

Student Inquiry
Levels 3-4

A Short History of Photovoltaic (PV) Cells

Student Inquiry

● Inquiry 1

Before you try to answer Inquiry 1, have a go at answering supporting questions 1A, 1B, and 1C on the next page.

You can research information on these questions by going to the websites listed at the bottom of the page.

What are some of the significant factors that have influenced people's decisions to accept or reject PV technology as a way to generate electricity?

Schoolgen – Student Fact Sheet *A Short History of Photovoltaic (PV) Cells*
http://www.schoolgen.co.nz/pdf/SE_L3-4_SF_History.Photovoltaic.cells.fact.sheet.pdf

Historical overview of PV
<http://www.pvresources.com/introduction/historicaloverview.aspx>

Energy Quest – Energy Story
<http://www.energyquest.ca.gov/story/chapter15.html>

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Supporting question 1A

What changes in technology have helped PV technology become more widely used as a way to generate electricity?

Supporting question 1B

What economic changes have influenced people's attitudes towards PV technology as an effective way to generate electricity?

Supporting question 1C

What environmental, social or political changes have influenced people's responses to PV technology as a way of generating electricity?

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Before you try to answer Inquiry 2, have a go at answering supporting questions 2A, 2B, and 2C on the next page.

You can research information on these questions by going to the websites listed at the bottom of the page.

What were some of the challenges faced by scientists wanting to develop PV technology as an efficient way to generate electricity?

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Supporting question 2A

How did people's attitudes, opinions and values affect scientists' research into PV technology and their efforts to improve PV technology's effectiveness in generating electricity?

Supporting question 2B

What were some of the technological problems that scientists have had to overcome to make PV technology an efficient and effective way to generate electricity?

Supporting question 2C

What world events presented scientists with additional challenges that they needed to overcome to improve PV technology?