## DOCUMENTING REAL WORLD EXPLORATION: FIELD NOTES

| Deeper Learning            | Master core academic content (d, e, f, g, h)  
|                           | Work collaboratively (a)                      
|                           | Communicate effectively (b)                   
|                           | Learn how to learn (b, m)                     |

| Target Audience           | Grade: 3–10                                
|                           | Content area: All                          |

| The What                  | Introduce various formats for students to record what they learn and process while in the field or when interacting with an expert. |

| The Why                   | When students interact with the field it is crucial that they be active learners. Therefore, they must have an ongoing way to process and learn during such experiences. Structuring their documentation format enables a teacher to scaffold skills such as analyzing and synthesizing information. Real world exploration documentation can later be used as a form of data during research projects and papers. |

| The How                   | How real world exploration is documented depends on the experience. Setting will dictate the most appropriate form of data collection. For example, a voice or video recording is more appropriate for an expert interview than a still camera. Students can document real world exploration in any of the following ways. Note that depending on the grade level, some students will need more guidance during the experience than others. Similarly, older grades will be more capable of collecting certain types of data, while younger grades will need “pause time” built in throughout the experience to document. Pause time can also be scheduled for directly after the experience, prior to returning to the classroom. |
The How (continued)

- Observing an event
  - video with accompanied storyboard filled in with process notes
  - flowchart graphic organizer to document process, order of events
  - a tallying/charting graphic organizer to count or follow trends and behaviors
  - still photos with annotations to document specific people, places, or things
- Conducting an expert interview
  - voice or video recording of the interview with notes on times, points made, direct quotes, or further questions
- Shadowing an expert
  - still photos to capture important elements of the work
  - recording observations or direct quotes in graphic organizer
- Observing a natural state, behavior, or process
  - Take notes by tallying or counting processes or behaviors, flow chart to show processes, still photos with annotations of what is being documented, sketch notes for what is observed and accompanied reflections, graphic organizer for guided observations (see the Field Notes Graphic Organizer below)
- Visiting a specific site for viewing
  - photographs, sketch notes, graphic organizer for guided observations
  - scavenger hunt prepared by the teacher to require students to find specific things. Students can take notes on their findings along the way.

Notes on graphic organizers for data collection:

- For each of the above methods, students should have a basic graphic organizer that is tailored to their specific field of study. This may include guiding questions or specific points of observation related to the unit/project. See below for examples. The more data students are able to collect and process, the more students will be able to engage in a meaningful debrief once they return to the classroom. See Foundational Strategy: Debriefing Real World Exploration for more on how to do this.
### Go Deeper!

- Learn more about other forms of data collection in CraftED Curriculum’s Lesson: Collecting Data in the Field.
- Use real world exploration documentation to help conduct a scientific investigation. (NGSS Practice 3)
- Create graphic organizers to guide student documentation and help them see patterns and recognize cause and effect. (NGSS Crosscutting Concept)
- Guide real world exploration documentation so as to direct students to collect the data they need to develop a mathematical model. (CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP4)
- Engage in research and inquiry to investigate topics and later use for writing assignments. (CCSS W-7)
**Sample Real World Exploration Graphic Organizer**
**Topic:** Animal behavior at the beach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal Behavior</th>
<th>Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are specific things you see, count, and/or notice?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assumptions or questions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What can you infer or assume about what you see in front of you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connections</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some connections you can make to what we are learning in class? To your research? To your life?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways did you interact with the field? What was your role?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Real World Exploration Graphic Organizer
Topic: Analyzing architecture downtown

Draw a sketch of your three favorite buildings here:

What do you notice about the following?

The building’s location

The building’s use/purpose
What about these buildings are you drawn to?

What do these buildings have in common? How do they differ?

What elements of math are present in these three examples?
What elements of architecture are present in these three examples?

Pick one feature you don’t like and rework/revise it in a new rendering sketch here:

Pick one feature from your favorite building and incorporate it into a brainstorm of your own design here: