

PART III

DEVELOPING RELATED SKILLS

A GAME PLAN FOR WORK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART III: DEVELOPING RELATED SKILLS

A Game Plan for Work

1. Working Toward Your Goals 3
2. Exploring Job Possibilities 14
3. Looking for a Job 23
4. Networking 31
5. Preparing a Resume 38
6. Making Contacts 53

WORKING TOWARD YOUR GOALS



AGENDA

- SESSION 1
 - Starter
 - In the Future
 - A Career Hypothesis
- SESSION 2
 - A Career Hypothesis: Show Results
 - Why Work?
 - Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will identify their career goals.

Students will recognize how education can help them achieve their goals.

Students will identify the steps to reaching their career goals.

Students will recognize the importance of short-term employment to achieving their long-term career goals.

Materials Needed

- Session 1: Journals or notebook paper, a dictionary (Part I)

- Session 1: Four job postings requiring different levels of skill, education, and experience (Part I)
- Session 1: One copy of the “Job Analysis” activity sheet for each student (Part I)
- Session 1: Internet access or books/articles about securing jobs (Part II)
- *Note: If possible, arrange for a school counselor to attend the second half of Session 1 for student interviews*
- Session 2: Poster paper, old magazines, tape, glue, markers, scissors, etc. (Part I)

SESSION 1

Starter (3 minutes)

Note: This lesson has students consider goals they have for the future. If possible, consider teaching your students the lessons in the [Goal Setting](#) module before this lesson, so they will be familiar with goal setting concepts.

Write the following quote on the board: “The future depends on what you do today.”

Ask students to interpret the quote. Discuss the relationship between goal setting and success in life.

Explain that in this lesson students will identify careers they may be interested in and learn skills that will help them achieve their goals.

Part I In the Future (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify their career aspirations and recognize how education can help them achieve these goals.

1. Students visualize their goals for the future.

Ask students to close their eyes. Say, “Imagine yourself 15 years from now. What are you doing with your life? Think about some of the goals you have set for yourself. Have you achieved those goals? How are you making a living?”

Ask students to open their eyes. Allow them a few minutes to write about what they were thinking as you spoke. Ask them to include details of their career goals.

2. Students share their career goals.

When students have finished writing, ask volunteers to share what they wrote. As students share their future goals, write their responses on the board.

Explain to students that no matter what their goals are, they will need a plan to achieve them.

3. Students distinguish between jobs and careers.

Explain to students that the writing they just did was about their career goals. Ask students if they know the difference between the words “job” and “career.” If necessary, have two volunteers look up the words in a dictionary and read the definitions out loud. Lead students to the understanding that “job” refers to working and getting paid. Explain that jobs are often short term. Tell students that “career” indicates something long term that people plan for and strive to advance in.

Explain that people change jobs often, especially when they are young. Tell students that it is also becoming more common for people to change their career paths. (Provide an example of this, preferably one from personal experience or knowledge.) Share with students how statistics indicate that they are likely to change careers several times during their lives and that they will have many jobs in each career. Point out that this makes mastering the skills of looking for a job important.

Explain to students that you had them begin by thinking about their long-term career goals because they will ideally choose short-term jobs that fit with those goals.

4. Students analyze the requirements and compensations of several jobs.

Before class, identify four job listings in your area from an online job board (for example, www.indeed.com or www.monster.com). Ensure the options require different levels of skill, education, and experience (such as a mover, administrative assistant, computer technician, and teacher). Either print the postings for each student or display them where the entire class can see them.

Explain to students that they are going to compare and contrast different jobs. Distribute copies of the “[Job Analysis](#)” activity sheet to students. Have a volunteer read out loud to the class a job posting that does not require any previous experience. Ask students what skills an applicant for this job needs, writing their responses on the activity sheet in the box labeled “Skills.”

Then, ask students what level of education is needed for the job (e.g., a high school diploma or a college degree). Instruct students to fill in the “School” box appropriately.

Next, have students identify the job’s pay and benefits. (If students do not understand what benefits are, explain health care coverage, vacation time, tuition reimbursement, etc.) Have students add the appropriate information to the activity sheet; then, ask if they think there is an opportunity for advancement.

Ask students to consider whether this job is something that they would want for a career, not just for a short-term job. Have them fill in this information in the final column.

5. Students recognize that education can help them achieve their career goals.

Discuss each of the other job advertisements you selected. Have students fill in the boxes.

When they are finished, ask students which job they would choose and why. After students have responded, challenge them to find the relationship between education, salary, benefits, and advancement. Students should notice that more education brings better salary, benefits, and advancement opportunities.

Explain that a good education can help people secure competitive jobs and achieve career goals in almost any field.

Part II A Career Hypothesis (30 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify the steps to reaching their career goals.

1. Students hypothesize about what is necessary for them to reach their career goals.

Introduce the concept of planning for a future career by explaining the steps that you personally took to become a teacher. Include your high school education, temporary jobs, college experience, special training, and other factors that helped you. Tell students they need to think about what they can do now and in the future to reach their goals. Explain that you're going to ask them to make some guesses about what they'll need to do to have the careers they desire.

Ask students to define "hypothesis." Explain that in science, a hypothesis is a proposed testable solution or educated guess that scientists make after gathering information.

Instruct students to write a hypothesis concerning what they need to do to achieve their career goals. Point out that they gathered information when they looked at the job postings to see what is necessary to get certain jobs, and that you gave them more information when you told them how you became a teacher. Remind students to consider factors such as education, work experience, special talents or abilities, and money as they write their hypotheses.

Allow students 10 minutes to write their hypotheses.

2. Students share their career-path hypotheses.

When 10 minutes have passed, ask volunteers to share their ideas with the class. Allow students to add to and alter their own hypotheses if other students' ideas work for them.

Explain that scientists always test their hypotheses to see if they will work. Ask students to suggest ways they can test their hypotheses. (*Students should suggest: research on the internet, interviews, consulting the school counseling department, speaking with someone from a human resources department, consulting professionals in their desired fields, etc.*) List all resources on the board.

3. Students research what is required to achieve their career goals.

Group students with similar career goals. Challenge the groups to use the resources they identified to test and modify their hypotheses. Explain that they have the rest of the session and until the next session to state a conclusion about the steps they need to take to build their careers. Direct students to use the books you have available, the internet, interviews with a school counselor, and other references to test their hypotheses.

Conclude by informing students that in the next session they will have 25 minutes to create a visual representation of their findings. Instruct students to bring to class any visuals they encounter in their research that they would like to incorporate into their presentations (e.g., charts, photographs, worksheets).

SESSION 2

Part I A Career Hypothesis: Show Results (30 minutes)

Purpose: Students create visual representations of their career plans.

1. Students report on the steps they need to take to reach their career goals.

Have ready poster paper, construction paper, old magazines, tape, glue, markers, scissors, and so forth for students to use.

Explain to students that they have had time to discover the steps they will need to take to pursue their career goals. Have students return to their groups from Part II of Session 1. Tell the groups to work for 25 minutes to create visuals that represent the steps necessary to achieving their career goals. Encourage students to use charts, cartoons, flowcharts, photographs, etc.

2. Students discuss the steps to reaching their career goals.

When 25 minutes have passed, have the groups display their visuals around the classroom. Point out that students found that education, experience, and talent are all important to achieving career goals.

Remind students that their career plans will have to be continually revised and updated. Point out that they may change their career goals a number of times during their lives; each time, they will need to revise their plans.

Ask the groups to share the most interesting or surprising thing that they discovered as they tested their career-goal hypotheses.

Part II Why Work? (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize the importance of short-term employment to achieving their long-term career goals.

1. Students realize that holding a part-time job is a meaningful career strategy.

Remind students that they recognized that experience helps in achieving career goals.

Lead students to the understanding that they gain experience when they work in a field related to their career goals. Prompt students by saying, "If I wanted to be a musician, what kinds of jobs would give me valuable experience?" (*Students should respond: working in a music store or playing in a band.*) Explain to students that those kinds of experiences would allow you to learn more about music, making you a better musician. Also, point out that you'd be earning money while you learned.

2. Students recognize how working helps them learn life skills.

Ask students to suggest other reasons, besides knowledge of the job, that employers look for people with experience. Lead students to the understanding that someone who has held a job before will have learned some basic skills related to work. Point out that these basic skills will help students succeed in their careers no matter what their goals are.

Ask students to suggest some basic skills that they might learn by working. Write student responses on the board. (*Students might respond: reliability [being on time and prepared], solving problems and making decisions independently when possible, communication skills [getting along with co-workers, resolving differences, communicating with supervisors, etc.], financial responsibility [handling their paychecks and perhaps customers' money], or knowledge about taxes and Social Security deductions.*)

3. Students brainstorm part-time jobs that will help them achieve their career goals.

Say to students, "If a student wants to be a doctor, what kind of job might she get now, while she is in high school, that will help her accomplish this goal?" Have students brainstorm some possibilities. Write responses on the board. (*Students might respond: work in a hospital, at a pharmacy, or with the school nurse.*)

Students will have to take various things into consideration when preparing for a future career and looking for a part-time job. Point out that for someone who wants to become a doctor, a great high school job experience might be to work in a hospital. However, many of these types of positions are volunteer and unpaid. If a student needs to earn money, they might have to consider a job unrelated to the medical field or balance a paid job with the hospital volunteer position. Explain that it is important to weigh all of the consequences.

Repeat the activity with other occupations in which students have shown interest.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to describe how these sessions have helped them clarify their career paths. Tell them that the following lessons will provide them with the tools to secure the jobs they've identified. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- A good education helps people achieve their career goals.
- If you know what is needed to have the career you want, you can take these steps to get you there: graduation, higher education or training, and work experience.
- Part-time jobs not only pay money but can also provide experience in a career field.

Student Assessment

SESSION 1

1. Explain the difference between a job and a career.
2. What is one of your career goals?
3. What are some of the steps you must take to achieve your career goals?

SESSION 2

1. List three positive benefits of getting a part-time job.
2. What can you do now to work toward achieving your career goals?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Strivers achieve what dreamers believe.”

As a class, discuss the importance of action in realizing a dream. Explain that everyone has a dream career, but not everyone takes the steps they need to make their dream a reality.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students fold a piece of paper into quarters. In the fourth box, have students draw a cartoon showing themselves at their dream jobs sometime in the future. In the first three boxes, have them illustrate the steps needed to realize those dreams, with deadlines if desired.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students think about why a particular career is interesting to them. Have them write about why they think this career will be a good fit for who they are and the kind of adult they want to become.

Have each student exchange their work with a classmate for feedback.

Using Technology

Have students search the internet for a publication about the career they’ve chosen (e.g., *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Harvard Law Review*, *Instructor*, *Variety*). Have them write a review of the publication that gives other students an overview of the magazine’s regular features and content.

Have students present their information to the class. Place their reviews in a binder of job-hunting resources.

Homework

Have students arrange to shadow someone at work in their desired profession. Have them write a diary describing what this person's day is like.

Have students present their results to the class. Place their work in a binder of job-hunting resources for in-class use.

Additional Resources

Have students read *Teenagers Preparing for the Real World* by Chad Foster (available at www.chadfoster.com). It has great advice for teens on how to find the work they love, with the observation that they'll spend 86,000 hours of their lives doing that work.

Have small groups list tips for finding the work they love.

JOB ANALYSIS

Directions: Complete the chart below by writing the appropriate information in each box.

	SKILLS	SCHOOL	SALARY	BENEFITS	CAREER
Job #1:					
Job #2:					
Job #3:					
Job #4:					

EXPLORING JOB POSSIBILITIES



AGENDA

- Starter
- My Qualifications
- This Is Your Job
- The Ideal Part-Time Job
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will revisit their strengths and identify their interests.

Students will identify the process of finding a job.

Students will identify the characteristics of their ideal jobs.

Materials Needed

- The help wanted section of a local newspaper (Starter)
- One copy of the “My Qualifications” activity sheet for each student (Parts I and III)
- One copy of the “Ideal Job Equation” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Bring to class the help wanted section of a local paper or print out online postings of nearby jobs. Distribute one page to each student. Have students count the number of jobs on each page; write the totals on the board. If the section is very long, ask a volunteer to calculate the average number of jobs per page; then, tell the class how many pages are in the help wanted section and ask them to calculate the approximate number of jobs open.

Say, “With so many choices, how can you decide which job is the right one for you?” Explain that today’s lesson will help students determine how to find the right job for them.

Part I My Qualifications (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify their qualifications and interests.

1. Students identify their qualifications and interests as they complete an activity sheet.

Explain to students that each of them brings certain qualifications and interests to a job. Identifying their unique qualities will help direct them to a job that is appropriate for them.

Distribute copies of the “My Qualifications” activity sheet. Begin by discussing strengths. Remind students that strengths are admirable qualities that people have. Ask students to name a few. (Students might respond: loyal, caring, sense of humor, and so forth. If they name a talent, accept it.)

If students completed the “Strengths Interview” activity sheet (Confidence Building, “Lesson 2: Identifying Strengths”), ask them to take it out of their folders and review it for about a minute. If students have not completed the activity sheet, give them a minute to brainstorm a list of their strengths.

Discuss the “My Qualifications” activity sheet with students and clarify the different sections. As appropriate, explain:

- **Strengths:** You listed these on the “Strengths Interview” activity sheet (or during the brainstorming that you just did).
- **Knowledge:** This is what you have learned in school, in classes such as math, science, or English. Knowledge can also be what you’ve learned from your hobbies, activities, or other experiences.
- **Talents:** These are things that you do well, like singing, swimming, or writing.
- **Interests:** These are things that you enjoy doing, like listening to music, playing sports, or going to the movies. You don’t have to be good at doing something for it to be an interest.
- **Experience:** These are jobs or activities in which you have been involved.

They might include babysitting, delivering papers, entering a science fair, or working in a store or office.

2. Students recognize that their strengths, talents, interests, experience, and knowledge can help them find a job.

Have students fill out the “My Qualifications” activity sheet.

When students have finished, point out that they should tell potential employers about these qualifications, as they show their strengths and make them good candidates for a job.

Part II This Is Your Job (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize what they are looking for in a job.

1. Students are randomly assigned jobs to spark their thinking about what they want to do.

Say, “Now that you have realized your qualifications and interests, who wants a part-time or summer job?”

Walk around the room and randomly give jobs to the students who have their hands raised. Tell one student that they are a veterinarian’s assistant, another that they are a cashier at a drugstore, and another that they deliver pizzas.

When all of the volunteers have been assigned jobs, ask students if getting a job is really that easy.

2. Students discuss the process of getting an after-school job.

When students respond that it is not that easy to find a job, ask them how someone does get an after-school or part-time job.

Elicit from students some of the following steps:

- Answering advertisements
- Responding to postings in store windows
- Filling out applications
- Aptitude testing
- Interviewing
- Networking (making contacts in the career field)

Write student responses on the board.

3. Students discuss what they want in an after-school job.

Explain to students that there are many things they have to think about and do before they get hired for a job. Ask students to suggest some of the things they need to consider. Add responses to those already on the board. (Students might respond: you need to decide what you want to do, think about where you want to work, find out what jobs are available, and decide which jobs you're qualified for.)

To conclude, point out to students that they already know about the different things that interest them or that they would like to do. They also know what they can't do because of their schedules or because they have limited transportation or other restrictions. Explain that they need to find a job that meets all of those requirements.

Part III The Ideal Part-Time Job (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify the characteristics of their ideal part-time jobs.

1. Students use an activity sheet to determine important factors to consider while looking for employment.

Remind students that short-term jobs provide excellent training and great experience. Explain that this activity will help them consider the factors that will determine what their ideal short-term jobs are.

Distribute copies of the "Ideal Job Equation" activity sheet. Discuss the sections of the activity sheet with the class. Explain to students that qualifications are the skills they have, such as knowledge or experience, that will help them get a job, and that salary is how much they will be paid.

Ask students to identify some of the factors that determine salary. Elicit from students that experience and level of education can affect how much money they earn. Encourage students to think about how much money they need to make.

Point out that location is also important because they need to be able to get to their jobs. If they don't have access to transportation, they have to think about jobs that are within walking distance.

Explain to students that job environment is important because they will want to feel comfortable where they are working. Ask students to consider whether they want to work indoors or outside, with people or alone, in a big office or for a small company.

Explain that limitations are factors that might keep an employer from hiring them, such as their age, their availability to work full time, or their school schedule.

Have students fill in the boxes on the activity sheet with appropriate responses. Suggest that students use the "My Qualifications" activity sheet for reference.

2. Students consider their ideal jobs.

After students have completed the activity sheet, explain that based on the factors they listed, they should be able to determine their ideal part-time jobs. For example, they might want an after-school job that allows them to be outdoors, that allows them to work only on the weekends, and that pays more than minimum wage. With these criteria, they might be able to find a job at a park or with a florist or landscaper.

Elicit other examples from students and have the class brainstorm possible job options.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students how they will use decision making skills, such as gathering information and weighing options, in their job searches. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Each person has unique strengths, interests, knowledge, talents, and experiences.
- To find a job, individuals must determine their qualifications and interests.
- An ideal short-term job is one that meets all personal requirements.

Student Assessment

1. List three jobs that would use some of your qualifications. Explain which of your qualifications would be used and how.
2. List three things that you are looking for in a job.
3. What jobs are available to you now? Which of them meet your personal requirements?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Find a job you like, and you add five days to every week.”

Discuss with students the difference between spending their time doing something they like and doing something they tolerate.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students read biographies and magazine articles about people who’ve been successful in the field of their choice.

Have each student give a brief oral report on the early work life of the person that they have chosen, without naming the person. Play “20 Questions.” Have other students guess who the person is and where they ended up.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students summarize their entries on the “Ideal Job Equation” activity sheet. They should identify which elements are most important to them as they select their ideal jobs.

Discuss how each element was chosen.

Using Technology

Have students discuss their job preferences and areas of interest. Then, have them visit the Occupational Outlook Handbook site at [https:// www.bls.gov/ooh/](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/) and research information about their desired professions.

Have students report on the job outlooks in their fields of interest.

Homework

Ask students to interview parents, businesspeople, and community members about their first jobs and how they started their careers.

Have students write summaries of the interviews, discuss them, and include them in the class binder.

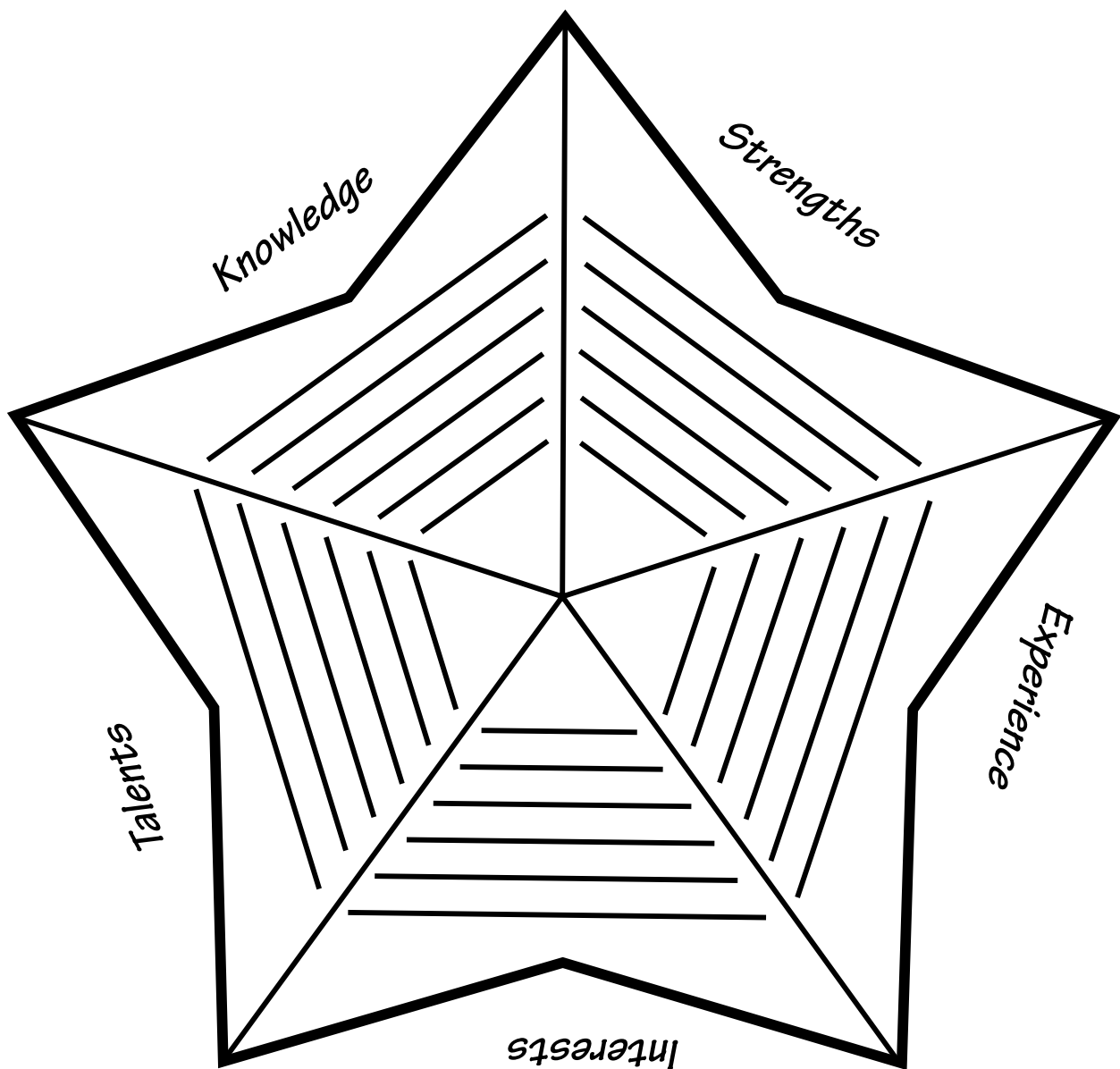
Additional Resources

Read “I Hear America Singing” by Walt Whitman out loud. This poem celebrates various professions.

Have students update the poem to include more working women and jobs for the information age.

MY QUALIFICATIONS

Personal Facts:



IDEAL JOB EQUATION

QUALIFICATIONS	+	SALARY/BENEFITS	+	LOCATION	+
<div></div>		<div></div>		<div></div>	
ENVIRONMENT	-	LIMITING FACTORS	=	MY IDEAL JOB	
<div></div>		<div></div>		<div></div>	

LOOKING FOR A JOB



AGENDA

- Starter
- Finding Job Listings
- Reading and Understanding Job Descriptions
- Is This a Fit?
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will learn how to identify jobs.

Students will understand how to read and understand a job description.

Students will learn how to determine if a job is a good fit.

Materials Needed

- Whiteboard and markers (Parts I and II)
- “Sample Job Posting” Activity Sheet (Part II)
- Internet access (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Have students recall the last time they decided to watch a movie. Ask, “When choosing a film, did you just select a title at random and press play?” Elicit from students that a lot of thought and consideration can go into the decision of what movie to watch. Say, “You might consider the type of film you feel like seeing, read the description to see if it interests you, or find reviews before deciding.”

Explain to students that, just as they would not select a movie at random, the same should apply when trying to find a job. Tell students that in this lesson they will learn the process of looking for a job.

Part I Finding Job Listings (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students learn how to use job posting resources.

1. Students identify job-hunting resources.

Ask students where they might find information about jobs in which they are interested and list their responses where everyone can see them. (Student responses may include job search engines, company websites, and social networking sites.) Explain to students that not all jobs are listed in one place, and they may have to search through many sources in order to find the right job for them.

2. Students understand how the same type of job can be posted under different names.

Ask students for a show of hands if they have ever seen the insect that emits light during the summer. After taking the survey, ask for a volunteer to share the name of the insect you described (students may say “lightning bug” or “firefly”). Point out that people refer to this insect by different names, like “lightning bug,” “firefly,” “glowworm,” and “june bug.” Say, “Even though we are referring to the same thing, we can have many different names for it. This is also true for job postings.”

Say, “For example, some companies may refer to a position as an ‘Office Manager,’ whereas others may call the same job an ‘Office Administrator,’ ‘Executive Assistant,’ or ‘Office Coordinator.’ Emphasize that, when looking for a job, it is important to do the proper research and identify all of the possible titles and descriptions for the job you are seeking.

3. Students find similar jobs with different titles.

Group students into pairs and tell them you are going to give each of them a job title and they need to find different ways the job title can be listed in postings. Examples could include:

- Communications Coordinator (e.g., Engagement Manager, Marketing Coordinator)
- Customer Service Representative (e.g., Receptionist, Technical Support)
- Data Scientist (e.g., Data Engineer, Data Analyst)
- Event Planner (e.g., Event Coordinator, Event Manager)
- Office Clerk (e.g., Office Assistant, Office Worker)
- Project Manager (e.g., Project Coordinator, Project Engineer)
- Security Guard (e.g., Security Officer, Security Specialist)

Tell students they have five minutes to work as a team and identify as many different job titles for that position as possible. Once they have finished, have them share their findings with the class, offering your ideas as well.

Part II Reading and Understanding Job Descriptions *(10 minutes)*

Purpose: Students understand how to read a job description.

1. Students learn why it is important to read a job description thoroughly.

Tell students that the majority of job openings are posted with a description that provides details on the position that is available. Say to students, “While you may find that the same job can be listed under several different titles, the reverse can also be true. Sometimes, you may see that a job with the same title is listed for multiple companies, but the responsibilities for the position can be significantly different. That’s why it is important to read job descriptions thoroughly.”

2. Students read a job description and identify key terms and requirements.

Say to students, “It is important to pay attention to the language of a job description, as it usually contains keywords that describe what the employer is looking for in a new hire.” Distribute copies of the “Sample Job Posting” activity sheet to each student (alternatively, you can find a job posting online) and tell them to highlight the information they need to address when they apply for the job (for example, experience managing social media accounts).

After five minutes, have students share what they highlighted and explain their reasons for doing so. Point out that some qualifications may seem intimidating at first, but most employers do not require applicants to possess everything that is outlined. So, it is important to apply for jobs you want even if you do not fully match the description. Say, “Maybe you have never managed a social media account professionally, but you have experience with them personally. This could make you a good fit for the job.”

Next, say, “In addition to understanding the key responsibilities’ and qualifications, knowing how to apply is very important. Oftentimes, people will not include the required documentation when applying for a job.” Point out that this posting asks for a cover letter and resume, but other jobs may ask for more information, like school transcripts. Tell students that where you send the documentation is just as important. This posting asks for it to be emailed, but others may ask for applicants to upload it to a company job portal.

Say, “If you do not read a job description thoroughly, you may miss some important instructions, and this could cause your application to be disqualified without ever being read. You want to ensure you are giving yourself the best chance of being considered for the job you want.”

Part III Is This a Fit? (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students reflect on the type of job they would like to have.

1. Students identify the difference between nonprofit and for-profit jobs.

Ask students to raise their hands if they know the difference between a nonprofit and for-profit job. Then tell students that, generally speaking, a nonprofit organization exists to provide a service to a community, further a cause, or work toward a specific mission. A for-profit business is primarily focused on generating a profit. Say, “When deciding on a career path, it’s important to consider your interests. Would you prefer to focus on helping your community directly or on helping a business become as successful as possible?”

Emphasize that there is no right answer to this question—many for-profit businesses do a lot of good for their community and support a variety of causes, and many people in the nonprofit sector can be very successful. Say, “The important thing is to consider what path would be the best fit for you and your interests.”

2. Students learn that researching a company is important.

Tell students that an important step in the job-seeking process is researching the company they are interested in working for. Say, “Knowing as much as possible about a company can help put you ahead of other applicants when applying for a job.” Point out that most companies have social media accounts and web pages, and some may even have news articles, press releases, or Wikipedia pages. Emphasize that knowing about their potential employer will help them in the application and interview process, as well as give them a greater understanding of how the employer operates.

3. Students learn how to research the culture of a company.

Say to students, “While it’s important to research a company to help you in the application process, this can also be an opportunity to learn more about the culture of the company.” Explain that there are websites that allow current and former employees to voice their opinions on a company. Say, “Websites like these can offer valuable insight into what the day-to-day is like at a company and also provide more details on benefits, work environment, and more.”

Have students select a well-known company they may want to work for and take 10 minutes to research what it is like to work there. Tell them to consider things that are important to them (for example, opportunities for advancement, work-life balance, or salary ranges). Once they have finished, have volunteers share what they have learned with the class. Was there anything about working for a specific company that surprised them? Ask, “After researching the company, are you more interested or less interested in a career with them?”

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to name three important steps in looking for a job. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in the lesson:

- Understand the different ways that jobs are posted.
- Read a job description closely.
- Research the employer and make sure you are a good fit for each other.

Tell students that, while the job-seeking process can seem intimidating at first, breaking it down into smaller steps can help provide them with the ability to apply with confidence. Then, write this quote where everyone can see it and encourage students to write it in their journal, “It’s the possibility of having a dream come true that makes life interesting.”

Student Assessment

1. What are three sources for job postings?
2. What information should you look for in a job description?
3. How can you determine if you are a good fit for a job, and vice versa?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, so most people don’t recognize them.”

Ask volunteers to complete this sentence: “I will make my own opportunities by...”

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about how looking for work makes them feel. Have them describe what they find exciting and what they find challenging. Ask student volunteers to share their journal entry.

Using Technology

Have students take the free personality test at www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test. After students receive their results, ask if there are any careers they think may be a good fit for them. Ask too if there are careers recommended that they have not considered.

Homework

Have students identify five industry-specific sources (*for example, jobs in education, jobs in the medical field, local government jobs*) where jobs are posted and bring them to class the next day.

Using Quotations

“One thing to remember is that you’re not alone. There are lots of people who’ve struggled with job searches and staying motivated but have pushed through and found the job of their dreams. It’s not always quick or easy, but it can and will happen.”

Encourage students to write this quote down and display it at home where they can see it.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Before beginning this activity, prepare six responses that students might hear from a hiring manager when inquiring about part-time jobs (for example, “We’re not hiring,” “Please apply online,” “What are your qualifications?”). Write these responses on the board and assign each a number from one to six. Divide students into pairs and have them take turns playing job seeker and hiring manager. Students playing the latter should roll a die to determine which of the six responses to use.

SAMPLE JOB POSTING

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Business, Inc.
Denver, CO

Description

Business, Inc. is looking for an experienced, personable, and energetic communications coordinator to join our Denver, CO office. Candidate should be resourceful, ambitious, and results-driven. Responsibilities include managing the company's social media accounts, engaging with and responding to community members, and assisting in the planning of small- to medium-size events.

Details

- Location: Denver, CO (remote work possible)
- Schedule: Full-time
- Experience: 1-3 years in a similar role
- Travel: Low (less than 25% of time)

Key Responsibilities

- Manage the company's social media accounts by creating engaging content, developing a detailed project plan, and adhering to strict timelines.
- Identify new potential audiences and create a detailed outreach plan.
- Respond to and interact with our community through our social media channels.
- Assist in the planning and successful execution of external events by communicating with and securing vendors, event spaces, caterers, and more while staying within budget.

Qualifications

- Proven track record of planning successful events a plus.
- Extensive experience with social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter.
- Ability to work fast and remain calm under pressure.
- Must be well-organized and possess strong communication skills.
- Ability to handle multiple responsibilities at once and effectively prioritize tasks.

Salary and Benefits

Salary commensurate with experience. Ten observed holidays and two weeks paid vacation upon starting. Health and dental insurance.

How to Apply

Send a resume and cover letter to jobs@businessinc.com. No phone calls. References required.

AGENDA

- Starter
- Make the Connection
- The Right Way and the Right Time
- In the Network
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will understand what networking is.

Students will identify the right way and the right time to network.

Students will recognize that the people they know can help them to network.

Materials Needed

- One 10-foot piece of string for each student in the class (Part I)

Starter (3 minutes)

Ask students if they can explain the phrase “six degrees of separation.” Lead students to the understanding that the phrase means that you can link yourself to anyone in the world in fewer than six “steps.”

Guide the class through an example, linking the class to someone remote and writing each step on the board. For example, ask students if anyone knows the mayor. If not, ask students if anyone knows of another person who might know the mayor (perhaps the superintendent). Ask if anyone knows the superintendent. If not, ask who might know the superintendent (a principal). Does anyone know the principal? Continue in this way, making the connection back to the class.

Explain to students that the process of “knowing someone who knows someone” is called networking and that today’s lesson will help them learn the right way and the right time to network for job opportunities.

Part I Make the Connection (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify the right way to network.

1. Students demonstrate the process of networking.

Tell students that they are going to do an experiment to see how easily information can travel. Ask a volunteer to think up a simple statement that uses their name (e.g., “Jane Smith is looking for a job.”). Tell the class that the goal is to get the message to all of the students in the room, but each student can tell only two others.

Ask students how many links they think there will be between the volunteer and the last students to hear the message. Hand all the pieces of string (one for each student) to the volunteer and explain to the class that they will mark the links by holding a piece of string between them each time the information is shared.

Have the volunteer quietly tell the message to two other students and, holding the end of all the strings, pass half of the strings to each of them. Have those students tell two more students and pass half of their strings to each of them. This process should continue until all students have heard the statement. (Students should continue holding their pieces of the string and passing the rest along. If the first student was holding 20 pieces, the next two should each have 10 strings, the next four should each have 5 strings, and so on.)

Ask students to determine the number of links between the first student and the last. Explain that the strings represent a network of people. Networking allows information to be communicated rapidly in a short amount of time.

2. Students learn the benefits of networking.

Ask students to suggest how networking relates to looking for a job. Lead students to the understanding that networking is the process of telling people that you are looking for a job.

Ask students to imagine the following scenario: A student they have never seen before comes up to them, hands them a piece of paper, and walks away. The paper says that there is going to be a surprise quiz in math tomorrow. Ask students if they are likely to believe the note.

Then, have students imagine that a friend from their math class tells them the same information. Ask students if they would pay more attention to the friend. Have students suggest reasons why.

Remind students that, when hiring, employers are trying to make a decision that is very important to them. In making this decision, they gather information from sources they trust. Explain that they are interested in recommendations from people they know, such as friends, family, coworkers, etc.

Lead students to recognize that these connections are more effective than a blind application or resume alone. Mention that some companies don't even publicize jobs that are open and rely solely on word of mouth.

Part II The Right Way and the Right Time (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify the right way and the right time to network.

1. Students learn the steps of networking.

Explain to students that there are three steps for telling people that you are looking for a job:

1. Say, for example, "I am looking for a job to earn money for college and to get work experience."
2. Tell the person the type of job you are looking for. Use phrasing such as, "I would like to find a job in the health care industry because I want to be a doctor."
3. Ask people to help you by saying, "If you know anybody who might help me find a job like that, I would appreciate it if you would let me know." You may also say, "If you hear about a job that I might be qualified for, I would appreciate it if you called me."

2. Students learn the right way to network.

Tell students the following story:

I had a friend come over the other day, and she was very unhappy. She told me that she was at a party and saw the manager of a department store. She needed a job, so she went up to the manager and told her, "I really need a job. I'll do any type of work. Please give me a job." My friend said the manager just looked at her and walked away.

Ask students why they think the manager walked away. Lead students to recognize that the friend was too pushy and sounded too desperate. Explain to students that sounding pushy or desperate puts the applicant in a bad light and can make potential employers uncomfortable.

3. Students learn the right time to network.

Ask students what the department store manager was doing before your friend saw her. Lead students to the understanding that they don't know, and that neither did the friend. Tell students that perhaps the manager had just had a fight with a close friend.

Ask students to consider how this might have affected the way the manager treated your friend. Explain that networking should be done only when the person you are speaking to is fairly comfortable and focused on the conversation. Discuss with students some suggestions for opening up conversations about jobs. (Refer to the suggestions provided in step one of this activity.)

4. Students practice appropriate networking.

Have students work in pairs to suggest something that would have been more appropriate for the friend to say, such as, "I'm looking for a job in cosmetics. May I call you tomorrow to arrange a time that's convenient for you to meet with me?"

Provide students with other situations (e.g., your friend's mother owns a music store that you would like to work in, your uncle is in politics and you'd like a job at the mayor's office) and have them phrase appropriate networking statements using the structure provided above.

Part III In the Network (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize that the people they know can help them to network.

1. Students identify the kinds of people who may help them find a job.

Ask students whom they would talk to about getting a job. Write student responses on the board.

The list will likely include people such as teachers, employees they know, friends, and family. Explain that all of these people are helpful. Also, point out that sometimes family members can be a bigger help than students think. Remind students that networking is all about "knowing someone who knows someone." Family may not have direct connections to a job, but they might know somebody who does.

Ask students, "Whom do you think can help you the most to find a job—the owner of a business or your mom?" Have students give their reasons. (Students may choose the owner because the owner may know about more jobs, or some may select their mothers because they are more interested in the students.)

Tell students it is important that they explore all possibilities when networking and not rule out anyone prematurely. Explain to them that it is as important to talk to someone who will pass their name around as it is to try to find a person who may know about a lot of jobs.

2. Students brainstorm specific people to include in their networks.

Have students individually brainstorm all of the people who might help them in their job hunts. If students are familiar with clustering (a graphic organizer for brainstorming around a central theme), have them put themselves at the center; draw circles for family, school, friends, and activities around their name; and include names and connections in each area.

Instruct students to list everyone who might possibly be helpful to them, even if they aren't sure how. Also, encourage students to list names of people their contacts might know.

Point out to students that they probably know many more people than they think.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Remind students that networking is a process that never stops. Even when they aren't actively looking for a job, they should develop relationships that might help them in their careers. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Networking means asking other people to help with your job search.
- Any time can be the right time to talk about job possibilities as long as the other person is interested in the conversation.
- Networking is a tool to let others know you are looking for a job and to discover job openings.
- It is as important to talk to someone who will pass your name around as it is to try to find a person who may know about a lot of jobs.

Student Assessment

1. Define “networking” and explain why it is important.
2. List four things a good networker does and says.
3. List three people you can use for networking and explain how each of these people may be able to help you.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Every successful businessperson can point to one item that is the key to their success...It’s almost always a \$9.95 Rolodex.”

Explain that a Rolodex is a filing device that organizes contact information; it’s similar to a contact list on a cell phone or in software such as Outlook. Have students ask people they know to tell them about five of their most important contacts, how long they’ve known each person, and how they got to know these people. Discuss the answers in class.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Discuss that networking works both ways and that helping others find work builds lasting relationships.

Create a class bulletin board for job tips and referrals. Have students choose partners to encourage them in their efforts.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students reflect on the idea of networking. Have them answer the following questions: Is this intimidating to you? Do you think that networking sounds easy? What tips do you have for people who find networking difficult? What tips do you want regarding networking?

Have students share the tips they want and the tips that they can give others.

Using Technology

Have students use the internet to locate professional, service, volunteer, and mentoring organizations. Have them research information about the organizations they find.

Have each student write a paragraph summarizing the different organizations they found and their contact information. Include their paragraphs in the class job-hunting binder.

Homework

Have the class poll students in school who have part-time jobs. Have them find out what these students do and how they found work.

Have the class create two graphs, one that shows the jobs students hold and another that shows how they got them.

Additional Resources

Have students read *Make Things Happen: The Key to Networking for Teens* by Lara Zielin.

Have small groups list tips for networking and choose one tip they can put into action.

PREPARING A RESUME



AGENDA

- SESSION 1
 - Starter
 - Skills, Talents, and Experience
 - You Have Skills
 - What's in a Resume?
- SESSION 2
 - Make It Sharp
 - Putting It All Together
 - Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will identify the experiences and job skills they possess that will help them find jobs.

Students will analyze the skills they identified to find those appropriate for their resumes.

Students will learn what to include in their resumes.

Students will learn what a resume should look like.

Materials Needed

- Session 1: A dictionary (Part I)

- Session 1: Completed copies of the “My Qualifications” activity sheet (Part I)
- Session 1: One copy of the “Skills Translator” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- Session 1: Sets of real job application forms from such places as fast-food restaurants, department stores, and gas stations for each small group (Part II)
- Session 1: One copy of the “Sample Resume A” and “Sample Resume B” activity sheets for each small group (Part III)
- Session 2: One set of real resumes on various kinds of paper and in various fonts for each small group (Part I)
- Session 2: One copy of the “My Resume” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- Session 2: Dictionaries and other reference materials (Part II)

SESSION 1

Starter (3 minutes)

Tell students the following story:

Dave Thomas was the owner of Wendy's, the worldwide fast-food chain, and starred in the company's commercials. Even though Dave owned Wendy's, he handled very little of the company's day-to-day operations. He admitted that he wasn't very good with those details. But Dave was a great speaker; so instead, he traveled around to the different restaurants to motivate his staff and he was featured in Wendy's commercials. Dave knew what his strengths and weaknesses were. He translated his strengths into a skill that he used to make his business more successful.

Explain to students that they will need to present their unique strengths, experiences, and skills to potential employers; a resume is an effective tool with which to do that.

Part I Skills, Talents, and Experience (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students recall the experience and job skills they possess that will help them find jobs.

1. Students identify what a resume is.

Ask students if they know what a resume is. After several students have volunteered explanations, ask a student to look up "resume" in the dictionary. Explain that a resume is a summary of an individual's education and work experience.

2. Students identify experiences that may help them get a job.

Ask students to raise their hands if they have work experience. If any students raise their hands, ask them to share their experience with the class. Explain that other experiences can translate into skills that are important to employers.

Ask students to take out the "My Qualifications" activity sheet, which they completed in Lesson 2. If students have not completed the activity sheet, conduct a brainstorming session so they can identify their own skills, strengths, and talents.

Remind students not to limit themselves to work experience when considering things to include on their resumes. Explain that many things they do on a regular basis can provide experience and indicate skills. Offer examples such as babysitting for younger siblings, helping with the cooking, volunteering, and participating in school activities.

Prompt students by instructing them to think about the things they like to do and the skills or talents that these things involve. Allow them several minutes to make a list of their experiences.

3. Students recognize the value of their skills, talents, and experience.

When students have finished, explain that all of these things they have listed are skills they can talk about when they apply for a job. Job skills can come from hobbies, activities, education, and prior jobs.

Part II You Have Skills (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students analyze the skills they have identified to find those appropriate for their resumes.

1. Students recognize how their skills, talents, and experiences translate into job skills.

Hand out the “Skills Translator” activity sheet. Explain that this activity sheet will help them turn the experiences and talents that they just identified into skills for the workplace.

Provide an example for students, such as, “One of my activities is basketball, so I put that in my activity box. What are some of the skills I use playing basketball? To play basketball, I have to be a team player, I have to have discipline to go to practice, I’m able to jump high, I have an accurate shot, and I can calculate scores.”

Point out that you considered all of the skills that you have gained from basketball, even if they aren’t directly related to a job. Ask if anyone can translate any of the basketball skills into skills that an employer might want. Lead students to the understanding that being a team player shows the ability to work well with other employees in the company, that discipline shows perseverance and indicates likely good attendance, and that the ability to keep score shows basic math skills.

Repeat this process using an experience offered by a volunteer.

2. Students translate their skills, talents, and experiences into job skills.

Have students fill out the activity sheet using their individual skills, experiences, activities, and talents.

3. Students analyze the types of skills that are important for various jobs.

Have students form small groups. Distribute the job application forms to each group. Ask students to analyze the questions that are asked on each application. From their analyses, have students deduce the types of skills needed for each type of job.

Ask students to compare questions and skills for each job. Have the groups write two lists: one that lists skills that most jobs require and another that lists specialized skills that apply to only certain jobs.

Have a volunteer from one group read their group’s list. Write responses on the board. Ask other groups to add to the lists.

Have groups compare their activity sheet responses with the lists on the board. Have them notice similarities. Ask students to revise and adjust their individual lists to better reflect the skills that employers want.

4. Students share their revised skill lists with the class.

Have volunteers share their revised activity sheet responses with the class. Allow students to make positive comments and offer constructive criticism. Suggest that students “borrow” talents and skills if any apply to them.

Explain that a resume will help students organize their skills so they can get the job that they want. Explain that a resume is a clear, easy-to-read summary that shows a potential employer the skills they have.

Part III What’s in a Resume? (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students learn to determine the areas that should be covered in their resumes. They also recognize the two most important elements of a resume: content and format.

1. Students examine the formats of real resumes.

Distribute the “Sample Resume” activity sheets and ask the groups to notice the format of “Sample Resume A.” Ask students if any of the headings on the resume look like categories where their skills would fit.

Explain that the headings on the resume are there to help organize the information being presented. Headings make resumes easy to read and send a message signifying what is impressive about the resume writer.

Ask students to examine “Sample Resume B.” Have groups notice the differences between the resumes. Discuss their observations.

Explain that while formats differ, there are a few things that should be included on every resume, such as your name, address, and how the person can get in touch with you. Additionally, point out to students that no matter what, their resumes should focus on their strengths.

2. Students review what they have learned about resumes.

Remind students that many of the things they do every day can be considered impressive skills. For example, if they know a lot about computers or if they speak another language, they have skills that not everyone has, and they should be sure to create a category on their resumes that will let them highlight those skills.

Explain that students will write resumes of their own in the next session. Ask that they continue to think about their skills, talents, and experiences in the interim. Suggest that they add these qualifications to their lists so that they will be even more prepared to create an impressive resume during the next session.

SESSION 2

Part I Make It Sharp (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students appreciate the importance of a clear format and proper grammar on their resumes.

1. Students review the parts of a resume.

Reiterate that a resume is a summary of an individual's education and work experience and is a way to showcase skills to a potential employer. Remind students that they have many talents and strengths that can be assets when looking for a job. Explain that a resume will help to organize and present those skills.

2. Students discover the dos of resumes.

Discuss with students why it is advantageous for their resumes to stand out. Ask about ways that resumes can be made to stand out. Have student groups look at the real resumes and notice the ways in which different resumes look special. (Some examples might be: the choice of font, the use of boldface, or underlining important words.) Explain that resumes should be clear and easy to read.

3. Students discover the don'ts of resumes.

Ask students if they can describe the kinds of resume mistakes that might catch an employer's eye and cast them in a negative light. (Students may respond: poor grammar, misspellings, or a handwritten—instead of typed—resume.)

Ask students to take the point of view of employers and think about the characteristics they would look for in their employees. Point out that employers want to know that potential employees complete every job to the best of their abilities, consider every task important, and make sure each job is done properly. Explain to students that when they submit a resume without any grammar or spelling errors, they're telling potential employers that they care about the things they produce. That makes them good prospective employees.

Highlight the importance of this by explaining that employers usually get many resumes for one position and that if a resume has many grammar or spelling errors, the employer may not even read it.

4. Students recognize the importance of editing and proofreading their resumes.

Explain the importance of editing and proofreading. If you've done the lesson on writing reports, ask students to recall why having someone else look over a paper is important. Explain that it's important to have at least two people they trust look over their resumes before they send them to anyone. Remind students that spelling and grammar are easy to fix. Suggest that students ask a friend to proofread their resumes so that prospective employers will not be turned off by errors.

5. Students decide on categories with which to organize their resumes.

Remind students that to make resumes organized and easy to read, their qualifications must be organized into categories. Qualifications that are similar should go into the same category. For example, they might list sports, chess, and cooking under “Activities” if they frequently participate in these activities.

Have students recall some other categories for a resume. (Students might respond: education, work experience, volunteer experience, school activities, interests, and talents/strengths.)

Ask students to choose appropriate categories that they will use in their resumes.

6. Students learn about putting the finishing touches on their resumes.

Explain to students that there is one more thing they need to know. Say, “Your resume is all about you. Make sure it presents you in the positive light you deserve and that your name is in the largest font size on the page.”

Part II Putting It All Together (25 minutes)

Purpose: Students write and correct their resumes.

1. Students write their own resumes.

Give each student a copy of the “My Resume” activity sheet.

Explain that this outline will help them create their resumes. They should put one activity or skill on each line and highlight their special skills. These are the characteristics that will make them stand out from other applicants.

Have students use the activity sheet as an outline for drafting their resumes in class.

Refer students to dictionaries and other reference materials. Consider allowing them to work in pairs or small groups so that they may help each other.

After students have drafted their resumes, remind them that real resumes are always typed. Consider allowing students to go to the school computer room or library to type their resumes into the format they like (or assign typing and printing the resume as homework).

2. Students evaluate their peers’ resumes.

Explain that most employers take less than a minute to look at a resume before they put it down. Remind students to make sure that their resumes are so clear and easy to read that potential employers get the important information in a short amount of time. Spelling, grammar, and neatness are essential.

If time permits, ask students to work with a partner to edit and proofread their resumes.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students if they can actually use the resumes that they wrote. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Students have talents and strengths that can be assets when looking for a job.
- A resume helps present these skills.
- A well-written, error-free resume with appropriate details can impress a potential employer.

Student Assessment

SESSION 1

1. What is a resume? List the benefits of having one.
2. List three categories that you should include in a resume.
3. Imagine you want to apply for an after-school job as a salesperson at your favorite clothing store. The job description reads, "Seeking salesperson with some experience. Must have a good understanding of merchandise and cash register. Must feel comfortable approaching customers. Must work well as a member of a team." List the skills that you might need to be qualified for this job.

SESSION 2

1. List five characteristics of an effective resume and three characteristics of an ineffective resume.
2. What can you do to make your resume presentable to a potential employer?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Use what talents you possess; the woods would be very silent if no birds sang there except those that sang best.”

Discuss recognizing and building on existing skills.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students create resumes for famous characters from history or literature by analyzing the skills evidenced in the subject’s activities and putting a spin on historic events or literary works.

Have students share these resumes with the class and discuss appropriate word choices and descriptions.

Writing in Your Journal

Ask students to write about personal experiences that involved special talents and skills.

Have volunteers share what they wrote with the class. The other students should offer suggestions for incorporating these unique experiences into a resume.

Using Technology

Have students type their resumes in a word processor and save the files for later use.

Divide students into pairs. Each student should proofread their partner’s resume for spelling, grammar, and content suggestions.

Homework

Have students create charts that list effective action words and various formats that they can use on their resumes.

Have students share their work with the class. Then, have them discuss how their resumes can show how they've grown and changed over time.

Additional Resources

Review resume guides such as *Your First Resume* by Ron Fry and *The Damn Good Resume Guide: A Crash Course in Resume Writing* by Yana Parker.

Have students select resume formats that work well for people just beginning their careers. Give examples of ways in which volunteer work and student activities can be included.

SKILLS TRANSLATOR

EXPERIENCE/ACTIVITY

>

SKILLS

=

JOB SKILLS

1. Fill in the small box with your experience or activity.
2. List the skills you use to accomplish that activity in the “Skills” box.
3. Those skills can be translated into the “Job Skills” box.

>

=

EXPERIENCE/ACTIVITY

SKILLS

JOB SKILLS

SAMPLE RESUME A

Carlos DiSanto

925 Riverside Drive, Apartment #1F
San Diego, CA 90013
(619) 555-0485

Education

Junior at Carver High School

20XX-20XX Forensics Team

20XX-20XX Community Service

Shore Road Middle School, Class of 20XX

Experience

Sales/Cashier

Haagen Dazs Stores, San Diego, CA; April to December 20XX

Responsible for customer service, cash register, inventory, and store maintenance.

Kitchen Helper

Summer Camp; 20XX

Assisted in meal preparation for entire camp; worked as a waiter and busboy.

Tutor/Babysitter

Numerous families; 20XX-20XX

Responsible for child care and math tutoring for numerous families with children ages 1–9.

Skills

Knowledge of personal computers and basketball. Avid reader.

References available upon request.

SAMPLE RESUME B

Amaya Adams

1 Liberty Plaza, Apartment #3
New York, NY 10025
(212) 555-7606

Experience

- 5/XX-8/XX **Summer Youth Intern**
Central Park Conservancy, NY, NY
Functioned as member of an ecology team for recycling and beautification projects in Central Park.
- 4/XX-12/XX **Sales/Cashier**
CVS, NY, NY
Responsible for customer service, inventory, and store maintenance.
- 6/XX-9/XX **Kitchen Helper**
Summer Camp, NY, NY
Assisted in meal preparation for entire camp; worked as a waitress and bus girl.
- 1/XX-3/XX **Helper/Babysitter**
Responsible for child care and related tasks for numerous families with children ages 1 to 10.

Education

Dalton High School
Women's varsity basketball team, 3 years (Co-captain; All-Star Team MVP Award)
Women's varsity soccer team, 2 years
P.S. 175, Class of 20XX

Skills

PC literate, photography/darkroom experience, classical guitar, and various sports.

References available upon request.

MY RESUME

Name

Street

City, State, Zip

Phone

EDUCATION/SKILLS

JOB EXPERIENCE/SKILLS

SKILLS/HOBBIES/SPECIAL INTERESTS

REFERENCES

MAKING CONTACTS



AGENDA

- SESSION 1
 - Starter
 - Who Can Talk about You?
 - Preparing Your References
- SESSION 2
 - Cover Letters
 - Writing a Cover Letter
 - Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will recognize the importance of good references and identify potential references.

Students will learn how to determine what employers might want to learn from references.

Students will learn to prepare references for phone calls or other inquiries from employers.

Students will recognize why cover letters are important and identify the parts of a letter.

Students will write a cover letter for a job of their choice.

Materials Needed

- Session 2: One copy of the “Sample Cover Letter” activity sheet for each student (Part I)

- Session 2: One copy of the “Your Cover Letter” activity sheet for each student (Part II)

SESSION 1

Starter (3 minutes)

Tell students to imagine that they have to choose to work on a project with one of two classmates whom they don't know. Both of these students claim to know a lot about the subject, to be hard workers, and to have great grades. Ask, "How are you going to decide which student to work with?"

Lead students to the understanding that the best way would be to get the opinions of other students or teachers who have worked with them before.

Explain to students that employers try to find out more about applicants in the same way. References are the people who will speak to potential employers about an applicant's ability to do a job. The first session will help students identify and contact references. The second session will help students write appropriate cover letters to potential employers.

Part I Who Can Talk about You? (25 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize the importance of securing good references and identify potential references.

1. Students consider what employers want to know about them.

Place students in small groups. Ask groups to brainstorm information that an employer might want to know about them. Have them develop a list of questions that employers might have.

Have groups share their questions with the class. Write the questions on the board. As they offer their questions, ask students to explain why an employer would want to know such information. Help students discover the qualities that employers are looking for in a new employee.

2. Students identify the characteristics they should look for when choosing references.

Ask students, "If the personnel manager at the company where you applied wanted to find out information about you, what kinds of people would you suggest the manager talk to?"

Students should share that people for whom they have worked (as volunteers or for pay) are good choices. Also, teachers, counselors, and coaches are valuable references.

Ask students why they chose these people. List the reasons on the board. Have them organize this list by order of importance. Help students reach a consensus about the top four qualities a reference should have.

Lead students to the understanding that they should choose references who know them well, respect them, and like them.

3. Students recognize potentially inappropriate references.

Ask students if any of them have listed family members as references. Ask the class to consider some of the pros and cons of listing family members. (Pros include that family members know them very well. Also, some students may only have family references. Cons include that employers may feel that a family member is not an objective source or that a student is trying to hide something by having only a family member as a reference.)

Ask students if they can think of other people who might not make appropriate references. (Students might respond: close friends and social peers.) Have them explain their thinking.

Have students review their lists. Ask if they would like to change, add, or delete categories of people from their lists of possible references. If so, have them explain why before making the appropriate changes.

4. Students choose people to use as references.

Have students take a minute to write down the names of two or three people to use as references when applying for a part-time job. Have students find their references' telephone numbers and addresses as part of their homework.

Part II Preparing Your References (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students will learn to prepare references for telephone calls or other inquiries from potential employers.

1. Students recognize that communication with references is important.

Ask students to consider what they would do if they received a phone call from someone they don't know asking their opinion of a friend.

Have volunteers share their answers with the class. (Students should mention that they might not answer the questions or that they might give a poor responses, as they wouldn't be prepared for the conversation.)

Point out that if references don't know that they are references, they might not give the best recommendations.

2. Students learn to prepare references for calls from potential employers.

Explain that students need to prepare their references to talk about their strengths to a potential employer. Students should be sure to ask the person if it's okay to use them as a reference.

Explain that if a person agrees to be a reference, students should call and tell them the name of the employer and the job sought. Point out that if students haven't spoken to a reference in a while, they may need to update the reference on their job goals and their other recent activities. That way, references will be prepared and can give strong, effective information.

Have several pairs of volunteers take turns role-playing a conversation in which a student asks an individual to be a reference. Have other students critique the performances.

SESSION 2

Part I Cover Letters (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize why cover letters are important and learn how to write a cover letter.

1. Students recognize the importance of cover letters.

Tell students that once they have identified the job they want to apply to, written their resumes, and prepared their references, the next step is to write a cover letter.

Ask students to explain what a cover letter is. Lead students to the understanding that a cover letter introduces them to the employer and identifies the position in which they are interested.

Explain to students that a cover letter also allows them to explain things about themselves that aren't immediately visible in their resumes. Provide students with the following example:

You're applying for a job at a local ice cream store. Mr. Steven Chip, the manager, is interviewing 50 young people for summer jobs. You know your resume is strong, but your resume can't show how good you are with people, that you love ice cream, and that you've been a customer at Mr. Chip's store for years. Your cover letter can!

2. Students discover how cover letters can expand and complement a resume.

Tell students that a cover letter is the place to specify to an employer the job in which they are interested. A cover letter allows applicants to show that they know something about the company and have initiative. Cover letters can also bring up or expand upon special skills or talents that might not be highlighted in a resume.

Ask students to identify other things that they might include in their cover letters. (Students might respond: special experiences that could prove useful on a job, willingness to take on all tasks.)

3. Students analyze the parts of a cover letter.

Have students form small groups. Distribute copies of the "Sample Cover Letter" activity sheet. Give groups four or five minutes to identify the elements of a good cover letter. Call on each group to identify one important element that the members found in the sample. (Students might respond: the heading; an inside address; a salutation; the body, which includes who the writer is, how they found out about the job, and why the writer is qualified for the job; a closing; and a signature.)

4. Students learn the dos and don'ts of writing good cover letters.

Give students the following pointers. You may wish to have them take notes.

- Address the letter to a specific person. Don't use "To Whom It May Concern." Call the company to find out how to spell the person's name. Be sure to include their title. If there is no way to find out the individual's name, use "Dear Hiring Manager" or "Dear Personnel Manager."
- Make your letter short and to the point. The first paragraph should say that you are applying for a job and provide a description of the job.
- Use the letter to describe the skills you have that make you a good candidate for the job.
- Don't begin every sentence with "I." Vary your sentences.
- At the end of the letter, explain that you will contact the employer to follow up. Also, thank the employer for their time.
- Close the letter with "Sincerely."
- Check your letter for mistakes and then print the letter and the envelope. Don't forget to put your return address on the envelope.
- Be sure to sign your name.
- Ask someone to proofread your letter before you mail it.

5. Students identify key points about cover letters.

Point out that a cover letter must be specific. Students will need to write a new cover letter for each job they apply to. Remind them that cover letters and the interview process can turn a no into a yes.

Part II Writing a Cover Letter *(25 minutes)*

Purpose: Students will write their own cover letters.

1. Students develop ideas that they might include in their personal cover letters.

Have students take a few seconds to think about a job that they would like to have. Ask them to think about some of the things that they might include in a cover letter to give more information about themselves and to show interest.

2. Students draft their cover letters.

Pass out the "Your Cover Letter" activity sheet. Have students write a first draft of their cover letters. They can make up addresses for the companies and names for the heads of personnel if they do not have that information.

3. Students use peer evaluation to offer constructive criticism.

After students have completed their drafts, have them meet in small groups to exchange cover letters and offer constructive criticism. Remind students of what constructive criticism is. You may want to establish rules for peer evaluation by requiring each group member to make a positive comment before criticizing or correcting.

4. Students revise their cover letters.

Direct students to reexamine their first drafts. Suggest that they look for places where they can improve their letters by shortening sentences, being more to the point, or substituting words that are more precise. Ask them to think about the changes that were suggested by their peer evaluation group. Have students make changes that improve their letters.

5. Students check for errors in spelling, grammar, mechanics, and form.

Provide time for students to exchange and proofread the revised letters. Remind students that they should always proofread their cover letters and not rely on their word processor's spelling and grammar check features.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to identify how references and cover letters can help strengthen their resumes for a potential employer. Suggest that students keep a copy of their list of references and cover letters so they can use them as models in the future. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- References are a way for a potential employer to find out more about an applicant.
- People who know you and respect your abilities are good choices for references.
- References are important and could be the factor that helps get you the job.
- A cover letter gives you a chance to give a potential employer more information and to make your resume stand out.
- An effective cover letter is brief, precise, and error-free and follows proper business-letter format.

Student Assessment

SESSION 1

1. List your references. Explain your relationship with them and why you think they would be good references.
2. Who might make an inappropriate reference?
3. How should you prepare your references for being contacted by potential employers?

SESSION 2

1. What is a cover letter, and why is it important?
2. What is in a good cover letter?
3. What might employers think when they receive cover letters with spelling and grammar errors?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“A wise man knows everything. A smart man knows everyone. A successful man knows both.”

Have students explain why it takes both knowledge and contacts to be successful. Encourage them to give examples.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Print sample cover letters on heavy paper and cut them into parts. Distribute three or four letters (in pieces) to each group of students for assembly. Students should note qualifications in the body of the letter that match the needs of the target company.

Review the standard parts of a business letter. Have students explain how they assembled the pieces (e.g., the writer used the company name in the body of the letter).

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about the reasons they chose the references they selected and the activities they have shared with those people that shed light on their character or skills.

Have students share their work with a classmate.

Using Technology

See *What Color Is Your Parachute? Guide to Job-Hunting Online* by Richard N. Bolles and Mark Emery Bolles for a list of job-related websites.

Have students visit and write reviews of these sites. Have them share their work with the class.

Homework

Have students research a company they'd like to work for. Have them visit the company's website and research information about the company at the library.

Explain to students that a cover letter should describe ways in which their skills could benefit the employer. Have them make notes about how their skills might be useful to the company. They should include a sentence or two about this in the final drafts of their cover letters.

Additional Resources

Assign topics from *Winning Cover Letters* by Robin Ryan, which addresses 42 cover letter mistakes, to groups of students. Have them report their findings to the class.

Have students decide which mistakes might apply to beginning job hunters. Make a class list of dos and don'ts.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

1347 Regata Drive
Georgetown, RI 02931

May 15, 20XX

Ms. Beverly Johnson
Supervisor
Cortland Pharmacy
233 Jones Street
Georgetown, RI 02931

Dear Ms. Johnson:

In response to your recent advertisement in the *Ledger*, I am applying for the position of weekend clerk. I have included my resume to provide you with information about my skills in working with people.

Experiences that have prepared me for this position include my present job at Flagman's Sporting Goods, where I have worked as a cashier for one year providing customer assistance and pleasant service. I also volunteer at the community hospital, so I am familiar with pharmaceutical names.

I am interested in a future career in medicine. Working at Cortland Pharmacy would offer me the chance to build knowledge in the field. My strong interest in medicine would also benefit your store.

I will contact you early next week to discuss a good time for us to meet. If you have any questions, I can be reached at (401) 555-5656. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Jason Washington

Jason Washington

YOUR COVER LETTER

Your address

Your city, state, ZIP

Date

Name

Title

Address

City, state, ZIP code

Dear _____,

I am applying for _____

Experiences that have prepared me for this job include _____

I will contact you _____

Sincerely,

Signature

Your name