Introducing your students to new cultures and different point of views is easier today than ever before. It is not as expensive as you may think either. You need two things, creativity and technology. Your creativity is what will lead you throw new doors and technology will help keep those doors open!

Creativity

1. The first thing that you’ll need to do is think of what you want your students to learn. Is it math language arts science and how best to achieve this by allowing your students to think globally.
2. Determine how big you want this to be; think continent vs city.
3. Begin your research and look for resources (speakers, information, data what tech is needed)
4. Next it’s time to involve your students!

Homegrown

In rural areas often time the high-speed connection is poor ☹ and other resources are scarce to none. I am speaking in terms of the school as well as the town that the school is located in. Fret not this is the perfect opportunity to involve your homegrown talent. I am sure that we all know someone who is currently overseas or has been overseas and we also have teachers who were not born and raised in America. Tap into this resource!

Foreign Teachers

1. Your foreign teachers have access to their hometowns, countries and people all over this world. Invite them to help you create a lesson that fosters learning about their culture and a shared connection between your town/city and theirs or one that they are very much familiar with.
2. Have access to their roots. Allow foreign teachers to discuss their country and provide examples.
3. Dig deeper than food and language
4. Explore the things that are similar
5. Create an assignment that would allow the teacher to connect with a colleague at home and involve other students from that country or professionals.
6. Work together to solve a local issue; Don’t adopt an attitude that America knows best instead maybe look at an issue in your area that has been solved by people living where the teacher is from.
7. Seema Bansal , How to fix a broken education system ... without any more money TED Talk “But we did not have the budgets to give that to 15,000 schools, 2 million children. We needed another solution. We couldn't think of anything. One day, one of our team members went to a school and saw a teacher pick up sticks and stones from the garden outside and take them into the classroom and give them to the students. That was a huge eureka moment for us. So what happens now in the textbooks in Haryana is that after every concept, we have a little box which are instructions for the teachers which say, "To teach this concept, here's an activity that you can do. And by the way, in order to actually do this activity, here are things that you can use from your immediate environment, whether it be the garden outside or the classroom inside, which can be used as learning aids for kids." And we see teachers all over Haryana using lots of innovative things to be able to teach students.”

Local Talent

1. Ask someone you know who is overseas to create a Vlog/Blog for your class that way your students can be involved in the process. Maybe create an itinerary for the person to follow so your students are included in the planning process. You can even go as far as to create a budget if 20 students were to visit those places.

Residents/Business Owners

1. Business owners are your friends, partner with them to take your lesson plan to the next level. Involve them in the creation of the curriculum. Examine global trends in their field, make predictions for stock exchange, what resources are needed where and when. Predict which countries will become global powers or fall away based upon trade history.
2. Inviting someone who is a baker and focus on how baking is a science. Why we need acids and bases, how temperature effects the process.
3. Everything doesn’t have to be or need to be global. There are plenty of interesting facts where you live or as close as the neighboring city. Consider deviating from the normal school field trips and involve local restaurants antique shops and such. You’ll be surprised at what you discover.

There’s an app for that

Today we have access to the world in the palm of our hands and at our finger tips. There is virtually an app for everything, including an app to access virtual reality!

Here are a few apps that will make facilitating your lesson a lot easier

1. WeChat- I mentioned this one earlier as I discussed how I coordinated the international lesson
   1. WeChat is a messaging and calling app that allows you to easily connect with family & friends across countries. It's the all-in-one communications app for text (SMS/MMS), voice and video calls, Moments, photo sharing, and games.
2. Skype- I’m sure that we all familiar with the desktop version, but you can also download the app.
3. Skype has dominated the video chat industry for years with more than 700 million registered users. Its compatibility reaches far beyond smartphones to desktops, tablets, television sets, and other devices. The service also offers video chat, video messaging, and instant messaging within a streamlined build, while giving users the option to make VoIP calls to outside numbers for a small fee
4. FaceTime
5. Apple’s built-in video chat option remains one of the most popular video chat apps on the market. Though only available for iOS and Mac OS X users, FaceTime’s simple interface allows for quick video calls using either Wi-Fi or your network connection. FaceTime certainly doesn’t offer the most bells and whistles of any client on our list, but it’s already integrated within iOS and doesn’t require any additional software or advanced setup.
6. Google Hangout
7. Google has a knack for bringing people together. The tech giant’s aptly-titled Hangouts allows you to chat with up to 10 other people via both Wi-Fi and mobile networks, while sharing personal photos and a barrage of classic emojis in the process. Google+ users even have the app directly integrated into their profiles and the service operates across platforms, allowing you to video chat regardless of whether you’re using a smartphone or tablet.

Google Earth

Project Based Learning

* Most of what we have discussed involves project based learning.
* You can seek to create unique projects such as pen pals so students can practice composing emails.
* When I lived in China I connected with a local high school to create a program that involved the town administrator and Chinese students.
* Shannon Page, a fifth-grade teacher,

1. The first thing Ms. Page and her students did for a recent virtual trip to New York City was complete a geography lesson: They looked at a map to see where they were going vis-à-vis their current location in Wake County. They noted the mileage as well as the names and shapes of the states they would “fly over” on their way to New York.
2. Next came an extended arithmetic lesson: figuring airfare. Using travel-related websites, the students examined, compared, and computed flight costs for themselves and the class as a whole, taking into consideration departure and arrival times as well as trip durations.
3. Next came an art and technology-skills lesson: The class created individual passports.
4. Then Ms. Page configured the chairs in the classroom like seats on an airplane; the kids “boarded,” “stowed their luggage,” and “buckled their seatbelts”; and the “plane” “took off,” after which the students completed their next lesson: writing about their flight experience.
5. Next came a reading and technology-skills exercise: researching the Statue of Liberty.
6. This exercise led to unexpected history lessons about Ellis Island, immigration to the U.S., and the Great Depression. “I didn’t anticipate this tangent at all,” says Ms. Page. “Again, the kids led and I scrambled to stay with them.”
7. The virtual visit to the monument entailed more math lessons. Was there a fare to ride the ferry? Was there a fee to enter the statue? If so, were the fees different for adults and children? What was the total cost for the whole class to enjoy the total Statue of Liberty experience?
8. More entries to the students’ KWLs followed, as well as follow-up research and another writing assignment — this one regarding the students’ impressions of the monument.
9. Throughout the project, which took about a month to complete, Ms. Page often consulted both her “subjects wheel” and the Standard Course of Study to create timely assessments for her students.
10. While “in” New York, her students also visited Wall Street, researched and chose stocks in which to “invest,” and “bought and sold” shares, all of which entailed lessons in not only math and history but also financial literacy and money management. “Not many fifth graders have much experience with losing money,” Ms. Page explains, emphasizing the educational efficacy of authentic intellectual exercises.

Local Cultural Affairs/Diversity Center

Skype in the Classroom

Twitter

* Connect with the community

1. Partner up with local government or charitable organizations and use Twitter to reach a broad audience discussing the latest cultural or educational events in the area and encourage others in the community to attend.
2. Subscribe to relevant hash tags and accounts from all perspectives and compile an updated resource.
3. Students can connect with professionals and organizations to explore career options.
4. TweetStats allows users to input a specific account name and look at a bar graph of the microblog’s activity. Students can search for tweets in their around the world and gather data on how and when their neighbors use Twitter.
5. Follow interesting people for real time updates such as [CassiniSaturn](https://twitter.com/CassiniSaturn)

Instagram

* Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? Have students post photos of a location, animal, food etc. and the class can use clues from previous discussions to guess where the student is
* Students can create and follow hash tags