**Personal Visions of the Future**

**Purpose**

This activity will be one of the final culminating activities for this course. Students have reached the point at which they have completed the overall Big History narrative. Having followed the story of the universe from the Big Bang to the Anthropocene, it is now time for them to use their Big History knowledge and skills to make some conjectures about the future. During this activity, students will be focused on three primary goals that correspond to some of the major skills and concepts emphasized by the overall BHP course:

1. Identify and explain the concept of **Thresholds of Increasing Complexity**, and the **Ingredients** and **Goldilocks Conditions** needed for these thresholds to occur.
2. Use **Claim Testers** to analyze and evaluate possible conjectures for the next **Threshold(s) of Increasing Complexity**.
3. Think across **scale** to develop a list of possible Thresholds of Increasing Complexity that may occur by the time they graduate from high school.

**Process**

As a Big Historian, one of the things that we look for are patterns that may exist within both the pre-historical and historical record. These patterns can then be used to help us make conjectures, or educated guesses, about what the future may hold. In this activity, you will be asked to 1.) examine and claim test some conjectures proposed by the father of Big History, David Christian, about what might be the next Threshold of Increasing Complexity, and 2.) think across scale to formulate a list of possible Thresholds of Increasing Complexity that may occur by the time you graduate from high school.

**Activity #1: David Christian and The Future**

Using the following reading, we will look at some of the conjectures that David Christian makes about possible future Thresholds of Increasing Complexity. Your task will be to: 1.) identify each conjecture that he makes, 2.) analyze each conjecture through the lenses of the 4 claims testers (Evidence, Authority, Intuition, and Logic), identifying which claim tester would best help you to determine the possible Ingredients and Goldilocks Conditions that would be needed for each conjecture to be possible, and 3.) from your analysis, evaluate whether each conjecture is believable, and why. Finally, before we get started, briefly summarize the following terms so we know that everyone is starting on the same page:

* Threshold of Increasing Complexity:
* Ingredients:
* Goldilocks Conditions:

Insert Link to David Christian Excerpt Here

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Conjecture | Claim Testers | Ingredients | Goldilocks Conditions | Believable, and Why? |
| Global Government Structure | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| Fusion Power | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| Finding a greater energy source | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| Conjecture | Claim Testers | Ingredients | Goldilocks Conditions | Believable, and Why? |
| Colonizing the Moon | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| Colonizing Mars | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| Colonizing a planet in another solar system | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| Create a new lifeform | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| Cure Cancer | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| Nano-machines | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| Conjecture | Claim Testers | Ingredients | Goldilocks Conditions | Believable, and Why? |
| Artificial Intelligence | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| Trans-Humans | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| A Global Mind | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| New Species | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |
| Encountering Alien Lifeforms | * Evidence
* Authority
* Intuition
* Logic
 |  |  |  |

**Activity #2: Threshold 9 The Future: Time Capsule Project**

For this activity, you will be writing a letter to your future self. Specifically, you will be writing to yourself when you are a senior in high school. In your letter, you need to make the following conjectures about the future:

* Make 1 conjecture about something important that will happen locally in the **city that you will graduate from high school**.
* Make 1 conjecture about something important that will happen in the **state that you will graduate from high school**.
* Make 1 conjecture about something important that will happen in the **country that you will graduate from high school**.
* Make 1 conjecture about something important that will happen in the **World.**
* Make 1 conjecture about something that will happen in the **Universe**.
* Finally, make 1 conjecture about **what you will be doing** following graduation from High School.

As you develop each one of your conjectures, remember to think about the **Ingredients** and **Goldilocks Conditions** that will be needed for each of these **Thresholds of Increasing Complexity** to become a reality.

When you have completed your letter, obtain an envelope from your teacher and seal your letter inside. Then write your first and last name on the front of the envelope, along with today’s date. Put your envelope into your class’s time capsule, and your teacher will make sure that they are kept safe until your senior year of high school.