

As I write this I am completing the interviews (and re-interviews) for Properties of Matter (**PM**). ***This went far better than I imagined.*** Specifically, almost every student submitted their product on time. Many listened to suggestions during interviews and made edits to their products and re-interviewed. ***These are such important habits!*** I thought, since we began the year remotely, it would take more practice, but most students are embracing the process and are thriving. They've made a great deal of progress in science in two months. Very impressed by this! At this point, students should be feeling comfortable with the structure of science class. All units have the same structure.

Here is information to help you better understand assignments listed in Aspen.

### **SD (Self Direction):**

**PM SD Week 1, 2, 3...:** These weekly scores describe how well students did their jobs in class (followed directions, came to class on time with their science materials, remained on task, participated in discussions) during our Properties of Matter unit. These SD scores will be posted each week all year.

**PM Products on time:** (See above.)

**PM Socratic Assessment on time:** (This is due Friday, October 30, so will be on Aspen next week.) Each unit the Socratic Assessment serves as one summative assessment for the unit. Assessments are activated near the end of the unit, and students a week to answer the 10-questions. This SD score indicates whether your child completed it on time, and also if they signed in properly. **[I want the following format: Period Last Name First Initial.]**

### **Properties of Matter:**

There are five ***Properties of Matter*** scores in Aspen:

#### **Properties of Matter Product and Interview:**

Students had to create a product that addresses the following:

- 1. Provide evidence** that gases are real even though they are usually invisible to human eyes.
- 2. Provide evidence** that invisible gases are made of tiny pieces (atoms and molecules) that, by themselves, are too small to be seen with the unaided eye.

Most student products were either a written piece (with diagrams), or Google Slides. **Students were expected to use activities from the unit as evidence.** They should never have to Google answers. This would indicate they did not learn content from our activities!

The product was evaluated independently from the interview. **Most students were more proficient with the interview than with the written product.** This is not unusual. It is one thing to have all the ideas in your head; it is another to write out these ideas in a clear and logical manner. We will keep working on this important skill. Students receive **specific feedback** for how to improve products.

All four Properties of Matter tasks can be redone if students are not satisfied with their current scores. Most days during PM Get Set time I have time available.

**Properties of Matter Socratic Assessment:** [See Socratic Assessment info above under SD.] This is the fifth, and final PM task in Aspen. As students answer each question they get immediate feedback about **why** the answer is the answer. **Scoring:**

- 3: 9-10 correct
- 2: 6-8 correct
- 1: 0-5 correct

Students may wait 24 hours and retake the assessment if not satisfied at first.

## FAQs

**Question:** Progress reports came out, but Science is not on there! How am I supposed to know how my child is doing?

**Answer:** At the conclusion of each unit, I send a detailed report card like this one. **This** is your child's report card for science. All report cards are posted on the **Parent Info** page of my website ([www.stithsonianscience.com](http://www.stithsonianscience.com)).

**Question:** Do you have to wait for me to email these reports each unit?

**Answer:** No! I use Aspen to record scores, just as all the other teachers do. Having trouble finding the specific scores for science on Aspen? Ask your child to show you. It's important for them to be able to regularly check Aspen.

**Question:** How is my child doing in science overall?

**Answer:** At this time I need to give you **three** separate answers to that question. (How they are doing with Self Direction, with Science Process Skills, and with Properties of Matter.) These are very different standards, and should not be lumped together.

We are now on to **Cells & Genetics**. Here are the four product goals for this unit:

1. Name a specific **single-celled** organism and describe how they make more of themselves. [Include diagrams, and name the type of reproduction.]
2. Name a specific **multi-celled** organism and describe how they make more of themselves. [Name the type of reproduction.]
3. Draw or make a model of a cell. (Include: **nucleus, genes, chromosomes.**)
4. Explain the following:
  - a. Name the part of your cell that is basically your traits.
  - b. Explain where **your** traits came from.

As always, please do not hesitate to email me if you have any questions.  
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