

Expeditions – FAQ

CAN EXPEDITIONS OPERATE CONCURRENTLY WITH MODULES?

- Yes, but...
 - There is a difference in grade values between a Module (420) and an *Expedition* (100). (Note: a summative assessment – to be taken at the conclusion of each *Expedition* – will be available in summer 2016. This summative assessment will increase the points possible for each *Expedition*.)
 - There are no Knowledge Survey items in an *Expedition*.
 - Attendance/participation is not calculated.
 - There are framework differences that will have to be managed.

CAN I PARTIALLY UPDATE A CURRENT MODULES LAB TO INCLUDE STEM EXPEDITIONS. WHAT CONSIDERATIONS NEED TO BE MADE?

- A mix of rotational Modules and rotational STEM *Expeditions* is certainly possible due to the similar length of time between both instructional units.
- To facilitate the lab, *Synergy ITC* is required. The Modules in the current lab would need to be compatible with *Synergy ITC* to create this mixed environment.

IS THERE AN UPGRADE PATH FROM EXISTING MODULES TO THE STEM EXPEDITIONS?

- Yes, for some of the STEM *Expeditions* that is possible.

DO EXPEDITIONS HAVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS?

- Yes, based on the definition of *performance assessments*, but they are different from Modules.
- Performance and skills assessments are in the logbook. Performance assessments can be graded in logbooks for STEM *Expeditions*, and the Teacher's Notes mention the need to visit student groups during specific activities.

COMPARED TO A MODULE, HOW MUCH OF THE EXPEDITION EXPERIENCE IS APPLICATION-BASED?

- More of the *Expedition* experience is hands on.
- Hands-on applications are the focus of each *Expedition*, with all content supporting the completion of these applications. The hands-on applications provide meaningful experiences that help the student accomplish the goal/challenge as conveyed by the story.
- The engineering component in STEM *Expeditions* requires students to brainstorm ideas, design, build, test, and improve a product or process. Throughout this process students apply what they've learned through lessons and other activities.
- In *Expeditions*, students spend more time working in their logbooks recording and analyzing data from experiments, graphing, drawing conclusions, and justifying conclusions. In Modules, there are no logbooks and less emphasis on justifying conclusions. Using the logbooks allows students to take multiple paths and have original thoughts and creativity in their conclusions and justifications.

HOW IS WHOLE CLASS DEFINED IN RELATION TO EXPEDITIONS?

- All students in a classroom are going through the same material at the same time. Students are at workstations with content on a device in front of them – in groups of one, two, three, or four.

WHAT DEVICES CAN BE USED FOR EXPEDITION DELIVERY?

- Mac and PC with Chrome browser
- Apps are being developed for tablet delivery.
- No third-party software is being used in development at this time.

WHY CHROME?

- Chrome is the recommended browser for *Storyline* (the software used to create the *Expeditions*).
- Other browsers interpret HTML5 incorrectly in some instances.

ARE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS VALIDATED?

- The questions are written based on the principles and guidelines of the concept of *Understanding By Design* (Grant Wiggins & Jay McTighe). While there are no rubrics for “grading” a question, the guidelines are being followed and an internal peer writer review has been done.

ARE THE SOFT SKILLS COVERED IN STEM EXPEDITIONS THE SAME AS IN MODULES?

- Many of the soft skills are the same between Modules and *Expeditions*; however, in many *Expeditions* there are new skills covered such as critique and evaluation of other students and presentations. Problem solving is built into all titles.

WOULD EXPEDITIONS BE CATEGORIZED AS PROJECT-BASED LEARNING AND/OR PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING?

- STEM Expeditions have elements of both, but technically not all of either. They are mostly problem-based learning. Problem-based learning is free will in nature and has very little instruction and guidance. To that point, some *Expedition* titles have too much guidance to be classified strictly as problem-based learning. All have some elements of problem-based learning, but the degree to which we guide students would hinder classifying them as 100% problem-based learning, mostly because of classroom scenarios and equipment provided.
- Project-based learning tackles real-world problems with real-world solutions. This is localized education with a public audience. Limitations on classifying *Expeditions* as project-based learning would include the extensive modeling aspect of the curriculum instead of the application of real-world solutions.