

# Spiritual Exploration

**Workshop 2B | Tuesday, May 29** St. Peter's: 10:00-11:00am | Louisiana Gov. School: 2:00-3:00 pm

## Objective

The fourth session of the Global Village Project is intended to unify the work begun in the previous session, “Diversity.” Recently observing the traits that make us special, we go on to explore the experiences and people in our lives that have shaped the people we are today. While the day’s sessions are separated by a fun icebreaker to give the students a chance to take a break, the game is intentionally focused on encouraging leadership and teamwork among the Belizean students—preparing the students to see themselves as contributors to a whole at the end of the next day’s first session. Taking the time to think about their past, students will use symbols, colors, and other imagery to depict their lives’ stories thus far.

After this workshop, the students and facilitators will:

- be able to conceptualize their lives as a flow of connected experiences and not a pool of disjointed and unassociated occurrences
- visualize the significant contributions and “setbacks” that have been a part of their lives’ journeys
- become more aware of “what” it is that makes them who they are

## Credits

-- The “Indestructible House” activity included in this session was inspired and adapted from a similar activity led by the Bonners of the College of Charleston at the National IMPACT Conference 2012 at Stetson University in DeLand, Florida.

-- The “River Story” activity included in this session comes from a pool of resources that can be found on the curriculum page of the online [BonnerWiki](#) of the Bonner Foundation located in Princeton, New Jersey.

## Materials

- A ream of 8.5”x11” white printer paper
- Various colored washable markers
- 8-12 decks of traditional playing cards

## How to Prepare

In addition to including this workshop in the agenda of the “Belizean Curriculum Review” discussion, facilitators should prepare by creating two life-size models of a flowing river that will be used for the larger group discussion at the end of this activity. Also, facilitators should decide among them who will lead the opening icebreaker (this person should prepare a sample River Story) and who will be responsible for delivering the “What’s a River Story?” talk.

## Brief Outline

The agenda of this one-hour workshop is as follows:

1. “Indestructible House” Icebreaker | 15 minutes
2. Icebreaker Debrief | 10 minutes
3. What’s a River Story? | 10 minutes
4. Create YOUR River Story | 25 minutes

## Facilitator Guidelines

### 1. “Indestructible House” Icebreaker | 15 minutes

After snack time, this exciting game is a great way to call everyone’s attention back to focus. Whichever Bonner is facilitating this activity should divide the class up into four quarters. Then, each group of students gathers around one table upon which is placed a deck of 52 traditional playing cards. The instructions are as follows:

1. Explain to the students that this is a silent activity and that there should be no talking from this point on.
2. Tell the Belizean students that their goal as four teams is to use the next seven minutes to build a structure out of cards that is able to withstand our “wind test.” (At this point, wave a folded piece of the 8.5”x11” printer paper to show what will be creating the wind).
3. Kindly ask the students to not bend, tear, or cut the cards in their attempt to build a strong and sturdy structure.
4. Tell them that at the end of seven minutes, whichever group builds a structure that stands tall against the wind of the facilitators’ printer paper, is the group(s) that wins.

*Remember, this activity must be done for seven minutes in complete silence!*

After seven minutes, go around the room and wave the papers at each of the groups’ structures. Those that stand strong should be awarded with applause from the facilitators and others students while those that fall down should be given equal praise for their attempt.

### 2. Icebreaker Debrief | 10 minutes

The same Bonner who had given the instructions for the activity should now proceed to ask the entire class of students the following:

1. What was the most challenging part about this activity?
2. At what point did anyone become frustrated?
3. Are there any tips that a group might like to share with the class?

The aim of this debrief is to arrive at the conclusion that, “in order to accomplish this goal as a team, everyone’s leadership had to be respected, trusted, and valued.”

### 3. What’s a River Story? | 10 minutes

At this point of the session, the Bonner will introduce the idea of creating a “River Story” in order to “show” one another our lives’ journeys. The Bonner leading this conversation should already have made an example to share with the class. The point of this talk is to say that: “life is a like a river and its continual flow of experiences shapes the direction in which this “river” flows.” In the example “River Story,” the following elements should be explained:

1. Symbol of the **hand** = Story of Service (done for/by someone)
2. Symbol of the **heart** = Relationship (mentor, partner, friend)
3. Symbol of the **rock** = Obstacle(s) or turning point
4. Symbol of the **tree** = Idea(s) or important growth
5. **\*Symbol of choice\*** = Dream for the future

Each of these symbols should be included *somewhere* in the example in order to give the Belizean students a sense of how they are intended to be used in this activity.

*Be very specific in regard to the explanation of the final “symbol of choice” that is placed in the distance of the flowing river. The students need to understand that, no matter how much their river may encounter one of these elements, the “flow” can still run in pursuit of any imagine dream or idea for the future.*

#### 4. Create YOUR River Story | 25 minutes

At this time, all of the Belizean students should be provided utensils for coloring and constructing their River Stories. The students should take twenty minutes to reflect on how they would like to illustrate their life journeys.

*Students are encouraged to move anywhere in the room they would like to work on their rivers. While silence in the room is not mandatory, facilitators may opt to use a little bit of calming background music to set an appropriate tone for reflection and introspection. Students may work together or on their own as they see fit.*

Bonner facilitators who haven’t created their own example of a River Story should do so at this time with the Belizean student participants. The Bonner who has already finished their example can walk around the room and offer suggestions or help to any of the participants that may have questions.

After twenty minutes have passed, the students should have prepared their own River Stories. The Bonner facilitators should ask everyone to return to their seats in the circle around the room and to think about:

“What did you learn about yourself that surprised you?”

As the students consider this, ask them to put their names somewhere (front or back) of their River Story paper. Collect their River Stories and explain that we will return to the concept of life as a unifying flow of experience tomorrow.

*At this time, students will take a half hour to return to their “Build Yourself, Build Belize” handouts. The students are encouraged to make iconic additions to these worksheets that symbolize what they have learned in each of the past three themed sessions (International*

*Perspective, Diversity, and Spiritual Exploration). Bonners can briefly demonstrate how to make the additions before they take a passive role in the space and allow the students to work on their own.*