

Desert Springs Middle School  
Ms. Charles' 2022-23 Exploratory Syllabus

**Ms. Charles' 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Exploratory Course**

**Course Descriptions:**

This 6th Grade Exploratory Course, Communication, is designed to look at all the various ways human beings interact and transmit information with each other, i.e., written, oral, visual, etc., with the express goal of helping students understand the importance of being heard and understood. Students will utilize reading, writing, speaking, research, technology, and creative skills as they dive into what it takes to be an effective communicator in our world today. The purpose of this course is to provide students with the background and essential tools they will need to communicate safely and effectively in the 21st century.

**Expectations For Course:**

Students in this class are expected to expand upon reading, writing, speaking and research skills already gained from their previous years in elementary school. **It is anticipated that students entering 6th grade should be able to: 1) Write basic sentences correctly, 2) Use correct spelling and grammar (capitals, periods, commas, correct forms of words, correct use of the personal pronoun "I," etc.), and 3) Have the minimum of a 4th grade reading level.** They are to come to class on time and complete their assignments in a timely manner. There will *not* be regular homework in the Exploratory course since much of what we will be working on can be completed during regular class time. That being said, there will be occasions when students will be required to complete something at home and return it the next day. Also, there may be a "flipped" classroom experience once in a while that will require students to complete something at home before the next class meeting. Assignments must be turned in ***ON TIME*** for credit. ***LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED - PERIOD!*** (See policy regarding absences below.)

Students will be using Chromebooks, websites, and interactive learning tools, as well as paper, pencil, and creative materials to complete assignments. Students must follow proper etiquette (***respect, integrity, honesty, etc.***) for interactions with others while online as well as during face-to-face classroom time. *Any inappropriate behavior via the computer/internet and/or classroom will have immediate consequences, including but not limited to: warning, relocation, phone call home, lunch detention, Chromebook use restricted, etc.*

**Textbooks and Materials:**

**There is no textbook for this class.** Students will be provided with the appropriate resources and online materials to complete this course.

**Students are expected to come to class *each day* with the following:**

1. 2 pencils, sharpened and ready for use. Mechanical pencils are acceptable; however, students must have their own replacement lead for them!
  2. One eraser
  3. 1 pen: Blue or black ink
  4. 3-ring binder with loose-leaf college ruled lined paper (**NOT** a spiral bound notebook please!)
  5. Headphones/earbuds
  6. ***CHARGED*** Chromebook
  7. **OPTIONAL:** Washable colored marking pens (*no Sharpies/Permanent Markers are allowed*), colored pencils, ruler, scissors, and glue stick.
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**Grading Plan:**

Grades are based on the point system. Each assignment is assigned a point value based on difficulty and importance. Daily work is 10 to 30 points for all courses. Quizzes and larger assignments can range from 10 to 50 points. Tests are 30 to 50 points. Small projects typically range from 20-50 points. Major projects range from 50-100 points. A student's final average is computed by taking the total number of points received divided by the total number of possible points creating a percentage.

For Example:

Major Project -	You received 88 out of 100 possible points
Minor Project -	You received 40 out of 50 possible points
Bell Work-	You received 10 out of 10 possible points
You earned:	138 out of 160 possible points.
	$138 \div 160 = .8625$ or $86\% = B$

Grading Scale:

A	90-100
B	80- 89
C	70- 79
D	60- 69
F	59- 0

- **Participation (10% of total grade)**: Being able to participate in a calm, dignified manner is an important skill to learn, as is working collaboratively with others which teaches students to listen and compromise. It is expected that **EVERY** student will participate every day.
  - **Reading (15% of total grade)**: Reading is a cornerstone of learning, so to help students become more successful in **ALL** of their subjects, we will be setting aside 15 minutes per class for reading. This will encompass fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary, and will be evaluated using an Independent Reading Exit Slip that students will turn in daily.
  - **Quizzes/Tests (25% of total grade)**: These will be sporadic throughout the course, but will be consistent with the reading portion of the class.
  - **Assignments (20% of total grade)**: Exploratory assignments consist of grammar/writing skills, reading, research, collaborative activities, technology, and creative projects. Typically, ample class time will be given for in-class assignments. **Therefore, if a student should not use their time wisely, they will be required to complete the assignment for homework and receive only partial credit unless otherwise specifically stated to the student by the teacher.**
  - **Projects (30% of total grade)**: For Exploratory: Each student will be completing various projects throughout the trimester. These projects consist of research, WeVideos, slide presentations, artwork, and other creative presentations.
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### Course Policies:

- **Student Work:** All students are expected to read class material, think critically, write effectively, and use complete sentences, proper grammar and correct spelling in every written performance. **Work should be neat and legible. Crumpled, ripped, and/or messy assignments will not be accepted.**
- **Participation:** It is anticipated that students will participate fully in class. Students will earn points for participating appropriately (showing proper manners, respect, good use of class time, etc.) during class activities which can then be used to purchase something from the class store at the end of the month.
- **Group Activities:** Students will be working in groups from time to time. Students are expected to be an active member of their group and participation points will be assessed accordingly. Students will always be graded on their individual performance in the group.
- **Prefects:** Each student will have the opportunity to be a Prefect for their group which will earn them points which can then be used monthly to purchase something from the class store. Prefects are in charge of a group of four to eight (4-8) students for one week. Their responsibilities will include: Making sure everyone is on task, obtaining and passing out materials, collecting work, and helping group members understand instructions/obtaining clarification for the group. They will also be the contact person regarding any questions, problems, etc, that the group has that requires Ms. Charles' attention. **This does NOT mean that a student cannot speak with Ms. Charles on their own - this is always available to them after instructional time is completed.**
- **Extra Credit:** Opportunities for extra credit will be offered from time to time, and should **NOT** be counted on to improve a grade more than 5%. Extra credit is extra work **above and beyond** the usual assignments/homework to help improve borderline grades, **not work used to cover up missing work.**
- **Absences:** If a student is absent, **it is their responsibility** to obtain any missed work and return it in a timely manner. All information regarding assignments, projects, etc, can be found in Google Classroom under AGENDA. Agendas are posted every Sunday evening for the following week. Students will also be writing down what they are working on in their own Agendas that will be provided by DSMS.

### Classroom Behavior Expectations:

- ***Students are expected to treat the teacher and other students with respect at all times. Offensive language and hatefulness are not acceptable AT ANY TIME - IN CLASS OR OUTSIDE OF IT!*** As a guide, I like to use “**Do the Right Thing.**” Students know what is right and wrong and are expected to act accordingly. **No student has the right to impede or interfere in any way in another student's right to learn.**
  - It is anticipated that students will be **in their seats and prepared for class** when the bell rings. Being prepared for class means having all materials, books, pencils/pens, etc. out and ready, cell phones silenced and in their backpack, and backpacks hung on the rack located **inside** the classroom.
  - **CHROMEBOOKS:** Chromebooks will be used in the classroom on a regular basis. Students will not be allowed to charge during class time, but can charge before school and during lunch if they ask. They will need to use their Chromebooks at home as well - so **an internet connection at home is necessary!** **Should a student misuse and/or damage a Chromebook, they will be responsible for paying for repairs and/or replacement of said Chromebook!**
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- **CELL PHONES:** Cell phone use is ***not allowed*** during class time, nor during the school day from the first bell to the last bell of the day (between 8:45 am and 3:35 pm). Cell phones are to be either silenced or turned off during class and placed in the student's backpack (not kept in a pants/shirt/jacket pocket). ***If students do not follow cell phone procedures, it will be confiscated and a parent/guardian will be notified to retrieve the cell phone from the front office.***
  - Students are expected to **PAY ATTENTION** - Talking while the teacher is instructing or while other students are presenting is disrespectful and will not be permitted. It is anticipated that students will ***listen the first time directions are given*** - if for some reason a student misses some information or does not understand some instructions, they should ask their Prefect for clarification during independent work time. (Each group of 4-8 students will be assigned a Prefect - a student who will be in charge of their group for the week). If there is still some confusion, the Prefect will then ask for clarification from Ms. Charles **OR** the student may ask during independent work time.
  - **Statement for Academic Dishonesty:** ***Academic honesty is expected in ALL courses.*** Cheating will not be tolerated. Consequences may include: Reduction in grade on assignment, zero grade on assignment/test, repeat the assignment, or other consequences as deemed appropriate. Academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students, the school counselor, and parent/guardian, and an Incident Report will be made.
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**Please make sure this page is signed and the requested information provided.**

Have your student **return just this page** to Ms. Charles - *This is their first assignment that will go into the gradebook and is due by August 17, 2022!*

*Please keep the remainder of the syllabus at home so that you can refer to it as necessary. A copy can also be found in Google Classroom.*

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I have read and understand the requirements for Ms. Charles' Exploratory course.

**Student Name**

(First and Last - *please print*): \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Name**

(First and Last - *please print*): \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian:** Please fill in ALL the information below to facilitate school-to-home communication.

U.S. Mail: Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (        ) \_\_\_\_\_

Text: (        ) \_\_\_\_\_

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