

Scientific Thinking 2 Comments:

Elisa Brundage

B

Elisa, you've gotten off to a strong start this trimester in ST2. You arrive on time each day, have had no missing or late work, and your written assignments reflect the fact that you typically pay close attention to assignment expectations as you work. In class you are an engaged student who doesn't hesitate to ask for clarification when instructions or content are unclear or confusing, which is a great habit. The quizzes in this class seem to pose a challenge to you, and you earned 18.5 out of 30 points on the first quiz of this trimester. Some of your answers showed great detail and a good grasp of the content. There were other questions that you had a harder time with, though, and the genetics problems seemed to be particularly challenging. I did notice that you used a highlighter to draw your attention to certain portions of the questions--how do you feel that went for you? When we met to discuss this most recent quiz and talked about your study strategies, it sounded like you have many useful steps already in place (making flash cards, writing many things down by hand). When I asked you to make a resolution to help you succeed in our class in 2022 you said, "One resolution for myself is to take detailed notes, meaning that whenever we have a discussion about something in class, i will take notes in case i need them later on. It will help me succeed because writing things down stimulates the brain, making you retain the information." I think that this is a great idea, for exactly the reasons you've said. In addition to taking those notes, spending a little time after each class going through any notes or assignments and making sure that they've got all of the necessary information will set you up nicely when it comes time to study and help you recognize if there are some pieces that are confusing or missing expected detail. As I said in our recent meeting, please remember that I am always happy to clarify any points of confusion that might pop up. We even share a free period this trimester (G period), so it would be easy for the two of us to meet to discuss content or study strategies. Elisa, I can see your engagement in the classroom. I am confident that we'll unlock a study strategy that lets you feel that your hard work is more clearly reflected in your quiz grades, and I look forward to working with you as we continue our study of organismal biology.

Tae Delaney

C+

Tae, you've gotten off to a somewhat uneven start this trimester in Scientific Thinking 2, with some areas of success and others with some room for progress, but I am confident that as the trimester continues you will see improvement in our class. You have arrived on time to class most days, and you've worked well with a variety of partners for lab activities, which is great. You regularly ask questions in class that show that you're following the conversation and thinking about the topics. Last trimester you had a few late assignments, but you've had no missing or late work thus far this term--nicely done! When I asked you to make a resolution to help you succeed in our class in 2022 you said, "I can turn in classwork with thorough work." I think that this is a great goal. Taking the time to engage a little more deeply with the assignments and explain your thinking will not only further strengthen your understanding of the concepts but also help you get a clearer sense of questions that you might have about the content. A good first step would be to consider what is getting in the way of your doing this. Do you run out of time to do your work? Do you miss certain parts of the instructions? It also seemed that the first quiz of the trimester may have been tough for you, as there were several questions where your answers were a little sparse, and you earned 15.5 out of 30 possible points. When we met to

discuss this quiz you shared that you were disappointed with this grade as you had put a lot of work into prepping for the assessment. You also felt that you spent lots of time on certain topics (such as osmosis) that ended up being a smaller portion of the quiz than you had anticipated. I really appreciated your reflecting on this experience as your answers showed good insight into your process as well as a lot of self-awareness. One strategy we discussed would be to check in with me when the next review sheet becomes available to make a plan for what you need to study, so that you feel that you are dividing up your time in a way that works best for you. Tae, I am confident that with some increased attention to these areas and continued self-advocacy you will continue on an upward trajectory in Science this trimester. Please remember that I am here to help you, and I am available during your GSH this winter, so it would be easy for the two of us to meet to discuss content or study strategies!

Eva Olteanu

A

Eva, you've gotten off to another strong start this trimester in Scientific Thinking 2. You arrive on time each day, you work well with a variety of lab partners, and as has been the case all year, you've had no missing or late assignments. You also did a great job on our first quiz of the trimester, earning 28.5 out of 30 possible points. You included the essential detail in your responses to nearly all of the short answers and it was obvious that you had a strong understanding of the concepts involved and were well prepared for this assessment. When I asked you to make a resolution to help you succeed in our class in 2022 you said, "Continue to thoroughly read and complete assignments to better assist studying for quizzes." It sounds like you have systems and strategies in place that allow you to be successful in our class--these are great things to have figured out at this point in your academic career as they will serve you well not just in our class, but as you move forward with your schooling. If you would like to push yourself further in our class, one thing you could try would be to look for connections between what we are studying in class and what you hear about current scientific topics or controversies in the news. Bringing that real-world context into the classroom might be a fun angle to explore. Eva, I couldn't be happier to have the chance to teach (and advise!) you this year. I look forward to seeing more strong work from you as we continue our study of organismal biology this trimester and anticipate a great remainder of the year together in Scientific Thinking 2. Keep up the excellent effort (and the book recommendations)!

Marine Biology Comments

Piper Danis

B

Piper, what a delight it is to have you in class again after so many years! We started this trimester in Marine Biology by discussing abiotic factors and oceanic zones, and then moved on to examining plankton and ocean productivity. We've gone on field trips to the University of Washington Fish Collection as well as the Seattle Aquarium, where we observed animal behavior and had a workshop on invertebrate classification led by aquarium staff. We also dissected squid to learn more about their adaptations to their marine habitat, and you jumped right in, perfectly willing to get your hands dirty (inky!). It comes as no surprise to me that you are an engaged and enthusiastic member of the class. And in fact, when I asked you to reflect on how things are going for you in our class thus far, you said, "I feel like I can be genuinely motivated and excited to learn in this class, I have never been this

enthusiastic about a science class before." You added, "Science has never been my strong suit, and I normally don't enjoy it and have a hard time staying engaged or understanding the material, but I love this class, especially all the field trips and hands-on labs which make things really fun and interesting for me." That's all so great to hear! The one point that I would take exception with is where you characterize Science as not being your strong suit, as that does not match my recollection of you in the classroom as a Middle School Science student--you were always engaged and hard-working and successful in those years. It would be wonderful if one takeaway from this class was for you to reconsider how you define yourself relative to Science and remember your potential in this field. You contain multitudes!

The first test of the trimester was challenging and your grade on this progress report is weighted heavily toward that. On that test, many of your answers showed a strong understanding of the concepts involved--there just seemed to be a few that were less clear to you, particularly the ones about ocean productivity. And when I asked you about an area with room for improvement you said, "I might try new study methods for the next quiz, I think I did okay on the last one, but I might try to do some things differently next time." Please remember that I am here to help you, and we even share a free period (H period), so it would be easy for the two of us to meet to discuss content or study strategies. I anticipate that on our future larger assignments (such as your Literature Review on the vampire squid), you will see increased success, which will in turn pull your grade up even further. I know the US play will keep you busy in the coming weeks, so please be sure you're communicating with me so I can help support you in navigating that balance between academic and theatrical commitments.

Tessa Martinez

D

Tessa, this trimester has gotten off to a slightly rougher start than was the case in Ecology, but that does not diminish what a treat it's been to get to teach you in Upper School this year! We started this winter in Marine Biology by discussing abiotic factors and oceanic zones, and then moved on to examining plankton and ocean productivity. We've also gone on field trips to the University of Washington Fish Collection as well as the Seattle Aquarium, where we observed animal behavior and had a workshop on invertebrate classification led by aquarium staff. It was also really fun to get to see you at the Seattle Aquarium's Evening Beach Walk in January. It's too bad the weather wasn't better (and that your feet got soaked), but hopefully you and Rohan still saw some cool organisms! When I asked you to reflect on how things are going for you in our class thus far, you said, "I feel like I have been successful at finishing my homework and doing my research when answering questions. I also have been speaking up a bit more in class even when I am a bit confused about something which has been helpful." I agree! It's been impressive to see the growth in your abilities (and confidence!) since your Middle School days, and I hope that you are proud of your progress, as that is directly due to your efforts.

The first test of the trimester was challenging and your grade on this progress report is weighted heavily toward that. I believe that you will see improvement in your grade going forward as we add more assignments in that category. In looking over your test, there were several questions that showed a good understanding of the topics, but there were others that proved a bit more challenging. In fact, when I asked you about an area with room for improvement you said, "I would like to improve my study habits and the way that I do on tests. I feel like for the test we recently had I did not do my best to prepare because I was a bit unsure how to study and prepare for what was going to be on the test." I definitely agree that it would be worthwhile to consider the method you used to prepare for this assessment, as this was a bit of a departure from how tests went for you last trimester in Ecology. Did you do something different to study this time? Please remember that I am here to help you, and we

even share a free period this trimester (H period), so it would be easy for the two of us to meet to discuss content or study strategies. I anticipate that on our future larger assignments (such as the Literature Review), you will see increased success, which will in turn pull your grade up. Tessa, I look forward to more great work from you as the trimester continues. Let me know how I can help!

Drew Goetzmann

B

Drew, I've really been enjoying having the opportunity to work with you in class this winter. We started this trimester in Marine Biology by discussing abiotic factors and oceanic zones, and then moved on to examining plankton and ocean productivity. We've also gone on a virtual aquarium field trip and learned about fish biology in anticipation of some upcoming dissections. When I asked you to reflect on how things are going for you in our class thus far, you said, "I feel like the presentation I gave in class was the most successful I have been." That's so great to hear! What do you think was responsible for this success in comparison to other presentations? If you're able to identify that piece, it might provide you with some strategies to carry that feeling on into other classes and presentations in the future.

The first test of the trimester was challenging and your grade on this progress report is weighted heavily toward that. On that test, many of your answers showed a strong understanding of the concepts involved--there just seemed to be a few that were less clear to you. When I asked you about an area with room for improvement you said, "In labs I never seem to accomplish very much. I see very little and tend to produce bad observations. The multitasking of labs and volatility is hard on me so I want to work to get better at it." Thank you for letting me know that this is an area of challenge for you. I'm wondering if it might be helpful for the two of us to chat a bit more about this to develop some strategies you might want to consider? I would be very happy to work with you to help you feel successful in a lab setting--although we do not share a free period this trimester, I am available after school most days. All in all, Drew, you're off to a strong start. I'm looking forward to learning a lot more about *Calyptogenia magnifica* via your upcoming literature review (such a cool choice of species!) and anticipate a great remainder of the trimester in Marine Bio.