Mr. Marshall’s Extra Credit Policy

My philosophy on extra credit has changed over my career. For a while I could not think of any scenario where a student could benefit from extra credit AND had shown throughout the year that they deserved it. Students who have worked hard and deserve the privilege do not have grades that will benefit or be affected much by extra credit, while students whose grades could use the additional support most likely have not shown they deserve it throughout the semester. So when, exactly, does extra credit make sense?

Then I discovered one scenario where extra credit would apply: the issue of rounding grades. Suppose a student works hard, gets help after school, and ends with a final grade of 89.8%, a B+. Do I round them to an A? What about a student with a 69.8%? Do they deserve the same consideration? Where do I draw the line? This is a problem that extra credit may help solve.

Extra credit is often seen as “make-up” credit when in fact it is “additional credit.” To be qualified for extra credit, you must already have given credit completed. By this, I mean A) Have all assignments completed, including exams (remember, you can ALWAYS turn in missing assignments); B) Have no more than 8 absences, excused or otherwise; and C) Have no more than 5 tardies.

Below you will find a list of extra credit assignments. These assignments are lengthy, and cannot be completed at merely the last minute. The assignments are broken up into four categories. If you qualify for extra credit, then you may complete no more than three total of the assignments below (no more than one from each category). For each of these assignments completed I will bump your final grade up 1% at the end of the semester. **NOTE: 1% does not guarantee that your letter grade will change. 3% will. Keep that in mind when deciding whether or not to pursue this extra credit.**

You must see me to discuss your project BEFORE beginning work on these items, or the extra credit will not count. All extra credit items are due the week before the final in January. Any item submitted that includes any research whatsoever must also include an MLA-format works cited page of primary source material (no Wikipedia), including any pictures used. My standard for accepting an extra credit assignment is as follows: Busy-work with no value is not accepted; work that can be used to educate or aid future students on the topic is the ideal goal.

**Category 1: Increased Study of Science**

1. Write a 6-7 page biographical paper on a famous scientist, alive or diseased. Include in your paper a brief background, significant contributions to the field of science, and legacy.
2. Pick a 100-year period in history and create a timeline of scientific achievements during that decade. At least 30 entries must be made on this timeline. Entries must include a date, an image, and a brief 4-5 sentence description of the entry. Timeline must also be to scale.
3. Research and write summaries of 20 current events in science of your choosing. Each summary must be 5-7 sentences long, describing both the event and its significance, and include a reference of where the research was conducted.
4. Another, student created idea, discussed with Mr. Marshall first.

**Category 2: Experience and Practice in the Scientific Method**

1. Choose three plant species and grow specimens of each over a 45-day period. Keep a log each day about what you observe, how you tended to the plant, and what biological concepts you see at work throughout the month. See me for recommended species.
2. Create a field log of plants, insects, birds, fungi, or land animals that you are able to locate and identify in your area. See Mr. Marshall for identification methods. A minimum of 30 species and 3 kingdoms must be identified. Each species must include details about population size, environment located within, and how to locate the specimen again.

3. Research your favorite “mythbuster” type of myth and conduct an experiment to designed to prove or disprove the theory. All portions of the scientific method must be detailed and accounted for. Present your findings to Mr. Marshall.

4. Another, student created idea, discussed with Mr. Marshall first.

Category 3: Personal and Community Health

1. Participate and/or volunteer in any community health and/or fitness event. Examples may include but are not limited to marathons, bicycle races, triathlons, relay races, etc.

2. Another, student created idea, discussed with Mr. Marshall first.