

### Ecology Part I:

In sixth grade science, there are more, shorter units. In seventh grade science there are fewer, longer units. For this reason, I am assessing students halfway through each unit. The primary summative assessments for each unit are student-created products and interviews. As I write this I am completing the interviews (and re-interviews) for Ecology I--New England Organism Google Slide Show. The Slide Show was evaluated independently from the interview. **Most students were more proficient with the interview than the product.** This is not unusual. It is one thing to get all the ideas in your head; it is another to write these out in a clear and logical manner. We will keep working on this important skill. Students receive **specific feedback** for how to improve products.

At this point, students should be comfortable with the structure of science class. All units have the same structure.

### Work completion:

The **majority** of Aurora seventh graders regularly come to class on time with work completed. If this is your Aurora student, please skip down to **Scores in Aspen**.

Too many, however, are **regularly** not prepared. (Different circumstances come up in all homes that explain occasional missing work, but I'm talking about work not done **most of the time.**) In talking with both students and parents, the key is not keeping track of assignments. All Get Set teachers shared something called a **Work Mat** with students in homeroom earlier this year. I believe it is better than a planner or an assignment notebook. Students write assignments on sticky notes, and place these on the **To Do** section of the Mat. The due date is listed. At the end of the school day, students can prioritize assignments based on due dates. They take **one** sticky and place it in the **Doing** section. When completed they move it to **Done**. The Work Mat is better than a planner at helping students improve executive functioning. But, it takes some work to set up and use! Some students completely **own** the fact that they are not using such a system, but yet do not start using it!

### Scores in Aspen:

Here is a description of all scores listed in Aspen. (Remember, once in science, you must click on "Assignment".)

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

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

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

**ECO Socrative Assessment on time:** (This is due Friday, November 6, so will be on Aspen next week.) Each unit the Socrative Assessment serves as one summative assessment for the unit. Assessments are activated near the end of the unit, and students have 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.

### **OE (The code in Aspen for Ecology is OE--Organisms and Environment.):**

There are five **OE** scores in Aspen:

**Ecology I Product and Interview Goal 1:** Carrying Capacity and Limiting Factors

**Ecology I Product and Interview Goal 2:** Role of organism in ecosystems.

**Ecology I Socrative Assessment:** [See Socrative Assessment info above under SD.]

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

## **FAQs**

**Question:** How do I know if my child is regular late with work?

**Answer:** Weekly SD scores will be 1s and 2s rather than 3s.

**Question:** Progress reports came out, but Science was 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. Having trouble finding the specific scores for science on Aspen? Ask your child to show you. It's crucial 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 Organisms and the Environment.) These are very different standards, and should not be lumped together.

We are now on to **Part II of Ecology**. Here are the big ideas for this half of the unit:

#### V. Natural Selection

- A. Defined
- B. Variation:
- C. Adaptation:

#### VI. Energy Flow Through Ecosystems

- A. Photosynthesis:
- B. Food chains:
- C. Food webs:

Have a good Thanksgiving--stay safe. I will meet with some of you during our virtual parent conferences next week.

As always, please do not hesitate to email me if you have any questions.  
(dstith@londonderry.org).