

Learning Expeditions!

Are you ready to go?

You're about to venture beyond the walls of what you know into uncharted territory. A Learning Expedition, like learning itself, is an endless ocean, a bottomless cave, a mountain trail that disappears into the mist. Learning Expeditions are intergalactic, deep space travel. Are you ready for lift off?

Luckily, you're not alone. You'll have the other young people on your team, the staff of your after-school program, and your virtual teacher, Simon, as a guide. Who's Simon? Simon is inside the iPad that came in your Learning Expedition Trip Kit. He's full of information, questions, and clues to help you discover a treasure trove of knowledge.

Why did you sign up for a **Learning Expedition**? Let's review:

- You get to visit frickin' awesome places, places like the California Science Center, the Disney Concert Hall, and the Getty Center for the Arts. And it's totally free!!
- You get money for your favorite afterschool program, up to \$1000 per expedition!! Think about what your program could do with a \$1000--new sports equipment, musical instruments, or pizza parties every Friday.
- You get credit with your school. Each expedition will prepare you to show your school that you've done what it takes to graduate. If your teachers agree, they can give you academic credit, more time off during the school day, or an academic achievement award that can help you get a job or get into college.

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- You get to be a teacher. That's right, you get to teach other young people and share the discoveries from your expedition.
- You get to decide what you want to learn and how you're going to learn it. You're in charge.

So, I'll ask again, are you ready to go? Great. Here's what you do:

Step 1 - Preparation

- **Choose a subject** - Think about what subject you want your expedition to be about: science, math, language arts, English, history, social studies, arts. Find the people on your team who want to learn similar subjects.
- **Divide into groups** - Divide your team into four groups by what subject you want to learn about. Yes, two groups can study the same subject. But to be eligible for the full \$1000, you'll need four groups.
- **Pick a learning challenge** - Turn Simon on. Enter the names and grade levels of everyone on your team. Give your team a name and tell Simon the subject each group want to study. Simon will show you possible learning challenges. Each group chooses one, and no, they can't be the same! Simon will then tell you the four places you will travel to meet your learning challenges. All four groups, the whole team, will travel together.
- **Create a schedule** - Work with the staff member or adult volunteer and decide when your entire team can complete each leg of the journey.



Step 2 - Take a Trip

- **Scan the QR Code** - Use Simon to scan the code at the entrance to your destination. If you're at a park, type the name of the park into Simon.
- **Find yourself** - Simon will ask you questions about where you are. What do you see when you look north? What street are you on? What number bus stops nearby? We want you to find yourself so you can bring your friends and family back here and show them what you learned.
- **Do What Simon Says** - Simon will then ask questions and provide information and clues to each group in your team to help them make progress on their learning challenge. Work together to answer Simon's questions.
- **Load up your digital rucksack** - Simon will ask you to upload photos, videos, audio, or other material you find on the Internet related to the challenge. This goes into your team's online rucksack. You'll use this material later when you are teaching your challenge to the rest of the group, so the more material, the better your lesson will likely be.
- **Share** - Before leaving your destination, have each group explain what they learned. This is important practice for putting together and teaching your final lesson.



Step 3: Finish the Journey

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- **Download your collection** - After your last trip, open all the files your group uploaded to Simon during your expedition. You can access Simon's brain from another device. You don't need Simon with you for this part.
- **Create a lesson** - Use the material, the photos, video, and audio, to create a lesson plan to teach what you learned during the expedition to the rest of the team. Simon will help you write the plan and do a dry run.
- **Teach the Team** - As a group, use your lesson plan to teach the team about your challenge. Film this. And then upload the lessons and the video to Simon. An expert panel will evaluate these and award your team's work a rating on a scale from 1 to 10. Each point is worth \$100. A perfect ten means \$1000 for your afterschool program. We use the best lessons to create new learning challenges that Simon can use with other young people.
- **Earn credit** - Find the Learning Expeditions coordinator in your school district. Share the lesson plan and video with them. They will record and recognize your work with a certificate of achievement at the end of the school year.

Now that you're done, are you ready to go again? You can take as many learning expeditions as your afterschool program can manage. Keep taking learning challenges. If you accumulate enough challenges in a particular subject, your school might give you credit or let you skip ahead. Students whose teams receive the highest scores will be honored by the Mayor. This is a great thing to show a potential employer!!

So, are you ready to go?

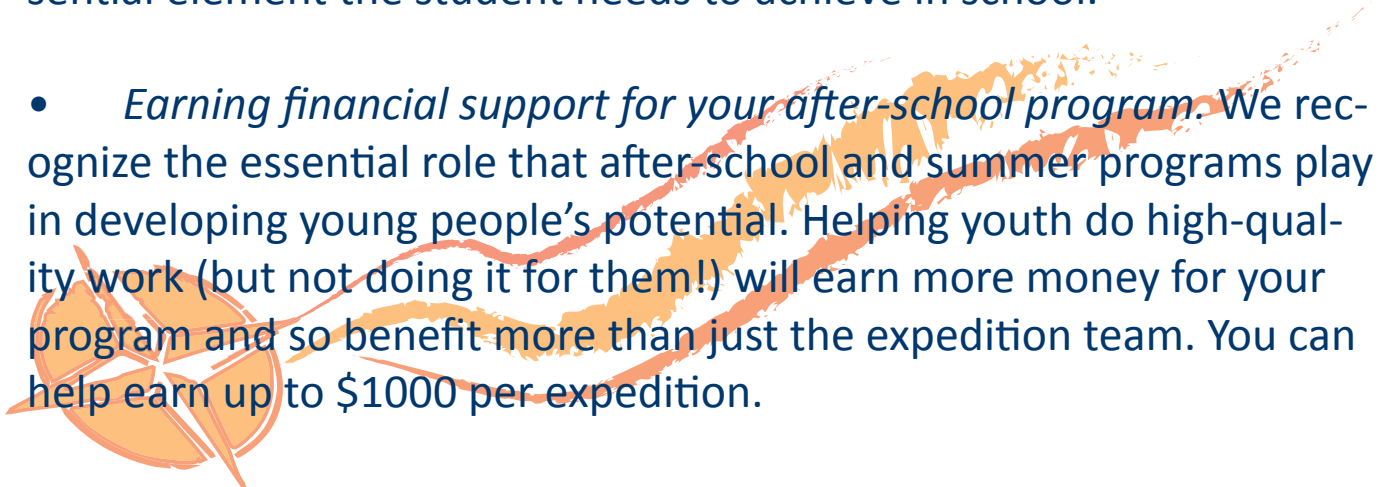
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Dear Trip Leader,

Thank you for your participation in Learning Expeditions, a revolutionary new approach to education sponsored by the Office of the Mayor, MacArthur Foundation, the Metropolitan Transit Authority, the City of Los Angeles Parks and Recreation Department, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, and over 100 arts, cultural, and educational institutions around Southern California.

By guiding young people through the program, you are helping make Los Angeles a model city for 21st century education. Here's how you're part of the solution:

- *By exposing young people to the cultural richness that exists in Southern California.* It's important that all young people feel they have access to the arts, history, outdoors, and educational opportunities that make Southern California such a great place to live.
- *Connecting out-of-school time to in-school learning.* The learning challenges given to youth are the same as the California State Education Standards. Each challenge completed means mastery of an essential element the student needs to achieve in school.
- *Earning financial support for your after-school program.* We recognize the essential role that after-school and summer programs play in developing young people's potential. Helping youth do high-quality work (but not doing it for them!) will earn more money for your program and so benefit more than just the expedition team. You can help earn up to \$1000 per expedition.



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- *Earning support for the arts.* At a time of budget cutbacks, the arts are in danger. The Mayor's Office has promised to match the money earned through the expeditions with a grant to the City's Cultural Affairs Department. This means more support for the arts and cultural institutions you will visit on your expedition, giving them a real stake in the learning of each participant.
- *Demonstrating the power of the arts for learning across the curriculum.* Learning Expeditions uses the arts and aesthetic experiences to teach subjects across the curriculum. The program is part of the Art Commission's Arts for All initiative that is working to ensure arts education has a place within every school in the county. We use the lessons that students come up with as inspiration to create better learning challenges. We are updating Simon all the time with new ideas and opportunities for learning in Southern California.

One of the special things about Learning Expeditions is that it's free for participating organizations and youth: free performances, free admission, free transportation. As the guide, you are keeper of the passes that allow your team to discover everything our county has to offer. You can complete the expedition during a single day, on multiple days, or take a trip once a week, whatever works best with your schedule and your after-school program.

We also encourage you to keep Simon, the enclosed iPad, safe in its protective pouch and with you during the expedition. When you're out on the town, the learning will come fast and furious. Simon is a wise teacher, but he is fragile. You can help Simon by making sure one team doesn't dominate his time. To earn the most money, each team has to do its best work!

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If you have additional questions about what it means to be an expedition guide, visit our website at www.learningexpeditions.org or call our office at 213-564-9395.

Happy trails!

The Learning Expeditions Team

