


# Tinkering Labs – Electric Motors Catalyst: NGSS Curriculum User Guide

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The Electric Motors Catalyst Class Pack can be used in classrooms in many ways, including in-school or after-school clubs and enrichment. It can also be used as a vehicle to teach students in elementary and middle school the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). While the kit provides many opportunities to connect student tinkering to energy, motion, and engineering, this curriculum has been developed to explicitly address when and how these connections can be made. The NGSS performance expectations (the official name for the standards) have been bundled with specifically identified Electric Motors Catalyst Challenges into an Electric Motors Catalyst NGSS Unit. Each unit is comprised of a series of lessons that will allow students multiple opportunities to wonder, test, invent (and yes, play!), while learning important physical science and engineering core ideas (content). Each unit also begins with a phenomenon for students to make sense of, embedded formative assessments, and a summative performance assessment.

## How does the Electric Motors Catalyst support the NGSS?

The Framework for K-12 Science Education, upon which the Next Generation Science Standards are built, placed an emphasis on the engineering practices.

 *“The actual doing of science or engineering can also pique students’ curiosity, capture their interest, and motivate their continued study; the insights thus gained help them recognize that the work of scientists and engineers is a creative endeavor [5, 6]—one that has deeply affected the world they live in. Students may then recognize that science and engineering can contribute to meeting many of the major challenges that confront society today, such as generating sufficient energy, preventing and treating disease, maintaining supplies of fresh water and food, and addressing climate change. Any education that focuses predominantly on the detailed products of scientific labor—the facts of science—without developing an understanding of how those facts were established or that ignores the many important applications of science in the world misrepresents science and marginalizes the importance of engineering.”*

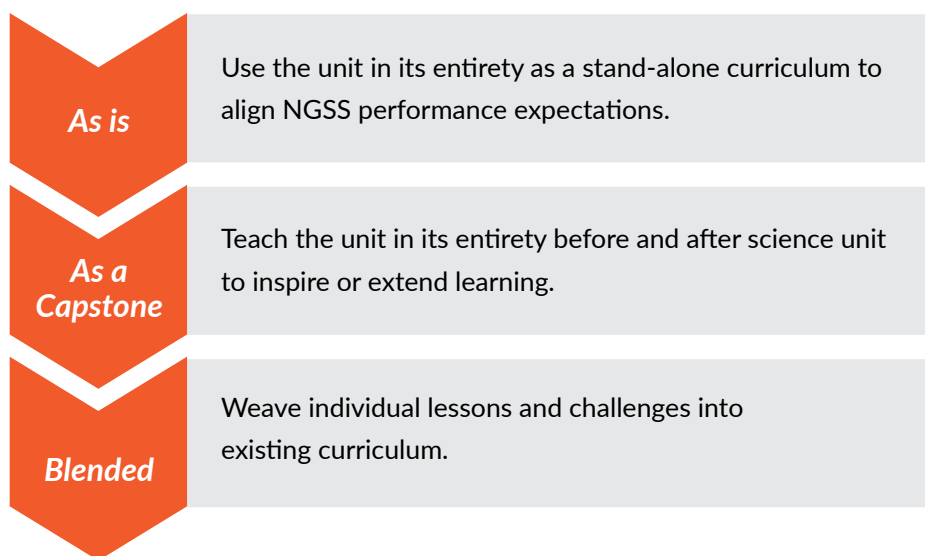
– A Framework for K-12 Education

The Electric Motors Catalyst Class Pack is a teacher-friendly way of piquing student curiosity, engaging in creative science work, and confronting challenges. The Class Pack includes 10 engineering design challenges and materials to solve each challenge in a variety of ways. What is not included? A pre-defined procedure to create each device. Instead, students use their creativity and autonomy to build, create, and tinker! As students work through different engineering design challenges, teachers can highlight different aspects of the engineering process that students are utilizing. After the students have created their devices, the teacher can leverage their interest in their designs to discuss disciplinary core ideas in science such as force, motion, electricity, or energy.

## How should I use an Electric Motors Catalyst NGSS Unit?

The units are designed to align to specific NGSS performance expectations for a grade band. By completing a unit in its entirety, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the **Science and Engineering Practices**, **Disciplinary Core Ideas**, and **Crosscutting Concepts** for the performance expectations identified. However, the units can be modified and adapted to blend with your current curriculum.

### Ways to Use The Electric Motors Catalyst NGSS Units



The units include integrated engineering and physical science units, as well as stand-alone units to target engineering practices.

## How do the Electric Motors Catalyst NGSS Units align to the NGSS?

The units are crafted so that students are figuring out specific elements of the **Disciplinary Core Ideas** and **Crosscutting Concepts** while engaging in the **Science and Engineering Practices**. Directions and support are provided to teachers to use the Electric Motors Catalyst challenges to drive student learning as students ask questions, define problems, and design solutions.

## Is the Electric Motors Catalyst Class Pack right for my students?

The Electric Motors Catalyst Class Pack works in any classroom. Engineering design challenges provide all students, even those who struggle with traditional assessments, with an opportunity to shine and show their learning in non-traditional ways. Regardless of background, location, or previous science exposure, hands-on, inquiry learning provides a common experience with which all students can make sense of and communicate about.