

Krista Wilson, Osceola Middle School, Pinellas County



"I have learned that the more engaged students are, the more receptive they are to tackling difficult science topics. I have also learned that students need multiple encounters with various texts to really start to grasp difficult concepts."

Krista was chosen as a 2015 Honorable Mention for using the NIE educational publication *Coasters 101* to teach physics.

Each year, Krista takes her students to Physics Day at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, an annual event that offers activities, including interactive physics stations and a live, interactive physics show.

The unit leading up to the field trip fosters research and inquiry. Students conduct experiments that investigate forces and motion, such as building solid fuel rockets and CO₂ cars. Students calculate the potential and kinetic energy of the rockets and calculate the speed of the cars on the racetrack. *Coasters 101* is an integral part of this unit, especially for building student understanding of abstract concepts and for strengthening curricular connections.