Investigating the role of virtual reality in geography via Google Expeditions

Conference or Workshop Item

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Investigating the role of virtual reality in Geography via Google Expeditions

Field Studies Council: Steve Tilling
The Open University: Ana-Despina Tudor and Shailey Minocha
Geographical Association: Becky Kitchen

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The project

- Investigating the role of virtual reality in science and geography school education
  - for teaching concepts and phenomena
  - to support geographical and scientific enquiry
  - to complement physical field trips
Agenda

- What is virtual reality?
- Google Expeditions
- Demo
- Individual activity
- Group discussion
What is virtual reality?

A simulated environment on a computer or mobile platform (e.g., smartphone, tablet):

- Second Life
- Virtual Skiddaw: 3D Geology Field Trips (Unity 3D)
- Head-mounted Displays
- Viewers
- Mobility
Google Expeditions

Tablet + Smartphone + Cardboard Viewer + App + Router
Google Expeditions App

- Free app, available on Android and iOS platforms
- Over 500 expeditions (three types)
  - physical locations, e.g. London Olympic Park, International Space Station
  - simulations, e.g. process of photosynthesis and pollination
  - career expeditions, e.g. day in the life of a software developer, Dean of an Engineering Faculty
- Each expedition has
  - Photospheres (360° view) with some explanatory text, points of interest and questions (Guide mode)
  - Google Cardboard viewer gives the 3D view (follower mode)
How you could help us?

- Trying it out today (Demo)
- Individual activity – thoughts on using virtual reality in your teaching (activity sheet)
- Group discussion – using virtual reality in enquiry
Demo: List of Expeditions

- Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo
- Borneo: Plant Adaptations
- The Great Barrier Reef
- Volcanoes around the world
- London Olympic Park
Individual activity

Considering any one of the stages you teach/train (e.g. KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4, etc.)

- Think of **one example** on how you would use Virtual Reality in a lesson or a set of lessons.
- It could be a difficult concept or a process or any topic where you feel Virtual Reality could play a role.
- **Explain your choice**
Geographical enquiry and Virtual Reality

- Creating a need to know
- Questioning
- Collecting data
- Making sense of the data
- Reflecting on learning
Enquiry for physical field trips

Pre-physical field trip → During a Physical field trip → Post-physical field trip
Group activity

- What are your current practices of teaching questioning?
- How would you use Virtual Reality to facilitate questioning?
Website and contact details

- Project website:
  [http://www.shaileyminocha.info/google-expeditions/](http://www.shaileyminocha.info/google-expeditions/); has links to blog-posts

- Email addresses:
  - Steve Tilling, FSC: [steve@field-studies-council.org](mailto:steve@field-studies-council.org)
  - Ana and Shailey at the OU: [ana.tudor; shailey.minocha]@open.ac.uk

- Twitter:
  - @Save_Fieldwork @AATudor @ShaileyMinocha