## REAL WORLD EXPLORATION

| Deeper Learning Competency | Master core academic content (d, e, f, g, h)  
| Work collaboratively (a)  
| Communicate effectively (a, f) |

| Target Audience | Grades: K–12  
| Content areas: All |

| The What | Get students out in the field to make connections between content of study and the real world. Students can work with a partner or in a small group to complete this experience.  
Real world exploration could involve any of the following:  
• interviewing an expert (this can be done virtually if it is not possible to leave school)  
• shadowing an expert in the workplace  
• observing/documenting human/animal behavior in a specific setting (livecams or Google Classroom can provide virtual alternatives)  
• conducting surveys |

| The Why | Leverage real world exploration as  
• a shared experience to draw upon later  
• a form of data collection for research  
• an opportunity for students to apply content to a new context  
• a chance for students to practice skills, including working with peers, analysis, application, and oral communication.  
Note: This is different from the traditional field trip in that this experience should be tied directly to the current unit of study. The information and skills acquired during this experience should be necessary for students in order to complete their project or unit—therefore, the real world exploration does not take place at the end of the unit. The information students gain from this experience should not be able to be retrieved from any other source—in other words, it will allow students to construct new, dynamic knowledge. |
The success of real world exploration depends on facilitator preparation. You can set your students up for success in the following ways:

- **Identify and communicate with professionals and organizations that are related to your content of study to measure their interest in participating in the unit/project’s planning phase.** (Older students can undertake this portion of work themselves.)
- **Connect with professionals/organizations in advance of student real world exploration to prepare them for what students are working on and how the expert fits into the project/unit.** Save yourself time by using a generic template for this correspondence.
- **Inspire inquiry by helping students develop good questions for what they are curious about, the assumptions they hold, and what they hope to learn.** You can use any of the following CraftED Curriculum Foundational Strategies to facilitate this process: Interviewing Experts, Modeling How to Interview an Expert, or Friendly Feedback.
- **Place students in groups, at locations or with experts who can best address their questions and meet their needs to complete the unit/project.**
- **If the real world exploration involves an interview or survey, preview student questions and offer feedback.** Have students practice this process with a peer.
- **Review professional behavior and expectations with students, and help them consider the perspective of those with whom they will interact during this process.**
- **Set clear expectations for the purpose of real world exploration and what students should be learning.** Most importantly, ask them to consider how they will be held accountable when they return to class. How will they share it out? How will they reflect on this experience? When will they be asked to apply what they learned to the unit/project?
- **Arrange logistics for student travel (a point person at location; drivers/chaperones to be with each group; maps and directions; permission slips).**
- **Send students into the field with something to write on (a clipboard) and help them process what they encounter with a useful graphic organizer.**
- **Review best practices and tools related to documentation, such as voice recorders, digital cameras, tally markers, etc.**
- **Be sure to have students debrief the process.** Check out CraftED Curriculum’s Foundational Strategy: Debriefing Real World Exploration for ideas. See CraftED Curriculum’s Foundational Strategy: Documenting Real World Exploration for ideas and tips on how to meaningfully debrief real world exploration.
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<th>Go Deeper!</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Students can connect with a local university to learn more about ethnography and social science research methodologies. (CCSS ELA SL-1)</td>
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<td>• Students can write brief explanatory paragraphs based on their real world exploration experience. (CCSS ELA W2 a-f) See CraftED Curriculum’s Lesson: Collecting Data in the Field for guidance.</td>
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<td>• Students can seek out real world exploration experts and locations to aid in their research writing projects. (CCSS ELA W7)</td>
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<td>• Students can study social interactions and group behavior. (NGSS LS2-D)</td>
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<td>• Students can develop mathematical models to synthesize information and include in their research findings. (CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP4)</td>
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