Greetings Students,

May 29, 2015

You are receiving this note from me because when you were choosing your classes for next year, you signed up for AP Biology. There is much work to be done but it will be inspiring to study God’s living creation surrounding us. We have fascinating books to read and exciting labs planned and I am looking forward to spending this challenging year with you.

As an Advanced Placement course, the material will be covered very quickly. You will be using both a paper textbook and a digital course. There are also three summer assignments that need to be completed. The first assignment is reading a book called *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*. Either a hard copy or a digital copy is fine. You can purchase your copy through any major bookseller or online. My recommendation to you is, as you read through each chapter, use a highlighter to highlight key points, or even points that you find interesting or profound.

In addition, at the end of each part, you’ll need to write a reflection on what you read. (There are three parts to the book and you will, therefore, be writing three reflections.) We will be using reflective writing often throughout our year together. A reflection is simply a written paragraph highlighting what you found interesting, unusual, disturbing, or novel as you read. It should NOT be a simple summary of the reading. It should connect what you read to what you already knew or what you are learning. It should demonstrate to me that you not only read the text but also interacted with it. Each reflection should use the correct MLA formatting at the top and should indicate which part it matches. Keep all your reflections together in one document that you can submit via the Dropbox in Haiku on the first day of class. We will be reading some of the reflections of our peers during the first week of school.

The second assignment for the summer is to login to our digital website called MasteringBiology.com and watch some introductory tutorials. This website will be our digital home all year for many assignments, quizzes, and online animations and activities. You will also need to use this website before school starts to review some introductory biology material. The detailed directions about setting up a MasteringBiology account are included in another handout.

The third assignment for the summer is to read chapter one of our textbook using the eText on MasteringBiology. Chapter One is an introduction to our study and includes several important concepts. Concepts 1.1 through 1.3 are important material; concept 1.4 is optional. There will be an assignment on MasteringBiology about the concepts in chapter one. You may want to take notes (either electronically or digitally) on the themes from chapter one, as we will be referring to them often.

I will also be hosting a class picnic at my home during August with the date to be determined. We will simply observe the living things we see and enjoy each other’s
company. With the pond in the front, we can observe all kinds of birds, fish, insects, plants, etc. and marvel together at what God has created for our pleasure.

A very detailed syllabus will be distributed on the first day of class. The general list of units is below. Don’t be worried about the unit on evolution. As Mrs. Stone has already taught you in Biology, there is so much to be studied on the concept of evolution. (It does not just mean one species changing into another.) The course is designed around the concept of inquiry. This is a class where you get to explore and go deeper into science. You get to design your own experiments and work with different technology. You will read actual stories and case studies that will make the information real. You will take several meaningful field trips. You will be challenged but you will have fun.

The supply list will be on the website after July 1st. I have also attached that list below. If you have any questions, you can always email me at gina.smearsoll@cincinnatichristian.org. Have a wonderful summer! I wish you the best as we move toward the beginning of another school year. I look forward to meeting you in August!

Mrs. Smearsoll

AP Biology Units
Unit One: Chemistry of Life
Unit Two: Cells and Cell Processes
Unit Three: Genetics
Unit Four: Evolution
Unit Five: Form and Function: Maintaining Homeostasis
Unit Six: Interactions, Biodiversity, and Ecology

AP Biology Supply List
• Binder (any size) to serve as a lab notebook
• Four Books: (paper or electronic format)
  • Survival of the Sickest: A Medical Maverick Discovers Why We Need Disease by Sharon Moalem and Jonathan Prince.
  • The Hot Zone by Richard Preston
  • The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot (summer reading)
  • Darwin on Trial by Phillip Johnson