



RANCHO PICO

TRAIL BLAZERS

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to Rancho Pico Junior High School. Our team is dedicated to providing a caring and effective learning environment for each of our students, based upon the Rancho Pico Core Values, as indicated on our school website (www.hartdistrict.org/ranchopico/trailblazers).

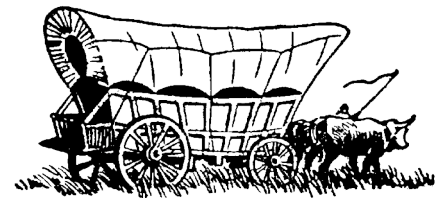
Class Rules

Every child has the right to an optimal learning experience, and our class rules are designed to support this position. All students will be expected to follow these rules:

- Respect our instructional time. Be in your seat with required materials, ready to work when the bell rings. Do not disrupt instruction. Cell phones must be turned off during class time.
- Respect our classroom and campus. Eating, drinking, and gum chewing are not permitted in class. Gum is not permitted at Rancho Pico at any time.
- Respect property. Writing on or damaging school property or the personal property of other students is unacceptable.
- Respect all people. Rudeness, profanity, obscene gestures and put-downs of any kind will not be tolerated.

Our success depends on the cooperation of all students. Those who do not cooperate may experience of the following consequences:

- Verbal warning
- Student-teacher conference
- Communication with parents
- Removal from the classroom
- Team conference (parent, student, teachers, counselor)
- Removal from activities / loss of privileges / detention
- Administrative involvement / class suspension



Materials

Students should come to school each day prepared to work. A carpenter without a hammer is soon out of a job! Bring your tools.

- Daily Planner
- 3-Ring Binder
- Single-Subject spiral notebooks
- Pens (red, black, blue, and green for English)
- Pencils
- Dividers
- Subject specific tools (ruler, etc.)
- Notebook paper

Homework

See individual course plans for homework policy.

Late Work

Assignments should be completed in a timely manner. Work that is turned in late will not be given full credit. Make sure you don't leave your work at home. If there is a family emergency, please send a note or an email to the teachers to explain the situation.

Grades

Our team uses the following grading scale:

90% - 100% = A (Advanced)
80% - 89% = B (Proficient)
70% - 79% = C (Basic)
60% - 69% = D (Below Basic)
Below 60% = F (Far Below Basic)

You can view your child's progress at any point in the year by using SNAP GRADES (<http://snapgrades.net/>). Progress reports are mailed home mid-way through each quarter.

Missing assignments are given a score of zero (0). Such a score will quickly lead to a low overall grade. Turn in all your work!

Attendance

In most cases, students who have an excused absence will have the same number of days as their absence to complete missed assignments. The same grace period does not apply to projects. Projects should be turned in on the assigned due date. It is the responsibility of the student to check with each teacher, or the homework notebook, to determine what assignments were missed. Students should also have a "study buddy" they can call for help.

Tardiness is disruptive. All students should be in their seats beginning their assignment when the bell rings. Excessive tardiness will result in detention.

Contacts

The Trail Blazer teachers have a conference / planning period every other day during period 4. To request a team conference, please contact Mr. Ritchie at extension 1611. Our team website is located at: www.hartdistrict.org/ranchopico/trailblazers. Teachers and counselors can be reached at 661.284.3260. Telephone extensions and email addresses are included in the following chart:

Mrs. Mumford /English (ext #1614) bmumfor@hartdistrict.org	Mrs. Flohr/History (ext #1615) rflohr@hartdistrict.org
Mr. Ritchie/Science (ext #1611) nritch@hartdistrict.org	Mr. Gately/Math (ext #1612) lgately@hartdistrict.org
Ms. Linda Sarian /Counselor (ext #1413) lsarian@hartdistrict.org	

Parent Signature

After reading this packet, please keep it in a safe place for future reference. Also, let us know that you've seen this letter by signing and returning the last sheet. Thank you.

Welcome to 7th Grade Life Science Mr. Ritchie

Course Introduction: This fun filled class is designed to teach students about the simple processes of Biology. We will examine structures from the smallest cells to the largest organisms. We will also study earth history and how organisms change over time. Students will learn how to use laboratory equipment and discover how the scientific method can be used to solve problems not only in science but in everyday life as well. Labs are a big part of science and this class will provide many hands-on laboratory activities. State standards can be found at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/scgrade7.asp>

Student Expectations: I expect my students to respect themselves, each other, and their teacher while at school. As a Trail Blazer student you are held to the highest standard. I look forward to watching students cheer their classmates on and support them. I would hope that all students show their spirit instead of breaking someone else's. Classroom rules are based on the Trail Blazers' team letter, which will be signed by the students and parents.

STUDENT BINDER

All Trail Blazer students must have a 3 Ring (preferably 2") Binder for Science class. This is a huge part of Science class and each student will be expected to have a binder. Students must bring their science binder with them as well as any specific materials assigned by the teacher to class every day. Homework and important class work will be kept in their binder.

Textbook: Prentice Hall: Focus on Life Science, *California Edition 2008*

Grading: Grades are determined based on the following:

Homework
In-class work
Quizzes
Tests
Labs

Materials Needed: The following will be needed in class everyday. These materials are essential for student success in science class.

- Three ring binder (2" or larger)
- 2 Spiral bound notebooks
- Three hole punch (attaches to three ring binder, not required)
- Small pocket calculator (not required)

Late Work Policy: Late work is expected to be handed in on the day back from an absence during Science class. This amounts to a 2 day policy. This 2 day policy is due to the block schedule. For instance, if a student is sick on Monday, their work due that day is due on Wednesday by the end of class. In the case of a long-term absence students will have an equal amount of time plus two days to make up the work. All make-up work will be posted in an agenda book, located on the front board. It is the student's responsibility to find out what they missed. I *will not* hunt students down to assign missed work.

Academic Integrity: All work is expected to be the student's own work unless otherwise instructed to be group work. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Tardy/ Attendance Policy: This section is covered in the Trail Blazers' team letter. Please see that information. Attendance to class is vital to student success especially in a hands-on science class. If students are absent it is their responsibility to get the make-up work. Any work not made up from an absence is seen as missing assignments.

Lab Behavior: Every student is expected to act in an adult manner in the laboratory situations. Treat all materials with respect and wear appropriate attire when directed by the lab instructions. Labs are an important part of science and should be attended.

Homework: I believe that work should be at least started in class. For this reason your student will not come home with lots of homework in Science. Only if a student was absent or if we were short on time in class will they have substantial amounts of homework. This doesn't mean that homework is not important I simply want to utilize the maximum amount of teaching time with the students in class and I feel starting in class allows me to monitor their questions.

Let's Talk: I will be in the classroom before and after school to help students. If there are special circumstances please make an appointment to discuss them with me privately.

Phone contact-284-3260 ext. 1611

Email- nritch@hartdistrict.org

Mathematics

Pre Algebra is the standard course for 7th grade students. This class provides important instruction in the following areas of mathematics required by the California Board of Education:

- Number Sense (Integers, Fractions, Decimals, Irrational Numbers)
- Algebra and Functions (Solving and Graphing Linear and Quadratic Equations)
- Geometry and Measurement (Plane and Solid Figures, Metric and Standard Measures)
- Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability
- Mathematical Reasoning

Materials

Notes can be taken in pencil or ink (blue or black), but all math tests and quizzes must be completed in pencil. All of our notes and homework are written in **single subject wire-bound spiral notebooks**. Don't tear out the pages! I recommend that you get a notebook for each quarter (**4 total for Math**) while they are sold at discounts. Colored pencils or pens are extremely useful for some of our assignments.

Calculators are used occasionally. The calculators we use in class are **TI 30X IIS**. (\$11 at Staples) You might want to have one for use at home. Students should be able to complete most work without the use of a calculator.

Grades

Pre Algebra

- The overall grade is made up of **70% test** scores and **30% practice** scores.
- There are a few quizzes, two or three chapter tests, and a final examination for each quarter.
- Homework is scored for timely completion, not for accuracy, as it is practice work.
- Notebooks will be graded at the end of each quarter.
- At the end of the year, students who have maintained an 85% test average, scored 85% on the Algebra Readiness Test, and have excellent work habits will take Algebra 1 the following year. All other students will take Algebra 8, the same course spread over two years.

Tests and quizzes will be sent home after they have been recorded and reviewed in class. Please take time to review the results at home, then sign and return this paperwork.

Homework

Pre Algebra usually requires approximately 20 minutes of homework for each lesson. Since we are on a block schedule, you can expect to need 40 minutes every two days to complete your homework. Some students may need additional time if they lack prior skills.

Students can get assistance with their homework by visiting class nearly every day before school or during brunch. Students are also invited to work with their peers in room 612 during lunch. The library is available on most school days before and after classes, as well as during lunch and brunch breaks.

Contact

The best way to reach me is to send an email message to lgately@hartdistrict.org . I check my email many times each day. You can also reach me by phone when classes are not in session. Call 1-661-284-3260 extension 1612.

I encourage you to visit the Trail Blazer website for additional information.

<http://www.hartdistrict.org/ranchopico/trailblazers/>

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need support. It's not unusual for previously successful students to find themselves struggling for the first time. Working together, I know we will find the best solution for each student's concerns.

Sincerely,
Lee S. Gately



7th Grade Language Arts

Mrs. Mumford

Welcome to 7th grade Language Arts and the world of junior high! This letter outlines the expectations, content, course requirements and other information that will give you the opportunity to achieve and have a positive learning experience.

Objectives:

In accordance with the state *Language Arts Standards, we will read and explore a variety of literary forms including short stories, poetry, novels and expository texts, and respond to those texts through written and oral presentations. We will continue to perfect our written and oral skills, while also increasing our knowledge of skills and methods used to produce works in several literary genres. We will prepare for the STAR exam and real world expectations as well as use these skills for personal enrichment and enjoyment. This course will cover informational skills, vocabulary building, grammar instruction, literary analysis of character, setting, plot and theme, oral presentations, listening skills, group discussions, critical thinking skills, and the complete writing process from prewriting to final draft. This 'process approach' to writing encourages students to plan before they write, and to revise their work before creating finished pieces. The class curriculum focuses upon mastery of the 7th grade standards, and standards-based instruction guides all planning and implementation.

***To review the California State Standards for English online, go to: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/>**

Textbook: Prentice Hall Literature: Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes
(Replacement Cost: \$65.00)

Each student is responsible for covering and caring for his or her book. Do not cover it with sticky book covers. Be kind to your books; lost or damaged books must be replaced or paid for by the student.

We will read most of the literature book. Some pieces we will read together; others you will read as a weekly independent reading homework assignment. Each week, you should be ready to share ideas, write short essays, take a short quiz, or make a thinking map on the assigned story.

Novels:

We will read at least one novel a quarter. Novels will be checked out from the library or students may buy their own books from the local bookstores. Again, students are responsible for replacing lost or damaged library books. Novels will be chosen from the following district approved list:

- Hatchet
- Midwife's Apprentice
- Treasure Island
- A Door In the Wall
- Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry
- A Day No Pigs Would Die
- Where the Red Fern Grows

Writing Domains:

- 1st Quarter - Response to literature
- 2nd Quarter - Informational Research
- 3rd Quarter - Persuasive
- 4th Quarter - Personal narrative

Focusing on the standards, you will write extensively and work on developing and enhancing your writing skills. Using the Jane Schaffer writing Method, you will write essays in response to the literature as well as essays about topics that interest you. In addition, you will write poetry, journal entries, reader response logs, and at least one research project.

Homework: Students will write their homework assignments in their daily planner every day. If there is no homework, students will write this down. Planners will be checked daily to make sure the assignment is recorded. At the end of the day, parents should compare the completed homework with the assignment written in the planner.

Independent Reading:

It has been proven that reading helps build student's vocabulary. In addition, reading stimulates students' minds and strengthens their comprehension and critical thinking skills. Students will be expected to read 20 minutes a night from a novel of their choice. Once during each semester, students will give an oral presentation with visuals in which they will present a book they have read.

Absences and Make-up Work:

In the event of an excused absence, the number of days allowed to complete the work is equal to the number of days absent. If you are going to be absent due to a field trip, appointment, or other excused activity, it is your responsibility to ask about the homework and turn it in ahead of time. Weekly assignments are due the day you return from an absence. It is also your responsibility to check the assignment poster and the absent work file for missed class work/homework assignments. Students must see me for the scheduling of make-up quizzes and tests. Long-term projects are due on the designated day.

Late work and Missing Assignments:

Late assignments will be accepted with a 10% deduction in points for each **day** late.

*****No late long-term projects will be accepted *****

Grading Policy:

All grades will be cumulative and computed on a point basis. The number of points possible for each assignment reflects the difficulty of the assignment. Participation is essential and is accounted for in determining your final grade. Participation is reflected in a student's involvement in class discussion and in class activities. It is recommended that students keep an accurate record of their grades so that they will be aware of their standing in class at all times. Snapgrades will be updated bi-weekly.

Extra Credit:

Extra credit will be available throughout the year. It is in the form of a five paragraph story that is based on one of the grammar warm-up sentences. One extra credit essay can be done per quarter.

Materials:

- A section in your 3 ring binder or a 1- inch binder
- 4 dividers or folders labeled: *assignments, warm-ups, notes, work in progress*
- 2- 70 page spiral notebooks
- Blue, red, and green pens, highlighters, white-board markers, pencils, and paper.
- Dictionary and Thesaurus to be used at home

Academic Integrity:

Any student involved in dishonesty (cheating and plagiarism) in any regard to any of his or her work will be subject to an automatic zero on the assignment and a phone call home.

Extra Help/Questions: I will be available on Tuesday and Thursday after school until 4:00 p.m. if your child needs help with an assignment. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me or e-mail me, and I will be happy to return your call or e-mail. I look forward to working with you this year!

World History

Mrs. Flohr

We will be studying world history. We'll cover from the fall of Rome through the Industrial Revolution. Along with this study, we'll cover the cultures of Japan, China, Mesoamerica, South America, and Africa. These studies will be developed around the California State Standards for Seventh Grade Social Sciences which can be found at <http://www.cde.ca.gov>.

HOMEWORK & MATERIALS

After reading a book called *The Homework Myth*, I have determined that giving homework everyday to junior high students is not advantageous. I feel that students need time with their families and friends and shouldn't be laden with work that can be done in class (unless it is a high school class – like Algebra). During the time that other classes are writing homework assignments in their planner, having teachers sign the planner and distributing or collecting homework, I have found that we are able to complete the work in class. The default in my class is no homework **but** this can be changed, depending on material that needs to be covered. If the student is absent, the work will have to be completed at home and some students may need more time than allowed in class. In this case, the student may have to complete work at home and the work will be noted in the planner. Work should be done in pencil or pen (blue or black only, please). **Neatness** is always important. If I can't read the assignment, it hasn't been done. When classwork is not turned in on the due date, the student may be kept in at brunch or lunch to complete the work.

EXTRA CREDIT

Students will be informed of any extra credit opportunities as they arise. Extra credit will not be accepted unless all work is turned in and will not be used in place of class work.

ABSENCES

If the student is absent from school, he/she will have an opportunity to make up work missed. Please contact me via email if you would like to know that day's classwork assignment at rflohr@hartdistrict.org. It will be up to **the student** to check the Daily Notebook to see what work has been missed and to turn in completed work in a timely manner. Please check the Student Planner for more information concerning absences.

GRADING

Students will earn points for completing class work, homework and tests. These points will be used to determine their grade in class. Participation may count as the determining factor if the student is between grades on the quarter grades (not progress report grades). Unexcused late work will be marked down. It's important to keep all work current. Remember – I don't "give" a grade; the student earns it. I will use the grading scale indicated on the Trail Blazer syllabus. Students and parents will be able to keep track of grades by checking SnapGrades at <http://snapgrades.net>.

A SPECIAL NOTE

Respect is important to me. I will respect each student and their ideas and feelings, and I expect the same from them in return. This class gives us a unique opportunity to explore, create and learn together about the world and its cultures. We will be studying about several religions of the world and I expect this to be done in a respectful way. I am really excited about sharing this classtime!

Syllabus Acknowledgement

I have read this syllabus and I understand and will abide by the terms of each course.

Student Name (Print)

I have reviewed the terms and conditions of this syllabus and discussed them with my child.

Parent / Guardian Name (Print)

Parent / Guardian Signature

Parent email: **[please print the email address carefully]**

@

Parent cell or work phone:

Home phone:

Notice: Students may be photographed or video taped during educational activities and student projects for the Trail Blazer video yearbook.