



# Mrs. Porter's FAQ



Here are answers to some of the things parents commonly ask me about my class. If you have questions that are not addressed here, please e-mail me at [yoda@mrsporter.com](mailto:yoda@mrsporter.com) or contact me by phone at 569-2045.

**Why does my son/daughter not bring home their science book very often?** Two reasons – first, I really don't assign much bookwork. My experience has been that most of these kinds of assignments are ineffective.

Students don't truly learn from them and there is a large amount of cheating that ends up taking place. I would rather focus our energies on activities, projects and in-class labs and discussions. Material for the homework, quizzes and tests will be found in their NOTES, not their science book. Second, your child may be using his or her time wisely! Students who use their time efficiently and are always prepared for class will have little homework. Students who do not use their time efficiently will probably have hours of work to do the day before everything is due for the unit. In most cases, this only happens once and the lesson is learned. You can check the time line of each unit by logging into Harmony and accessing the homework agenda.

**How is make-up work handled when a student is absent?** Students are responsible for getting and completing their make-up work. They may do this by seeing me before/after class or during enrichment. They may also do so by logging into Harmony and checking the homework agenda – then seeing me if they have questions. If students miss a due date for an activity they have already been given, they are expected to have it when they return to class. Labs and video assignments are generally excused as they cannot really be made up if they are missed. Tests and quizzes will have to be made up during enrichment and it is the students' responsibility to come in to do so.

**How can my child bring up a low grade?** Almost all low grades are due to incomplete assignments, so my first advice would be to make up any missing work that can still be turned in (one day past due date) and to make certain that no more zeros are accumulated. Second, do extra credit! I offer this opportunity because everyone has a bad day and needs to be able to pull himself/herself out of a hole. Students can get extra credit in two ways. The first is to do any Extra Credit Opportunities I offer in class. The second means is to write a report on any science-related topic. It must be in the students' own words. I generally give 5 points per paragraph (5+ sentences).

**How can I check on my child's grade periodically?** I apologize that I cannot contact you on a regular basis. I have over 150 students to keep track of and it simply isn't possible. You can check your child's grade in all of their classes by logging into Harmony from the school website. Your child is another source for this information. Students are given their grades 4 times per quarter in my class (about every 2 weeks). You are welcome to contact me anytime if you have questions or concerns about your child's grade. The easiest way for both of us is through the Parents section this website on the [Request Report](#) page. Here you can fill out a simple form requesting me to contact you. I will do so as soon as possible. You can also e-mail me at [yoda@mrsporter.com](mailto:yoda@mrsporter.com). If you do not have access to the Internet or e-mail, you can contact me by leaving a message with the school secretary (569-2045).

**How can I help my child do better in school?** There is a lot of help out there for parents and students. Rose-Hulman has a "[Homework Hotline](#)" (1-877-ASK-ROSE) that seems to be very helpful. There are lots of parent and student study helps linked the [Parent Links](#) page, and I'm sure there are many more out there. The most important thing is for you to stay involved. Ask them daily about school and study with them. Many students simply do not know how to study. Frequent contact with me (and your child's other teachers) will keep you informed of their progress and give opportunity to do something about a low grade before it's too late. I am always willing to stay after school or come early if your child needs my help with anything. Please do not hesitate to ask. Advance notice is usually necessary.

**My child is sure they turned in an assignment, but you have it as a zero. What happened?** The most likely explanation is that your son or daughter forgot to put their name on their paper. I have tried in the past to allow student to claim no-name papers. But this method doesn't work very well and junior high students are old enough to be responsible for putting their name on their work. Therefore, no-name papers are not graded. If this should happen, a little extra credit can make up for the lost grade or they can redo the assignment. Another possibility is that they only *think* they turned it in. I find that many students complete their assignment and simply never turn it in to be graded. In rare cases, papers have gotten stuck together when I've been recording their grades. If this happens, your child will have received a graded paper back that I do not have recorded in my grade book. This can be corrected when your child shows me their graded paper. I ask all students to keep their work in their science folder throughout the grading period. I will only credit them in this way if they can show me their graded paper, so it is important they keep all work.

**Other things you might like to know:**

- Seating changes every 9 weeks unless there are extreme circumstances.
- I am always available to help a student who asks. My prep periods are blocks 4 (Riverton Days) and 7 (Parke Days), but I can also stay after school or come early.
- I will always allow a student to redo an assignment or test if they feel they can do better.
- Students will be informed of their grade every two weeks. They will be required to graph their grade and complete a short self-evaluation. Therefore, your child should always have an idea where he or she stands in this class and have every opportunity to bring up a low grade.