

U.S. CIVICS

Terrace Community Middle School

Department of Social Studies

(Utilizing the Florida State Standards and New Generation Sunshine State Standards)

Teacher: Rixie Burroughs
7th grade U.S. CIVICS
School Year 2017-2087

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INTRODUCTION

Hop on the DC METRO! We're going on an Adventure in 7th Grade U.S. CIVICS. We'll be learning about our government and how it functions, important people and their roles, what we as citizens are expected to do and what rights we have. So get ready to work hard and learn a lot. To give you a brief summary of some of the topics included, we will study the following:

C-onstitution and Government (local, state, federal)
I-ndividual Rights and Responsibilities
V-oting Laws and Responsibilities
I-nternational Policies and Relationships
C-itizenship and Community Involvement
S-upreme Court Landmark Cases

“Civics is intended to develop students to become knowledgeable, responsible, and actively engaged citizens. Civics builds the skills to effectively participate in a democratic society by having students experience the role of the citizen in political, social, and economic systems. It incorporates an examination of the rights and duties of citizens, the structure and function of government, and the study of history.”

Florida Joint Council for Citizenship

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The course grade is calculated from the following 5 components: Homework, Assessments including Tests and CLA's (Creative Long term Assignments) aka projects, Interactive Folder and Current Events, Quizzes both announced/POP, Class Work/Bell Work, and Semester Exam/EOC = 30% of Each Semester's grade.

Grade Breakdown by Quarter:

- 10% Interactive Folder/Current Events
- 10% Class Work/Bell Work
- 20% Homework
- 20% Quizzes (POP and announced)
- 40% Assessments (Tests, CLA's, Essays)

Attendance: Attendance is the most important ingredient to the success of the class. Learning is an interactive process. For this reason, your participation in class activities is crucial. Classroom participation may include questions, answers, notes, and comments about any aspects of the course. Attendance will be taken daily. All absences are considered unexcused until you have submitted official documentation. Absences are the most common cause of zeroes in the grade book. Be here every school day if possible. **If you are absent, make-up work is your responsibility (the student's)!** You may also get a “study buddy” to pick up assignments for you.

Tardy Policy: Students will be expected to be quietly in their seats and working on the Bell Work when the bell rings. One minute before the bell there should be no more talking and students should begin to get ready for class with all materials out that are needed for that day's class.

Homework/Class Work: Throughout the year, you will be required to do various tasks/assignments at home and in class. Failure to turn them in/complete (on time) will result in a ZERO grade. **Homework is to be turned in on time. There will be no late work accepted! All assignments must be completed in order to receive a good grade for the Interactive Folder.**

Current Events and Public Speaking: It is pertinent that U.S. CIVICS students know what is going on in the world around them. At the beginning of the school year, each student will be given a unique country to research and current events will be due on posted weekly dates. **We will rotate between boys and girls so that a student will only have a biweekly current event (up to 4 per quarter).** To develop public speaking skills, students should be prepared to stand before the class and present their current event. NOTE: As information will be taken from the Internet, Newspapers, etc. it is essential that each current event has an accompanying bibliography in the correct (MLA) format for the resource used. **(A sample will be shown in class).**

Late Assignments: Absolutely no late assignments will be accepted (except by school policy). **An assignment is considered late after I have collected/graded the assignment during class.** Please note that your ability to manage your work and time is as much a part of the assignment as the completion of the homework. To avoid leaving your homework at home, it should be done early and then secured in your backpack and placed near your exit door so you will remember to bring it to school. Additionally, your printer will most likely break/run out of ink during the course of the year. When it does break or does not have ink, you can NEATLY handwrite the assignments or you may go to the media center in the morning/lunch/afternoon to print with your student ID (best choice). Lastly, homework is the students' responsibility alone, thus, no excuses will be accepted for late work.

No Credit: No credit will be given for any assignment, test or quiz turned in without a heading. You will earn a ZERO**. TCMS has a required heading (posted in class), which is to be placed upon every assignment, test and quiz. **The heading should be the first thing done...not the last.** Also, you should proofread your work before you submit an assignment, test, or quiz. Don't leave blank answers...when you try, you might be surprised and end up with correct answers. ****Points will be received when such paper is identified, labeled correctly, and returned to the teacher for rescoring).**

"In middle school a student shall learn to be fully responsible for their actions and work ethic. Homework and all projects assignments fall into this category; therefore, the following is stipulated by this board policy:

- **At no time will a student's homework, which included assigned classroom and out of classroom projects be accepted late, unless pre-cleared by the classroom teacher and for emergency circumstances only.**
- **Under no condition may a family member bring a student's homework, projects, PE clothes, book bags, etc. to school. These items will not be accepted by any TCMS employee." (TCMS Student Handbook, page 48)**

Assessments: You will sit for tests, which requires you to understand major themes in U.S. CIVICS. You will also be asked to create original CLA's (Creative Long-term Assignments) which may include models, research reports, and more, such as 4-Paragraph Essay Writings.

Writing Format: When needed, assignments must be documented properly with MLA footnote citation and bibliography, titled, typed **(Times New Roman, double-spaced, in 12-point font, with 1" margin on all sides, and black ink on white paper...all typed assignments should have this style).** Do not include a separate title page. These standards are in conjunction with the social studies and language arts departments. **Each paragraph should be indented at the start of the paragraph.**

Essays: Essay grades shall be based on a standard Writing Rubric. This will be posted as an attachment on my website. **Remember, follow the “type-written directions” above!**

Plagiarism and Cheating: You are responsible for performing your own work. Plagiarism is taking the words or ideas of another person and presenting them without appropriate documentation. The student handbook outlines specific penalties (TCMS Student Handbook, pages 12-13) for plagiarism and cheating. **If you plagiarize, you will receive a "0" for the assignment, a call home, and you will be reported to the administration office.**

Plagiarism/Cheating/Lying are all a Level One Violation. (See the pages listed above for consequences.)

Classroom Behavior: You are expected to observe proper classroom etiquette. This code of behavior must be followed so that our class activities can be carried out effectively. Simply, don't misbehave or disrupt our class activities. Violations of the student conduct code will invoke a measured response as dictated by the handbook. **REMEMBER: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and good Results will come your way!** Students are expected to show respect towards the TCMS staff and other students, as well as the property of the school, teachers, and other students. This encompasses a full range of behaviors that we will discuss and reinforce throughout the year, including but not limited to: being courteous, being punctual and paying attention to and following teacher instructions. **FIFA Soccer Rules for the classroom! (Red and Yellow cards will be issued.)** **Disrespect of any kind will not be tolerated.**

Restrooms: Go before or after class! Because our time together will be jammed pack, please use the restroom before or after class or during lunchtime. You don't want to miss something important. There are always emergency situations so please communicate to me. You must sign-out and sign-in each time you want to use the restroom and it will count towards your 5 per quarter “emergency” limit in my class.

Materials: 4-pocket folders with prongs (2 Red, 2 Blue), pencils, pens, and 1 roll of clear packaging tape (to be kept at home). You will also need some index cards (about 300) for flash cards/vocabulary. Having a stapler at home for putting an assignment together, and colored pencils and markers at home, also helps.

Communication: Primary mode of communication will be Student Grade Reports, which will be updated and posted to the Edsby anytime an assignment is graded. Weekly you will be required to have your CIVICS grades written onto your **Grade Checker (Goal Sheet)** and signed by parent/guardian acknowledging that they have reviewed your grades online. This usually is done on Thursday evenings and IT COUNTS FOR A GRADE TO BE ENTERED AT THE END OF THE QUARTER (Students will earn 10 points weekly for it correctly being completed. Incomplete weekly checkers will result in a ZERO score for that week's total. No partial credit will be given.) Email and phone messages are checked and replied to as soon as possible.

Study Suggestions: Should you drop your grade below an acceptable level, I have two standard suggestions.

1. Specify a two hour time block nightly when the entire household shuts down and focuses on academics. Everyone sits at a common table (if parents can not be at the table, it is best if they are at least within view).
2. Have a study partner, who is a successful student in my class. This is very common in the high-powered universities. The same magic occurs at all levels. The study partner (Study Buddy) must be someone with a solid GPA. Partners should be able to focus together and accomplish work without many distractions.

Tutoring: Weekly morning (“Extra Help”) tutoring sessions are on Fridays from 7:45-8:10. Students must report to the classroom. Bring along your questions! If you have a current grade of “C”, “D”, or “F”, you should plan on attending and asking questions.

COURSE OUTLINE

ORIGINS AND PURPOSES OF LAW AND GOVERNMENT

- **Influences of the Enlightenment
- **Influence of Colonists' View of Government
- **Colonial Concerns and Writing of the Declaration of Independence
- **The Articles of Confederation
- **Preamble of the U.S. Constitution
- **Constitutional Limits on the Powers of Government
- **Federalists, Anti-Federalists and the Constitution
- **The Rule of Law
- **Sources and Types of Laws

ROLES, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITIZENS

- **Citizenship
- **Obligations and Responsibilities of Citizens
- **Rights in the U.S. Constitution
- **U.S. Constitution and Individual Rights
- **The Impact of Constitutional Rights
- **The Evolution of Voting Rights
- **Landmark Supreme Court Cases

GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND POLITICAL PROCESSES

- **Political Parties
- **Monitoring and Influencing Government
- **Media and Political Communication
- **Understanding Issues Through Multiple Perspectives
- **Understanding U.S. Domestic and Foreign Policies
- **Government and Citizen Participation in International Organization
- **The United States and International Conflict

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION OF GOVERNMENT

- **Comparing Forms of Government
- **Systems of Government
- **Structure and Function of Government
- **Federalism
- **Amending the U.S. Constitution
- **Processes and Lawmaking
- **Federal and State Courts
- **Comparing the Florida and U.S. Constitutions
- **Government Obligations and Services

NOTE: The instructor may change the terms herein at anytime, but only with justification.

**** PLEASE PRINT ONLY THIS PAGE, SIGN, AND**

RETURN TO *Mr. Burroughs by Mon. August 14th*

I have read the Civics Syllabus, the extra “Mr. Burroughs’ Pet Peeves” sheet, and understand the expectations AND my responsibilities as a student in the 7th Grade Civics class.

_____ (NEATLY Printed Student Name)

_____ (Student Signature)

I have read the Civics Syllabus, the extra “Mr. Burroughs’ Pet Peeves” sheet, the Parent Expectations, and will support my student in fulfilling these policies for 7th Grade Civics.

_____ (NEATLY Printed Parent Name)

_____ (Parent Signature)

Mother’s Signature or Father’s Signature (Please circle one of these)

Additional Information about 7th Grade Civics or Mr. B's Pet Peeves...

1. Mr. Burroughs enjoys providing a clean, neat, learning environment. It is expected that you will do your part to keep the room looking the same (or better) than when you entered it. In other words:
 - **pick up any trash you drop—especially paper edge “frillies” (he hates a messy floor)
 - **don't write on desks, testing carrels, walls, etc. (it's not your property)
 - **if you spill something during class time, clean it up
 - **leave books and other classroom supplies stacked neatly on the tables/put away when exiting

2. Do your BEST!

- **Pencils should be sharpened before the bell rings with your planner/folder out on the table ready to start class. **You should already be copying items before the bell rings OR doing Bell Work.**
 - **Put your heading on papers before you start an assignment. **Papers without headings will receive lower grades after identification!** It would be a shame to do the work and then not get credit for it. Your name and complete heading lets us know it is your work!
 - ****Do not come to class without paper in your folder or pens/pencils.**
 - **Complete homework assignments ON TIME! Zeros make the grade book look UGLY!
3. You may have a water bottle out in class from which to drink. This keeps ones from asking to go to get drinks from the fountain during class time. **PLAIN water is permitted.** No colored waters or ones with added flavoring (which makes for sticky spills).
 4. Emergencies will arrive during the year for SOME of YOU! Emergencies are not habitual patterns that occur frequently. **If you had something happened outside of school, please have your parent contact me to let me know WHY your work was not completed. I should receive this before you come to class unless it's a handwritten note you are bringing to class with you. If it is a test day, please let me know in writing prior to you taking the test—not afterwards as your score will count.**
Examples: Your dog died and you were upset all night long. Power was out all night at home. You have a sports injury and spent extra time from the game in the emergency room. Your family was involved in a car accident and this shook you all up...and so on. You get the idea! The only ways I will consider an excuse is following the process above.
 5. **Your opinion counts! Your belittling someone else for their different opinion DOES NOT!** We will learn to share “how we feel” about certain topics and we must learn to accept that sometimes others have differing opinions from ours. If we were all the same, life would be so boring!
 6. You might get tired of Mr. Burroughs saying he “teaches you things for LIFE” and not just the subject matter. Believe it or not, learning to wear a complete uniform (correctly) each day, putting (correct) headings on paper, being respectful of other's opinions, being quiet when you should be quiet, keeping an organized folder, and so forth, **ALL** prepare you to be better future workers and citizens. There will be many other areas he will instruct you in and let you know how they might help you in life. Just enjoy learning!
 7. **Mr. Burroughs does not know everything!** You will ask questions he cannot answer. He will tell you to search the internet, as this resource is full of interesting information. He might even ask you to share

the next day what you discovered and then he will share it with other classes. He learns throughout the year, too.

8. **You will be expected to draw, color, build, design, etc.** You may not feel you are the best at something, but you can and should get better this year. Practice always helps someone become better in their growth of whatever they are trying to develop. You will have many opportunities to practice. **Mr. Burroughs wants to see YOUR WORK!** Not what someone else can draw, paint, etc. He will usually grade on neatness and following directions—not masterpieces productions. However, he does like to see those with more talent in artistic areas to not waste their talent and expects them to do the best they can! Some of you are better at writing, some artistic, some at speaking, etc. He will give opportunities for you to develop your talents. We ALL have special abilities.
9. **Supplies around class are just for that—CLASS.** Mr. Burroughs does not like to see ones who waste staples, tape, etc. on creations that have nothing to do with class. He provides these tools for us to use in class assignments and needs. Making a paper airplane is NOT a need! You get the idea!
10. **Remember the importance of the Yellow and Red Cards.** Your discipline depends on you. Do your best at all times and you should not have any problems
11. **Write neatly the FIRST time.** I would hate for you to have to rewrite something and take some of your precious time in doing so. Sometimes an extra five minutes slowing down can save you the thirty minutes of rewriting something so it can be read.
12. THE CHAIR is cool! **However, with THE CHAIR comes great responsibility.** You must write down the day's BellWork (BW), HomeWork (HW), and put any handouts needed into the absence folder for any classmate who is absent. If you cannot be responsible, you lose THE CHAIR!
13. We will work together with **P.R.I.D.E.** and you will be responsible to show **P.R.I.D.E.** !!

Putting
Responsibility
Into Individually
Developing
Excellence

7th Grade Civics PARENT Expectations...

Your supportive role as a parent is very important to the success of your child. In order for him/her to succeed in Civics class this year, it will take your sharing interest in what we are learning and reinforcing knowledge by discussing things at home. It is a great year to watch the growth of your child (probably the most you have ever seen) and watch him/her develop opinions and be able to support his/her opinions with research and facts. It's a challenging year, but it has been quite rewarding at the end! Here are some ways you can help your child out:

1. **At least once a week, check his/her grades online.** If you see something strange (such as a new pattern developing in your child and s/he is not completing work for the first time in his/her schooling career, or going back to old habits, maybe s/he is getting lower grades than before on tests and quizzes)...PLEASE contact me with an email. Let's not wait until it gets to the point that his/her grade cannot change much.
2. **Unloosen those apron strings more than you did in 6th grade, but be ready to tighten them back if needed.** Your child should become more self-sufficient this year, but if s/he has not reached that maturity level, then help him/her learn by following up and tightening those strings. Most still need to know you are still there and are in charge.
3. **Find a space at home for completing homework.** Please don't allow him/her to sit closed up in a room, and then s/he states s/he has been doing homework for 4-5 hours. We never give that much homework. Have them work where you can see them. Use a timer if needed to break up the time. Give a rest break if needed. You are the parent of a growing (soon to be teenager) child. There will probably be times that the two of you might feel friction. It's normal...we all went through it that age trying to figure out how independent we can be and wanting free reign on life. I would suggest that you don't give away leadership of your child. Be the parent!
4. **Make your child learn to do his/her own work.** Can you proofread essays and give input...sure you're the parent, but don't do it for him/her and don't change their wording because you see a better word. Let them go through the learning process you went through to make you successful. Sometimes we learn the best from trial and error. But, of course, assist where needed. Show your child how to do a poster neatly, how to build a model (when s/he is confused)...PLEASE don't do the work for him/her. And yet, PLEASE help them come from home with a finished product they are proud of and feel they did their best effort.
5. **If there is a question, an issue, something needing clarification...PLEASE contact me first.** I get really frustrated when parents go (what I call "over my head") to the administration with an issue and I have never been contacted. This is my 35th year of teaching...I like parent contact!!
6. **ENCOURAGE, ENCOURAGE, ENCOURAGE!** Your child is going to feel inadequate at times and perhaps feels s/he should give up. Let's not let that happen! If you find the material hard, be honest, let them know that it's hard...BUT, it's not impossible to learn!!
7. **Don't be surprised by questions s/he might ask about our government, politics, etc. use those times as chances to parent him/her in your feelings and beliefs.** I try hard to present unbiased knowledge...it can be difficult at times. But, you have free realm as a parent. Enjoy that!
8. **Be POSITIVE about the benefits of learning this material at such a young age.** Be POSITIVE even when it looks bleak in our world. Students at this age can worry quickly about things and you're reassuring your child that s/he is normal and that "Yes, we have issues in this democracy" but look how long it has worked...about 229 years (our Constitution has been in effect). Many nations cannot look back on their history this way. Are there still things to solve with poverty, racism, human rights, etc., of course there are...but try to show him/her

that it is better than when we began 229 years ago. We are still in the current process of forming “a more perfect union!” It will never become past tense!

9. **ENJOY this year!** Look at it as a chance to grow yourself and to see your child grow. I tell them I don’t know everything. Help your child see that we are always growing and learning. As you help him/her review, study, prepare a model, whatever, s/he will see you care about his/her development as a citizen and you want him/her to become an “awesome” citizen someday. This year and this subject can make some lasting impressions on your child. Take advantage of being a part of that learning process.

10. **READ the weekly update emails I send out.** REMIND your child of anything due that week or of things s/he should be working on (getting ahead) or studying (daily review of notes and terms). REINFORCE the Thursday night grade checker/goal sheet and make sure it is completed (both sides) before you sign it. REJECT sloppy work...and encourage him/her to write neatly (when it is handwritten) and most definitely use “grammar and spell check” before printing out a typed assignment.

11. **FINALLY, be a COACH and train, practice, provide water breaks and snacks, demonstrate ways to become better, and more.** Don’t get into fights over this, but BE THE PARENT! Set specific expectations...not only for my class...but for all of his/her classes. Do it like a coach would do it (not one of those negative, over-bearing coaches), and also be his/her favorite CHEERLEADER. I try to do both of these in my classroom...and I see you as my assistant.

IT’S GOING TO BE A “CIVICS-LY MINDED” YEAR! TOGETHER WE ARE GOING TO MAKE IT SUCCESSFUL!!