

New game teaches energy conservation

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U.S. engineers have designed a board game that teaches middle school children how their energy choices directly impact energy conservation.

The game developed at Clarkson University asks questions such as "What's the most energy efficient way to cook dinner: a gas stove, electric stove or microwave?" "Should you buy a new refrigerator or use grandma's old one (that) costs less but uses more energy?" and "How should an unstable petroleum market affect car buying decisions?"

Clarkson engineers said they hope the game, called Energy Choices, will motivate the next generation of consumers to think about how energy choices are made, the role economics play in such decisions and how to identify trade-offs that are acceptable and those that are not.

"The game is challenging and fun," said Professor Susan Powers. "It helps students understand energy concepts and the complexity of the issues. It also reinforces for each student the important role he or she really does play as an environmental stakeholder in our world."

The game was developed as part of the university's award-winning K-12 Project-Based Learning Partnership Program.

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