be administered electronically
  - Students should sit according to the seating chart and begin work on the "Do Now" posted activity
- "Remind" App
  - Students and parents are highly encouraged to download the "Remind" app
  - This app is used for seamless communication between all parties
  - To join, text the following code to "81010": @lowebio20

### **Technology Resources:**

Use this link to become familiar with the Technology Resources we will use in class:

[Technology Needs - Biology.docx](#)

**Virtual Norms:**

- Start and end on time
- Tame your technology
  - Mute your microphone when you're not talking
  - Turn on camera when speaking
- Dress appropriately
- Be aware of your surroundings when using the camera
- Respect everyone's point of view
  - Use the "raise your hand" function if you have a question
  - Use the chat box to ask and respond to questions
  - Do not post offensive language or pictures in chat... it is RECORDED
- Stay present and engaged
- Maintain a safe space