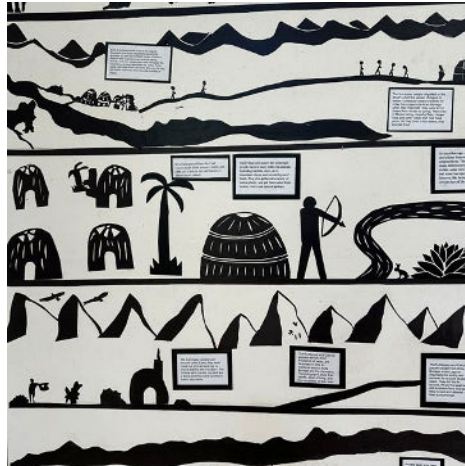
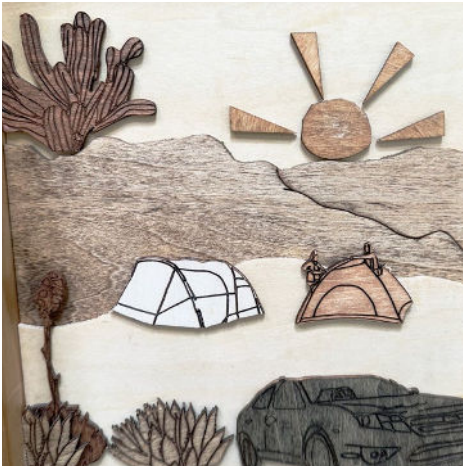




Epic Journeys

Juli Ruff, Humanities

Taya Chase, Math

Amilio Aviles, Physics

Ninth Grade

High Tech High

The Epic Journeys project explores why journeys are so essential to human's growth and asks students to uncover the value of sharing their stories as they explore and overcome challenges. Throughout the semester, students hiked local trails, worked through an obstacle course, snorkeled, camped, backpacked and boated across a section of the bay in personally designed and built cardboard boats. Through these adventures, students captured the joy, struggles and self growth through writing, collecting data, and learning about forces. Students also told the stories of their journeys through creating and sending postcards; making a mural that told the story of both the 6 million years of history of the land they camped on and the story of their time camping; creating graphical stories that showed their experience mathematically; writing articles; and much more.

Teacher Reflection

Getting students outside has such value, as does asking kids to try things that make them uncomfortable. Over and over again, students reflected on how they achieved things they never thought could or would, and were surprised by their own emotional responses to the experiences. We have done this project three times over three years, and each time it has held so much value for the students. Confidence is built out of competence, and competence is built out of experience.

—Juli Ruff

Student Reflection

As the night went on, we laughed and giggled more and played hide and seek. All that newfound friendship brought confidence and growth for me as a person. Camping in Anza Borrego at the Blair Valley campground was when everything changed. Early in the year, I was the kid sitting quietly in class, not wanting to raise my hand even when I knew the answer, and not wanting to face the failure of being wrong. I went from not being able to leave the only friend I knew, to being able to raise my hand, and shout out my ideas, while talking to so many new friends.

—Margo G.



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