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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
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Soaking Up the Sun!

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by Miesha Brayboy Gadsden

Children love asking questions, especially when it relates science or inquiry. Our world is full of science and questions that are just waiting to be answered. Why is the sky blue? What makes a car move? Why do bees buzz? This unit will help students tap in to their own natural curiosity about energy in a fun and exciting way! This science-based unit is designed for elementary age students, specifically 3rd -5th . We will discover the vital role the sun contributes to the survival of plants, humans and the balance of our ecosystem.

Energy is a very abstract concept to teach to younger students and this unit will give students a basic understanding and foundation of science that they can use to help them in the future. Energy is defined as the ability to do work. I want students to understand that energy is all around us and can be seen in various forms. We will specifically target how light energy from the sun helps plants make their own food, which we eventually eat and use for survival. Students will develop their own exploration activity where they research plants around the world and the impact the sun and humans have on them. My hope is that students become more aware of their surroundings and the role they play in their environment. I want students to walk away with a new appreciation of where they live and understand that their actions not only affect themselves, but the world.

(Developed for Science, grade 3; recommended for Science and Social Studies, grades 3-5)

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