

## **Introducing the Grand Challenges**

### Small Group activity

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This week we get to begin exploring the five grand challenges! It's important that each team is able to carefully consider each challenge topic so that you can ultimately rank and bid on them at Homecoming.

Keep in mind your goals:

- You're team will ultimately be designing a product, business or service within the topic that you choose.
- In order to really understand the topic, your team must engage in preliminary research.
- Each of these topics has significant future ramifications, your team must also strive to comprehend the implications of each Grand Challenge.
- You will need to accrue enough points by homecoming that you are able to "buy" the challenge your team would most like to pursue.

### Running the Activity

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You'll want to start in a large group and work your way down to small groups. You will introduce the five grand challenges and let them know the goals (bulleted above). You can increase suspense and listening if you talk about the goals first and then move on to "reveal" the Grand Challenge topics. Next you are going to divide your team into five small groups to begin the discussion.

Dividing up your team can be difficult, you can try one of these methods:

- Count off by five (then all the ones are together, all the twos, etc...)
- Allow self-grouping (this can be difficult for students that are not socially connected yet, you'll have to keep a sharp eye out for folks that get left out or feel awkward self grouping)
- Tape the five Grand Challenges around the room and let people choose by interest (if everyone wants to do one topic then you'll have to step in and encourage other topics)

If you don't group by interest, then you'll next have to distribute the Grand Challenges. There are basically three methods:

- Hold them behind your back and shuffle them, pull your hands back out and give the group the top topic (random)- or draw out of a hat
- Let students raise their hands or request challenges. Make sure to give the students a couple of minutes to talk. The disadvantage is that the loudest groups will win out over the others
- Let people pick in order of who has the most points

Once you are all settled into small groups, redirect the attention back to the front of the room. You can then let them know that we are going to start exploring these topics by asking questions – all great inquiry and creation begins with curiosity.

Each group needs to come up with ten questions about their topic. Make sure to give them a period of time to complete these questions and let them know you'll be collecting them (or taking pictures of their list). They can split up the questions at the end of the activity and each student can try to explore those questions this week. I would allow 5 minutes for getting into groups and 10-15 minutes to create a list of questions.