

## COVID-19: In Context

### A Virtual Field Trip Experience

#### STEM Global Teacher Workshop

Gates Foundation Discovery Center | [discovergates.org](https://discovergates.org)  
<https://www.wghalliance.org/initiative/stem-global/resources/>



**Time:** 50-60 minutes, virtual experience (free, real-time, interactive, via video conferencing)

**Subject & Grade Level(s):** High School Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, Art, or Advisory Period

**Brief Overview:** This free virtual field trip experience is offered by the Gates Foundation Discovery Center. The focus of this program allows for its integration into courses across disciplines, including science. However, rather than focusing on the science behind the virus or disease, this program provides students with an opportunity to reflect and connect to media portrayals (i.e., text, video, images) of pandemic experiences across communities.

Writing and drawing are pathways for consciousness-raising and context matters as we navigate the human experience, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. This program invites students to make connections between their individual and collective experiences of COVID-19 by engaging, reflecting, and responding to media in the context of COVID-19, including health disparities. This virtual experience uses poetry, art, and video to help students consider how the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced their own lives and society as a whole. Students will reflect on the inequitable impacts of the pandemic as well as engage in self-reflection through writing and drawing. Students will need a blank sheet of paper and something to write and draw with during the program.

Resources for extension activities are available on the program website. Live captioning is available through Microsoft TEAMS meeting platform. An ASL interpreter can be arranged with a minimum advance notice of two weeks.

(Image credit: Life After Lockdown art created by Craig Swart, [Amplifier](#).)

## STUDENT UNDERSTANDINGS

### Anchoring Phenomenon:

The COVID-19 global pandemic has impacted people across the world. However, the effects of the pandemic disproportionately affect people based on their community, access to healthcare, income level, employment type, understandings of scientific and medical discoveries, and other factors. Media portrayals capture some of the similarities and differences of people's individual and collective experiences during this challenging time. As students learn about and personally experience the disparities surfaced and exacerbated by the pandemic, it is important to give both space and structure to allow for them to process these feelings and experiences.

### Driving Questions:

- How can we reflect on and respond to our individual and collective experiences within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How can we think critically about media portrayals (i.e., text, video, images) of different people's experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How can we take care of ourselves and each other during this challenging time?

## ALIGNMENT TO SCIENCE AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING STANDARDS

### Next Generation Science Standards

This lesson builds toward the following high school level Nature of Science Standards from the Next Generation Science Standards.

#### Nature of Science: Science Addresses Questions about the Natural and Materials World

- Science and technology may raise ethical issues for which science, by itself, does not provide answers and solutions.
- Science knowledge indicates what can happen in natural systems—not what should happen. The latter involves ethics, values, and human decisions about the use of knowledge.
- Many decisions are not made using science alone, but rely on social and cultural contexts to resolve issues.

### Washington State Social Emotional Learning Standards

This lesson builds toward the following high school level [Social Emotional Learning Standards](#) developed for the [Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction](#) by the SEL Workgroup.

**Standard 1: Self-Awareness** - Individual has the ability to identify their emotions, personal assets, area for growth, and potential external resources and supports.

- **Benchmark 1A:** Demonstrates awareness and understanding of one's own emotions and emotion's influence on behavior.

- **Benchmark 1C:** Demonstrates self-awareness and understanding of external influences e.g. culture, family, school, and community resources and supports.

**Standard 4: Social Awareness** - Individual has the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

- **Benchmark 4A:** Demonstrates awareness of other people's emotions, perspectives, cultures, languages, histories, identities, and abilities.

**Download this lesson plan and associated student handouts at the STEM Global Resources page:** <https://www.wghalliance.org/initiative/stem-global/resources/>

**Credit:** *The COVID-19: In Context program and associated materials were developed by Ashley Hill from Triangle Associates, a consulting firm located in Seattle, WA for use by the Gates Foundation Discovery Center in Seattle, WA. This virtual field trip program is offered by the Gates Foundation Discovery Center. The program was presented at a STEM Global Educator Workshop in January 2021.*