

Level II & III PBLs---Social Studies Connections

Level II & III PBLs in high school are Math/Science projects with integrated English and Social studies components. Students in grades 9 – 12 will be asked to choose a driving question from their Math or Science course. It is then up to the student to investigate the connections the project has to social studies issues. The selection of a driving question and the social studies connections should be determined by the conclusion of the first quarter. Below are 6 ways a student can find the social studies connections to their level II and III PBLs.

1. Historical Connection: Students should be encouraged to examine the historical connections to a math or science problem. They can do this by exploring an event in the past that might be related to the discovery, or an effect of the discovery on an event that had happened as a result. For example, if a student is investigating air pressure, they can include how air pressure is related to the discovery of flight. (From the discovery of hot air balloons in the 18th century, all the way through space travel).

2. Economic Influence: Students can connect a scientific discovery with its economic impact. For example they can explain the discovery of radio waves, and the impact that has had on business and trade. Or explain how a new product has revolutionized an industry (GM Foods) or has caused the destruction of an existing economy.

3. Political influence: Students could investigate the role politics plays in their topic of choice. They can trace the influence governments have on funding particular research programs or how much funding is directed towards developing new scientists. Conversely, students could explore how science influences politics, such as the discovery of “greenhouse gases”.

4. Geographical influence: Students can look at how their topic can be observed in the natural world, and investigate if geography is an influence. As volcanos, geysers and hurricanes all have geographical influences students can make these connections and explain how these forces can affect all of us.

5. Effect of change on Society: Students can show how the topic of their project has influenced the way we live. Students investigating the development of computers, and show how this technology has revolutionized our whole world. Or how discoveries in the medical fields have changed the life expectancy, and what impact this has on culture.

6. Legal impact: Students can also look at how scientific and mathematical discoveries have impacted our legal system. The discovery of Steam power directly led to the Gibbons Vs. Ogden Supreme court case which decided several aspects of federal power in the United States.