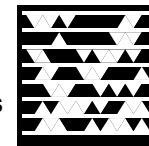




## Life: The Book

Brandon Davidson, Biology, High Tech High Media Arts  
Randy Scherer, Humanities, High Tech High Media Arts



In this project a humanities class and a biology class collaborated to explore the growing role of genetic engineering in American life. From conception through birth, childhood through adulthood, students examined the social, economic, political and historical implications genetic engineering has had and may have on American life. They also explored how these ideas connected to broader issues relating to healthcare in American society.

In Biology, students studied genetics, DNA, and biotechnology, using the same methods to produce and isolate proteins as those used by biotechnology companies to develop protein-based biopharmaceutical drugs. In Humanities, each student wrote an article about the impact of genetic science on a specific stage of human life. Articles ranged from the science and economics of cord-blood banking to personally relevant cases of genetically inherited diseases. In their exhibition of learning, students demonstrated the genetic engineering techniques used to create biopharmaceutical drugs, discussed their articles with the public, and sold the first copies of *Life: The Book*.

### Teacher Reflection

The lab series was possible through a collaborative program with Miramar College and Amgen. They helped to transform the classroom into a biotechnology lab. As a teacher, I value daily, rigorous lab work. The process makes abstract concepts crystallize for students, and helps our exploration of complex scientific ideas feel authentic.

—Brandon Davidson

### Student Reflection

My article was about HPV vaccines and why they are an issue in society today. I presented the perspectives of senators, doctors, parents, and even young women who had the vaccination. I interviewed associates from Planned Parenthood and got their opinion on the controversy. This project taught me more about something that is affecting young girls like myself, so the article was not only informative and helpful for the readers, but also for myself.

—Siarah Loyd, 11<sup>th</sup> grade

To learn more visit Randy's and Brandon's digital portfolios at  
<http://dp.hightechhigh.org/~rscherer/> & <http://dp.hightechhigh.org/~bdavidson/>