



Adventure: Mississippi River

A real-time, 60-day adventure rowing education expedition, presented live to a virtual classroom.

Objective

Adventure: Mississippi River (AMR) represents the kickoff to our annual OAR Northwest Education series. *AMR* will be the flagship expedition, blending real-life adventure with technology to reach students both locally and beyond the Mississippi River watershed. *AMR* aims to inspire students to experience an adventure in their local environment, understand the potential environmental impacts of their actions, and engage the rich history and diversity of species along the Mississippi River and its immense watershed. The curriculum will be designed around the research-based Adventure Learning approach and delivered direct to classrooms via the latest cloud-based technologies, enhanced with cultural and community connections to this important river. The online environment developed for *AMR* will support student interactions, and collaboration with the *Adventure: Mississippi River* community (students, adventurers, scientists and the public).

Route: The expedition team will paddle and row the Mississippi River from its Lake Itasca (MN) headwaters to the terminus at the Gulf of Mexico. *Adventure: Mississippi River* is a Fall-semester academic program, created in conjunction with the OAR Northwest Education Team.

Goals/Reach

1. Visit 30 schools bordering the Mississippi River (3 schools in each of 10 bordering states).
2. Increase student and teacher participation from previous Atlantic Ocean expedition by 30%
 - a. Previous expedition curriculum reached 75 North American Classrooms
 - b. Live online webinars reached >80,000 students worldwide
3. Conduct relevant scientific experiments on behalf of partnered research and conservation organizations

Team

Expedition Crew

Jordan Hanssen
OAR Principal

Greg Spooner
OAR Principal

Markus Pukonen
Filmmaker

Patrick Fleming
Science Officer

Education Team

Brant G. Miller, PhD **R. Justin Hougham, PhD**

Schedule

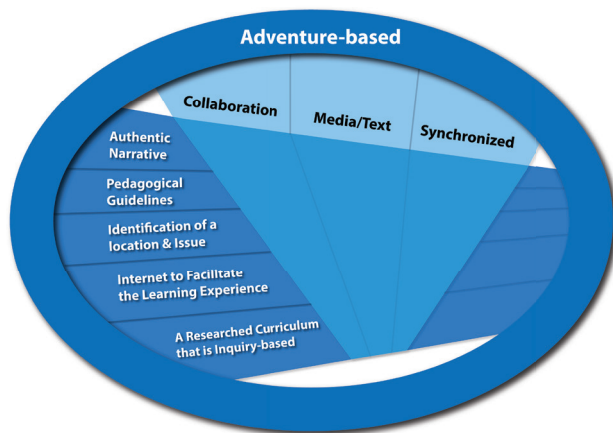
- **Project Capacity Building:** 1/1/2014 - 6/30/2014
- **Project Kickoff at Headwaters with OARNW teacher teams:** TBD
- **Project Launch:** 7/1/2014 - 8/30/2014
- **Project 'Live':** 9/1/2014 - 12/15/2014

Cost to the Educator

Free, thanks to public donations, sponsorship, and grant funding

Email spooner@oarnorthwest.com or Sign up at oarnorthwest.com/education

Adventure Learning



About OAR Northwest

Founded in 2005, OAR Northwest is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization that connects with partners to reach its expedition and program goals, while propelling youth, community members and businesses to their own extraordinary achievements.

OAR NW Education – How It Works

Who

K-12 students, teachers, community members, scientists are all invited to participate in AMR. Through AMR we plan to bring awareness to the largest watershed in the US and through doing so, provide interested partners an opportunity to more deeply engage with their place. **Future.** Each year OAR NW Education will conduct at least one expedition. We anticipate the

network of teachers, students, scientists and OAR NW community members to steadily grow over time. The result will be a robust network of individuals and groups adding value to the expeditions through their expertise and involvement.

What

The Adventure Learning approach was originally defined as “a hybrid distance education approach that provides students with opportunities to explore real-world issues through authentic learning experiences within collaborative learning environments” (Doering, 2006, p. 197). Adventure Learning at (AL@) is a re-conceptualization of the role of technology in place-based education that enhances place responsive pedagogies through technology. Students and teachers become experts in their own experiences through studies of the places where they live, using freely available software and low cost technology. Further, we explore ways in which AL@ enhances place-based programs by supporting connection and communication beyond the spatial and temporal boundaries of student experience. (Hougham, Eitel & Miller, 2012).

Future. As OAR NW Education expeditions are conducted, a design based implementation research (Penuel, Fishman, Cheng, & Sabelli, 2011) approach will be used to further hone how we engage the audiences participating in the expedition. Each expedition will serve as an opportunity to do research that will result in a more effective AL@ approach.

When

Beginning with the kickoff expedition – Adventure: Mississippi River, OAR NW will deliver annual education expeditions that focus on a particular context. For AMR 2014 the expedition will commence towards the beginning of the fall academic term to fully coordinate with the academic curriculum and expedition timeline. The expedition is projected to take approximately 60 days. **Future.** OAR NW Education expeditions will seek to align with the rhythms of a traditional academic calendar. For example, having expeditions and associated curricula fall within a spring or fall term will enable a greater audience to participate versus the limited formalized programming in the summer months.

Where

The place of inquiry for OAR NW Education projects encompasses a journey from a point A to a point B. For AMR 2014 the expedition will begin at the headwaters of the Mississippi River and end at the terminus, the Gulf of Mexico. Along the way, each river mile presents an inquiry opportunity that can be engaged by partner schools **Future.** AMR will be an annual expedition (pending funding). Additionally, a human powered around the world trip is in the works. Beyond this, OAR NW Education seeks to be a clearinghouse for education expeditions that engage students in their place through adventure and research based curriculum.

Why

Much like the thought of writing about the Mississippi River did not deter Mark Twain after countless authors had already exhaustively documented the subject, we feel that now, more than ever, delivering an education program through adventure holds incredible potential for making a meaningful impact on students along the Mississippi River corridor. **Future.** Life is too short to do stuff that isn't cool. We want to get kids excited about learning and we feel this approach is a great way to do that.

How

Sign up today with an email to education@oarnorthwest.com or visit oarnorthwest.com