



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
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## **Creating First-Class Experiences for Forgotten Schools: Why Not Us?**

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by Sean Means

The following unit unpacks reasons school leaders should invest resources in creating an annual trip abroad for their students. The unit surveys several teachers and students who have taken trips to Central and South America's rainforest and natural parks to gain a greater perspective on the region's natural habitat and the culture of the people living within it. The unit argues that international travel to settings in nature is even more beneficial for the most vulnerable children as it presents a learning opportunity away from community distractions and responsibilities. In order to make this a reality, the unit takes a deep dive into philanthropy, understanding the annual financial requirements of such a large undertaking. The following research describes how private enterprise and foundations have provided travel and accommodations for urban children who may only have been able to study abroad with their annual charitable giving. The unit includes plans for a trip to Ecuador and a sequence of classroom lessons to prepare students to engage deeply with their experience in natural settings on the trip.

(Developed for U. S. History, grade 11, and Social Justice, grade 12; recommended for Business, Foreign Language, and Spanish, grades 6-12, and Social Justice, grades 11-12)

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