

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.” —Henry Van Dyke

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

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SKILLS

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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.

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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
