

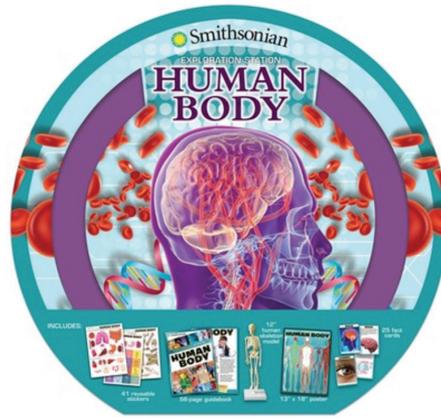
trap to stop snooping brothers. The story begins with Ellie and her best friend, Kit, completing a build of a water-balloon launcher to teach the neighborhood boys that it is not okay to exclude the girls from the soccer game. When Ellie's birthday gift for Kit, the French braid machine, acts more like a hair tangler than a hair braider, Ellie realizes that she needs to make a new gift for Kit, and fast. Ellie then comes up with the best idea ever: a fancy doghouse for her fancy friend's new dog. However, unable to ask Kit for help, she turns to one of the neighborhood "jerk boys," who turns out to be not such a jerk after all. Unfortunately, Ellie feels that she needs to lie to Kit to keep her secret, and she then lies to several of her friends, creating an unpleasant situation with many hurt feelings that Ellie must navigate. Fortunately, the kids successfully build the doghouse in time for the party—it even has a waterslide—and everyone, even the boys, get to go to Kit's party to experience the final surprise of the book.

This is a fantastic story for children about 6–12 years of age and is especially suited for girls. Ellie is a strong role model who emphasizes that you do not need schooling to become an engineer (well, maybe for the really tough builds) but instead just a desire to create and a willingness to make and fix your mistakes. The book also deals with themes of exclusion, like when the boys won't let the girls play soccer, or when the girls neglect to invite the boys to Kit's birthday party, and why lying is not a good option. There are drawings throughout of Ellie's builds, and there is a guide to Ellie's favorite tools at the end, starting with safety glasses. It also has humor and a few action scenes, keeping the story moving. I will be encouraging my own son and daughter to read this book, and it would be well received in many elementary classrooms.



Sara Fox
Academy of Science and Technology
The Woodlands, TX 77384
sfox@conroeisd.net

Exploration Station: Human Body. By Smithsonian. 2018. Silver Dolphin Books. (ISBN 9781626867215). 56 pp. Hardcover kit, \$21.99.



Exploration Station: Solar System. By Smithsonian. 2018. Silver Dolphin Books. (ISBN 9781626867222). 56 pp. Hardcover kit, \$21.99.

If there is a little scientist in your home (or classroom), these are very neat kits that offer fun and exploration of the topics they cover. Each comes in a round, hard box-case that is about the size of a dinner plate. Included in each kit is a 56-page guidebook that teaches kids about the given topic, in these cases the Solar System and the Human Body (although there are quite a few other topics available as well).

These kits are designated for children ages six and above, and to test them I turned them loose on the target demographic, my six- and eight-year-old sons. Both boys are interested in science and loved building the skeleton over and over and telling us, and each other, about the parts they already knew. The fact cards made for really fun, quick quizzes in a sort of "who knows more about the body" family

trivia game. The posters are high quality, as are the images in the booklets, which the boys found sufficiently engaging and with just enough of the "gross" details to keep their attention. The boys were not as into the stickers, except for the skeleton page, but I am sure that many kids would enjoy having them, as they are also interesting and fun and there are plenty to go around. The youngest got the most out of the Solar System toys and stars, which are now on my ceiling, but they both enjoyed the pictures and facts in the book that came with it as well as the poster that has the whole solar system on it. I would say that to put together something similar would cost around the same price, so having it in one place and from a good source is nice. The "Did you know" facts on the pages of the books added a nice touch to the teaching information and images that covered all the parts of the body and the solar system.

Included in the Solar System kit are the book, a large poster, 31 reusable stickers, space exploration toys (shuttle, astronaut, etc.), and glow-in-the-dark stars. Included in the Human Body kit are the book, a large poster, 41 reusable stickers, fact cards about the body, and a buildable 12-inch human skeleton model.



Amanda Glaze
Georgia Southern University
aglaze@georgiasouthern.edu

AMANDA L. GLAZE is an Assistant Professor of Middle Grades and Secondary Science Education at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, Georgia. In addition to science teacher education, she has taught courses in biological sciences for grades 7–12 and undergraduate students over the last 12 years. Her interests include evolutionary biology, science and religion, and the intersections of science and society—specifically where scientific understandings are deemed controversial by the public. Glaze holds degrees in science education from the University of Alabama and Jacksonville State University. Her address is Department of Middle Grades and Secondary Education, Georgia Southern University, P.O. Box 8134, Statesboro, GA 30458; e-mail: aglaze@georgiasouthern.edu.