**Junk Drawer Machines: Introducing Basic Mechanical Concepts**

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**Introduction**

This curriculum explores machines through five (5) lessons of hands-on; experiential learning to assist K-5 students in developing a better understanding of physical science. These lessons are designed to engage youth to discover more about their physical world, while building a basic knowledge of some common scientific terms and principles. It is the authors’ hope that this curriculum encourages an interest in physical science and provides an opportunity for youth to demonstrate an elementary understanding of basic mechanical concepts in preparation for a lifetime of scientific discovery.

Physical science is the area of science that studies non-living systems and the way in which non-living things work. In this edition of Junk Drawer Machines, we will be exploring, and implementing the following physical science concepts as they relate to each activity: simple machines, motion, (kinetic and potential) energy, and forces. The goals of this lesson plan are to: 1) Increase students’ interest in physical science through hands-on experimentation and problem solving; and 2) inspire and challenge students to be innovative through constructing machines with everyday items.