

Taking It To the Next Level

A Few Suggested Enrichment Projects

- **Home Solar Home** - What would it take to power your house entirely with a PV array? In researching this question, you will need to determine your home energy consumption, the size/power of an array needed to provide that amount of electricity, and the costs of purchasing and installing such a system. How long would it take for the system to pay for itself in energy savings? Check out the “Useful Websites” pages 105-106 for some places to start.
- **Sunny Communities** - Are there solar energy projects in your community? Find out where they are, how long they have been in operation, their functions, and their system specifications. Take pictures and create an informational pamphlet or poster to increase awareness of your community’s forward-thinking technologies.
- **The Solar Scientists’ Report** - Present your class findings about the school’s PV array system to parents, the school board, and/or a gathering of community members. Create a poster or power point presentation that will showcase your hard work. Be sure to provide a good background for your audience so they can understand and appreciate your expertise.
- **Solar Powered Products** - Many solar-powered products are commercially available, from radios to garden lighting to calculators. Do some *Consumer Reports* style research to find out what’s available and what people think of the products? What’s the most whimsical invention you can find that is powered by solar panels? The most ingenious? You may want to browse through a copy of *Consumer Reports* to get a sense of their reporting style. Share your findings (and the gadgets) with your class.
- **Solar Cars** - Find out about the American Solar Challenge and Junior Solar Sprint to learn about the world of solar racing. Design, build, and race your own miniature solar cars.
- **The Future of Photovoltaics** - What are some recent developments in PV technology? Are there new methods of making them or promising new materials? Where is this research occurring? Where are PV panels produced? Who makes them? Who buys them? What do energy experts forecast for the future of solar energy?
- **Solar Ovens** - You’ve been focusing on PV arrays, but what about the power of the sun to produce heat and cook food? Research how solar ovens are used around the world to help prepare food. After researching how different solar ovens are made, design and test one of your own. Hint: Many people start off with a pizza box.

