Grade 8 English with a Science Focus Class Application
DUE FRIDAY, FEB 19, 2016

Name _____

I am an English teacher who is studying to be a geologist/paleontologist at Utah Valley University…one class a semester. I currently clean dinosaur bones at Thanksgiving Point on Saturday mornings as a volunteer, and frequently visit with the public who stand outside our paleo lab to watch. As I tell the folks with whom I visit, I am a time traveler because I am the first person to touch the barosaurus since it died 145 million years ago in today's Wyoming.

Each science class I have taken – biology, astronomy, oceanography, meteorology, and of course, geology, has opened the door to incredibly complex and beautiful worlds, and I find it exciting to learn about each realm of knowledge. Who knew we were seeing the past when we view stars with their hundreds and often hundreds of millions of light years just now reaching our world? How many people know that the beginnings of life may have arrived on a meteor crashing into the hostile earth hundreds of billions of years ago bringing water with it …the first water which created atmosphere and fostered life?

Please tell me in a seven-to-ten sentence essay what field of science fascinates you the most, and tell me why. Details are critical, and if you write more than ten sentences, you have made me a happy geology student/English teacher/bone preparer/grandmother.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please keep in mind that we will follow the state's core curriculum for English, and we will be assessed on the standards for English 8. However, our reading materials will all have a science focus, our study of words and word parts will be based on the Greek and Latin roots – the languages of science and medicine – and we will write argumentative, process, problem/solution, compare/contrast papers as well as engage in formal debates on the hot science topics of the day. We will read about scientists and explore the challenges they faced in breaking barriers, and we will do a few experiments of our own. We will read a few science fiction short stories such as "Cold Equation," "There Will Come Soft Rains," "All Summer in a Day" "Monsters Due on Maple Street," among others. We will also examine a few episodes from the Twilight Zone television series to not only examine plot, character development, conflict, and protagonist/antagonist (yes, we do read some fiction). Most of students' reading and writing will be driven by student interest, and I will join in the discussions and assignments as well. If students participate in the science fair, they can work on their written presentation in my class (saves homework stress!).