

EXPLORATION
ACTIVITY PACK

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The possibilities for exploration are endless: from faraway places to microscopic biomes to the mysteries of our own minds, fascinating discoveries await those who venture. Encourage all your students to set their own intentions for exploration and to seek adventure along the way.

This activity packet includes a selection of resources for educators, families, and students.

BOOKLIST: A list of books about exploration recommended by RIF

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: An activity about exploration for the classroom

HOME ACTIVITY: An activity about exploration designed to help students continue learning at home

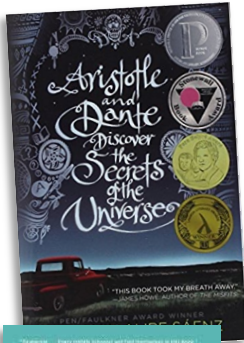
STUDENT ACTIVITY: An activity about exploration for students to complete independently

We suggest you print and copy the **Home Activity, Student Activity, and Booklist** pages and send them home to extend the learning.

For more reading resources, visit
www.RIF.org/literacy-central/collections/middle-school-family-literacy-initiative-exploration

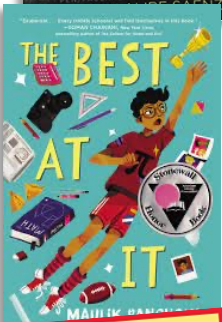
EXPLORATION BOOKLIST

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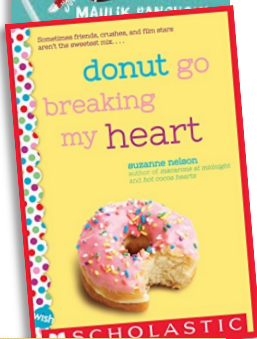
Aristotle & Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe

Author: Benjamin Alire Saenz
Relationships, Grades 9-12



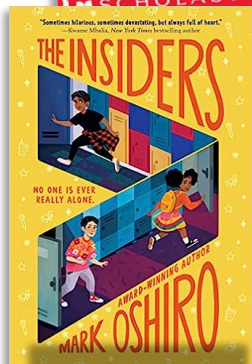
The Best at It

Author: Maulik Pancholy
Friendship, Grades 3-7



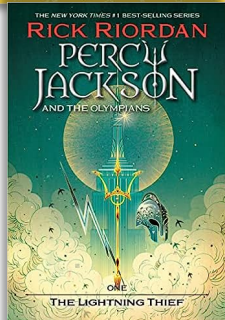
Donut Go Breaking My Heart

Author: Suzanne Nelson
The Arts, Grades 4-7



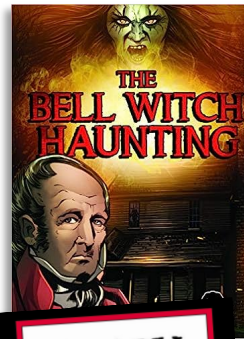
The Insiders

Author: Mark Oshiro,
Problem Solving, Grades 3-7



Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief

Author: Rick Riordan,
Fantasy/Sci-Fi, Grades 5-9



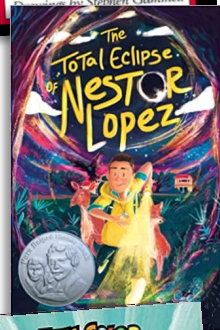
The Bell Witch Haunting

Author: Blake Hoena,
Family, Grades 3-7



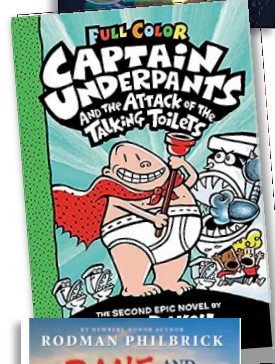
Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark

Author: Alvin Schwartz
Illustrator: Stephen Gammell
Horror, Grades 3-7



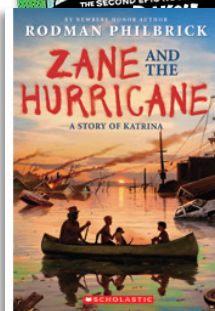
The Total Eclipse of Nestor Lopez

Author: Adrianna Cuevas
Mystery, Grades 3-7



Captain Underpants and the Attack of the Talking Toilets

Author: Dav Pilkey,
Funny, Grades 3-7



Zane and the Hurricane

Author: Rodman Philbrick
Nature, Grades 5-8

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

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SET YOUR OWN COURSE

Give your students the chance to dream about how they would explore if they had all the resources they needed...and then encourage them to take steps towards satisfying their curiosity. This activity opens up the imagination and closes with practical but exciting options for self-directed learning.

STEPS

1. Read books about exploration of many different kinds (e.g., space exploration, undersea exploration, travel, microscopic investigation) with your students and talk about what exploration means and encompasses.
2. Using the simplified grant application on the next page, have students dream up an exploration they would like to make if they had the funds to do it (the end of the grant application helps students brainstorm ways to explore their interest from the comfort of their desks and with no funding).
3. Provide a structure for “grant application review,” where students either exchange papers, meet in small groups to discuss their ideas, or present to the class (or some combination, to meet student needs). Encourage student reviewers to offer additional suggestions for self-directed exploration of the topic.
4. (Optional) Provide some class time during the month, if possible, for students to participate in their self-designed exploration.
5. (Optional) Have students make presentations, in the style and media best suited to their topic, about their chosen topic and what they’ve learned.

EXPLORATION GRANT APPLICATION

Name:	Date:
Exploration Topic:	Budget Desired:
Synopsis of Exploration (1 sentence):	
Goals (up to 3): 1. 2. 3.	
Materials/Resources Required (list):	
Detailed Description (paragraph or steps) of exploration plan:	
Please describe what challenges you anticipate during the exploration.	
How will completing this exploration change your life and/or the lives of others?	
List three ways you will build knowledge about your topic and plan without spending any money or leaving your desk/classroom/school/home. 1. 2. 3.	

HOME ACTIVITY

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FAMILY MEMBER INTERVIEW

Your child has been learning about exploration at school and this activity is designed to extend the learning at home.

Help your child expand their understanding of exploration and get to know a family member a bit better through a person-to-person interview. For these purposes, an exploration could be something personal (e.g., finding out about your ancestry), something work-related (e.g., looking for a solution to a challenge in the workplace), or something more classically “exploratory” (e.g., hiking a trail to find a waterfall).

STEPS

1. Identify a family member (maybe you!) who has a story of an exploration (as described above, this does not have to be a classically defined exploration involving travel and adventure).
2. Set up a time for your child to interview the person you identify. The interview could take place in person, by phone, on a video call, or by email.
3. If your child needs it, help them develop a list of questions:
 - a. What title would you assign to the exploration you’re going to talk about today?
 - b. What made you want to explore this topic/area?
 - c. How did you start your exploration?
 - d. What was it like while you were exploring (e.g., exciting, exhausting, exhilarating)?
 - e. What challenges did you face?
 - f. What did you discover?
4. After the interview, help your child write a thank you note and talk to your child about what they learned about the interviewee and/or exploration in general.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

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CHAIN-LINK

Based on your recent focus on exploration, this activity sets you on a course to follow the links to more and more information about a topic of your choice. Start with something that piques your interest but for which you have no expertise (e.g., watercolor, hieroglyphics, electric guitars, biomimicry), share your topic with your teacher or parent, and then become a virtual explorer.

STEPS

1. Identify your starting interest.
2. Google it.
3. Pick a starting point on the first page of results.
4. Click on your selection and consume the information at that page.
5. Find a link on the page you've just reviewed and repeat step 4.
6. Find a link on the page you've just reviewed and repeat step 4.
7. Find a video (if you haven't already) that is about your topic. Watch it.
8. Find an audio file (e.g., podcast, song) that is about your topic. Listen to it.
9. Write something about what you've learned (e.g., a poem, a song, an essay, a list, a letter to the editor – anything).
10. Share what you've learned, if you choose.