



Beach Hoppers
Matt Leader, Biology
Ashleigh Lin, Humanities
11th Grade
High Tech High North County

The San Diego Coastline is one of the most sensitive and unique habitats in the world with a higher percentage of endangered organisms per zip code than anywhere in the continental United States...Our task is to better understand the people, places, organisms and issues surrounding the existing natural spaces along the coast in San Diego. In the beach hoppers project students observe environmental interactions, identify organisms, interview people and analyze data from field work along the beach and beach communities in San Diego they visited through free public transit. With research occurring in biology and english and supported by the San Dieguito River Park, Palomar College and the San Diego Botanical Garden, students developed media in video, pictures and podcasts detailing the experiences and investigations. Student products are produced for all audiences but have been asked to connect to their 3rd grade partners at High Tech elementary North County for their similarly themed Nature Treasures project. The a goal of the project was to get the students actively investigating in communities they hadn't visited prior and share that through mentorship with younger students.

Teacher Reflection

I learned it is so valuable to connect students to communities outside school and their neighborhoods. They saw many different perspectives through interviews each day. I also learned isn't too difficult to take project research and investigation out of the class by making use of public transit and scaffolding that puts students in charge of the field work planning.

—Matt Leader

Student Reflection

Through this project we get a general grasp of all living things in San Diego County. I like how it is our responsibility to keep our organism alive and research independently. During our fieldwork we interview people we come across and look at their diversity. I think the field work is truly allowing us to see more people outside of school and the diversity of people in our area. I met a guy that toured in a band. He was really genuine and sweet. He taught me to use our time doing something we love.

—Karly C.



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