

More Interdisciplinary Activities Using REAL LIVES

- Challenge students to write a REAL LIVES “tip sheet” with helpful tips or tricks that they’ve discovered playing a REAL LIVES simulation.
- Have students create a list showing all abbreviations for Political, Society, and Health statistics and their meanings (e.g., HSR: health services, rural; BR: birth rate). Review all terms and their meanings with students *before* they begin the simulations. Post near computers to aid students as they work through the simulations.
- Host a mock United Nations Forum, having students debate critical global issues gleaned from the simulations to attempt to resolve problems. Each student (individually or in pairs) serves as a delegate to the UN Forum by representing one country learned about in REAL LIVES. Students will need to research up to three critical problems facing their birth country and report those to the Forum in short oral presentations. Or, they might wish to write and read a brief position paper. Once an issue is presented, the Forum (class) debates and attempts to resolve it. One student can act as Forum secretary, keeping track of issues and resolutions.
- When students are faced with a war in their country’s simulation, have them examine (through additional research) the historic reasons for conflicts within that world region (e.g., the Middle East, Africa). Examples include religious and ethnic differences, political and/or territorial conflicts.
- Celebrate diversity by hosting a classroom World Culture Fair. Students can work in pairs or teams to research, create, and share with one another traditional crafts, foods, music, folktales, dances, etc. from their simulated birth countries.
- Research a simulated birth country in order to create a profile in the form of oral and/or written presentations, maps, illustrations, board games, murals, travel brochures, or any other creative method students choose. Then have students work together to create a class “trivia” book, containing fascinating facts about each country they’ve researched.
- Many of the developing countries in REAL LIVES have events revolving around common illness and disease. Have students conduct further research (in the library and on the Internet) and report to the class about these diseases, how they are contracted, and how or if they can be treated/cured.
- Students can create a PSA (public service announcement) to be performed theatrically for the class on any number of subjects related to a birth country. For example, a PSA might focus on a country’s inequality of income, lack of safe water in rural areas, or steady improvements in adult literacy.

- Use Venn diagrams (see Comparing Lives activity) as a pre-writing tool, having students pull information from the diagram to write a fictional news report about the family, in the role of a journalist.
- Ask students to consider whether or not science and new technologies could improve living and working conditions in their birth countries. How? Why or why not?
- Have students gather data on their simulated birth country's imports and exports. Then have the class chart and analyze patterns of trade among the United States and other countries. In addition, students might research common transportation methods in each country to learn how economic activities are helped or hurt by these methods.
- Analyze the role of climate, natural disasters, and human activities (e.g., urban development, clear-cutting of forest land) in shaping regions of the world.
- There are many opportunities to blend math skills using statistical data shown in each REAL LIVES simulation. For example, students can:
 - a) Create broken-line graphs to show how quantities (e.g., income vs. nation, income vs. world) change over time.
 - b) Create a spreadsheet showing rates of exchange for the U.S. dollar with other countries' currencies. Students can find the name of each country's currency in the Household Data chart, Net Worth. They can find currency exchange rates in the business section of local newspapers and on the Internet. Have them convert foreign currencies into US dollars and vice-versa, rounding the currency amounts to the nearest hundredth.
 - c) Chart and analyze a country's demographics (e.g., birthrates, infant mortality).
 - d) Find the mean, median and mode of all rankings in the Personal Data column, using items with the 1-7 rating scale.
 - e) Keep an ongoing chart showing the simulated family's monthly income, monthly expenses, and net worth over a simulated "lifetime." Find the averages. Graph the data. Then, have students track and compare the same data for their own real-world lives. (Remind them to include income from after-school jobs and weekly allowances.)
- Construct timelines to establish the chronology of important events in each simulated life.
- Create cultural maps (showing patterns of ethnic groups, languages, religions, etc.).
- Make topographical maps featuring each country's major biomes (i.e., mountain, tundra, forest, etc.).
- Students can summarize events in their REAL LIVES simulations and write articles about them to be posted on the school's website or newspaper. (In addition, they can write about their experiences playing the simulation.)

- Have students identify any human rights violations in their simulated birth country to determine the personal, political, economic, and social ramifications of those violations. Then, have them read the text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>) to identify the specific human right(s) that have been violated.
- Create a timeline of each country's major historical events (see History and Factbook Links). Compile all information onto one collaborative world timeline, to be posted around the walls of the classroom.