

Engaging Experts

I can equip and empower my learners to interact with experts to gain deeper understanding and perspective on their topic.

Overview: Engaging Experts

Why Experts?

Engaging an expert adds depth to your FLEx by introducing a new voice and perspective. The perspective of an expert serves as a rudder and a guide for you and your learners toward real work that meets real needs of real people within your community.

An expert can be invited in to help you and your learners develop a broader and deeper understanding of the causes and realities of the real needs of your community, what real work could be meaningful and appropriate for your learners, or examples where real work is already being done. In this way, you and your learners may uncover an opportunity to partner with someone in the community for even more powerful transformation.

An expert may be able to help learners identify and remove assumptions, and removes the pressure from you, the teacher, to be the expert in all aspects of the FLEx. This interaction with a voice from outside the school community also begins to make the FLEx feel more real to the learners.

Who is an Expert?

An expert is anyone who can offer a different perspective or understanding of your topic.

An expert may bring deeper understanding to the real needs your learners have identified, the experience and realities of the real people your learners want to engage, and/or the real work your learners are imagining.

One lens through which to think about selecting an expert is to consider an expert who may be able to interact with your students more than one time. Could an expert visit the classroom on more than one occasion? Could an expert be called upon to offer feedback later in the process? Could the expert join your learners in their fieldwork? An ongoing relationship with an expert adds richness to the learning and relational aspects of FLEx.

Reflection Tool, Reflecting on your Learner's Ideas to Consider Experts

Use the tools below to capture your own thinking and your learners' thinking from the exit tickets from Step 4. The reflection questions are intended to guide you in considering both *what* you and your learners need to know and *who* you and your learners could invite into your journey at this point. You may find yourself flipping through your learners' exit tickets multiple times, looking for clues about what they're thinking and what they need at this point in their journey. Make sure to capture their ideas in the spaces below and feel free to add your own!

What do we need to know before we begin our FLEx?

What would be helpful for me and my learners to understand about the real need in our community we want to address?
What learning could contribute to greater understanding and empathy of the real people we'll engage during our FLEx?
What skills and knowledge will be helpful for me and my learners for our real work ?

Who do we need to listen to and learn from for our FLEx?

Who are the real people who we hope will be affected by our FLEx?
Who are the real people who are already addressing the real need ? (Government officials, faith-based organizations, non-profit organizations, public services)
Who are the real people who have expertise in the real work we want to do?

Design Template, Planning for Expert Visits

You've likely generated more people who could serve as experts than you feasibly have time to engage, and no doubt each person could offer a perspective that would add strength to your FLEx! Based on your overall thinking above, select an expert to visit your class and engage with your learners. If you want to invite and include more than one expert, feel free!

Our expert is:
How many times will your learners work with the expert? What possibilities exist for the expert to support the FLEx by offering feedback on our work and thinking?
How will we invite the expert to visit our class? What possibilities exist for equipping the learners to be the ones who issue the invitation?

With your learners, prepare to learn from the expert:

1. Learners can be invited into the process of selecting and inviting the expert into the FLEx via phone call, email, etc.
2. Introduce learners to the expert through available resources (consider the use of a Jigsaw read using websites, articles, a biography, organization outline, etc.)
3. Using the Idea Catcher, "Preparing for our expert," invite learners to identify possible questions to ask their expert, based on their current ideas for their Community Engagement.
4. Ask for learners to volunteer to share their Deep Hope and Focus Statement with their expert, and for volunteers to ask the questions they've identified.

Learner Idea Catcher, Preparing for Our Expert

Our Expert is

Real People--How can our expert help us grow in understanding and empathy for the real people with whom we wish to engage?

Questions we could ask:

Real Needs of Our Community—how can our expert help us better understand the causes and realities of the **real needs** of our community?

Questions we could ask:

Real Work—how can our expert help us with the real work we want to do?

Questions we could ask:

Planning for our Expert

Your learners' first experience with your chosen expert has great potential for shaping the remainder of your FLEx! Use the outline below to plan the time you and your learners will spend with your expert, the questions you will ask, etc. Feel free to adjust the plan below as desired—this is simply an outline and an example of how you might structure your time. Once it is completed, consider sending a copy of your plan before the visit, to your expert to foster an even deeper partnership for learning.

Learning Target:

Time	Activity & Description	Our Plan
10 minutes	Opening Circle With all participants in a circle (you, your learners, the expert), invite each person share their name and respond to a prompt or a question. The prompt should be simple and fun, such as, “what’s your favorite treat on a hot day?” The purpose here is for everyone to be honored by being named, and to break the ice by having everyone speak.	
5 minutes	Expert Introductions Invite your expert to introduce himself/herself further by describing personal experiences, interests, etc. that contribute to his/her expertise related to your FLEx. *	
10 minutes	Introduction of Deep Hope Learning Target Ask selected learners introduce the expert to the Essential Learning Target, by reading it aloud. Learners can describe how they developed this statement and add description or explanation to any phrases or ideas where that feels necessary. The expert should be invited to offer feedback or ask clarifying questions at this point.	

15 minutes	Expert Sharing Invite the expert to share relevant stories, presentation, expertise, etc. This section will depend largely on the background of the expert. *	
15 minutes	Questions and Answers Learners can ask the questions they have prepared for the expert at this time, and the expert can also be invited to ask the learners more questions about their FLEx.	
5 minutes	Exit Ticket	

Guide your learners toward an expression of gratitude for the expert's perspective and gift of time. While you will certainly want to thank your expert while he/she is present, you can also invite your learners to practice gratitude through writing a card after the expert's visit has concluded.

Learner Idea Catcher, During Expert's Visit

	I notice	I wonder
Real Work		
Real People		
Real Need		

Exit Ticket

Name:

Complete the sentences below to reflect on your experience learning from our expert.

What? What did our expert say that stands out to you?

So what? Why is that important?

Now what? How should that affect our FLEx?