

# LETTER FOR FOSS MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSES

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**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 Variables and Design, Home/School Connections, Families version COVID-19 School Closure Instructional Opportunities—March 19, 2020

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

### Learn About Engineering Opportunities Worldwide

[Engineers Without Borders](#) is an organization that connects volunteers with engineering projects all over Earth. Students can learn more about the projects by going to [the news section](#), select a topic and story and either write a short review of the project or video themselves reviewing the topic as if they were presenting a short news segment. For example, they might want to report on an [engineering project](#) right here in the United States – providing a way for homeless youth to charge their phones.

### Learn About The Plastic Problem

Many engineering solutions to problems can cause new, unexpected problems. One current issue to consider is the story of modern plastic use. Students can research the history of plastic use, from first inventions to modern widespread use. They can then respond to the questions below. Some articles and videos are listed below to help students research the issue.

- What important problems have plastic solved for humans?
- What unexpected environmental problems have plastic caused?
- What have humans done to try and minimize these other problems?

Some brief, interesting videos on plastic

- From National Geographic. [A Brief History of How Plastic Has Changed Our World](#).
- From NPR. [How Everything Became Plastic](#).
- From the Shedd Aquarium. [The Problem With Plastics](#).

Longer videos on plastic

- From NPR. [A 54 minute video. The Plastic Problem](#).

Article on reducing plastic waste

- From UN University. [How to Eliminate Plastic Waste and Plastic Pollution with Science and Engineering](#).

### Research Careers

Students can research science and engineering careers related to the content in the course, using the [Science and Engineering Careers Database](#) on FOSSweb. Students can pick a scientist or career from Engineering or Technology 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.