Navigating NGSS? We have what you NEED!

Wondering how the Next Generation Science Standards are going to affect the instruction you deliver in your classroom? We are here to help. Released in their final form in April of 2013, this latest edition of standards is very different from many other sets of standards in the past.

The most obvious change is the presence of cross-cutting concepts and science and engineering practices alongside the content standards. Designed to reinforce basic skills, these concepts and practices are woven throughout all grade levels of the standards, increasing in complexity and expectation as the grade level increases.

 Developing models, interpreting them, and designing experiments and devices to test ideas are emphasized, starting in third grade. Modeling abstract ideas is perhaps one of the most daunting tasks faced by science teachers, as any model has its limitations.

We have been monitoring the development of NGSS very carefully at NEED. We are confident that we have curriculum materials that will help you meet the standards and continue to teach your students to be conscious, educated consumers of energy.

**General Overview of NEED materials and NGSS**

***Primary Grades (K-2)***

These very young science students will need to make good observations, recognize patterns in their observations, and develop predictions based on their observations. Hands-on activities that are both informative and engaging will be a necessity! Primary Science of Energy and Energyworks can help your primary students understand what it means to make observations, describe them, and develop those important science skills. The patterns of weather, sunlight, and celestial objects can be demonstrated with many activities in The Sun and Its Energy and Wind is Energy. When geological events are introduced in second grade, Oil, Gas, and Their Energy will describe how changes occur slowly over time. And when these oldest primary children are ready to learn about water, Water and Energy will be ready to help them.

***Elementary Grades (3-5)***

Elementary students are ready to move from learning about science to actually doing science! They will need to be able to make measurements, identify a pattern, make predictions, and provide evidence from their observations. Developing cause and effect relationships and designing models or devices to demonstrate scientific concepts are introduced in fourth grade. Energyworks, Electroworks, and Wonders of Magnets will help your students get started with these important skills in third grade and carry them into fourth grade.

Speaking of fourth grade, welcome to the ‘Grade of Energy!’ These students will be asked to explain energy transformations, and that is precisely the focus of Science of Energy! When students begin to study various sources of energy, they can begin to develop ideas about climate change, which is also introduced in third grade and expanded in fourth grade. Learning about the climates of different world regions is an important concept illustrated in Mystery World Tour. This particular curriculum guide is currently undergoing a major revision and will soon be available to download.

Fifth graders are being asked to develop models about atoms and molecules, how matter moves through a biological system, and the interplay of matter among the geosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere. The radiometer activity from station 3 in Science of Energy, Energyflows, Wonders of Water, and the carbon cycle activity from Understanding Climate Change all tackle these difficult concepts. These activities will help your students understand how models work and how models can also have limitations.

***Intermediate Grades (6-8)***

Beginning with middle school, science concepts are divided among physical, life, and Earth and Space sciences. Look to NEED curriculum guides for excellent activities that help students develop more complex models and understand concepts like: thermal energy and its transfer, the effect of humanity on the earth and its systems, and the interplay of multiple geological and atmospheric processes. Science of Energy will help lay the foundation for most of the physical science standards, and Electroworks, Wonders of Magnets, and Thermodynamics all have activities that will finish the physical science section.

Energy Flows, Understanding Climate Change, and Science of Energy will help your students understand photosynthesis, carbon, nitrogen, and water cycles, and how energy flows in and out of the biosphere with respect to the life science standards.

An extensive amount of Earth and Space science standards directly relate to activities found in NEED curriculum guides. Exploring Oil and Gas, Understanding Climate Change, H2Educate, Energy from the Wind, Energy from the Sun, and Energy of Moving Water contain several activities each that will help your students understand the complex systems on Earth and their interactions. When it comes to understanding the impact of population growth and human activity, these titles coupled with Museum of Solid Waste will give your students a broader, clearer picture of how we are affecting geological systems.

The solar house design activity in Energy from the Sun and the wind blade design activity from Energy from the Wind will provide your students an opportunity to engage in an engineering and design challenge as dictated in the middle school engineering section of the standards.

***Secondary Grades (9-12)***

Continuing the separation of physical, life, and Earth and Space sciences, science concepts become more detailed and require more extensive application of basic skills. This is also the grade level at which NEED curriculum guides provide the most support within the framework of the NGSS. The following list of curriculum guides contains after each title a summary of the standards it supports. (P) indicates a Physical Science standard, (L) indicates a Life Science standard, (ES) indicates an Earth and Space Science standard, and (ED) indicates an Engineering Design standard.

Energy on Public Lands – evaluate solution to a complex real-world problem involving trade-offs (ED)

Exploring Climate Change – develop model of photosynthesis and respiration as related to carbon cycle (L); evaluating that ecosystems remain consistent but can be affected by changing conditions (L); find a solution for reducing the impacts of human activities on the environment (Wedge Challenge) (L); simulation for testing solution to mitigate adverse human impacts on biodiversity (L); develop quantitative model of carbon cycle (ES); analyze data to show one change to Earth’s surface can cause changes to other Earth systems (ES); show how energy flows within Earth’s systems change its climate (ES); analyze data to forecast rate of global climate change (ES); explain how resources have influenced human activity (ES); evaluate technological solution to reduce human activity impact (ES); illustrate relationships among Earth systems (ES); Analyze major global challenge (Wedge Challenge) (ED)

Exploring Hydroelectricity – design and refining of a device that transforms energy (P); model of two objects interacting through electric or magnetic fields (science of electricity model) (P); investigating the properties of water (ES); evaluating solution to a complex real-world problem involving trade-offs (ED)

Exploring Nuclear Energy – nuclear energy and changes in the nucleus (P); life span of the sun and nuclear fusion (ES); evaluating solution to a complex real-world problem involving trade-offs (ED)

Exploring Oil and Gas – electrical force strength between particles (P); molecular-level structure as it relates to designed materials (P); plate tectonics (ES);

Exploring Photovoltaics – design and refining of a device that transforms energy (P); wave/particle duality of electromagnetic radiation (P); effects of absorbing electromagnetic radiation (P); sun’s release of energy (ES)

Exploring Wind Energy – design and refining of a device that transforms energy (P); evaluating solution to a complex real-world problem involving trade-offs (ED)

H2Educate – element properties and the periodic table (P); investigating the properties of water (ES)

Learning & Conserving – can be used along with Saving Energy At Home and At School, design solution to a complex real-world problem by breaking it down into smaller problems (ED)

Mission Possible – explain how resources have influenced human activity (ES); evaluate design solutions for utilizing resources (ES); evaluate solution to a complex real-world problem involving trade-offs (ED)

Secondary Science of Energy – release and absorption of energy in chemical reactions (P); electromagnetic interactions (P); energy transformations, including photosynthesis (P) and (L); description of how devices use waves to capture energy (P)

Thermodynamics – transfer of thermal energy (P)

Next Steps in the Next Generation Science Standards

Several states have thus far officially adopted the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). If you’re in one of those states, you might be wondering how the energy lessons in NEED curriculum fit in with NGSS. We have listed each Disciplinary Core Idea below, with the appropriate grade-level curriculum guides that correspond well to the concepts. All NEED curriculum guides can be downloaded free of charge in PDF format. Feel free to email any questions you have to info@need.org. Happy correlating!

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| **Disciplinary Core Idea** | **Primary Supporting Curriculum Guides** | **Elementary Supporting Curriculum Guides** | **Intermediate Supporting Curriculum Guides** | **Secondary Supporting Curriculum Guides** |
| **Earth and Space Science** |
| **ESS1.A: The Universe and its Stars** The sun is a star that appears larger and brighter than other stars because it is closer. Stars range greatly in their distance from Earth.Patterns of the apparent motion of the sun, the moon, and stars in the sky can be observed, described, predicted, and explained with models. Earth and its solar system are part of the Milky Way galaxy, which is one of many galaxies in the universe.  The star called the sun is changing and will burn out over a lifespan of approximately 10 billion years. The study of stars’ light spectra and brightness is used to identify compositional elements of stars, their movements, and their distances from Earth.  The Big Bang theory is supported by observations of distant galaxies receding from our own, of the measured composition of stars and non-stellar gases, and of the maps of spectra of the primordial radiation (cosmic microwave background) that still fills the universe.  Other than the hydrogen and helium formed at the time of the Big Bang, nuclear fusion within stars produces all atomic nuclei lighter than and including iron, and the process releases electromagnetic energy. Heavier elements are produced when certain massive stars achieve a supernova stage and explode.  | Energy Stories and MorePrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Infobook ActivitiesThe Sun and its Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy Stories and MoreWonders of the Sun | Energy ExposEnergy from the SunIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesSchools Going Solar | Energy ExposSchools Going SolarSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook Activities |
| **ESS1.B: Earth and the Solar System** The orbits of Earth around the sun and of the moon around Earth, together with the rotation of Earth about an axis between its North and South poles, cause observable patterns. These include day and night; daily changes in the length and direction of shadows; and different positions of the sun, moon, and stars at different times of the day, month, and year.The solar system consists of the sun and a collection of objects, including planets, their moons, and asteroids that are held in orbit around the sun by its gravitational pull on them. This model of the solar system can explain eclipses of the sun and the moon. Earth’s spin axis is fixed in direction over the short-term but tilted relative to its orbit around the sun. The seasons are a result of that tilt and are caused by the differential intensity of sunlight on different areas of Earth across the year. The solar system appears to have formed from a disk of dust and gas, drawn together by gravity.  Kepler’s laws describe common features of the motions of orbiting objects, including their elliptical paths around the sun. Orbits may change due to the gravitational effects from, or collisions with, other objects in the solar system.  Cyclical changes in the shape of Earth’s orbit around the sun, together with changes in the tilt of the planet’s axis of rotation, both occurring over hundreds of thousands of years, have altered the intensity and distribution of sunlight falling on the earth. These phenomena cause a cycle of ice ages and other gradual climate changes.  | Energy Stories and MorePrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Infobook ActivitiesThe Sun and its Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesWonders of the Sun | Energy ExposEnergy from the SunIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesSchools Going Solar | Energy ExposSchools Going SolarSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook Activities |
| **ESS1.C: The History of Planet Earth** Some events happen very quickly; others occur very slowly, over a time period much longer than one can observe.Local, regional, and global patterns of rock formations reveal changes over time due to earth forces, such as earthquakes. The geologic time scale interpreted from rock strata provides a way to organize Earth’s history. Analyses of rock strata and the fossil record provide only relative dates, not an absolute scale.Tectonic processes continually generate new ocean sea floor at ridges and destroy old sea floor at trenches. Continental rocks, which can be older than 4 billion years, are generally much older than the rocks of the ocean floor, which are less than 200 million years old.  Although active geologic processes, such as plate tectonics and erosion, have destroyed or altered most of the very early rock record on Earth, other objects in the solar system, such as lunar rocks, asteroids, and meteorites, have changed little over billions of years. Studying these objects can provide information about Earth’s formation and early history.  | Energy Stories and MoreOil, Gas, and their EnergyPrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Infobook Activities | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy Stories and MoreWonders of Oil and Gas | Energy ExposExploring Oil and GasFossil Fuels to ProductsIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook Activities | Energy ExposExploring Oil and GasFossil Fuels to ProductsSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook Activities |
| **ESS2.A: Earth Materials and Systems** Rainfall helps to shape the land and affects the types of living things found in a region. Water, ice, wind, living organisms, and gravity break rocks, soils, and sediments into smaller particles and move them around.Earth’s major systems are the geosphere (solid and molten rock, soil, and sediments), the hydrosphere (water and ice), the atmosphere (air), and the biosphere (living things, including humans). The planet’s systems interact over scales that range from microscopic to global in size, and they operate over fractions of a second to billions of years. These interactions have shaped Earth’s history and will determine its future.All Earth processes are the result of energy flowing and matter cycling within and among the planet’s systems. This energy is derived from the sun and Earth’s hot interior. The energy that flows and matter that cycles produce chemical and physical changes in Earth’s materials and living organisms. Earth’s systems, being dynamic and interacting, cause feedback effects that can increase or decrease the original changes. A deep knowledge of how feedbacks work within and among Earth’s systems is still lacking, thus limiting scientists’ ability to predict some changes and their impacts.  Evidence from deep probes and seismic waves, reconstructions of historical changes in Earth’s surface and its magnetic field, and an understanding of physical and chemical processes lead to a model of Earth with a hot but solid inner core, a liquid outer core, a solid mantle and crust. Motions of the mantle and its plates occur primarily through thermal convection, which involves the cycling of matter due to the outward flow of energy from Earth’s interior and gravitational movement of denser materials toward the interior.  The geological record shows that changes to global and regional climate can be caused by interactions among changes in the sun’s energy output or Earth’s orbit, tectonic events, ocean circulation, volcanic activity, glaciers, vegetation, and human activities. These changes can occur on a variety of time scales from sudden (e.g., volcanic ash clouds) to intermediate (ice ages) to very long-term tectonic cycles.  | Energy Stories and MoreOil, Gas, and their EnergyPrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookWater and EnergyWind is Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy Stories and MoreWonders of WaterWonders of Wind | Energy ExposEnergy from the WindEnergy of Moving WaterIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesWind for Schools | Energy ExposExploring HydroelectricityExploring Wind EnergySecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesWind for Schools |
| **ESS2.B: Plate Tectonics and Large-Scale System Interactions** The locations of mountain ranges, deep ocean trenches, ocean floor structures, earthquakes, and volcanoes occur in patterns. Most earthquakes and volcanoes occur in bands that are often along the boundaries between continents and oceans. Major mountain chains form inside continents or near their edges. Maps can help locate the different land and water features areas of Earth. Maps of ancient land and water patterns, based on investigations of rocks and fossils, make clear how Earth’s plates have moved great distances, collided, and spread apart. Plate tectonics is the unifying theory that explains the past and current movements of the rocks at Earth’s surface and provides a framework for understanding its geologic history.  Plate movements are responsible for most continental and ocean-floor features and for the distribution of most rocks and minerals within Earth’s crust.  The radioactive decay of unstable isotopes continually generates new energy within Earth’s crust and mantle, providing the primary source of the heat that drives mantle convection. Plate tectonics can be viewed as the surface expression of mantle convection.  | Energy Stories and MoreOil, Gas, and their EnergyPrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Infobook Activities | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy Stories and MoreWonders of Oil and Gas | Energy ExposExploring Oil and GasFossil Fuels to ProductsIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook Activities | Energy ExposExploring Oil and GasFossil Fuels to ProductsSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook Activities |
| **ESS2.C: The Roles of Water in Earth’s Surface Processes** Water is found in the ocean, rivers, lakes, and ponds. Water exists as solid ice and in liquid form.Nearly all of Earth’s available water is in the ocean. Most fresh water is in glaciers or underground; only a tiny fraction is in streams, lakes, wetlands, and the atmosphere.Water’s movements—both on the land and underground—cause weathering and erosion, which change the land’s surface features and create underground formations.Water continually cycles among land, ocean, and atmosphere via transpiration, evaporation, condensation and crystallization, and precipitation, as well as downhill flows on land.The complex patterns of the changes and the movement of water in the atmosphere, determined by winds, landforms, and ocean temperatures and currents, are major determinants of local weather patterns.Variations in density due to variations in temperature and salinity drive a global pattern of interconnected ocean currents. The abundance of liquid water on Earth’s surface and its unique combination of physical and chemical properties are central to the planet’s dynamics. These properties include water’s exceptional capacity to absorb, store, and release large amounts of energy, transmit sunlight, expand upon freezing, dissolve and transport materials, and lower the viscosities and melting points of rocks.  | Energy Stories and MorePrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Infobook ActivitiesWater and Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy Stories and MoreWonders of Water | Energy ExposEnergy of Moving WaterH2 EducateIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook Activities | Energy ExposExploring HydroelectricityH2 EducateSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook Activities |
| **ESS2.D: Weather and Climate** Weather is the combination of sunlight, wind, snow or rain, and temperature in a particular region at a particular time. People measure these conditions to describe and record the weather and to notice patterns over time.Scientists record patterns of the weather across different times and areas so that they can make predictions about what kind of weather might happen next.Climate describes a range of an area's typical weather conditions and the extent to which those conditions vary over years.Weather and climate are influenced by interactions involving sunlight, the ocean, the atmosphere, ice, landforms, and living things. These interactions vary with latitude, altitude, and local and regional geography, all of which can affect oceanic and atmospheric flow patterns.Because these patterns are so complex, weather can only be predicted probabilistically.The ocean exerts a major influence on weather and climate by absorbing energy from the sun, releasing it over time, and globally redistributing it through ocean currents. The foundation for Earth’s global climate systems is the electromagnetic radiation from the sun, as well as its reflection, absorption, storage, and redistribution among the atmosphere, ocean, and land systems, and this energy’s re-radiation into space. Gradual atmospheric changes were due to plants and other organisms that captured carbon dioxide and released oxygen.  Changes in the atmosphere due to human activity have increased carbon dioxide concentrations and thus affect climate.  Current models predict that, although future regional climate changes will be complex and varied, average global temperatures will continue to rise. The outcomes predicted by global climate models strongly depend on the amounts of human-generated greenhouse gases added to the atmosphere each year and by the ways in which these gases are absorbed by the ocean and biosphere.  | Energy Stories and MorePrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Infobook ActivitiesThe Sun and Its EnergyWater and EnergyWind is Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy Stories and MoreWonders of the SunWonders of WaterWonders of Wind | Energy ExposEnergy from the SunEnergy from the WindEnergy of Moving WaterIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesSchools Going SolarUnderstanding Climate ChangeWind for Schools | Energy ExposExploring Climate ChangeExploring HydroelectricityExploring Wind EnergySchools Going SolarSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesWind for Schools |
| **ESS2.E: Biogeology** Plants and animals can change their environment.Living things affect the physical characteristics of their regions. The many dynamic and delicate feedbacks between the biosphere and other Earth systems cause a continual co-evolution of Earth’s surface and the life that exists on it.  | All About TrashBuilding Buddies | Building BuddiesEnergy HouseSaving Energy at Home and SchoolTalking Trash | Building ScienceEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy HouseLearning and ConservingMonitoring and MentoringMuseum of Solid Waste and EnergySaving Energy at Home and SchoolUnderstanding Climate Change | Chemistry and Energy EfficiencyEnergy Conservation ContractExploring Climate ChangeLearning and ConservingMuseum of Solid Waste and EnergySaving Energy at Home and School |
| **ESS3.A: Natural Resources** Living things need water, air, and resources from the land, and they live in places that have the things they need.Energy and fuels that humans use are derived from natural sources, and their use affects the environment in multiple ways. Some resources are renewable over time, and others are not.Humans depend on Earth’s land, ocean, atmosphere, and biosphere for many different resources. Minerals, fresh water, and biosphere resources are limited, and many are not renewable or replaceable over human lifetimes. These resources are distributed unevenly around the planet as a result of past geologic processes. Resource availability has guided the development of human society. All forms of energy production and other resource extraction have associated economic, social, environmental, and geopolitical costs and risks as well as benefits. New technologies and social regulations can change the balance of these factors.  | Building BuddiesEnergy Stories and MoreOil, Gas, and their EnergyPrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Infobook ActivitiesThe Sun and Its EnergyThis Mine of MineUsing and Saving EnergyWater and EnergyWind is Energy | Building BuddiesElementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposEnergy in the BalanceEnergy Stories and MoreLiquefied Natural Gas: LNGMonitoring and MentoringSaving Energy at Home and SchoolThis Mine of MineToday in EnergyTransportation Fuels DebateTransportation Fuels Rock PerformancesU.S. Energy GeographyWonders of Oil and GasWonders of the SunWonders of WaterWonders of Wind | Building ScienceEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposEnergy from the SunEnergy from the WindEnergy from UraniumEnergy of Moving WaterEnergy on Public LandsExploring Oil and GasFossil Fuels to ProductsGreat Energy DebateH2 EducateH2 EducateIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesLearning and ConservingLiquefied Natural Gas: LNGMonitoring and MentoringMuseum of Solid Waste and EnergySaving Energy at Home and SchoolThis Mine of MineTransportation Fuels DebateTransportation Fuels EnigmaTransportation Fuels InfobookTransportation Fuels Rock PerformancesU.S. Energy Geography | Carbon Capture, Utilization and StorageChemistry and Energy EfficiencyEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposExploring HydroelectricityExploring Nuclear EnergyExploring Oil and GasExploring PhotovoltaicsExploring Wind EnergyFossil Fuels to ProductsGreat Energy DebateH2 EducateLearning and ConservingLiquefied Natural Gas: LNGMission PossibleMuseum of Solid Waste and EnergySecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesTransportation Fuels DebateTransportation Fuels EnigmaTransportation Fuels InfobookTransportation Fuels Rock PerformancesU.S. Energy Geography |
| **ESS3.B: Natural Hazards** Some kinds of severe weather are more likely than others in a given region. Weather scientists forecast severe weather so that the communities can prepare for and respond to these events.A variety of hazards result from natural processes (e.g., earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions). Humans cannot eliminate the hazards but can take steps to reduce their impacts.Mapping the history of natural hazards in a region, combined with an understanding of related geologic forces can help forecast the locations and likelihoods of future events. Natural hazards and other geologic events have shaped the course of human history; [they] have significantly altered the sizes of human populations and have driven human migrations.  |  |  |  |  |
| **ESS3.C: Human Impacts on Earth Systems** Human activities in agriculture, industry, and everyday life have had major effects on the land, vegetation, streams, ocean, air, and even outer space. But individuals and communities are doing things to help protect Earth’s resources and environments.Human activities have significantly altered the biosphere, sometimes damaging or destroying natural habitats and causing the extinction of other species. But changes to Earth’s environments can have different impacts (negative and positive) for different living things.Typically as human populations and per-capita consumption of natural resources increase, so do the negative impacts on Earth unless the activities and technologies involved are engineered otherwise. The sustainability of human societies and the biodiversity that supports them requires responsible management of natural resources. Scientists and engineers can make major contributions by developing technologies that produce less pollution and waste and that preclude ecosystem degradation.  | All About TrashBuilding BuddiesEnergy Stories and MorePrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookThis Mine of MineUsing and Saving Energy | Building BuddiesElementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposEnergy HouseEnergy in the BalanceEnergy Stories and Moremonitoring and MentoringSaving Energy at Home and SchoolTalking TrashThis Mine of Mine | Building ScienceEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposEnergy HouseGreat Energy DebateIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesLearning and ConservingMonitoring and MentoringMuseum of Solid Waste and EnergySaving Energy at Home and SchoolTransportation Fuels DebateUnderstanding Climate Change | Carbon Capture, Utilization, and StorageChemistry and Energy EfficiencyEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposExploring Climate ChangeGreat Energy DebateLearning and ConservingMuseum of Solid Waste and EnergySaving Energy at Home and SchoolSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesTransportation Fuels Debate |
| **ESS3.D: Global Climate Change** Human activities, such as the release of greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels, are major factors in the current rise in Earth’s mean surface temperature (global warming). Reducing the level of climate change and reducing human vulnerability to whatever climate changes do occur depend on the understanding of climate science, engineering capabilities, and other kinds of knowledge, such as understanding of human behavior and on applying that knowledge wisely in decisions and activities. Though the magnitudes of human impacts are greater than they have ever been, so too are human abilities to model, predict, and manage current and future impacts.  Through computer simulations and other studies, important discoveries are still being made about how the ocean, the atmosphere, and the biosphere interact and are modified in response to human activities.  |  |  | Energy ExposIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesUnderstanding Climate Change | Energy ExposExploring Climate ChangeSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook Activities |
| **Life Science** |
| **LS1.A: Structure and Function** Plants and animals have both internal and external structures that serve various functions in growth, survival, behavior, and reproduction.All living things are made up of cells, which is the smallest unit that can be said to be alive. An organism may consist of one single cell (unicellular) or many different numbers and types of cells (multicellular).Within cells, special structures are responsible for particular functions, and the cell membrane forms the boundary that controls what enters and leaves the cell.In multicellular organisms, the body is a system of multiple interacting subsystems. These subsystems are groups of cells that work together to form tissues and organs that are specialized for particular body functions.  Systems of specialized cells within organisms help them perform the essential functions of life.  All cells contain genetic information in the form of DNA molecules. Genes are regions in the DNA that contain the instructions that code for the formation of proteins, which carry out most of the work of cells.  Multicellular organisms have a hierarchical structural organization, in which any one system is made up of numerous parts and is itself a component of the next level. Feedback mechanisms maintain a living system’s internal conditions within certain limits and mediate behaviors, allowing it to remain alive and functional even as external conditions change within some range. Feedback mechanisms can encourage (through positive feedback) or discourage (negative feedback) what is going on inside the living system.  |  |  |  |  |
| **LS1.B: Growth and Development of Organisms** Adult plants and animals can have young. In many kinds of animals, parents and the offspring themselves engage in behaviors that help the offspring to survive.Reproduction is essential to the continued existence of every kind of organism. Plants and animals have unique and diverse life cycles.Organisms reproduce, either sexually or asexually, and transfer their genetic information to their offspring.Animals engage in characteristic behaviors that increase the odds of reproduction.Plants reproduce in a variety of ways, sometimes depending on animal behavior and specialized features for reproduction. Genetic factors as well as local conditions affect the growth of the adult plant.  In multicellular organisms individual cells grow and then divide via a process called mitosis, thereby allowing the organism to grow. The organism begins as a single cell (fertilized egg) that divides successively to produce many cells, with each parent cell passing identical genetic material (two variants of each chromosome pair) to both daughter cells. Cellular division and differentiation produce and maintain a complex organism, composed of systems of tissues and organs that work together to meet the needs of the whole organism.  |  |  |  |  |
| **LS1.C: Organization for Matter and Energy Flow in Organisms** Food provides animals with the materials they need for body repair and growth and the energy they need to maintain body warmth and for motion.Plants acquire their material for growth chiefly from air and water.Plants, algae (including phytoplankton), and many microorganisms use the energy from light to make sugars (food) from carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and water through the process of photosynthesis, which also releases oxygen. These sugars can be used immediately or stored for growth or later use.Within individual organisms, food moves through a series of chemical reactions in which it is broken down and rearranged to form new molecules, to support growth, or to release energy. The process of photosynthesis converts light energy to stored chemical energy by converting carbon dioxide plus water into sugars plus released oxygen. The sugar molecules thus formed contain carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen: their hydrocarbon backbones are used to make amino acids and other carbon-based molecules that can be assembled into larger molecules (such as proteins or DNA), used for example to form new cells.  As matter and energy flow through different organizational levels of living systems, chemical elements are recombined in different ways to form different products.  As a result of these chemical reactions, energy is transferred from one system of interacting molecules to another and release energy to the surrounding environment and to maintain body temperature. Cellular respiration is a chemical process whereby the bonds of food molecules and oxygen molecules are broken and new compounds are formed that can transport energy to muscles.  | Energy Stories and MorePrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Science of Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy FlowsEnergy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksScience of Energy | Energy ExposEnergy FlowsEnergyWorksIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesScience of Energy | Energy ExposEnergy FlowsSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesSecondary Science of Energy |
| **LS1.D: Information Processing** Animals have body parts that capture and convey different kinds of information needed for growth and survival. Animals respond to these inputs with behaviors that help them survive. Plants also respond to some external inputs.Different sense receptors are specialized for particular kinds of information, which may be then processed by the animal’s brain. Animals are able to use their perceptions and memories to guide their actions.Each sense receptor responds to different inputs (electromagnetic, mechanical, chemical), transmitting them as signals that travel along nerve cells to the brain. The signals are then processed in the brain, resulting in immediate behaviors or memories. |  |  |  |  |
| **LS2.A: Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystems** Plants depend on water and light to grow.Plants depend on animals for pollination or to move their seeds around.The food of almost any kind of animal can be traced back to plants. Organisms are related in food webs in which some animals eat plants for food and other animals eat the animals that eat plants. Some organisms, such as fungi and bacteria, break down dead organisms (both plants or plants parts and animals) and therefore operate as “decomposers.” Decomposition eventually restores (recycles) some materials back to the soil. Organisms can survive only in environments in which their particular needs are met. A healthy ecosystem is one in which multiple species of different types are each able to meet their needs in a relatively stable web of life. Newly introduced species can damage the balance of an ecosystem.Organisms, and populations of organisms, are dependent on their environmental interactions both with other living things and with nonliving factors. In any ecosystem, organisms and populations with similar requirements for food, water, oxygen, or other resources may compete with each other for limited resources, access to which consequently constrains their growth and reproduction. Growth of organisms and population increases are limited by access to resources.Similarly, predatory interactions may reduce the number of organisms or eliminate whole populations of organisms. Mutually beneficial interactions, in contrast, may become so interdependent that each organism requires the other for survival. Although the species involved in these competitive, predatory, and mutually beneficial interactions vary across ecosystems, the patterns of interactions of organisms with their environments, both living and nonliving, are shared. Ecosystems have carrying capacities, which are limits to the numbers of organisms and populations they can support. These limits result from such factors as the availability of living and nonliving resources and from such challenges such as predation, competition, and disease. Organisms would have the capacity to produce populations of great size were it not for the fact that environments and resources are finite. This fundamental tension affects the abundance (number of individuals) of species in any given ecosystem.  | Primary Science of Energy | Energy FlowsEnergyWorksScience of Energy | Energy FlowsEnergyWorksScience of Energy | Energy FlowsSecondary Science of Energy |
| **LS2.B: Cycles of Matter and Energy Transfer in Ecosystems** Matter cycles between the air and soil and among plants, animals, and microbes as these organisms live and die. Organisms obtain gases, and water, from the environment, and release waste matter (gas, liquid, or solid) back into the environment.Food webs are models that demonstrate how matter and energy is transferred between producers, consumers, and decomposers as the three groups interact within an ecosystem. Transfers of matter into and out of the physical environment occur at every level. Decomposers recycle nutrients from dead plant or animal matter back to the soil in terrestrial environments or to the water in aquatic environments. The atoms that make up the organisms in an ecosystem are cycled repeatedly between the living and nonliving parts of the ecosystem.  Photosynthesis and cellular respiration (including anaerobic processes) provide most of the energy for life processes. Plants or algae form the lowest level of the food web. At each link upward in a food web, only a small fraction of the matter consumed at the lower level is transferred upward, to produce growth and release energy in cellular respiration at the higher level. Given this inefficiency, there are generally fewer organisms at higher levels of a food web. Some matter reacts to release energy for life functions, some matter is stored in newly made structures, and much is discarded. The chemical elements that make up the molecules of organisms pass through food webs and into and out of the atmosphere and soil, and they are combined and recombined in different ways. At each link in an ecosystem, matter and energy are conserved.  Photosynthesis and cellular respiration are important components of the carbon cycle, in which carbon is exchanged among the biosphere, atmosphere, oceans, and geosphere through chemical, physical, geological, and biological processes.  | Energy Stories and MorePrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Science of EnergyWater is Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy FlowsEnergy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksScience of EnergyWonders of Water | Energy ExposEnergy FlowsEnergy of Moving WaterEnergyWorksIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesScience of EnergyUnderstanding Climate Change | Energy ExposEnergy FlowsEnergyWorksExploring Climate ChangeExploring HydroelectricitySecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesSecondary Science of Energy |
| **LS2.C: Ecosystem Dynamics, Functioning, and Resilience** When the environment changes in ways that affect a place’s physical characteristics, temperature, or availability of resources, some organisms survive and reproduce, others move to new locations, yet others move into the transformed environment, and some die.Ecosystems are dynamic in nature; their characteristics can vary over time. Disruptions to any physical or biological component of an ecosystem can lead to shifts in all its populations. Biodiversity describes the variety of species found in Earth’s terrestrial and oceanic ecosystems. The completeness or integrity of an ecosystem’s biodiversity is often used as a measure of its health.  A complex set of interactions within an ecosystem can keep its numbers and types of organisms relatively constant over long periods of time under stable conditions. If a modest biological or physical disturbance to an ecosystem occurs, it may return to its more or less original status (i.e., the ecosystem is resilient), as opposed to becoming a very different ecosystem. Extreme fluctuations in conditions or the size of any population, however, can challenge the functioning of ecosystems in terms of resources and habitat availability.  Moreover, anthropogenic changes (induced by human activity) in the environment—including habitat destruction, pollution, introduction of invasive species, overexploitation, and climate change—can disrupt an ecosystem and threaten the survival of some species.  | This Mine of MineWater and Energy | Talking TrashThis Mine of Mine | Museum of Solid Waste and EnergyThis Mine of MineUnderstanding Climate Change | Exploring Climate ChangeMuseum of Solid Waste and Energy |
| **LS2.D: Social Interactions and Group Behavior** Being part of a group helps animals obtain food, defend themselves, and cope with changes. Groups may serve different functions and vary dramatically in size.  Group behavior has evolved because membership can increase the chances of survival for individuals and their genetic relatives.  |  |  |  |  |
| **LS3.A: Inheritance of Traits** Many characteristics of organisms are inherited from their parents.Other characteristics result from individuals’ interactions with the environment, which can range from diet to learning. Many characteristics involve both inheritance and environment.Genes are located in the chromosomes of cells, with each chromosome pair containing two variants of each of many distinct genes. Each distinct gene chiefly controls the production of specific proteins, which in turn affects the traits of the individual. Changes (mutations) to genes can result in changes to proteins, which can affect the structures and functions of the organism and thereby change traits. Variations of inherited traits between parent and offspring arise from genetic differences that result from the subset of chromosomes (and therefore genes) inherited. Each chromosome consists of a single very long DNA molecule, and each gene on the chromosome is a particular segment of that DNA. The instructions for forming species’ characteristics are carried in DNA. All cells in an organism have the same genetic content, but the genes used (expressed) by the cell may be regulated in different ways. Not all DNA codes for a protein; some segments of DNA are involved in regulatory or structural functions, and some have no as-yet known function.  |  |  |  |  |
| **LS3.B: Variation of Traits** Individuals of the same kind of plant or animal are recognizable as similar but can also vary in many ways.Different organisms vary in how they look and function because they have different inherited information.The environment also affects the traits that an organism develops.In sexually reproducing organisms, each parent contributes half of the genes acquired (at random) by the offspring. Individuals have two of each chromosome and hence two alleles of each gene, one acquired from each parent. These versions may be identical or may differ from each other.In addition to variations that arise from sexual reproduction, genetic information can be altered because of mutations. Though rare, mutations may result in changes to the structure and function of proteins. Some changes are beneficial, others harmful, and some neutral to the organism. In sexual reproduction, chromosomes can sometimes swap sections during the process of meiosis (cell division), thereby creating new genetic combinations and thus more genetic variation. Although DNA replication is tightly regulated and remarkably accurate, errors do occur and result in mutations, which are also a source of genetic variation. Environmental factors can also cause mutations in genes, and viable mutations are inherited. Environmental factors also affect expression of traits, and hence affect the probability of occurrences of traits in a population. Thus the variation and distribution of traits observed depends on both genetic and environmental factors.  |  |  |  |  |
| **LS4.A: Evidence of Common Ancestry and Diversity** Some kinds of plants and animals that once lived on Earth are no longer found anywhere.Fossils provide evidence about the types of organisms that lived long ago and also about the nature of their environments.The collection of fossils and their placement in chronological order (e.g., through the location of the sedimentary layers in which they are found or through radioactive dating) is known as the fossil record. It documents the existence, diversity, extinction, and change of many life forms throughout the history of life on Earth. Anatomical similarities and differences between various organisms living today and between them and organisms in the fossil record, enable the reconstruction of evolutionary history and the inference of lines of evolutionary descent. Comparison of the embryological development of different species also reveals similarities that show relationships not evident in the fully-formed anatomy.  Genetic information, like the fossil record, provides evidence of evolution. DNA sequences vary among species, but there are many overlaps; in fact, the ongoing branching that produces multiple lines of descent can be inferred by comparing the DNA sequences of different organisms. Such information is also derivable from the similarities and differences in amino acid sequences and from anatomical and embryological evidence.  |  |  |  |  |
| **LS4.B: Natural Selection** Sometimes the differences in characteristics between individuals of the same species provide advantages in surviving, finding mates, and reproducing.In artificial selection, humans have the capacity to influence certain characteristics of organisms by selective breeding. One can choose desired parental traits determined by genes, which are then passed on to offspring. Natural selection leads to the predominance of certain traits in a population, and the suppression of others.  Natural selection occurs only if there is both (1) variation in the genetic information between organisms in a population and (2) variation in the expression of that genetic information—that is, trait variation—that leads to differences in performance among individuals.  The traits that positively affect survival are more likely to be reproduced, and thus are more common in the population.  |  |  |  |  |
| **LS4.C: Adaptation** For any particular environment, some kinds of organisms survive well, some survive less well, and some cannot survive at all. Changes in the physical environment, whether naturally occurring or human induced, have thus contributed to the expansion of some species, the emergence of new distinct species as populations diverge under different conditions, and the decline–and sometimes the extinction–of some species.  Evolution is a consequence of the interaction of four factors: (1) the potential for a species to increase in number, (2) the genetic variation of individuals in a species due to mutation and sexual reproduction, (3) competition for an environment’s limited supply of the resources that individuals need in order to survive and reproduce, and (4) the ensuing proliferation of those organisms that are better able to survive and reproduce in that environment.  Natural selection leads to adaptation, that is, to a population dominated by organisms that are anatomically, behaviorally, and physiologically well suited to survive and reproduce in a specific environment. That is, the differential survival and reproduction of organisms in a population that have an advantageous heritable trait leads to an increase in the proportion of individuals in future generations that have the trait and to a decrease in the proportion of individuals that do not. Adaptation also means that the distribution of traits in a population can change when conditions change.  Changes in the physical environment, whether naturally occurring or human induced, have thus contributed to the expansion of some species, the emergence of new distinct species as populations diverge under different conditions, and the decline–and sometimes the extinction–of some species. Species become extinct because they can no longer survive and reproduce in their altered environment. If members cannot adjust to change that is too fast or drastic, the opportunity for the species’ evolution is lost.  |  |  |  |  |
| **LS4.D: Biodiversity and Humans** Populations live in a variety of habitats, and change in those habitats affects the organisms living there.Changes in biodiversity can influence humans’ resources, such as food, energy, and medicines, as well as ecosystem services that humans rely on—for example, water purification and recycling. Adaptation by natural selection acting over generations is one important process by which species change over time in response to changes in environmental conditions. Traits that support successful survival and reproduction in the new environment become more common; those that do not become less common. Thus, the distribution of traits in a population changes.  Biodiversity is increased by the formation of new species (speciation) and decreased by the loss of species (extinction).  Humans depend on the living world for the resources and other benefits provided by biodiversity. But human activity is also having adverse impacts on biodiversity through overpopulation, overexploitation, habitat destruction, pollution, introduction of invasive species, and climate change. Thus sustaining biodiversity so that ecosystem functioning and productivity are maintained is essential to supporting and enhancing life on Earth. Sustaining biodiversity also aids humanity by preserving landscapes of recreational or inspirational value.  | All About TrashThis Mine of MineWater and Energy | Talking TrashThis Mine of MineWonders of Water | Energy of Moving WaterMuseum of Solid Waste and EnergyThis Mine of MineUnderstanding Climate Change | Carbon Capture, Utilization, and StorageExploring Climate ChangeExploring HydroelectricityMission PossibleMuseum of Solid Waste and Energy |
| **Physical Science** |
| **PS1.A: Structure and Properties of Matter** Different properties are suited to different purposes.Matter of any type can be subdivided into particles that are too small to see, but even then the matter still exists and can be detected by other means. A model shows that gases are made from matter particles that are too small to see and are moving freely around in space can explain many observations, including the inflation and shape of a balloon; the effects of air on larger particles or objects.The amount (weight) of matter is conserved when it changes form, even in transitions in which it seems to vanish.Substances are made from different types of atoms, which combine with one another in various ways. Atoms form molecules that range in size from two to thousands of atoms. Each pure substance has characteristic physical and chemical properties (for any bulk quantity under given conditions) that can be used to identify it. Gases and liquids are made of molecules or inert atoms that are moving about relative to each other. In a liquid, the molecules are constantly in contact with others; in a gas, they are widely spaced except when they happen to collide. In a solid, atoms are closely spaced and may vibrate in position but do not change relative locations.Solids may be formed from molecules, or they may be extended structures with repeating subunits (e.g., crystals). The changes of state that occur with variations in temperature or pressure can be described and predicted using these models of matter.Each atom has a charged substructure consisting of a nucleus, which is made of protons and neutrons, surrounded by electrons. The periodic table orders elements horizontally by the number of protons in the atom’s nucleus and places those with similar chemical properties in columns. The repeating patterns of this table reflect patterns of outer electron states.The structure and interactions of matter at the bulk scale are determined by electrical forces within and between atoms.Stable forms of matter are those in which the electric and magnetic field energy is minimized. A stable molecule has less energy than the same set of atoms separated; one must provide at least this energy in order to take the molecule apart.  | Energy Stories and MorePrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Science of EnergyWater and EnergyWind is Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy Stories and MoreEnergy ExposWonders of WaterWonders of WindLiquefied Natural Gas: LNGElectroWorksEnergyWorksScience of Energy | Intermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposScience of EnergyEnergy of Moving WaterEnergy of WindLiquefied Natural Gas: LNGElectroWorksEnergyWorksEnergy from UraniumExploring Oil and GasH2 EducateTransportation Fuels Infobook | Secondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposSecondary Science of EnergyExploring HydroelectricityExploring Wind EnergyExploring PhotovoltaicsExploring Nuclear EnergyExploring Oil and GasH2 EducateLiquefied Natural Gas: LNGTransportation Fuels InfobookCarbon Capture, Utilization, and StorageThermodynamics |
| **PS1.B: Chemical Reactions** Heating or cooling a substance may cause changes that can be observed. Sometimes these changes are reversible, and sometimes they are not.When two or more different substances are mixed, a new substance with different properties may be formed. Substances react chemically in characteristic ways. In a chemical process, the atoms that make up the original substances are regrouped into different molecules, and these new substances have different properties from those of the reactants. The total number of each type of atom is conserved, and thus the mass does not change. Some chemical reactions release energy, others store energy. Chemical processes, their rates, and whether or not energy is stored or released can be understood in terms of the collisions of molecules and the rearrangements of atoms into new molecules, with consequent changes in the sum of all bond energies in the set of molecules that are matched by changes in kinetic energy. In many situations, a dynamic and condition-dependent balance between a reaction and the reverse reaction determines the numbers of all types of molecules present. The fact that atoms are conserved, together with knowledge of the chemical properties of the elements involved, can be used to describe and predict chemical reactions. | Energy Stories and MorePrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Science of Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy Stories and MoreScience of EnergyWonders of Oil and Gas | Energy ExposExploring Oil and GasFossil Fuels to ProductsH2 EducateIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesScience of EnergyUnderstanding Climate Change | Carbon Capture, Utilization, and StorageEnergy ExposExploring Climate ChangeExploring Oil and GasFossil Fuels to ProductsH2 EducateSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesSecondary Science of Energy |
| **PS1.C: Nuclear Processes**Nuclear processes, including fusion, fission, and radioactive decays of unstable nuclei, involve release or absorption of energy. The total number of neutrons plus protons does not change in any nuclear process. Spontaneous radioactive decays follow a characteristic exponential decay law. Nuclear lifetimes allow radiometric dating to be used to determine the ages of rocks and other materials.  |  |  | Energy ExposEnergy from the SunEnergy from UraniumIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesSchools Going Solar | Energy ExposExploring Nuclear EnergyExploring PhotovoltaicsSchools Going SolarSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook Activities |
| **PS2.A: Forces and Motion** Pushes and pulls can have different strengths and directions. Pushing or pulling on an object can change the speed or direction of its motion and can start or stop it.The patterns of an object’s motion in various situations can be observed and measured; when that past motion exhibits a regular pattern, future motion can be predicted from it. For any pair of interacting objects, the force exerted by the first object on the second object is equal in strength to the force that the second object exerts on the first, but in the opposite direction (Newton’s third law). The motion of an object is determined by the sum of the forces acting on it; if the total force on the object is not zero, its motion will change. The greater the mass of the object, the greater the force needed to achieve the same change in motion. For any given object, a larger force causes a larger change in motion. All positions of objects and the directions of forces and motions must be described in an arbitrarily chosen reference frame and arbitrarily chosen units of size. In order to share information with other people, these choices must also be shared.  Newton’s second law accurately predicts changes in the motion of macroscopic objects.  Momentum is defined for a particular frame of reference; it is the mass times the velocity of the object. In any system, total momentum is always conserved.  If a system interacts with objects outside itself, the total momentum of the system can change; however, any such change is balanced by changes in the momentum of objects outside the system.  | EnergyWorksPrimary Science of Energy | EnergyWorksScience of Energy | EnergyWorksScience of Energy | Secondary Science of Energy |
| **PS2.B: Types of Interactions** When objects touch or collide, they push on one another and can change motion.Objects in contact exert forces on each other.Electric and magnetic forces between a pair of objects do not require that the objects be in contact. The sizes of the forces in each situation depend on the properties of the objects and their distances apart and, for forces between two magnets, on their orientation relative to each other.The gravitational force of Earth acting on an object near Earth’s surface pulls that object toward the planet’s center.Electric and magnetic (electromagnetic) forces can be attractive or repulsive, and their sizes depend on the magnitudes of the charges, currents, or magnetic strengths involved and on the distances between the interacting objects. Gravitational forces are always attractive. There is a gravitational force between any two masses, but it is very small except when one or both of the objects have large mass—e.g., Earth and the sun. Forces that act at a distance (electric and magnetic) can be explained by fields that extend through space and can be mapped by their effect on a test object (a ball, a charged object, or a magnet, respectively). Attraction and repulsion between electric charges at the atomic scale explain the structure, properties, and transformations of matter, as well as the contact forces between material objects.Newton’s law of universal gravitation and Coulomb’s law provide the mathematical models to describe and predict the effects of gravitational and electrostatic forces between distant objects.Forces at a distance are explained by fields (gravitational, electric, and magnetic) permeating space that can transfer energy through space. Magnets or electric currents cause magnetic fields; electric charges or changing magnetic fields cause electric fields. | EnergyWorks Primary Science of EnergyWonders of Magnets | ElectroWorksEnergyWorksScience of EnergyWonders of Magnets | ElectroWorksScience of Energy | ElectroWorksExploring PhotovoltaicsSecondary Science of Energy |
| **PS3.A: Definitions of Energy** Energy can be moved from place to place by moving objects or through sound, light, or electric currents.The term “heat” as used in everyday language refers both to thermal motion (the motion of atoms or molecules within a substance) and radiation (particularly infrared and light). In science, heat is used only for this second meaning; it refers to energy transferred when two objects or systems are at different temperatures.The relationship between the temperature and the total energy of a system depends on the types, states, and amounts of matter present. Motion energy is properly called kinetic energy; it is proportional to the mass of the moving object and grows with the square of its speed. A system of objects may also contain stored (potential) energy, depending on their relative positions. Temperature is a measure of the average kinetic energy of particles of matter. The relationship between the temperature and the total energy of a system depends on the types, states, and amounts of matter present.  …and “electrical energy” may mean energy stored in a battery or energy transmitted by electric currents.  Energy is a quantitative property of a system that depends on the motion and interactions of matter and radiation within that system. That there is a single quantity called energy is due to the fact that a system’s total energy is conserved, even as, within the system, energy is continually transferred from one object to another and between its various possible forms. At the macroscopic scale, energy manifests itself in multiple ways, such as in motion, sound, light, and thermal energy.  These relationships are better understood at the microscopic scale, at which all of the different manifestations of energy can be modeled as either motions of particles or energy stored in fields (which mediate interactions between particles). This last concept includes radiation, a phenomenon in which energy stored in fields moves across space.  | Energy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksPrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Science of EnergyWonders of Magnets | ElectroWorksElementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksScience of Energy | ElectroWorksEnergy ExposEnergyWorksIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesScience of Energy | Energy ExposSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesSecondary Science of EnergyThermodynamics |
| **PS3.B: Conservation of Energy and Energy Transfer** Sunlight warms Earth’s surface. Energy is present whenever there are moving objects, sound, light, or heat. When objects collide, energy can be transferred from one object to another, thereby changing their motion. In such collisions, some energy is typically also transferred to the surrounding air; as a result, the air gets heated and sound is produced. Light also transfers energy from place to place.Energy can also be transferred from place to place by electric currents, which can then be used locally to produce motion, sound, heat, or light. The currents may have been produced to begin with by transforming the energy of motion into electrical energy.When the motion energy of an object changes, there is inevitably some other change in energy at the same time.The amount of energy transfer needed to change the temperature of a matter sample by a given amount depends on the nature of the matter, the size of the sample, and the environment. Energy is spontaneously transferred out of hotter regions or objects and into colder ones.  Conservation of energy means that the total change of energy in any system is always equal to the total energy transferred into or out of the system.  Energy cannot be created or destroyed, but it can be transported from one place to another and transferred between systems.  Mathematical expressions, which quantify how the stored energy in a system depends on its configuration (e.g. relative positions of charged particles, compression of a spring) and how kinetic energy depends on mass and speed, allow the concept of conservation of energy to be used to predict and describe system behavior. The availability of energy limits what can occur in any system.  Uncontrolled systems always evolve toward more stable states—that is, toward more uniform energy distribution (e.g., water flows downhill, objects hotter than their surrounding environment cool down).  | Energy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksPrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Science of EnergyThe Sun and its Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksScience of EnergyWonders of the Sun | Energy ExposEnergy from the SunIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesScience of Energy | Energy ExposExploring PhotovoltaicsSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesSecondary Science of EnergyThermodynamics |
| **PS3.C: Relationship Between Energy and Forces** A bigger push or pull makes things go faster.When objects collide, the contact forces transfer energy so as to change the objects’ motions.When two objects interact, each one exerts a force on the other that can cause energy to be transferred to or from the object.  When two objects interacting through a field change relative position, the energy stored in the field is changed.  | EnergyWorksPrimary Science of EnergyWonders of Magnets | ElectroWorksEnergyWorksScience of Energy | ElectroWorksEnergyWorksScience of Energy | Exploring HydroelectricityExploring Nuclear EnergyExploring PhotovoltaicsSecondary Science of Energy |
| **PS3.D: Energy in Chemical Processes and Everyday Life** The expression “produce energy” typically refers to the conversion of stored energy into a desired form for practical use.The energy released [from] food was once energy from the sun that was captured by plants in the chemical process that forms plant matter (from air and water). The chemical reaction by which plants produce complex food molecules (sugars) requires an energy input (i.e., from sunlight) to occur. In this reaction, carbon dioxide and water combine to form carbon-based organic molecules and release oxygen. Cellular respiration in plants and animals involve chemical reactions with oxygen that release stored energy. In these processes, complex molecules containing carbon react with oxygen to produce carbon dioxide and other materials.  Although energy cannot be destroyed, it can be converted to less useful forms—for example, to thermal energy in the surrounding environment.  Solar cells are human-made devices that likewise capture the sun’s energy and produce electrical energy.  The main way that solar energy is captured and stored on Earth is through the complex chemical process known as photosynthesis. Nuclear Fusion processes in the center of the sun release the energy that ultimately reaches Earth as radiation.  | Energy FlowsEnergy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksHybrid BusesOil, Gas, and their EnergyPrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Science of EnergyThe Sun and its EnergyWater and EnergyWind is Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy FlowsEnergy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksHybrid BusesLiquefied Natural Gas: LNGScience of EnergyWonders of Oil and GasWonders of the SunWonders of WaterWonders of Wind | Energy ExposEnergy FlowsEnergy from the SunEnergy from the WindEnergy from UraniumEnergy of Moving WaterEnergyWorksExploring Oil and GasFossil Fuels to ProductsH2 EducateIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesLiquefied Natural Gas: LNGSchools Going SolarScience of EnergyUnderstanding Climate ChangeWind for Schools | Carbon Capture, Utilization, and StorageEnergy ExposExploring Climate ChangeExploring HydroelectricityExploring Nuclear EnergyExploring Oil and GasExploring PhotovoltaicsExploring Wind EnergyFossil Fuels to ProductsH2 EducateLiquefied Natural Gas: LNGSchools Going SolarSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesSecondary Science of EnergyThermodynamicsWind for Schools |
| **PS4.A: Wave Properties** Sound can make matter vibrate, and vibrating matter can make sound.Waves, which are regular patterns of motion, can be made in water by disturbing the surface. When waves move across the surface of deep water, the water goes up and down in place; it does not move in the direction of the wave except when the water meets the beach. Waves of the same type can differ in amplitude (height of the wave) and wavelength (spacing between wave peaks).A simple wave has a repeating pattern with a specific wavelength, frequency, and amplitude.A sound wave needs a medium through which it is transmitted.The wavelength and frequency of a wave are related to one another by the speed of travel of the wave, which depends on the type of wave and the medium through which it is passing. Information can be digitized (e.g., a picture stored as the values of an array of pixels); in this form, it can be stored reliably in computer memory and sent over long distances as a series of wave pulses.Waves can add or cancel one another as they cross, depending on their relative phase (i.e., relative position of peaks and troughs of the waves), but they emerge unaffected by each other. Geologists use seismic waves and their reflection at interfaces between layers to probe structures deep in the planet.  | Energy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksPrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Science of Energy | Elementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksScience of EnergyWonders of Oil and Gas | Energy ExposEnergyWorksExploring Oil and GasIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesScience of Energy | Energy ExposExploring Oil and GasExploring PhotovoltaicsSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesSecondary Science of Energy |
| **PS4.B: Electromagnetic Radiation** Some objects give off their own light. An object can be seen when light reflected from its surface enters the eyes.Some materials allow light to pass through them, others allow only some light through and others block all the light and create a dark shadow on any surface beyond them, where the light cannot reach. Mirrors can be used to redirect a light beam. When light shines on an object, it is reflected, absorbed, or transmitted through the object, depending on the object’s material and the frequency (color) of the light. The path that light travels can be traced as straight lines, except at surfaces between different transparent materials (e.g., air and water, air and glass) where the light path bends. A wave model of light is useful for explaining brightness, color, and the frequency-dependent bending of light at a surface between media.However, because light can travel through space, it cannot be a matter wave, like sound or water waves.  Electromagnetic radiation (e.g., radio, microwaves, light) can be modeled as a wave of changing electric and magnetic fields or as particles called photons. The wave model is useful for explaining many features of electromagnetic radiation, and the particle model explains other features. When light or longer wavelength electromagnetic radiation is absorbed in matter, it is generally converted into thermal energy (heat). Shorter wavelength electromagnetic radiation (ultraviolet, X-rays, gamma rays) can ionize atoms and cause damage to living cells. Photovoltaic materials emit electrons when they absorb light of a high-enough frequency.  Atoms of each element emit and absorb characteristic frequencies of light. These characteristics allow identification of the presence of an element, even in microscopic quantities.  | Energy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksPrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookPrimary Science of EnergyThe Sun and its Energy | ElectroWorksElementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy ExposEnergy Stories and MoreEnergyWorksScience of EnergyWonders of the Sun | ElectroWorksEnergy ExposEnergy from the SunEnergyWorksIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesSchools Going SolarScience of Energy | Energy ExposExploring PhotovoltaicsSchools Going SolarSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook ActivitiesSecondary Science of Energy |
| **PS4.C: Information Technologies and Instrumentation** Digitized information transmitted over long distances without significant degradation. High-tech devices, such as computers or cell phones, can receive and decode information—convert it from digitized form to voice—and vice versa.Digitized signals (sent as wave pulses) are a more reliable way to encode and transmit information. Multiple technologies based on the understanding of waves and their interactions with matter are part of everyday experiences in the modern world (e.g., medical imaging, communications, scanners) and in scientific research. They are essential tools for producing, transmitting, and capturing signals and for storing and interpreting the information contained in them.  | Hybrid BusesWonders of Magnets | Hybrid BusesWonders of Magnets | ElectroWorksExploring Hybrid BusesSchools Going SolarSmart MetersWind for Schools | Exploring Hybrid BusesSchools Going SolarWind for Schools |
| **Engineering, Technology, and Applications of Science** |
| **ETS1.A: Defining and Delimiting an Engineering Problem** Asking questions, making observations, and gathering information are helpful in thinking about problems.A situation that people want to change or create can be approached as a problem to be solved through engineering. Such problems may have many acceptable solutions.Before beginning to design a solution, it is important to clearly understand the problem.Possible solutions to a problem are limited by available materials and resources (constraints). The success of a designed solution is determined by considering the desired features of a solution (criteria). Different proposals for solutions can be compared on the basis of how well each one meets the specified criteria for success or how well each takes the constraints into account.The more precisely a design task’s criteria and constraints can be defined, the more likely it is that the designed solution will be successful. Specification of constraints includes consideration of scientific principles and other relevant knowledge that is likely to limit possible solutions.Criteria and constraints also include satisfying any requirements set by society, such as taking issues of risk mitigation into account, and they should be quantified to the extent possible and stated in such a way that one can tell if a given design meets them.  Criteria and constraints also include satisfying any requirements set by society, such as taking issues of risk mitigation into account, and they should be quantified to the extent possible and stated in such a way that one can tell if a given design meets them.  Humanity faces major global challenges today, such as the need for supplies of clean water and food or for energy sources that minimize pollution, which can be addressed through engineering. These global challenges also may have manifestations in local communities.  | Building BuddiesEnergy Stories and MorePrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookUsing and Saving Energy | Building BudiesElementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposEnergy HouseEnergy Stories and MoreMonitoring and MentoringSaving Energy at Home and SchoolWonders of the Sun | Building ScienceEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposEnergy from the Sun (Solar House Design)Energy HouseIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesLearning and ConservingMonitoring and MentoringSaving Energy at Home and School | Energy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposExploring Nuclear Energy (Nuclear Power Plant Activity)Exploring Wind Energy (Siting Wind Farm Activity)Learning and ConservingMission PossibleSaving Energy at Home and SchoolSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook Activities |
| **ETS1.B: Designing Solutions to Engineering Problems** Testing a solution involves investigating how well it performs under a range of likely conditions.A solution needs to be tested, and then modified on the basis of the test results in order to improve it. There are systematic processes for evaluating solutions with respect to how well they meet criteria and constraints of a problem.Sometimes parts of different solutions can be combined to create a solution that is better than any of its predecessors. Models of all kinds are important for testing solutions. Designs can be conveyed through sketches, drawings, or physical models. These representations are useful in communicating ideas for a problem’s solutions to other people.Research on a problem should be carried out before beginning to design a solution. Testing a solution involves investigating how well it performs under a range of likely conditions.At whatever stage, communicating with peers about proposed solutions is an important part of the design process, and shared ideas can lead to improved designs.Tests are often designed to identify failure points or difficulties, which suggest the elements of the design that need to be improved. When evaluating solutions, it is important to take into account a range of constraints, including cost, safety, reliability, and aesthetics, and to consider social, cultural, and environmental impacts.  Both physical models and computers can be used in various ways to aid in the engineering design process. Computers are useful for a variety of purposes, such as running simulations to test different ways of solving a problem or to see which one is most efficient or economical; and in making a persuasive presentation to a client about how a given design will meet his or her needs.  | Building BuddiesEnergy Stories and MorePrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookUsing and Saving Energy | Building BudiesElementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposEnergy HouseEnergy Stories and MoreMonitoring and MentoringSaving Energy at Home and SchoolWonders of the Sun | Building ScienceEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposEnergy from the Sun (Solar House Design)Energy HouseIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesLearning and ConservingMonitoring and MentoringSaving Energy at Home and School | Energy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposExploring Nuclear Energy (Nuclear Power Plant Activity)Exploring Wind Energy (Siting Wind Farm Activity)Learning and ConservingMission PossibleSaving Energy at Home and SchoolSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook Activities |
| **ETS1.C: Optimizing the Design Solution** Although one design may not perform the best across all tests, identifying the characteristics of the design that performed the best in each test can provide useful information for the redesign process—that is, some of the characteristics may be incorporated into the new design. The iterative process of testing the most promising solutions and modifying what is proposed on the basis of the test results leads to greater refinement and ultimately to an optimal solution.Although one design may not perform the best across all tests, identifying the characteristics of the design that performed the best in each test can provide useful information for the redesign process—that is, some of those characteristics may be incorporated into the new design.Criteria may need to be broken down into simpler ones that can be approached systematically, and decisions about the priority of certain criteria over others (trade-offs) may be needed.  | Building BuddiesEnergy Stories and MorePrimary Energy ActivitiesPrimary Energy InfobookUsing and Saving Energy | Building BudiesElementary Energy InfobookElementary Infobook ActivitiesEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposEnergy HouseEnergy Stories and MoreMonitoring and MentoringSaving Energy at Home and SchoolWonders of the Sun | Building ScienceEnergy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposEnergy from the Sun (Solar House Design)Energy HouseIntermediate Energy InfobookIntermediate Infobook ActivitiesLearning and ConservingMonitoring and MentoringSaving Energy at Home and School | Energy Conservation ContractEnergy ExposExploring Nuclear Energy (Nuclear Power Plant Activity)Exploring Wind Energy (Siting Wind Farm Activity)Learning and ConservingMission PossibleSaving Energy at Home and SchoolSecondary Energy InfobookSecondary Infobook Activities |