



SMITHSONIAN



# EXPLORERS

AMAZING TALES OF THE WORLD'S  
GREATEST ADVENTURERS

*With a foreword by Barbara Hillary*

## TEACHER'S GUIDE

PREPARED BY



Reading Is  
Fundamental  
RIF.org



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### NOTE TO EDUCATORS

DK has devoted itself to creating nonfiction books that are not only accessible for children but interesting to them as well. Their children's books make learning fun by including colorful illustrations and photographs, using kid-friendly language, and offering a wide range of topics to be explored. Nonfiction texts are not always easy to implement in classrooms, but DK has found that particular balance of education and entertainment that leave children wanting to know more.

*Explorers* catalogs the lives and achievements of more than 50 brave explorers ranging from the explorations of an Ancient Greek voyager to those of the current day. This book is a useful print tool for teachers to introduce their students to history and geography, while simultaneously sparking their sense of adventure and curiosity. *Explorers* will act as a reference guide, providing students with introductory information on explorers they can choose to learn more about through research. They will meet many extraordinary people within this book's pages, even ones they have never heard of, and they will read about the explorers' exciting feats that they will not soon forget.

This book contains the historical figures that most have grown up reading about, but with all the lesser-known individuals highlighted in this book, it is no surprise that it could take longer than most to circulate the classroom. It is vital that each child has the opportunity to browse the whole book in order to fully engage their minds as they think about the lives of these explorers. For this reason, it is suggested that the book not be read "cover to cover" by the teacher, but rather that the student look through it and decide who they want to learn more about.

This book is recommended for students in grades 2–4. It can be used to entice an advanced 1st or 2nd grade student, as well as to appeal to a 5th or 6th grade reluctant reader.

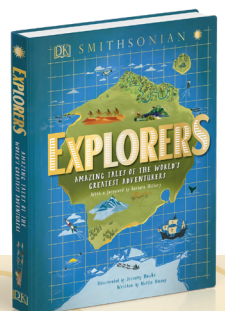
The team at RIF has prepared this teacher's guide with educators in mind. The team consists of the following people:

Edward Deleon, Chief Program and Content Officer

Keisha Siriboe, PhD, Director of Programs and Content

Pamela Thornton, former educator and librarian for Anne Arundel Public Schools in Maryland

Adele St. Martin, pre-service educator and researcher for RIF



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## LESSON PLAN

For additional resources go to RIF's Literacy Central ([www.rif.org/DK](http://www.rif.org/DK)). There you'll find word lists, puzzles, games, and other resources to accompany this book as well as other DK publications.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### PRE-READING QUESTIONS:

Before making this book available to students in the classroom, ask a few pre-reading questions to activate their prior knowledge and get them interested in the topic. Some sample questions ranging in complexity might be:

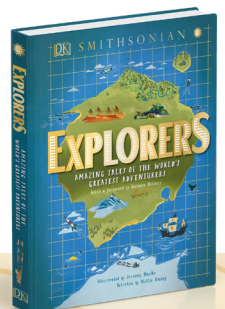
- Have you ever explored in your backyard, neighborhood, or on the playground?
- What kind of discoveries did you make?
- Did you share your discoveries with your friends and family?
- Have you ever read a book about an explorer from history?
- What kind of discoveries did they share with the world?
- Why is it important that people explore the world?
- What do you think is the most dangerous part about being an explorer?

### READING:

Now, allow the students to read through the book during free time. Once all students have had the opportunity to examine the book, discuss the post-reading questions below in a conversational and open-ended style. Note: This could span several weeks depending on how much free time the children have and how many copies are available in the classroom.

### POST-READING QUESTIONS

- What were some discoveries that you didn't know about before reading this book?
- Did looking at this book make you want to do deeper research on a certain explorer?
- These explorers came from very different places and time periods in history. What are some characteristics that you think they all had in common? What are some feelings they might have experienced on their journeys?
- Was there one explorer you related to personally? Why?
- What are some ways these historic explorers' travels might be different if they set out today?



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## CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT)

### WRITING ACTIVITIES

- Choose an explorer from the book. Find more information about them through at least one source beyond *Explorers*. Use what you find and write a short 8–10 sentence biography on your chosen explorer using at least two linking words in the story. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.1, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.2)
- Choose any living explorer from the book. Use a computer and some print resources to learn more about the explorer's life. Draft a letter to the person asking at least three questions about their life, work, or experiences. Utilize peer editing to revise your rough draft. Type a final copy and send it to the explorer directly. Use the school's address as the return address, and allow the child to read replies from their chosen explorer to the class. The student will write a mini research paper on the explorer while waiting for responses. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.5, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.7, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.8, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.10)

### STUDENTS AS EXPLORERS WRITING ACTIVITY (WITH STEM FOR 3RD AND 4TH GRADERS)

- Arrange children into three groups (sea and ice, land, and air and space). Ask them to brainstorm what they will need to pack depending on the climate and terrain of the assigned group. You can let them look through that section of the book for ideas. Prompt them to write a list and present it to the class, allowing time for feedback from both you and fellow classmates. Ask students to compare and contrast their group's list with one of the other groups in a few sentences. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.3, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.9)
- Choose one group of explorers that the class will study. Ask students what supplies an explorer preparing for an expedition to a remote destination like the Arctic might consider bringing. They will compile a list, find the weight of each item, and find totals. The teacher can use a backpack and free weights to show how heavy an explorer's bag can get. They can plot on a graph the weights of each group's bag or different variations of the supplies of one group by adding or subtracting the weights of certain supplies from their bag. For 4th graders, use all four basic operations in word problem format. (CCSS.Math.Content.3.MD.A.2; CSS.Math.Content.4.MD.A.2)

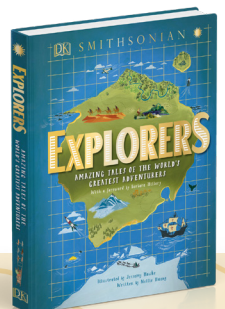
### STEM (FOR 2ND GRADE)

- Choose an explorer and, with your students, do a deeper dive into their contributions to science. Jeanne Baret (found on p.28), for example, was a French botanist who discovered hundreds of exotic plant species from Asia and the South Pacific, which she then introduced to Europe. Discuss with students ways in which she did this, if different climates might affect how well the plant grew, and what else the plant might need to thrive in a new environment. Attempt some forms of seed collecting (from the schoolyard or ask students to look at home) and planting, and track or graph data. (NGSS 2-LS2-1, NGSS 2-LS4-1)

### OTHER IDEAS FOR THE CLASSROOM:

Engage auditory, visual, and bodily kinesthetic learners:

- Play recordings of sounds typically heard in a rain forest or on a beach to help students imagine what the explorers might have experienced.
- Display photos of regions specific explorers visited on projectors or SmartBoards.
- Bring in artifacts that children might not be familiar with, such as a compass, binoculars, or foreign currency.

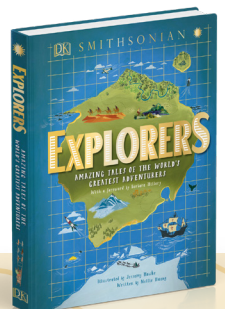


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### WORD LIST

<b>ANTHROPOLOGY</b>	the study of humans and their cultures
<b>ARTIFACT</b>	human-made object, usually from the past
<b>CASTAWAY</b>	person who has been stranded, for example someone who has swum to shore or to an island after their boat has sunk
<b>CONSERVATION</b>	looking after the Earth to protect the environment
<b>DEFORESTATION</b>	when a large number of trees in a forest or area are cut down or destroyed
<b>ETHNOGRAPHY</b>	study and recording of a particular culture or society
<b>FRONTIER</b>	border of a country that separates it from other countries
<b>HERBARIUM</b>	place where dried plants or herbs are kept to be studied
<b>INDIGENOUS PEOPLE</b>	first people who lived in a place
<b>MISSIONARY</b>	someone sent to convert the native people of a country to a particular religion
<b>NAVIGATION</b>	method of figuring out the route to follow when traveling
<b>PILGRIMAGE</b>	journey to a sacred place for religious reasons
<b>SCHOLAR</b>	person who is an expert on a particular subject
<b>SLAVERY</b>	when people are owned by another person and forced to work for them
<b>TRADE ROUTE</b>	route sailed or traveled by merchants carrying goods from one place to another



For the curious

[www.dk.com](http://www.dk.com)



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