Activity Ideas
For *The Hartford Courant*'s "News in Education" Articles

The Institute for American Indian Studies' Education Department has been writing articles for *the Hartford Courant*'s "News in Education" website. The activities below go along with the articles, which are aligned with Common Core Standards and are intended for various reading levels. Please feel free to modify the activities to fit your situation. Questions or comments can be directed to education@iaismuseum.org. Thank you for the important role you play in our communities.

Link to Articles: https://www.nieonline.com/courantnie/iais.cfm

Article 4: "Not So Primitive Technology"
Suggested Reading Level: Grades 6-8

- *Design a Technology:* A technology is any tool that helps someone complete a task. Have your students be engineers and design their own technology.
    - This could be done individually, in pairs, or in small groups.
    - Have them start with a problem statement: What is a daily task that they would like to make a bit easier? What is a problem in your community (home, school, town, country, or world) that could be solved with a new technology?
    - Next, have students brainstorm a technology that could help them solve their problem statement.
    - Have students create a blueprint and/or write a proposal for their technology. In their proposal, or along with their blueprint, students should explain what problem their technology is solving and what materials or resources they need to build it.

- *Being Resourceful*: In large part, the technology that people use depends on what resources they have access to. Students might not think all that much about what resources are required to make some of the technology that they use in everyday life.
    - Have students take an inventory of every technology they use in a day.
    - Alternatively, students could make a list of every technology that is needed in order to do a specific thing. Examples might include: Cooking their favorite meal, playing their favorite sport, playing their favorite song, or getting to their favorite place in the world. You might want to give them an example.
    - For cooking a meal, technologies might include: bowls, knives, spoons, measuring utensils, a pan, a pot, a stove/oven, a refrigerator, a table, a spatula, and/or a potholder. They might not think of indoor plumbing, but that is certainly a useful technology you would find in most modern kitchens.
    - For each type of technology, have students list the resources or materials needed to make that technology, or to make it work.
    - For the cooking example, the resources might include: plastic (petroleum product), metal (what type?), glass (modified sand), wood, rubber (petroleum product), and/or cloth (plant fibers). They might think of electricity for some of the appliances, and some of them might have a gas stove at home.
    - You can decide how specific you want them to be, based on your students' grade level and whether you want this to be a simple assignment or a longer term project.
    - Remind students that a technology is any tool that helps people do something or complete a task.