

# LETTER FOR FOSS MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSES

.....

**Hello Students, Teachers, and Families,**

To facilitate science teaching and learning during school closures, the FOSS team has provided additional Home/School Connections on the FOSS website <https://www.fossweb.com>. Students and families gain access to resources on FOSSweb through the class pages set up by the teacher. The teachers can leave notes on the class pages for students. Students can read those notes with assignment instructions from the teacher when they sign in to FOSSweb. Note that teachers may, instead, send FOSSweb assignments to students through other established parent communication apps or emails.

The new Home/School Connections for each course are active investigations that can be conducted at home (inside or outdoors), online readings, or online multimedia experiences including research. Most of these activities are part of the existing course that the students are learning, now formatted for students to access at home.

The teacher will decide which of the suggested activities are appropriate for students based on the classroom science experiences students have had through the year. Please refer to the teacher's communications home for specific expectations for assignments. The teacher may assign *FOSS Science Resources* readings, videos, and multimedia from investigations in the module or course.

**For Students and Families:** To sign in to FOSSweb, use the student user name and password provided by your teacher. Here's a short video to get you started on FOSSweb.

**For Student Sign in Video:** <https://youtu.be/Fcfjbt7Li2k>

**For FOSSweb help:** <https://www.fossweb.com/student-parent-help>

Preview the **Course Summary** from the Student Page. The **Module Overview** is available to download as a PDF. The first few pages of the Overview will help to set the context for the Home/School Connections.

**For Teachers:** For help in setting up and using Class Pages, use the Walk-through Videos on FOSSweb: <https://www.fossweb.com/fossweb-walkthrough-videos>

Visit the Home/School Connection for each module or course you teach, select the specific assignments that will be most relevant to your students at this point in instruction. Communicate with families about which content you are assigning through the Class Pages Notes on FOSSweb or through any other established parent communication channel your school has in place.

**Tech support on FOSSweb:** <https://www.fossweb.com/contact-us#jotform>

Together we will continue to make progress in science teaching and learning during school closures. Now, more than ever, we appreciate the role that science plays in our lives, and how important it is for citizens of all ages to understand and act based on scientific evidence

Sincerely, The FOSS Team at the Lawrence Hall of Science

## FOSS Human Systems Interactions, Home/School Connections, Families version COVID-19 School Closure Instructional Opportunities—March 18, 2020

NOTE: For all online research projects, we suggest that students use our [Internet Disclaimer](#) to help guide their independent evaluation of digital sources.

### Course Project A: Coronavirus research project

In the FOSS Human Systems Interactions course, students study disease. The coronavirus pandemic connects directly to this course of study.

FOSS developers are organizing resources that can support students in learning about coronavirus, and will publish those in an upcoming Home/School Connection. For now, here are some research questions you can ask students to explore. Students can create a poster or digital presentation of what they have learned. (continued on next page)

Research questions:

- What is a novel virus?
- How did the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV, which causes COVID-19) start infecting humans?
- Why is exponential growth a problem during an outbreak?
- How are vaccines developed?
- How does the coronavirus pandemic compare (so far) to the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic?

**Note to teachers, parents, and students:** If you come across coronavirus resources that are age-appropriate for elementary or middle school students, and you want to share them with the FOSS developers so we can share them with other educators in our next Home/School Connection update, you can send them to [jpenchos@berkeley.edu](mailto:jpenchos@berkeley.edu)

### Additional Extension Projects

(Accessible any time during the course; length of assignment can vary)

**Research Diseases:** Students can select a medical disease or condition that they are interested in and find out more about it. A reliable source of information is [MedlinePlus](#) from the National Library of Medicine.

#### Research careers

Have students research science and engineering careers related to the content in this course, using the [Science and Engineering Careers Database](#) on FOSSweb. The database includes information about various careers and features diverse scientists. Students can

pick a scientist or career from Life Sciences and then complete a report on the person or career. Students with access to a smartphone could video themselves reporting as if it were a news segment.

### **Photo challenges**

Students can take photos to answer one of the challenges below and create their own website, social media collection, or share the files with their teacher/classmates.

- Eyes Photo Challenge

How many different types of eyes can you find? Take pictures that show the variation of human eyes or the diversity of eyes on other animals. (Note: If you are photographing a person, remember to take a close up of the eyes. We will not accept photos that show full faces.)

- Glowing Eyes Photo Challenge

Did you ever notice that photos of cats' eyes seem to glow? Take a picture that shows an animal's glowing eyes.