

Part 1: Close Read- Underline main ideas, circle anything strange, and WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS IN THE MARGIN-we often forget this one.

Google Expeditions goggles help teachers take students on field trips

By Kansas City Star, adapted by Newsela staff

On a recent Friday morning, students from Kansas City, Missouri took a field trip. They went to the Grand Canyon in Arizona. The second-graders were back in class before lunchtime. Actually, they really never left their classroom. They never even left their seats, for that matter. But the Boone Elementary School students did go to the Grand Canyon — virtually. They saw the world wonder in 3-D and said it felt as if they were standing right in the midst of its rocky formation.

### Virtual Reality Field Trips

Holsman has been the lady with the virtual field trips since last fall. That was when she first brought Google Expeditions and its virtual reality (VR) technology to the school district. VR lets users enter new worlds created by computers. Putting on goggles allows one to step into these computer-edited places. Holsman began training teachers to use VR to energize lessons. The technology helps make the lessons more real for students. On that Friday it was teacher Sydney Craddocks' second-graders' turn to travel. Holsman handed out about a dozen VR goggles connected to the Google Expeditions app. The app was operated by Holsman, the field trip guide.

With an iPad in hand, Holsman could see everything the students could see. A little smiley face representing each student in the class appeared on her screen. The faces let Holsman know where on the field trip every student was looking. On command, students picked up a pair of goggles and held them to their eyes.

## Students React To Virtual Environments

Cries of "Oh!" "Aw!" and "Wow!" filled the room. "I see a beautiful land," one student said to her desk mate. "I feel like I'm flying," the other said. Looking at an image on a screen is nothing new. Teachers have shown films of amazing places in the world for many years. But this is something altogether different, Holsman said. "Each kid is thoroughly immersed," she said. Every time Holsman does this, students immediately start sharing what they see and feel with their desk mates. "They are talking and forming their own questions, and that's what we want," Holsman said. "I tell teachers all the time this is not going to be a quiet exercise," Holsman said. "They are excited and engaged and they are learning from each other. And even though they can't really touch the canyon, they feel like they can touch it." Virtual field trips are becoming a popular teaching tool across the country. At Center School District, the goggles are being used at all grade levels. VR is taking students to places they might never afford to go to.

## More Than Just Pretty Places

The program allows students to virtually swim with sharks or walk through a museum without ever leaving their classroom. Holsman has taken fifth-grade students to the moon. She has taken middle school students studying careers to a New York work site. Some high school students visited the campuses of colleges they wanted to attend but could not afford to travel to.

"My students have been asking about taking a field trip all year," Craddock said. But what they had in mind was something more traditional. They are asking to go to the Kansas City Zoo. "It's nice to be able to take them somewhere that some of these children will never get to go. Somewhere they are really going to remember."

Since the lesson was about how the earth is changed over time by erosion and other natural processes, the second-graders also took a quick journey to Russia. They visited the Tolbachik volcano in Kamchatka. With her goggles pulled up to her eyes, Lola Valdivia let out a gasp. "I feel like I'm walking in lava," she said. "It looks like it's snowing, like there is snow falling to the ground," another student yelled out. They were referring to the ash coughed up by the erupting volcano.

## PART 2 Reading Comprehension

Answer all questions in a COMPLETE SENTENCE! If you get stuck on a questions; skip it and go to the next one.

1. One MAIN idea of the article is that a second grade class got to take a virtual reality field trip to the Grand Canyon.

What is another MAIN idea of the article?

2. How does seeing things in 3D make the students feel? Use some of their own words from the Students React To Virtual Environments section.

3. Teachers would like to take their students on field trips but school districts don't always have the money. How can this help?

4. Tough One: Read the introduction and the article's final section, "More Than Just Pretty Places." What is the connection between those two sections? Think about it from the student's point of view.

5. Where would you like to go if we had this technology in our classroom? Why there?

## PART 3 Write A Summary

Write a summary of this article (just like we do in class); make sure that it is at least 5 sentences, explains the article, all sentences are complete, and indent the first sentence.

