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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2011 Volume V: Chemistry of Everyday Things

The Problems and Potential of Portable Power

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by Jennifer Fleck

This unit on batteries is designed to give students a basic understanding of batteries so that they can apply that knowledge to a unit on energy and renewable resources in a freshman environmental science course. In addition to targeting the content knowledge necessary to understand how a battery works, it also explores the historical and societal contexts of science via the exploration of the development of the battery. Within these goals, students will hone their reading, presentation, and experimental design skills. Through the study of the chemistry of an everyday item, a battery, it is my belief that students will gain a deeper understanding of the nature of science, as well be in a position to apply content knowledge to the real world context of designing a power plant.

(Developed for Environmental Science, grades 9-12; recommended for Environmental Science and Chemistry, grades 9-12, and General Science, grades 7-12)

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