

FINDING A PLACE IN LEARNING: FACILITATING PLACE-BASED WRITING IN
THE SECONDARY CLASSROOM

by

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Place-Based Expeditionary Writing Program Facilitation Guide

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Goal: Improve secondary student writing and research skills through the use of a place-based writing program connected with project-based and expeditionary learning.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Project Summary.....	3
Lesson Design Framework.....	5
Timeline.....	8
Overview.....	8
Detailed Timeline.....	9
6 Weeks Out.....	9
5 Weeks Out.....	10
4 Weeks Out.....	11
2 Weeks Out.....	15
Expedition.....	16
1-2 Weeks After.....	17
2 Weeks After.....	17
3 Weeks After.....	18
4 Weeks After.....	18
Examples of Content Area Projects.....	19
Assessment and Reflection.....	20
References.....	21
Appendix.....	22
Expedition Rubric.....	22
Project Tuning Guide.....	23
Behavior Contract.....	24
Packing List.....	25
Itinerary and Course Report.....	26
Place-Based Writing Activity Ideas.....	27
Expedition Reflection Form.....	30
Student Project Reflection Question Guide.....	34

Project Summary

The question that I am exploring in my capstone project is: *How can teachers facilitate place-based writing practices that impact the writing and research skills of high school students?*

The culminating project for the research question consisted of a facilitation guide for secondary educators that is flexible enough for use in pairing with a wide variety of expedition opportunities and content areas. It is important to note that, while writing is a main component of the facilitation guide, there is no reason that student activities need focus only on Language Arts standards. This guide strived to reinforce the idea that cross-curricular educational opportunities are all around us and stretch both teachers and students to consider the multiple facets of place, where those facets intersect, and where they diverge. This is not a curriculum guide in the traditional sense, with a collection of direct instruction lessons for use in a classroom setting, but instead asks teachers and students to be curious about the places they visit through expeditions and employ the flexible nature of this guide in whatever ways it works best for them, before they depart, while they are immersed in the place, and when they return – there is no one way to “do” place-based writing and cross-curricular learning and I want to stay away from holding this as an end-all, be-all, kind of work. This fills the current need for structures on how to facilitate place-based writing for secondary students that fosters their writing and research skills.

This facilitation guide helps teachers foster understanding for their students that there are many ways to experience, think about, engage with, and tell the story of a place. Throughout their expeditionary, project-based learning experiences, students will conduct research on an aspect of a place of their choice and communicate in writing the story of that place from the

perspective of a particular content area and genre, improving their writing and research skills. The intended outcome of the guide is for teachers to feel they have a better framework with which to facilitate project-based learning related to expeditions and field experiences.

The curriculum framework I chose to utilize for this project is the “understanding by design”, or “backward design” framework. This framework, developed by Wiggins & McTighe, is unique in that it asks teachers to first think about what the final assessment for the unit will be, and then design lessons around that end goal, instead of the opposite that has been utilized for decades in the classroom. I specifically chose this framework for several reasons. The first is that it is the most widely accepted curriculum framework in the field of education at this time. The second is that with project-based learning, individual activities may be unclear at the outset of a project – however, the final product (or assessment) is often framed out early in the project design process. Discoveries are made as students begin to gain introductory information about the topic they are exploring that could completely change the path of their learning and still end up with the same final product. On the other hand, as students learn more, they may find that they need to alter their final product to better reflect what they think are the most important components to highlight and discuss. The backward design framework seems best suited to this educational style, allowing flexibility in learning methods and always valuing student understanding over going through the motions of specific activities that have no relevance to individuals and their path of study.

Lesson Design Framework

Stage 1: Desired Results

Content Standard(s):

E1.6 Informational Writing – Research 1: Use MLA/APA format to cite sources used in a research paper, giving credit to the source. Create a reference list and format writing according to MLA/APA guidelines.

E1.7 Informational Writing – Integrating Research 1: Introduce research material from sources by providing context and adequately connect the research to the topic or question posed.

E1.8 Writing Process – Writing Process Year 1: Use the writing process to develop and strengthen writing by planning, drafting, revising, and editing while focusing on purpose and audience.

E1.13 Conventions – Spelling: Spell correctly when using a variety of words and recognize spelling patterns. Use proper capitalization.

E2.6 Informational Writing – Research 2: Use MLA/APA format to cite sources used in a research paper, giving credit to the source. Create a reference list and properly format in-text citations according to MLA/APA guidelines.

E2.7 Informational Writing – Integrating Research 2: Analyze written works and research to develop claims and counterclaims fairly, using valid reasoning and avoiding logical fallacies.

E2.8 Writing Process – Writing Process Year 2: Use the writing process to develop and strengthen writing by planning, drafting, revising, and editing while focusing on purpose and audience.

E2.13 Conventions – Punctuation: Use proper punctuation in writing, including the use of periods, question marks, commas, quotations, colons, semicolons, hyphens, and exclamations.

E2.14 Conventions – Phrases: Use various types of phrases and clauses to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentation.

E2.16 Vocabulary – Variety: Use a variety of vocabulary to convey tone in a piece of writing, or to tailor the writing for a specific audience.

E3.3 Informational Text – Evidence: Cite Textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

E3.4 Informational Text – Claims: Evaluate the argument and claims in a text, assess whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

E3.7 Informational Writing – Sources 1: Use a variety of reliable sources to conduct research, including but not limited to articles, interviews, surveys, documentaries, podcasts, and primary fieldwork.

E3.8 Writing Process Year 3: Use the writing process to develop and strengthen writing by planning, drafting, revising, and editing while focusing on purpose and audience. Writing must be proofread and edited by peers, staff, and at least one person outside of the school community. Document and reflect on the steps in the writing process.

E3.14 Conventions – Tense: Write a work using the proper voice and tense for the situation consistently.

E4.3 Informational Text – Style: Analyze how writing style differs between different types of texts, such as news articles, scientific articles, manuals, and letters.

E4.6 Informational Writing – Informative Writing: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

E4.7 Informational Writing – Sources 2: Understand the ways in which sources are limited, included scope, bias, and credibility.

E4.8 Writing Process Year 4: Use the writing process to develop and strengthen writing by planning, drafting, revising, and editing while focusing on purpose and audience. Writing must be proofread and edited by peers, staff, and at least one person outside of the school community. Document and reflect on the steps in the writing process.

E4.13 Knowledge – Use: Demonstrate knowledge of language to edit a written work so it conforms to the guidelines appropriate for the writing style and audience.

- Students will utilize the place of their expeditions to improve writing and research skills through sustained inquiry in a particular aspect of their place with focus (although not exclusive study) in a content area of their choosing.

Understandings/Goals

Students will understand that there are many ways to experience, think about, engage with, and tell the story of a place.

Essential Question

How do we tell the story of a place?

Student Objectives

Students will be able to

- Conduct research on an aspect of a place of their choice
- Communicate the story of their place from a particular content perspective and genre

Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks:

- Create a product that tells the story of a place with focus on a specific content area
- Narrative self assessment

Other Evidence

- Journaling and discussion
- Participation in field experiences
- Prewriting/brainstorming and drafts
- Notes and research

Stage 3: Learning Plan

Learning Activities

Learning activities will vary widely from student to student depending on the content area focus of their project. However, broadly speaking, learning activities will include:

- Brainstorming
- Background research
- Connecting with area contacts and experts
- Finding project models
- Participating in project tuning
- Participating in all activities during expedition
- Curating artifacts
- Drafting
- Seeking and giving feedback
- Revising and editing
- Presenting the final product
- Reflecting on the project process

Timeline

Overview

Timeline	Main teacher responsibilities	Main student responsibilities
6 weeks out	Send out expedition application to school via Google Forms with app deadline	Complete expedition application by deadline
5 weeks out	Review, choose and notify students with other expedition leaders	Keep an eye on email for notification or acceptance
4 weeks out	Facilitate once or twice weekly meetings focused on expedition and project planning	Make best effort to attend all meetings, make up missed meetings, and keep up with assignments/work
2 weeks out	Prepare for and lead info meeting	Attend with parent/guardian
Expedition	Lead expedition	Full participation
1-2 weeks after	Guide students in completion of project	Complete project
2 weeks after	Facilitate feedback session for each student's project	Provide feedback to peers, use feedback to improve project
3 weeks after	Presentation	Find relevant audience, prepare to present, and present
4 weeks after	Reflection	Reflection

Detailed Timeline

6 Weeks Out: Send Out Expedition Application

Teacher Responsibilities

With the other expedition leaders, create a student expedition application specific to your expedition using Google Forms. In the description section of the application, be sure to include the following, but feel free to add additional details as you see fit for your expedition:

- What staff are leading the expedition?
- What level is the expedition and why?
- Where is the expedition going?
- What are the dates of the expedition?
- What other “need to knows” are there that would be helpful for students to know before applying? (such as phone expectations, the bathroom situation, etc..)

As you create questions for the application, include the following, but feel free to add additional questions as needed for your specific expedition:

- Student full name
- Grade level, advisor, and how many credits they have
- Any prior expedition experience (ask them to list all prior expedition) or other experience related to the location
- Short essay of why they are interested in going and what they can contribute to the experience for the group
- Short response of initial project ideas OR just content area interest for project focus

Send this google form out to all eligible participants via email, and add a note to the daily announcements to remind students to fill it out if interested. **Include the due date of the application in the email.**

Student Responsibilities

When the application is emailed to students, it is their responsibility to review the background information written in the application description to ensure the expedition is a good fit for the student. They should also check with their family and work (if applicable) and any other commitments to make sure they are available on the expedition dates listed BEFORE applying. It is important for students to take time to write thoughtful responses to each of the questions instead of rushing through it. They also need to note the application deadline and turn theirs in by that date. Finally, students should monitor their emails for updates moving forward.

5 Weeks Out: Selecting Expedition Participants

Teacher Responsibilities

When selecting applicants for expeditions, make sure to include all staff who are leading the expedition in the selection process and that everyone is on the same page about what makes a “highly qualified” applicant.

To ensure unbiased selection of expedition participants, utilize a rubric scoring system for each applicant to determine eligibility based on the criteria included in the application and needs of the trip. Generally, highest scoring students will be the ones you accept on your expedition, but you also need to consider how many expeditions they have been on previously and the group dynamics and makeup in making final decisions. Refer to Appendix A for an example.

Backups: It seems that with every expedition something comes up with one or two students that make them unable to attend (even if they were initially able to upon application). Because of this, it is important to select 1-2 backup students and notify them as such at the same time you notify other students who have been selected to go. Be sure to explain to them that they are backups, but that if circumstances arise they may get to join the trip, and that they therefore must still keep the expedition dates free and participate in all expedition-related activities and meetings.

“Do not pairs”: Although the rubric is a good guide for which students to select for the trip, also consider pairs of students that might struggle to work together in the expedition setting, and plan for this by either discussing your concerns with those students ahead of time, or making decisions about which student to bring and which might have to wait another year. It is also important to consider the mix of students overall to ensure a positive, cohesive group experience.

After the lead staff select students, run the final list by the full staff at a staff meeting. After full staff approval is given, email selected students and their families (including backups) with the expedition dates and info meeting date (schedule for about 2 weeks before the expedition leaves) along with any other important information. It is helpful to request an RSVP from families for the info meeting to ensure attendance ahead of time so you can gather necessary information, and make alternative plans early if they cannot attend.

Student Responsibilities

Students should continue to monitor their email for updates and take off work on the dates of the expedition (if applicable). Additionally, they should block off the evening on the info meeting for themselves and ensure their family can come (if they and their family cannot attend, the student should make arrangements with expedition leaders to receive relevant information).

4 Weeks Out: Set Up Weekly Meetings

The weekly meetings have several goals: to facilitate creation of projects related to the expedition, for students to get to know each other, and plan the expedition itself. It is important to keep the meeting time consistent and track student attendance and participation to support them in staying on track with project deadlines and being prepared for the expedition. The expectation should be that participants (including backups) make their best effort to attend all meetings, and that they will make up any missed work if they do miss a meeting for any reason.

What follows is an outline of what should happen at each meeting. It is created with a 1-hour time slot in mind, but can be adjusted for both number and length of meetings as needed.

Week 1 (4 weeks before departure)

- Set expectations for meetings including day, time, and length of meetings; student behavior during meetings; and what students should do if they miss a meeting.
- Facilitate a get to know you/community building game
- Facilitate questioning/brainstorming
 - Large group: With a white board or large sheet of paper, write the name of where you are going in the middle. Then give each student 5 post-its to write things related to that place on them (one idea on each post-it). When all have finished writing, have them place them on the paper or board. Read them out loud. Then, have students say out any others that came to mind during the process.
 - Individual: In student's applications, they should've expressed either project ideas or content areas of interest related to the expedition. Have them write the name of the place you are going in the middle of a sheet of paper and think of as many things as they can related to that place and their content areas of interest. After they've exhausted their own minds, encourage them to explore ideas on the internet. Then, have them discuss with peers for even more ideas!
 - If a student already has a project in mind, you can assist them in refining their ideas while other students are brainstorming.
 - You can also frame it for students like this:
 - What is something about ____ (place) that you're curious about?
 - What is a problem that ____ (place) faces and how can it be addressed?
- Students should leave the meeting knowing their expedition mates a little better, understand the expectations of the meetings, and with a reasonably solid idea of what they'd like to do their project on. If a student is still struggling to come up with an idea, expedition leaders should coordinate a time to meet with that student to explore further.
- Keep in mind that for students who are backups, they can still do their project without having the experience of the expedition, so it is important that they participate fully.

Week 2 (3 weeks before departure)

- By this meeting, students should have a solid understanding of their project focus.
- Facilitate project module creation, circulating the room to provide support to individual students as they work through the module
 - You may need to work with a student to establish what learning targets they have already achieved to ensure there isn't any overlap. It is also important to verify chosen targets to ensure they align properly with the scope and content of the student's project.
 - Students may also need help establishing an authentic audience for their final product. This is key because it helps them know how to create and present the information they will be gathering. This means brainstorming with students who in the real world works with the questions, problems, and curiosities they are exploring in their projects and the expedition.
- Facilitate reaching out to area contacts relevant to student projects
 - Each student should take the lead on finding locations, museums, tours, local experts, demonstrations, and beyond that pertain to their project and attempting contact (if possible) to see what possibilities exist for field experiences during the expedition. Students may need coaching on inquiry etiquette, either over the phone or via email.
- Facilitate students finding project models
 - Since students have established an authentic audience and therefore genre for their final product, it will be helpful for students to find a model of writing or presentation that fits their audience and genre to function as a baseline for students to work from as they create their own pieces.
- Students should leave the meeting having created a complete project module, reaching out to a possible field experience related to their project and the expedition, and having found a model for their final product.
- **Independent work for students to complete before the next meeting:**
 - Begin background research for their project
 - Begin to collect a variety of reputable sources relating to their project
 - Continue contact with field experience contacts
 - Advise students that before making any firm confirmations, they need to check in with staff leaders.

Week 3 (2 weeks before departure)

- Large group check-in on the following:
 - Field experience contacts - Have students made contact? What information have they learned? What are the next steps?
 - Collecting resources - How many does each student have? What challenges are they encountering in research? What has been a success?
- Facilitate meal planning
 - First, write on the whiteboard all the meals the group will need to plan for. Below is a possible format

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	

- Then, establish any food allergies for the group.
- Then, give students time to share out meal ideas - these could be meals they've eaten before on expeditions, meals they love from home, or meals they personally love to cook!
- Then, assign a meal idea to each of the meals listed as "need to plan for"
- Then, put students into cooking groups - it usually works best to do pairs, but this may need to be adjusted depending on the number of students. Once students are grouped, assign them to different meals - if each group will need to cook more than once, be sure that responsibility is appropriately balanced and that each group gets a chance to cook a variety of meals (maybe a breakfast and a dinner, for example). Staff should also take the lead on at least one meal, but it is best to take an "easy" one, (like an oatmeal breakfast) so that students can practice their cooking and teamwork skills.
- Once meals are assigned, cooking groups should find a recipe online for each of their meals and put together grocery AND cooking supply (what kinds of pans, utensils, ets they will need) lists for those meals, keeping portions and servings in mind.
- As an exit ticket, students should do the following:
 - Email their recipes to staff leaders
 - Give staff leaders their grocery and supply lists
- **Independent work for students to complete before next meeting:**
 - Continue background research to be prepared for project tuning
 - Continue collecting a variety of resources
 - Continue communication with field experience contacts as needed.

Week 4 (1 week before departure)

- Large-group check-in
 - What new details do you have on your field experience contacts?
 - Plan a time for grocery shopping and gear gathering
 - Split the group in two so that some students help with groceries and others help with gathering supplies and gear.
- Facilitate project tuning
 - While groups of 4 work best for project tuning, that isn't always possible given attendance and expedition group size. If you have 6 or more students, break them up into 2 groups for the sake of time, with one staff leader monitoring each group and keeping time.
 - Provide each student with a "Project Tuning Guide" (Appendix B). Establish and explain the purpose, norms, and protocol of project tuning as outlined before groups begin the tuning process.
- **Independent work for students to complete before expedition:**
 - Help with grocery shopping and gear gathering as assigned
 - Finalize field experience details as needed
 - Adjust project per project tuning notes and reflection
 - Get to a comfortable spot with their research and sources

2 Weeks Out: Info Meeting

The informational meeting is an important part of the expedition preparation process, as it gives students, expedition leaders, and families a chance to discuss the details of the expedition, gather important information, and clarify any lingering questions and concerns.

Teacher Responsibilities

Although you already sent out an email asking for RSVPs from families for the info meeting, it helps attendance to send a reminder email to families 1 week prior to the meeting date.

There is some additional preparation that you will need to do before the meeting as well. This includes:

- Printing out enough behavior contracts (Appendix C) for all student participants
- Gathering medical forms of participants from the front office
- Creating a “trip overview” presentation and handout, including address and phone number of where you will be, contact info of staff leaders, and expected return date/time
- Creating a packing list that includes which items can be provided by the school if needed (See Appendix D for an example)

During the meeting, you will need to go over several things. Depending on the level of expedition you are leading and the experience of your selected participants, families will have a wide range of questions they ask, in varying degrees of detail. It is important that all lead staff are present at the meeting. The general sequence of the meeting is suggested to follow this structure:

1. Distribute medical forms, behavior contracts, and other handouts as families arrive.
2. Introduce yourselves as the lead staff.
3. Go over the details of the trip, including contact details for staff and where you are going and the packing list.
4. Have students share their projects with the other families.
5. Read through the behavior contract together and provide clarification as needed.
6. Discuss the importance of updated medical forms, especially medications taken/dosages and allergies. Explain the school’s medication distribution protocol to families.
7. Provide time for large group questions.
8. Collect all medical forms and signed behavior contracts.
9. Allow for one-on-one question time with families as well, as needed.

Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the student to attend the info meeting and review all necessary paperwork with their family.

Expedition

Teacher Responsibilities

The most important role of the staff leaders is to ensure that student participants stay safe. While students help with gathering gear, it is the leader's responsibility to ensure that all necessary gear is in working order and that the group has everything they might need. Staff should leave an itinerary of their trip with the school director (See Appendix E). This includes keeping a folder with emergency contact and health information. Additionally, it is the role of the staff to hold onto all student prescription medications and disperse them as prescribed.

During the expedition, you will be facilitating writing prompts and reflection activities with participants at least once daily. Refer to the Activity Ideas (Appendix F) for guidance. While these writing prompts and reflection activities are important to student learning, they are not the only times you should engage students in dialogue around place. Take opportunities to engage students in informal learning and hands-on experiences as they come to immerse them fully in the expedition and all it has to offer them.

It is tradition that at the end of each expedition, students write postcards to the director and school board describing their experiences, showing the value of expeditions and justifying their continued support. Be prepared to help students start their postcard - here are a few prompts to get them started:

- Something new that I did on this expedition was...
- Expeditions like this are valuable learning experiences because...
- After this expedition, I want to learn more about...

Additionally, staff need to complete expedition reflection forms (See Appendix G) for all student participants.

Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the student to come to the expedition prepared to keep their project in mind, do their best, be curious, engage fully, write a postcard, and be willing to try new things. Documentation is also important during this phase, whether it be photos, written reflections, or gathering artifacts. Additionally, at the end of the expedition, students must complete a self-evaluation form of their behavior and participation on the expedition.

1-2 Weeks After: Creating

Teacher Responsibilities

After completing the expedition, it is important to debrief the experience with students individually in the context of their projects. When meeting with students one-on-one, it can be helpful to lay out a timeline of completion for them and co-create task lists to help them reach their final goal in addition to facilitating individual reflection on what the expedition meant for them and their project focus. This is also a time for staff to complete any outstanding components of the course report (See Appendix E).

Student Responsibilities

At this point, students should be chipping away at their projects daily. Tasks will vary student-to-student based on their content area focus and final product, but it is important that they are making consistent progress towards completion. For students, this time might include:

- Referring back to reflections, journals, photos, and other artifacts from the expedition
- Completing additional research based on information learned from the expedition
- Drafting of final products

2 Weeks After: Improving

Teacher Responsibilities

As students move closer to project completion, your role as facilitator shifts slightly, moving from more group-focused activities to individual work and check-ins. It is your responsibility to motivate students, monitor their progress, and encourage them to seek feedback from a variety of people, including peers, teachers, and even experts and potential audience members, to get diverse perspectives on their work so they can move into the revision phase confidently.

Student Responsibilities

Students should continue to work on their projects daily, drafting final products. This is also an important time for students to be seeking feedback from peers, teachers, experts, and potential audience members on their projects so they can easily move into the revision phase. This also means providing feedback to other expedition participants as they should be at similar points in project creation.

3 Weeks After: Presenting/Sharing

Teacher Responsibilities

During this phase, teachers will be spending a lot of time working with students one-on-one to get their projects to a final draft. You might also assist students in finding and reaching out to relevant audiences that might be interested in their projects, including identifying contacts and drafting correspondence. It is also important that, if students are going to be giving presentations, that they are given opportunities to practice and prepare - this might be just the student presenting to you, a group of friends, or their class and seeking feedback on presentation skills.

Student Responsibilities

At this time, students should be putting the final touches on their projects. They should also be finding and reaching out to relevant audiences that might be interested in their projects in addition to practicing their presentation skills in front of peers, if relevant. Finally, students should present their project.

4 Weeks After: Reflection

Teacher Responsibilities

At this point, all student projects should be complete. Your role now is to facilitate student reflection, award credit, and engage in your own reflection on the process as a whole.

Students should always reflect on their work after completing it. Use the question guide (Appendix H) to help facilitate student reflection on their work. Once students complete their reflection, it is your responsibility to provide final narrative feedback to the student on their work and growth throughout the project and expedition process, assess the student's chosen learning targets, and award credit for the project.

Your individual reflection should focus on the following:

- How did the project and expedition process go overall?
- How did students grow or change during the process?
- Were the overall goals of the learning experience met?
- What would you do differently?

Student Responsibilities

After students present, their only responsibility is to complete a thorough self-reflection on their work using the question guide.

Examples of Content Area Projects:

Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness

- English: What stories and about who have been told about the BWCA? Why? How?
- Algebra: Create bird houses that maximize space for a native bird of the area
- Geometry: Area vs shape of lakes, use of rods as measurement
- Probability and Statistics: What is the purpose of group size limits? Fishing limits? How many people are in the BWCA at once? What impact does this have on the area?
- Life Science: Identifying plants/animals, water quality and fish populations, USFS
- Physics: Different types of canoes, paddles, etc and their effect on travel
- Chemistry: Water quality testing
- Astronomy: Sky navigation
- Meteorology: Accuracy of weather predictions, observations
- Environmental Science: Carrying capacities of lakes in BWCA, ecosystems present
- Geology: How was the BWCA formed? Rock sampling
- Phy Ed: History of BWCA marathons/races, planning healthy meals to appropriately replenish calories lost during the day
- Art: Traditional art of region, how art has been used to promote the region, photography, using natural objects for art
- US History: History of indigenous people in the area, USFS
- Geography: Mapping of areas travelled, GPS use, navigation, land management of wilderness areas vs national parks etc
- Economics: Local business (Ely)
- Government: How did the BWCA become designated wilderness? Why? Who did it? What threats does the BWCA face now and from who?

Assessment and Reflection

Assessment will be based on the effectiveness of this guide in helping teachers facilitate place-based writing in conjunction with expeditionary and project based learning. Keeping with the vein of the guide, assessment and reflection will take place in narrative form. After staff complete one round of facilitation using this guide, they should respond to the following questions:

- How did the project and expedition process go overall?
- How did students grow or change during the process? Specifically think about their growth in writing, giving and accepting feedback, and the revision process.
- Were the overall goals of the learning experience met?
- What would you do differently?
- How did this guide support you throughout the process overall? What parts were particularly helpful to you as an educator and facilitator? Where was it lacking? What suggestions do you have for improvement?

Student reflection and assessment on individual projects and expedition performance is addressed in Appendices G and H, also taking narrative form.

References

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Appendix A: Expedition Rubric

This is only an example of how to score student applicants to assist in the selection process. Below is an explanation of each component of the rubric and considerations you might make in your decision making process.

Name	Essay	Attendance	Credits earned	Exped exper	On time	Total	Notes
A	0	3	3	1	1	8	
B	2	2	1	3	1	9	
C	1	4	1	3	1	10	
	2=Yes 1= 0=No	4=95+ 3=85-94 2=75-84 1=65-74 0=0-64	4=1.5+ 3=1.25-1.5 2=1-1.24 1=.5-.99 0=0-.49	3=Low 2=Med 1=High	1=Yes 0=No	Higher	

Essay: Did the applicant take the essay portion of the application seriously?

Attendance: How has the student's attendance percentage been so far this year? Are they making improvements in attendance? Do they have special circumstances that limit their attendance?

Credits earned: You might need to adjust this system depending on what time of year you are leading your expedition - if it is in early fall, you might look at students' credit earning from the previous year; if it is in late spring or summer, you might want students to have earned more credit by the time the application is due.

Expedition Experience?: Depending on the expedition you are leading, it might be beneficial for some or all of the students to have prior expedition experience. For example, if you are taking students on a week-long backpacking trip to Canyonlands, it would be helpful for some of the students to have backpacking experience outside of school or to have previously attended a shorter backpacking expedition with school to Jay Cooke State Park. For purposes of example here, the rubric is for an entry-level expedition, so those with less experience are given preference through scoring, with low experience getting the highest score.

On time?: An on-time application demonstrates that a student is serious about the expedition.

Total: While this can be helpful in sifting through applicants initially, it should be taken with a grain of salt, with consideration to the "notes" section of the rubric for each student. Generally, higher scores are students better suited to the expedition.

Notes: Here is where staff can write details about students as they comb through applications. Important information to note might include extenuating circumstances for that student relating to one or more parts of their application, recent behaviors, potential concerns with other students, etc.

Appendix B: Project Tuning Guide

Adapted from High Tech High “Fifteen Minute Project Tuning”

Norms:

- Be hard on content, soft on people
- Be kind, helpful and specific
- Share the air

Protocol: Each student gets 15 minutes to share their project. Staff leaders will facilitate the project tuning process and act as timekeeper.

1. **Project Overview** (3 minutes): The presenter gives an overview of their project and shares their thinking about key elements of the project. The presenter might share drafts, plans, resources, or other artifacts that help the group understand their ideas. The presenter should share a problem or question they are working on.
Participants are silent.
2. **Group Think Time** (1 minute): Participants write ideas about what they want to know more about and general project ideas for the presenter.
Presenter is silent. Participants think and/or write silently.
3. **Clarifying Questions** (2 minutes): Participants ask “clarifying” questions of the presenter. Clarifying questions help the group understand the presenter’s ideas more easily. Clarifying questions tend to have brief, factual answers.
Participants ask questions. Presenter answers questions.
4. **Probing Questions** (2 minutes): Participants ask “probing” questions of the presenter. Probing questions reveal the presenter’s thinking and logic, and help the presenter expand their thinking. Probing questions usually start with “how” or “why”.
Participants ask questions. Presenter answers questions.
5. **Discussion** (5 minutes): Participants begin with positive feedback. Then participants identify opportunities for growth. How might the presenter need out help? What are the strongest or most exciting parts of this project - and how might we build on these? Will we be able to complete this project? Does this project come from a real problem or need?
Presenter physically pulls themselves back from the group, is silent, and takes notes. Participants should direct their comments to each other, not the presenter.
6. **Reflection** (1 minute): The presenter has the opportunity to respond to the discussion and summarize key ideas. The presenter may share what struck them and what next steps might be taken as a result of the ideas generated by the discussion.
Participants are silent.
7. **Debrief** (1 minute): The group debriefs the process, reflecting on how well they adhered to the norms and protocol.

Appendix C: Behavior Contract

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS CONTRACT

Please review the following student behavior expectations. The student's signature at the bottom of this page indicates that they agree to demonstrate these behaviors during all pre-departure activities, as well as, during the travel program.

1. I understand that expeditions are extensions of the school day and school rules and responsibilities apply.
2. I will make every effort to attend all pre-departure meetings and activities.
3. I will come prepared with all materials necessary for full participation.
4. I will use common courtesies at all times.
5. I will try my best to maintain a positive attitude during the entire experience.
6. I understand that I am an ambassador for my school, community, and country and I will treat everyone I meet with respect.
7. I am willing to try new experiences, make new friends, and try new foods as a participant in this travel program.
8. I understand that I am expected to participate in all programs and activities during the travel program.
9. I am willing to take directions from all those in charge including the group leaders, chaperones, instructors and guides.
10. I understand that I may not be allowed to use and/or bring any personal electronic items such as Handheld games, CD players, hairdryers, cell phones, etc.
11. I will follow all rules outlined in the student handbook guide.
12. I understand that smoking is not allowed during any part of an expedition.
13. Finally, I understand that my acceptance into this travel is conditional and if at any time I fail to live up to these responsibilities, I may be removed from the group.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

The behavior expectations outlined above are crucial for the success of our travel program. The group leaders and chaperones must be confident in each student's ability to be cooperative and dependable before we can escort them outside of the school building. **Your signature at the bottom of this page indicates that you understand and agree with the student behavior expectations and are confident in your child's ability to uphold them. If the child breaks this contract during the trip, the leader has the right to send them home at the parent's expense.**

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix D: Packing List

This is a generic packing list meant for an outdoor-focused expedition. Adapt as needed.

- Rain gear (jacket and pants) (Can be provided)
- One pair of athletic/comfortable pants
- Two shirts - long or short sleeve (athletic material is better than cotton but either works)
- Warm fleece or insulated jacket (warmer than just a sweatshirt) (Can be provided)
- Shorts (optional)
- Underwear (enough for your preference)
- Socks (wool socks for hiking would be good) (Can be provided)
- One pair of sneakers or boots that can get wet/muddy for hiking around (Can be provided)
- Extra pair of dry shoes to hang out in the campsite
- Warm hat/beanie
- Warm shirt/pants/PJs to sleep in
- Hat with brim for sun (optional)
- Sleeping bag/pillow (Can be provided)
- Ground pad/Sleeping mat (Can be provided)
- Water bottle (Can be provided)
- Flashlight
- Sunglasses (optional)
- Small backpack/daypack to carry things while hiking
- Toiletries (Toothbrush, toothpaste, face wash, hand towel, etc.) Do not expect to shower while you are on the trip
- Sunscreen and chapstick
- Medications (list and instructions must be given to staff)
- Book/journal/drawing supplies for bedtime (optional)

Do NOT Bring:

- Personal electronics (bluetooth speakers, video game players, etc.)
- Personal items that would be heartbreaking to lose
- Expensive or fragile items
- Non-prescription medications that have not been approved by the leaders
- Perfumes, hairsprays, and other “stinky” items
- Anything not allowed at school

Appendix E: Itinerary and Course Report

COURSE REPORT

Name of Course:

Dates of Expedition:

Staff Leaders:

Students:

Description of Expedition:

Contacts:

Staff Contact Info	Contact of Lodging	Other Contacts

Itinerary:

Day/Time	Activity	Notes

Budget

Item	Predicted Cost	Actual Cost	
Food			
Gas			
Lodging			
Total			

Final Thoughts/Recommendations:

Appendix F: Place-Based Writing Activity Ideas

The following pages are merely suggestions of more formalized writing activities that engage students in critical thinking about place while practicing their writing and discussion skills. Adapt the activities as necessary for your own expedition location, and remember to not limit yourself and students in thinking these writing activities are only for outdoor-focused trips.

Overall suggestions for place-based writing activities:

- Provide ample time for students to process questions and develop thoughtful responses
- Encourage all students to write down their responses (not just think them) - this helps with accountability and serves as formative assessment and evidence of learning. Provide writing utensils and small journals for them to catalog all their writing throughout the expedition. Make accommodations as needed.
- Staff should also participate in the activities as much as possible, although your first priority is ensuring students understand the activity.
- Establish right away some writing activity norms for the group. Some examples are:
 - What is said here, stays here
 - No judgement
 - One person speaks at a time
 - Everyone is given an opportunity to share

The following activities have been adapted from *Taking Inquiry Outdoors* (Bourne, 2000).

- **Phrase or Word Generation and Sort:** Provide students a bunch of small pieces of paper/post-its (10 or more each, but keep the number consistent across students). Instruct students to observe their surroundings for 5 minutes. Then, have them write 1 comment, observation, phrase, or word about what they are witnessing and experiencing on each piece of paper. Then, have students arrange their phrases/comments/observations/words in different ways. This arrangement could be a poem, sequence of events, organized by topic/category, or something else entirely.
 - It is helpful to provide examples as you explain each step in this activity.
- **Solo Spot:** If you will be staying at the same place for the duration of the expedition, you can use this activity as a way for students to observe change, even over a short time. Have students choose a spot to enjoy by themselves. Explain that they will observe life here regularly (this could be once a day, several times in one day, etc), only there to record what you experience (meaning that students should keep personal thoughts and opinions out of their observations as much as possible). Remind students to look for small details and attempt to be as descriptive as possible in their observations. Students should include the following for each of their observation times:

- Describe the spot and why you chose it (only needs to be included in first observation)
- Directions and a rough map to your spot (only needs to be included in first observation)
- Date
- Weather conditions
- What did I see? (Students could incorporate photography or sketching here)
- What did I hear? (Students could incorporate audio recording here)
- What did I smell?
- What did I feel?

After each round of observation, have students come together to share any significant changes or notable observations.

- **Scaffold Observation:** Give students 3 minutes to explore their surroundings and choose something they would like to sketch - they should be away from other students. Give students time to sketch their chosen item. Then, instruct them to spend some time journaling about what they were doing as they sketched - some questions to get them started are below. Then, have students identify at least 5 sensory/descriptive words to describe their observation and sketch. Share as a group.
 - What was the purpose of the sketch?
 - What did you focus on? Why?
 - What challenges did you face and how did you work through them?
- **Observation Journaling:** Have all students sit the same direction, viewing the same view. Instruct them to use their five senses, observe all that is happening around them, writing a list of what they see, hear, feel, and smell. Then students should use their notes to compose a poem, song, or paragraph that captures the moment. Share as a group.
 - This one is fun because even though students are all seeing the same view, their observations will vary and serve to provide insight to other students about what is happening around them that they might not be aware of.
- **Conflict Journal Prompt:** Put students into partnerships. Explain that they will be making observations about conflict in nature. Have each partnership find their own place to sit and observe away from others, and ask them to identify a conflict they see that involves nature, and write it down. Then, individually, they should respond to the following questions. Then, they should discuss the questions with their partner and write down main points from their conversation. Finally, share as a group.
 - What are the two or more things that are in conflict?
 - Conflict is struggle. Briefly tell what the conflict you have observed is about.

- Think about what will happen in this conflict. Write a paragraph to explain your prediction about how the struggle will develop and how it might end.
- It can be helpful to provide time limits for each portion of this exercise.
- You might consider pairing students intentionally for a variety of reasons, or allowing them to choose their own partners.

The following activities have been adapted from Rural Voices (Brooke, 2003).

- **Regional Literature:** Find fiction and nonfiction about the specific place you are going – descriptions, paintings, poetry, case studies etc for students to examine as you explore the place you are focusing on. For example, you could find a passage that describes a place or event related to the expedition location, read it aloud to the group, give them some time to reflect on it, and then discuss the piece as a group, connecting what was read to what their experiences have been. Questions to start your exploration of regional lit:
 - What happened here?
 - Who did it happen to?
 - Why does it matter?
- **Place Talks:** Invite locals to talk to your group about how they were influenced by the place you are exploring on the expedition, memories of the place, and what they value most in that place. You could also tie this in with the Regional Literature activity above, having locals stay to engage in reading and discussion on passages about the place.
- **Travel Portfolio:** At the beginning of the expedition, explain to students that as part of the experience, they are responsible for creating a collective travel portfolio, documenting artifacts, reflections, and experiences from their trip. Students should work to gather notable artifacts such as postcards, photographs, menus, written memories, reflections, receipts, brochures, and beyond to serve as documentation.
 - For recurring expeditions, this is a cool way to re-experience place and see how student values and the place itself change over time
 - It can be helpful to provide a certain number of items that each student should contribute, to ensure balance of “voices” in the portfolio
 - Staff should contribute to this as well!
- **15 Sentence Portrait:** Explain to students that they will be writing a portrait of an item of their choosing related to the expedition - this could be an animal, person, place, building, event, or beyond. Explain that they only have 15 sentences to develop and describe a full, interesting “character” and might need to get creative in their writing to fit in all the details they feel are necessary to fully develop their character. Give students time to brainstorm and then write. Share as a large group at the end.

Appendix G: Expedition Reflection Form

Expedition Reflection

STAFF FORM

Student Name:

Date:

Expedition:

Level:

Teamwork/Team Player:

- 5 *Student was always willing to help others and fully participate in all activities.*
- 4 *Student was mostly willing to help others and participated in most activities.*
- 3 *Student was sometimes willing to help others and sometimes participated in activities.*
- 2 *Student was rarely willing to help others and rarely participated in activities.*
- 1 *Student refused to help others and never participated in activities.*

Notes:

Communication:

- 5 *Student was always willing to participate in group discussions and communicated regularly with leaders.*
- 4 *Student mostly participated in group discussions and and communicated most of the time with leaders.*
- 3 *Student sometimes participated in group discussions & occasionally communicated with leaders.*
- 2 *Student rarely participated in group discussions and did not communicate with leaders often.*
- 1 *Student never participated in group discussions and refused to communicate with leaders.*

Notes:

Adaptability:

- 5 *Student was always able to adjust to changes and unexpected circumstances.*
- 4 *Student was mostly able to adjust to changes and unexpected circumstances.*
- 3 *Student sometimes was able to adjust to changes and unexpected circumstances.*
- 2 *Student rarely was able to adjust to changes and unexpected circumstances.*
- 1 *Student did not adjust well to changes and unexpected circumstances.*

Notes:

Leadership:

- 5 *Student always demonstrated leadership skills ie. motivation, positive attitude, and responsibility.*
- 4 *Student mostly demonstrated leadership skills ie. motivation, positive attitude, and responsibility.*
- 3 *Student sometimes demonstrated leadership skills ie. motivation, positive attitude, and responsibility.*
- 2 *Student rarely demonstrated leadership skills ie. motivation, positive attitude, and responsibility.*
- 1 *Student did not demonstrated leadership skills ie. motivation, positive attitude, and responsibility.*

Notes:

Recommendations:

- Recommend applying for the next level of expedition without reservation
- Recommend applying for the next level of expedition with improvement in the following areas: _____

- Recommend to apply for an expedition at the same level
- Recommend apply for an expedition at a lower level
- Would not recommend for additional expeditions

Summary:_____
Expedition Leader_____
Signature_____
Date_____
Expedition Leader_____
Signature_____
Date_____
Student Signature_____
Date

Expedition Reflection

STUDENT FORM

Name:

Date:

Expedition:

Level:

Teamwork/Team Player:

- 5 *I was always willing to help others and fully participate in all activities.*
- 4 *I was mostly willing to help others and participated in most activities.*
- 3 *I was sometimes willing to help others and sometimes participated in activities.*
- 2 *I was rarely willing to help others and rarely participated in activities.*
- 1 *I refused to help others and never participated in activities.*

Notes:

Communication:

- 5 *I was always willing to participate in group discussions and communicated regularly with leaders.*
- 4 *I mostly participated in group discussions and and communicated most of the time with leaders.*
- 3 *I sometimes participated in group discussions & occasionally communicated with leaders.*
- 2 *I rarely participated in group discussions and did not communicate with leaders often.*
- 1 *I never participated in group discussions and refused to communicate with leaders.*

Notes:

Adaptability:

- 5 *I was always able to adjust to changes and unexpected circumstances.*
- 4 *I was mostly able to adjust to changes and unexpected circumstances.*
- 3 *I sometimes was able to adjust to changes and unexpected circumstances.*
- 2 *I rarely was able to adjust to changes and unexpected circumstances.*
- 1 *I did not adjust well to changes and unexpected circumstances.*

Notes:

Leadership:

- 5 *I always demonstrated leadership skills ie. motivation, positive attitude, and responsibility.*
- 4 *I mostly demonstrated leadership skills ie. motivation, positive attitude, and responsibility.*
- 3 *I sometimes demonstrated leadership skills ie. motivation, positive attitude, and responsibility.*
- 2 *I rarely demonstrated leadership skills ie. motivation, positive attitude, and responsibility.*
- 1 *I did not demonstrated leadership skills ie. motivation, positive attitude, and responsibility.*

Notes:

Recommendations:

- I should be recommended to apply for the next level of expedition without reservation.
- I should be recommended to apply for the next level of expedition if I improve in the following areas: _____

- I should be recommended to apply for an expedition at the same level.
- I should be recommended to apply for an expedition at a lower level.
- I would not recommend myself for additional expeditions.

Summary:

Student Signature

Date

Appendix H: Student Project Reflection Question Guide

1. How much did you know about the subject before you started?
2. What process did you go through to produce this project?
3. Have you done a similar kind of work in the past (earlier in the year or in a previous grade; in school or out of school)?
4. In what ways have you gotten better at this kind of work?
5. In what ways do you think you need to improve?
6. What problems did you encounter while working on this project? How did you solve them?
7. What resources did you use while working on this project? Which ones were especially helpful? Which ones would you use again?
8. What are you still confused about?
9. What were you surprised by?
10. How do you feel about this project? What parts of it do you particularly like? Dislike? Why? What did/do you enjoy about this project?
11. What was especially satisfying to you about either the process or the finished product?
12. What did/do you find frustrating or challenging about it?
13. What were your standards for this project? Did you meet your standards?
14. What were your goals for this project? Did your goals change as you worked on it? Did you meet your goals?
15. What does this project reveal about you as a learner?
16. What did you learn about yourself as you worked on this piece?
17. Have you changed any ideas you used to have on this subject?
18. Find another project that you did at the beginning of the year to compare and contrast with this what changes can you see? How did those changes come about? What does that tell you about yourself and how you learn?
19. What is the one thing you particularly want people to notice when they look at your work?
20. What do your classmates particularly notice about your project when they look at it?
21. In what ways did your work meet the standards for this project? In what ways did it not meet those standards?
22. If someone else were looking at the project, what might they learn about who you are?
23. What would you like to learn more about? How are you going to learn it?
24. What would you change if you had a chance to do this project over again?
25. What will you change in the next revision of this piece?
26. What's one goal you would like to set for yourself for your next project?
27. What would you like to spend more time on at school?
28. What things might you want more help with on future projects?