## INTERVIEWING EXPERTS

| Deeper Learning Competency Spotlight | Master core academic content (d, e, f, g, h)  
Develop academic mindsets (i, j, k) |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Target Audience | Grades: 5–10  
Content areas: All |
| The What | This strategy is a scaffold for interacting with experts so that students are prepared to make the most out of their data collection experience. An expert is someone who has authoritative, comprehensive, or demonstrated knowledge and skill in a particular discipline or area. Experts include scientists, chefs, artists, doctors, community leaders, professors, nutritionists, and so on. |
| The Why | Experts provide students with a beautiful connection between their academic content and the real world. The process of learning from an expert brings content to life and helps students see the applicable value in their studies. In addition to serving as an authentic data source, interacting with experts gives students an opportunity to develop the valuable lifelong skill of communicating with professionals and the chance to imagine themselves in a particular workforce. |
| The How | Proposal  
- Once students have crafted a guiding question for their research, have them identify quality data sources—people or organizations to help them answer their question.  
  - For help crafting beautiful questions, see CraftEd Curriculum’s Lesson: Why Ask Why?  
  - For help laying out the research process (and to see how interviewing experts fits in), see CraftED Curriculum’s Foundational Strategy: Research Road Map. |
The How (continued)

Preparation
- Have students identify three topics they would like to speak to the contact about, collect data on, or otherwise learn more about.
- For each topic write 5–10 questions to ask the expert.
  - Model quality, open-ended, and specific questions for students. Teach them about if/then questions to anticipate how the expert may reply and then guide them through the process of asking another question on their list.
    - For example, if I ask an expert to tell me about what inspired them to get into their field of study and they end up telling me all about their college experience, I should not plan on next asking the question, “What did you study in school and how did it inform your work now?” Instead, I may jump down to another question.
  - Encourage students to include specific content words, theories, names, or processes in their questions.
    - As a class, generate a list of key terms that you would like students to discuss with the expert. Have them underline or highlight these terms as they appear in their questions.
- Have students draft an agenda for their time with the expert.
- Identify how students will collect data during the interaction (see CraftED Curriculum’s Foundational Strategy: Field Notes).
- Provide diagnostic feedback to students on their preparations thus far, focusing on what is realistic. Provide them with further ideas to explore.

Practice
- Discuss professional behavior (eye contact, voice volume, use of technology, attire, honoring time, handshakes, introducing yourself, and the agenda).
- Model the process, perhaps using a fishbowl protocol. For more on this, see CraftED Curriculum’s User Guide.
- Have students simulate their plans in trios so that one person can be an observer and offer feedback to the students who are asking and answering questions.
- Reflect on the practice experience—students may need to revise their questions or plans.
## The How (continued)

Do it, debrief it, and apply it!
- Debrief with students after their experience so they can reflect and share out with the class (see CraftED Curriculum’s Foundational Strategy: Debriefing Real World Exploration for more guidance on this process).
- Put the data to use in a larger project or research paper. Show students how to properly cite their collected data. For ideas, see CraftED Curriculum’s Foundational Strategy and/or Lesson on Infographics.
- Have students send the expert a thank you note and add the expert to your community contact database. For more on this, see CraftED Curriculum’s User Guide.

## Go Deeper!

- Learn more about other data collection forms in CraftED Curriculum’s Lesson: Collecting Data in the Real World.
- Arrange for students to receive expert feedback on their current work/prototype.
- Give students a problem-based scenario to work through with the expert. (CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP1)
- Arrange for students to use experts’ space or tools on a current design project. (NGSS, ETS1)
- Arrange for students to engage in short-term internships or larger projects in collaboration with organizations and experts in the field.