

Mr. Boyle's 8th Grade Civics and Economics Syllabus (2019-2020)

Class Description:

Civics and Economics is a core class for 8th grade that is given to students to learn, analyze, and practice the intellectual and practical skills necessary to become an informed, productive United States citizen. For some of you this may be the first social studies class that will directly connect you to the real, modern world. The main goals of the year will be for students to be able to:

- 1) Examine the roles citizens play in the political and economic systems of the United States
- 2) Identify rights, duties, and responsibilities of United States citizens
- 3) Examine the constitutions of Virginia and the United States
- 4) Describe the structure and operation of local, state, and national levels of government.

In addition, students will investigate the decision making process involved in the American market economy as well as the role of the government and the consumer within the economic system. Students will experience civic life in the school environment which will help them to become more aware of the importance of personal character traits required to participate effectively in the diverse society of the United States today.

Textbooks:

We will often be working from two textbooks: *Civics In Practice: Principles of Government and Economics* from Holt McDougal and *Our State and Nation: Civics and Economics (Second Edition)* from Five Ponds Press. There are between 20-25 hard copies of each textbook in the class, with *Our State and Nation* available as a PDF on Google Classroom. If work is not completed in the time allotted in class and a student needs to borrow a textbook to finish at home, it will be done so on a first-come first-serve basis.

Grading:

Grades will be weighted as **40%** for “**Major Grades**” (formal assessments like tests, quizzes, projects), **30%** for “**Minor Grades**” (work started in-class like current events and webquests), **20%** for “**Participation Grades**” (daily warm-ups/jumpstarters from class), and **10%** for “**Practice Grades**” (worksheets from textbooks). The grading scale will be:

A+: 98-100

A: 92-97

A-: 90-91

B+: 88-89

B: 82-87

B-: 80-81

C+: 78-79

C: 72-77

C-: 70-71

D+: 68-69

D: 62-67

D-: 60-61

F: 0-59

Civics/Economics Binder or Folder:

A designated 3-ring binder OR folder will be required to keep your jumpstarters, class work, notes, and handouts in. Each piece of paper in the binder or designated folder should be added in the table of contents and kept in a numbered order, with the number added into the corner of each entry. This will be graded at the conclusion of each unit in the weighted percentages mentioned above.

Homework:

Depending on the activity, homework grades can be found in either the “**minor grade**” category or “**practice grade**” category. Homework that is assigned should take no longer than 30 minutes. Exceptions to this may occur as a result of long-term assignments or projects that weren’t finished during scheduled in-class times, which will not be graded in the gradebook as homework. Students will be responsible for writing homework into their planner or notebook at

the beginning of class or when assigned by myself. Make sure to copy the homework **exactly as it is written** so we ensure the correct assignment is being done.

It should go without saying, but homework needs to be turned in on the day it is due. Students will lose **10%** of their homework grade after each day the homework is missing. **Remember:** a low grade on any assignment is better than a 0.

In addition to rare out-of-class work, students should begin developing self-review and testing skills in order to succeed in this and future classes. We will be using many strategies throughout the year; find the ones that work best for your learning style.

Make-Up Work:

All students are responsible for following up with teachers for their make-up work. Occasionally this will require materials from me, so make sure you remind me if you have missed time on the day you return. Students will have extensions based on the number of days absent. Again, this is your responsibility. Jumpstarters cannot be made up as you have to be present to participate.

Assessments:

Assessments will include formal tests, quizzes, and projects in order to provide different kinds of activities and experiences. Grades will reflect the mastery of the subject by each student. Tests will be given electronically through Quia at the conclusion of each unit. Students will receive their login name and password from me. These are what make up the “**major grades**” section

Required Materials:

Each student will need to bring to class every day:

1. Pencil/pen
2. 3-ring binder with loose-leaf paper
3. Chromebooks

In addition to these items, some days may require the usage of notecards and art supplies.

Rules:

Rules have been established to provide a safe, secure, and productive learning environment that benefits all students. All students will be expected to follow all rules created by Augusta County

Public Schools and Stewart Middle School, including our Tier 1 and Tier 2 discipline charts. All rules will be enforced in this classroom. Though it should go without saying, any form of **cheating will result in a 0** on the assignment.

Student Responsibility:

As said above, the overall goal of this class is to give you the knowledge necessary to create informed, productive citizens. In order to do this, we as a class must:

1. Come ready to **learn, discuss,** and **think** each and every class period
2. Act and talk in a **constructive, productive,** and **appropriate** manner to each other, whether as students or teachers
 - a. **Debates are never personal and ideas should be allowed to be expressed in the classroom without insulting anyone's beliefs or personal attributes**
3. Avoid **distracting** others and **interrupting** the day's lesson
4. Allow yourself (and me) to **make mistakes** so we can learn from them together

To add to these overall classroom guidelines, please never forget that I am here to teach and help you as students and citizens. Whether it's a problem academically, personally, or you just need to talk, come see me at an appropriate time (i.e. not in the middle of class). I would be more than happy to help you with whatever you need or help find someone who can.

Welcome to Civics and Economics.

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Teacher Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dian Boyle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.