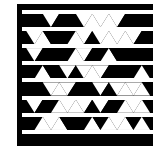




Get Bent

Jeff Robin, Art, High Tech High
Andrew Gloag, Math, High Tech High



The idea for “Get Bent” came from us working together in the past, where we combined art and calculus in a project called “Calculicious—making calculus delicious.” This year, students used three-dimensional geometry, calculus, physics, art, and wood working skills to design, explain, and construct chairs and lamps people would actually want in their homes. Students meticulously documented the process—from inspiration to design to construction—and wrote books about the experience. Our idea was that on exhibition night, people could sit in the chairs and read students’ books by the light of their lamps.

Teachers’ Reflection

Making bent wood furniture seemed cool. It still does. To get started, we looked on the internet to find ways people had steamed and bent solid wood, and we started experimenting. It was fun and exciting and very expensive. We found several barriers to steaming wood in a reasonable way. In particular, we never really found the perfect length of time to leave the wood in the steamer. The wood would often peel apart, split or simply not bend at all. We eventually came up with a good proof model using laminates. Doing the project ourselves first was an important step. We needed to know that the project was possible and how difficult it would be for students to complete. For example we learned that we would need to use laminates and that books made with one web-based publisher looked better than those with another. If we had not tried these steps first, we would have been left flat-footed with 50 students. In the end we were pleased with how everything came together in time for exhibition night.

Student Reflection

Get Bent was a unique project that got me into the senior mood. The other three years I have gone here I have always seen seniors working hard in Jeff’s class, making outstanding works of art and powerful projects. The resources we had in class allowed us to create a professional final product. Our final chair/lamp demonstrated high-level skills that we acquired over the course of the semester.

—Zac Wendroff

To learn more about this project visit
jeffrobin.com or <http://dp.hightechhigh.org/~ajgloag/>