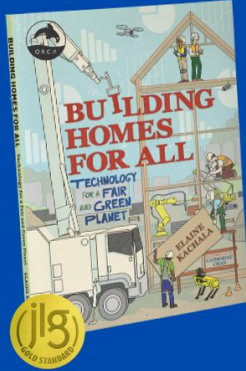


Especially for Educators: “What To Do When the Information Keeps Changing” by Elaine Kachala



“Imagine doing a school project where the information kept changing because the topic was brand new...” This was the beginning of a Dear Reader note that I included in *Building Homes for All: Technology for a Fair and Green Planet* (Orca Book Publishers, March 2026).

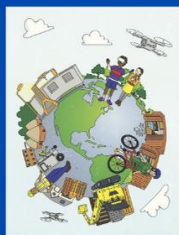
I included the note because that’s exactly what happened to me when writing this book—new technology advancements were happening at a breakneck pace.

While this was incredibly exciting, I worried about what it meant for my book’s currency and accuracy. So, I included notes about this in the book. For example, “In 2024, there were hundreds of 3D-printed buildings worldwide. By the time you are reading this book, there will be way, way more...” And the concluding section is titled *Just the Beginning, What’s Next?* And, of course, the Dear Reader note. But was this enough?

I thought, why not create a classroom-ready, inquiry-based resource that’s like a time capsule and builds on the *What’s Next idea?* An exercise that situates the book in a snapshot of time: these are the current innovations, but how might things change in 5, 10, or more years?

So, in addition to the free Teacher guide (see my website), I’ve created the activity on page 2. While the questions are specific to this book, they can be adapted for use with other nonfiction STEAM books.

Information and technology change so quickly. I hope this activity is a useful way to help students think critically about the changes and connect what they read to current and future developments.



1. Map the present

- Students list three or more technologies or materials featured in the book (e.g., 3D printing, exoskeletons, mass timber, low-carbon concrete, upcycle plastic), and note the companies developing them.
- What does the book say about these technologies or materials? (e.g., What is the technology/material capable of building or doing? How can they improve housing shortages and climate problems?)
- What do people think about the technology/material? (e.g., Is it being used widely? Are there any concerns? Are there rules or laws that support or impede its development?)
- What does the book say about future innovations?

2. Update the book

- Students research each of the technologies or materials (and companies) that they've chosen in question #1 and update how each has changed or improved (e.g., Is there a newer generation of the same technology/material? How is it the same or different? Has the company abandoned the technology/material altogether and created something different? Does the company still exist?)
- What do people think about the technology/material? (e.g., Have people's opinions changed about it? Is the technology more or less popular? What impact is it having on housing shortages and the climate crisis? Have the rules or laws to support or impede its development changed?)
- Is what the book said about future innovations happening?

3. Imagine the future

- Based on how things have changed (or not), what do students predict will happen in the future with the technologies/materials that they've chosen to research?
 - Create a timeline or a 'Then / Now / Next' chart (e.g., What will happen in 5, 10, or 15 years?)
 - Consider whether the changes will have positive or negative impacts on people's lives. Explain why.

4. Extension activities

- Write a short paragraph explaining why the book is still useful even if some facts have changed.
- Sketch pictures of future technologies and homes.
- Create a poster titled, 'Homes Then, Now, and Next.'