Citizen Science With Fold-It

(2 of 2 of the Citizen Science Module)

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# Summary

Following up on the previous lesson, students will get to experience another way that average citizens can make meaningful contributions to citizen science. They will review the different areas where citizen science can be used, learn more about one specific example, Fold-It, and then try Fold-It for themselves.

# Engineering Connection

This lesson relates more to science than engineering, but engineering can be brought in because a software engineer or group of software engineers had to create the Fold-It game. Scientists often need a lot a data to do their research. Sometimes they can use large numbers of average citizens to help collect/analyze their data. In some ways, the students will be acting as research assistants.

# Grade Level

4-6, but it could be used for high school if more complex explanations are given than those recommended in the slide notes.

# Duration

50-60 minutes

# Cost Per Group

$0, assuming you have computers with Internet access available

# Materials List

* Computers, preferable one per student.
* The Fold-It software from <http://fold.it/portal/>. It can be installed to flash drives if necessary
* A projector or something similar for displaying the presentation slides

# Learning Objectives

* Understand that average citizens and even students such as themselves can make small but meaningful contributions to science
* Understand how easy it is to make contributions to science
* Learn specifically what some of the ways are a citizen can contribute to science, such as by folding proteins

# Procedure

The procedure of the lesson, including assessments, is embedded in the presentation slides. See the slides and slide notes for more.