

summer activity guide

Exploring My World

ages
13–15



About the Summer Activity Guides

Summers are for fun and engaged learning. In 2020 as the impact of the pandemic is widely felt, summer opportunities will be different for young people, families, and afterschool and summer program staff. The Summer Activity Guides were developed to help engage youth with supportive adults in a range of places.

The activities and resources in the Summer Activity Guides are intentionally designed to support youth-serving summer programs in driving consistent engagement and providing ongoing opportunities for youth skill-building and emotional well-being. In addition to the activities for youth, supplemental materials will be available to support professional development and enhance family engagement.

The Guides include 150 original activities and challenges organized by four different age groups (5-9) (10-12) (13-15) (16-18). The activities are adaptable for in-person and virtual instruction, or a hybrid of both, as well as sent as take-home packets.

All activities should be safely executed and aligned with state and local health guidelines.



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Research a Country

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

In this literacy activity, teens will research a country to learn more about life in that country and expand their world view. As part of the ‘Exploring My World’ unit, this activity supports the development of self-efficacy, evaluation, perspective-taking, appreciating diversity, respect for others, and reflection.

SUPPLIES

- ‘Country Research’ worksheet
- Pen or pencil
- Computer/smartphone/tablet with internet connection

STEPS

- Learning about other countries and cultures is a great way to expand your worldview and understand more about the world around you.
- Make sure you have a copy of the ‘Country Research’ worksheet, a writing utensil, and a way to access the internet.
- Select a country, outside the United States, that you would like to learn more about. This could be a country you’ve visited, one you’ve always dreamed of visiting, or any country you find interesting.
- Complete the attached ‘Country Research’ worksheet, using the internet to look up any necessary information.
 - You may need to use multiple sources to answer all of the questions about your selected country.
- Prepare to share what you learned about your selected country with your peers!

ADAPTATIONS

- If facilitating virtually or in-person, create time for teens to share their research with their peers. Allow time for teens to ask questions and engage in discussion about the different countries and what they learned.
- If teens do not have a printer, they can write their answers to the worksheet questions on a separate sheet of paper.



EXTENSIONS

- Share your research with a friend or family member. Do they know any other facts or information about this country that you can add to your research?
- Look up videos on the history or culture of your selected country.
- Research a second country using the same process. What are the differences and/or similarities between the two countries you researched?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- How did you select the country you researched?
- Were you surprised by anything you learned about the country you researched?
- What are the differences between the country you researched and where you live? What are the similarities?
- Have you ever traveled to a different city or country? How was that experience?

Worksheet:

Country Research

Answer the following questions about your selected country

1. **Country:** _____

2. **Capital of the country:** _____

3. **Where is the country located?** _____

4. **Population of the country:** _____

5. **Language(s) spoken in this country:** _____

6. **Religion(s) practiced in this country:** _____

7. **Currency in this country:** _____

8. **Current political leader:** _____

9. **System of government:** _____

10. **Major cities:**

11. **Major landmarks or attractions:**

12. **Important holidays or cultural events:**

Worksheet:

Country Research

13. Major historical events:

14. Traditional foods and beverages:

15. Traditional music or songs:

16. Current celebrities or famous citizens:

17. Any other interesting information:

18. Draw an image of the country's flag:

Visitor's Guide

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

In this art and literacy activity, teens will create a visitor guide brochure for the country they researched in the ‘Research a Country’ activity. As part of the ‘Exploring My World’ unit, this activity supports the development of creativity, perspective-taking, appreciating diversity, respect for others, and reflection.

SUPPLIES

- ‘Country Research’ worksheet from the ‘Research a Country’ activity
- White or colored paper
- Pen or pencil
- Colored pencils/markers/crayons

STEPS

- In this activity you will be creating a visitor guide brochure for your selected country. A visitor guide is like a marketing tool to convince someone to visit that country.
- Make sure you have your completed ‘Country Research’ worksheet from the ‘Research a Country’ activity.
- Using the worksheet, pick which information would be most relevant for anyone planning a trip to your selected country.
 - Remember, you are trying to convince someone to visit this country, so make sure your information is fun and exciting!
- Once you have all the information for your visitor guide, fold a blank piece of paper into thirds to create your brochure.
- Create a cover page for your brochure, and add all of your selected information to the other sections.
- Decorate your brochure with colors and images that are relevant to your country.

ADAPTATIONS

- If facilitating virtually, teens can create their brochure on a computer using a Word document or create a visitor’s guide with a PowerPoint presentation.
- If facilitating virtually or in-person, create time for teens to share their brochures with their peers. Allow time for teens to ask questions and engage in discussion about the different countries and what they learned.



EXTENSIONS

- Make it a competition! After you have seen the brochures from all your peers, vote on which country you would most like to visit. The country with the most votes wins.
- Create a video version of your visitor’s guide by using imagery and voiceover, or by recording yourself talking about all the highlights of your selected country.
- Many countries have visitor websites for tourists – look up the visitor website for your selected country and see what information they share and what you could add to your own brochure.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- How did you select the most important information to share in your brochure?
- What are the most important pieces of information you want to know when visiting somewhere new?
- What was it like to make a guide for somewhere you have not visited?
- What kind of information would a visitor guide for your city or community contain?

Cultural Immersion

CHALLENGE DESCRIPTION

In this art and literacy challenge, teens will learn more about the culture of the country they researched in the ‘Research a Country’ activity. As part of the ‘Exploring My World’ unit, this challenge supports the development of creativity, perspective-taking, appreciating diversity, and respect for others.

SUPPLIES

- ‘Country Research’ worksheet from the ‘Research a Country’ activity
- Computer/smartphone/tablet with internet access
- Various food items depending on selected dish

STEPS

- In this activity you will be taking a deeper look at the culture of your selected country by examining their food, music, art, and language.
- Make sure you have your completed ‘Country Research’ worksheet from the ‘Research a Country’ activity.
- Using the worksheet, revisit what you researched around the food, music, celebrities, and other interesting information about your selected country.
 - If you do not have enough information on your worksheet, you may need to do additional research.
- Over the next week (or more), complete each of the following activities:
 - Look up a traditional recipe from your selected country and make it. Taste it with your family and see what everyone thinks!
 - Look up famous musical artists from your selected country and listen to their songs. Make a playlist of your favorite songs to share with friends.
 - Look up famous artists from your selected country and take a look at their work. This could be painters, sculptors, dancers, writers, actors, directors, etc.
 - Look up what language is spoken in your selected country and try to learn a few key phrases, such as “hello”, “goodbye”, “thank you”, or numbers 1-10.
 - There are many fun websites and apps for language learners, such as Duolingo (www.duolingo.com)



ADAPTATIONS

- If facilitating virtually or in-person, create time for teens to share the recipes, songs, art, and key phrases they learned.
- If facilitating digitally or with take-home packets, teens can share what they learned with their family members.
- If teens do not have all the necessary ingredients for their selected recipe, they can put their own twist on it with the available ingredients.

EXTENSIONS

- Get a PenPal from your selected country using a cultural exchange site such as <http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/>
- Teens can work together to create a group cookbook where they compile all of the recipes from their different countries.
- Teens can work together to create a group playlist of songs from their different countries.
- Teens can take turns teaching each other key phrases and numbers they learned in the different languages.

Virtual Field Trip

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

In this activity, teens will create go on their own virtual field trip to the country they researched in the ‘Research a Country’ activity. As part of the ‘Exploring My World’ unit, this activity supports the development of perspective-taking, appreciating diversity, respect for others, and reflection.

SUPPLIES

- ‘Country Research’ worksheet from the ‘Research a Country’ activity
- Computer/smartphone/tablet with internet access

STEPS

- In this activity you will be going on a virtual field trip to your selected country. After all your hard work it’s finally time to see this place with your own eyes!
- Make sure you have your completed ‘Country Research’ worksheet from the ‘Research a Country’ activity.
- Using the worksheet, revisit the section where you identified major cities and popular sites/attractions.
- Based on this information, select where you want to go on your virtual field trip.
 - For example, if you researched France you could choose to visit Paris and the famous sites there such as the Louvre or the Eiffel Tower.
- Navigate to one (or both) of the following sites to begin your virtual field trip:
 - <https://www.360cities.net/>
 - <https://www.google.com.earth/>
- In the search bar, type in the name of the country, city, or famous site you want to visit.
- Take your time exploring and keep note of your favorite places!

ADAPTATIONS

- If facilitating virtually, create time for teens to share their field trip experiences with one another and highlight their favorite sites.
- If facilitating in-person, take turns going on virtual field trips to everyone’s selected countries as a group. This could take place over several days or weeks.



EXTENSIONS

- Go on another virtual field trip by choosing a different city or country to explore. Invite a friend or family member to join you.
- Create a photo album of your virtual field trip by compiling your favorite images of the places you “visited”. You can even get fancy and photoshop yourself into the pictures!
- Create an itinerary and budget for this field trip as if you were actually going to go on the trip. How would you get there? Where would you stay? What sites would you see? How much would it all cost?
- Use the virtual field trip websites to look at images of popular sites in your own state.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Did anything you saw on your virtual field trip surprise you? If so, what?
- What was your favorite place you visited? Why? Would you like to go there in real life?
- What new information did you learn about your selected country by going on this virtual field trip?

Global Documentary

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

In this activity, teens will watch an 8-part documentary mini-series on global poverty and its impacts. As part of the ‘Exploring My World’ unit, this activity supports the development of perspective-taking, empathy, appreciating diversity, respect for others, and reflection.

SUPPLIES

- Computer/smartphone/tablet with internet access

STEPS

- In this activity you will watch an 8-part documentary mini-series. Each video is between 5-8 minutes in length.
 - You can watch all of the videos at once, or watch them over several days.
- This documentary series follows a group of college students who travel to rural Guatemala to better understand the reality of extreme poverty and living on just \$1 per day.
 - This series covers the issues of clean water, nutrition, Mayan culture, going to school, and finding work.
- The Mayan civilization was an indigenous society in Central America before the Spanish conquest in the 16th century. Descendants of the Maya still live in Central America today, and they make up 60% of the Guatemalan population.
- Follow this link to watch the 8-part documentary mini-series:
 - https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=P_L74av1RRDrIYw6spYn5W3yal_vQD4kz
- Take notes throughout the series on issues or key points that stand out to you. Consider the following questions while you’re watching:
 - How do we define ‘poverty’?
 - What factors keep a family or community in poverty?



EXTENSIONS

- Feeling inspired? Look up organizations that work to combat global poverty and see how you can join them or contribute.
- Create your own documentary mini-series about an issue – either global or local – that you are passionate about.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What, if anything, did you know about the Mayan culture before this series?
- Why should we care about global issues? How do they impact me personally?
- How did this series change your perspective on global issues?
- Did anything you see in this series surprise you? If so, what?
- Which issue highlighted in this series stood out to you the most? Why?
- What role can we play in ending global poverty?
- How do the issues highlighted in this series compare to issues in our own community? What are the differences? Similarities?

ADAPTATIONS

- If facilitating virtually, create time for teens to share their thoughts about the documentary and engage in a group discussion.
- If facilitating in-person, watch the documentary series together and engage in a group discussion afterwards.

CREDITS

- Activity inspiration from The Change Series: Living on One Dollar

The 50 State Afterschool Network



The Summer Activity Guide has been developed for the 50 State Afterschool Network with leadership from the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network to engage and support children and youth nationwide.

In each state, the afterschool network is broadening opportunities for youth. Seeking equitable outcomes for underserved children to succeed in school and future jobs, a statewide afterschool network brings together cross-sector leaders with a common vision and coordinated strategy to advance quality afterschool and summer learning programs

Alabama Afterschool Community Network
Alaska Afterschool Network
Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence
Arkansas Out of School Network
California AfterSchool Network
Colorado Afterschool Partnership
Connecticut After School Network
Delaware Afterschool Network
Florida Afterschool Network
Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network
Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance
Idaho Afterschool Network
Afterschool for Children and Teens Now (ACT Now) Coalition (IL)
Indiana Afterschool Network
Iowa Afterschool Alliance
Kansas Enrichment Network
Kentucky Out-of-School Alliance
Louisiana Center for Afterschool Learning
Maine Afterschool Network
Maryland Out of School Time Network
Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership
Michigan After-School Partnership
Ignite Afterschool (MN)
Missouri AfterSchool Network
Mississippi Statewide Afterschool Network
Montana Afterschool Alliance
Beyond School Bells (NE)

Nevada Afterschool Network
New Hampshire Afterschool Network
New Jersey School- Age Care Coalition
NMOST (New Mexico Out of School Time) Network
New York State Network for Youth Success
North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs
North Dakota Afterschool Network
Ohio Afterschool Network
Oklahoma Partnership for Expanded Learning Opportunities
OregonASK
Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool/Youth Development Network
Rhode Island Afterschool Network
South Carolina Afterschool Alliance
South Dakota Afterschool Network
Tennessee Afterschool Network
Texas Partnership for Out of School Time
Utah Afterschool Network
Vermont Afterschool, Inc.
Virginia Partnership for Out-of-School Time
Washington Expanded Learning Opportunities Network
West Virginia Statewide Afterschool Network
Wisconsin Afterschool Network
Wyoming Afterschool Alliance