Oregon
HS.HECPS Curriculum

Lesson Plans for Educator Use in Career Connected Learning

OR HS.HECPS

Introduction

About This Curriculum

The Higher Education and Career Path Skills (HECPS) standards provide Oregon educators with a framework for helping students develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to successfully navigate education, careers, and life after high school. Through intentional instruction and meaningful learning experiences, students build self-awareness, explore opportunities, prepare for postsecondary education and training, and develop the skills necessary to thrive in an ever-changing workforce.

The high school HECPS standards are organized into four domains:

- **HS.HECPS.A: Seeking Assistance and Self-Advocacy**
- **HS.HECPS.B: Career Exploration and Preparation**
- **HS.HECPS.C: Postsecondary Readiness**
- **HS.HECPS.D: Workforce Readiness**

To support implementation of these standards, this curriculum is organized into four instructional units, one for each HECPS domain.

Each unit includes:

- **a unit overview,**
- **approximately fifteen lesson frameworks,**
- **assessment strategies,**
- **extension opportunities, and**
- **supplemental resources.**

Together, the four units provide more than 60 hours of instructional framework designed to help educators implement the HECPS standards in a variety of educational settings.

Unlike many published curricula, these lessons are not intended to be comprehensive or scripted. During development, educators were intentionally asked to create a flexible instructional framework rather than fully developed lesson plans. Every lesson follows a common template that identifies learning objectives, instructional activities, reflection opportunities, assessment ideas, and extension strategies while leaving room for educators to apply their own expertise, teaching style, and local resources.

This approach recognizes that no single curriculum can fully reflect the diverse schools, communities, industries, cultures, and opportunities found across Oregon. A lesson that works in Portland or Salem may need different examples than one taught in Burns, Astoria, Ontario, Pendleton, Medford, or Coos Bay. Rather than prescribing one way to teach the standards, this curriculum provides a strong foundation that educators can adapt to make learning meaningful for their students and communities.

The curriculum was also designed with the understanding that artificial intelligence is becoming an important planning and instructional tool for educators.

Each lesson includes opportunities for educators to leverage AI to expand activities, differentiate instruction, generate examples, create supporting materials, develop assessments, or adapt lessons for different grade levels and learning needs. Instead of attempting to anticipate every possible classroom scenario, the curriculum encourages educators to use professional judgment alongside AI tools to efficiently customize instruction while maintaining alignment with the HECPS standards.

This curriculum represents Oregon GEAR UP's investment in strengthening the statewide college and career readiness supports. By creating adaptable instructional resources that can be implemented in schools across Oregon, Oregon GEAR UP and Oregon Goes To College seek to increase access to high-quality college and career readiness instruction while empowering educators to build learning experiences that reflect the strengths and opportunities of their own communities.

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Introduction

How This Curriculum Was Developed

This curriculum was developed through a two-day Curriculum Design Sprint hosted by Oregon GEAR UP, to be shared through their statewide initiative, Oregon Goes To College.

Twenty-three educators from across Oregon came together to collaboratively design instructional resources aligned to the four HECPS domains. Participants included classroom teachers, school counselors, college and career professionals, and educational leaders representing schools and communities throughout the state.

Before beginning curriculum development, participants engaged in professional learning focused on instructional design, career-connected learning, and evidence-based teaching practices. Throughout the workshop, educators experienced instructional strategies and learning activities as participants before applying those same approaches to curriculum design. This process helped establish a shared understanding of effective instructional design while allowing teams to draw from their own professional expertise.

Following the learning experience, participants divided into collaborative teams, with each team responsible for developing one HECPS domain. Using a common curriculum template, each team designed a unit overview, lesson frameworks, assessment ideas, extension opportunities, and supporting instructional resources. The shared template helped ensure consistency across all four domains while allowing individual teams to contribute their unique ideas and instructional approaches.

Participants were intentionally asked not to create a fully scripted curriculum. Instead, they were challenged to develop instructional frameworks that any educator in Oregon could build upon. Lessons were designed to identify the essential learning experiences, provide a logical instructional sequence, and offer practical examples while leaving room for educators to incorporate local partnerships, community resources, student interests, regional industries, and school-specific priorities.

The result is a curriculum that combines the collective expertise of Oregon educators with the flexibility needed to serve schools across the state. Whether implemented in a comprehensive high school, a rural district, an alternative education program, a charter school, or another educational setting, these resources are intended to provide a practical starting point rather than a finished product.

This curriculum is Version 1.0. As with any first edition, we know there are opportunities for improvement, and we welcome your feedback. Please use the QR code to share suggestions, ideas, and lessons learned as you implement these resources. Your input will help shape Version 2.0.

We are especially grateful to After Affect for facilitating the Curriculum Design Sprint and to Bolen Design, LLC for bringing these resources to life through thoughtful design.

Oregon Goes to College is a statewide initiative of Oregon GEAR UP. Oregon GEAR UP is funded by the US Department of Education and supported by Oregon State University. We are proud to invest in resources that strengthen Oregon's college and career readiness by supporting educators, encouraging collaboration, and expanding access to meaningful college and career readiness instruction for students throughout Oregon.

OR HS.HECPS B

Career Exploration & Preparation

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STANDARDS

HS.HECPS.B.1
Practice employability skills necessary to effectively self-manage and collaborate with others in a workplace setting.

HS.HECPS.B.2
Understanding the valuet range of career pathways available, including, but not limited to, apprenticeships, military service, higher education, trades and non-degree programs.

HS.HECPS.B.3
Explore local opportunities and benefits for participating in career-connected and community-based experiential learning related to future goals.

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Career Exploration **& Preparation**

Unit Overview

The instructional sequence is designed to move students from self-awareness, to career exploration, to career decision-making, culminating in an authentic demonstration of learning.

Students begin by examining their own interests, values, skills, and strengths through self-assessments and reflection activities (HECPS B.2). These lessons help students establish a personal foundation for understanding how their individual characteristics influence career choices.

Next, students expand their knowledge of the variety of range of career pathways available (HECPS B.3). Through research, guest speakers, career cluster investigations, and exploration of education and training options, students develop an understanding of multiple career possibilities. Students compare career options and explore the roles of job shadowing, internships, mentorships, networking, and lifelong learning in career development. They practice evaluating careers based on required education, salary, work environment, growth outlook, and alignment with their personal goals.

As students narrow their interests, they engage in lessons focused on career decision-making and adaptability (HECPS B.1). Students examine employability competencies and consider how their current strengths and areas for growth may influence their career decisions and next steps. They also analyze trade-offs, practice making career-related decisions, and learn strategies for adapting to setbacks and changing opportunities. These experiences encourage students to recognize that career paths are rarely linear and often require flexibility and resilience.

Throughout the unit, learning becomes increasingly student-directed. Students apply research skills, evaluate sources, participate in discussions, complete reflective writing, and receive formative feedback that prepares them for the culminating assessment.

The **Career Exploration Presentation Project** serves as the summative assessment for this unit by allowing students to apply what they have learned about themselves and the world of work through meaningful career research and self-reflection. Students investigate a career of interest, evaluate the education and skills required, connect the career to their personal strengths and goals, and communicate their learning through a professional presentation.

Unit Purpose

The purpose of this unit is to help students develop the knowledge and skills needed to make informed decisions about their future careers. Students will increase their self-awareness by identifying their interests, values, skills, and strengths while exploring a wide range of career pathways, postsecondary education and training options, and workplace opportunities. Through research, discussion, and career exploration activities, students will learn how personal characteristics and experiences influence career choices and long-term goals.

Throughout the unit, students will strengthen career readiness skills such as critical thinking, communication, research, adaptability, and reflection. They will explore the value of job shadowing, internships, mentorships,

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Career Exploration **& Preparation**

networking, and lifelong learning while recognizing that career paths often change over time. The unit culminates in a **Career Exploration Presentation Project**, where students demonstrate their ability to connect personal strengths and interests with potential career pathways and make thoughtful, evidence-based decisions about their future.

Assigned HECPS Standards

- HS.HECPS.**B.1**
- HS.HECPS.**B.2**
- HS.HECPS.**B.3**

Essential Questions

- Who am I, and what kind of future do I want to create?
- What possibilities align with who I am becoming?
- How can I take meaningful steps toward a future that fits me?

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Oregon Employability Skills
https://www.oregonemployabilityskills.org/

Occupational Outlook Handbook
https://www.bls.gov/ooh/

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Career Exploration **& Preparation**

Lesson Sequence

LESSON	TITLE	STANDARD	PAGE
1	My Journey Map – Discovering Who I Am	HS.HECPS.**B.2**	8
2	Exploring Postsecondary and Career Pathways	HS.HECPS.**B.2**	16
3	Connecting My Journey to My Future Pathway	HS.HECPS.**B.2**	23
4	Guest Speaker Protocol/ Student Experience Protocol	HS.HECPS.**B.3**	31
5	Mock Job Interview	HS.HECPS.**B.3**	38
6	Community Involvement Project	HS.HECPS.**B.3**	47
7	Industry Specific Project	HS.HECPS.**B.3**	52
8	Internship/ mentorship/ job shadowing	HS.HECPS.**B.3**	67
9	Career Fair Etiquette & Preparation	HS.HECPS.**B.3**	76
10	Know the Competencies	HS.HECPS.**B.1**	73
11	Practice the Competencies	HS.HECPS.**B.1**	83
12	Grow Your Competencies	HS.HECPS.**B.1**	90
13	Job Detective	HS.HECPS.**B.2**	98
14	Wheel of Destiny	HS.HECPS.**B.1**	105
15	Overcoming Setbacks	HS.HECPS.**B.1**	110

CONTRIBUTORS

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OR HS.HECPS B.2
OR HS.HECPS B.1

DURATION 50 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR CANDACE CHAPMAN

Lesson 1

My Journey Map – **Discovering Who I Am**

Lesson Purpose

This lesson provides students with structured opportunities to reflect on who they are today and how their experiences have shaped them. Through the creation of a My Journey Map, students will connect their personal stories, accomplishments, challenges, interests, and future aspirations into one visual representation.

This self-awareness supports the development of employability skills such as self-management, goal setting, self-reflection, and communication while establishing a foundation for exploring career pathways throughout the remainder of the unit.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Know that self-awareness is an important part of career and college planning and that personal interests, strengths, values, and experiences influence future decisions.
- Understand that everyone's journey is unique and that there are many different paths toward future success.
- Be able to identify their personal strengths, interests, values, and goals; reflect on experiences that have influenced them; organize their reflections into a visual Journey Map; and explain how self-awareness helps them prepare for future education and career opportunities.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- ***My Journey Map***
- Pencils
- Colored pencils or markers (optional)

Technology

- Slideshow introducing self-awareness and career readiness
- Projector or classroom display

Room Setup

- Arrange the classroom for individual work followed by partner or small-group discussion.

Teacher Preparation

- Print the My Journey Map or provide students with a digital copy.
- Prepare the Self-Inventory questions included in the My Journey Map activity.
- Prepare a sample Journey Map using a fictional student or teacher example.
- Display the lesson objectives and sample ***Journey Map.***
- Prepare a slide show introducing self-awareness and career readiness

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Bell Ringer Reflection

Students respond to a future-focused question and consider how much they currently know about the direction they may want to take after high school.

2 STEP

Class Discussion: Why Self-Awareness Matters

Introduce the connection between self-awareness and future planning and facilitate a brief discussion about how interests, values, strengths, and experiences influence decisions.

3 STEP

Self-Inventory

Students reflect on their interests, strengths, values, skills, accomplishments, support systems, experiences, and future goals in preparation for creating their Journey Map.

4 STEP

My Journey Map Creation

Model a completed Journey Map before students organize their reflections into a visual representation of who they are and where they may want to go.

5 STEP

Think-Pair-Share

Students share selected portions of their Journey Maps and discuss similarities and differences in their experiences, strengths, interests, and goals.

6 STEP

Individual Reflection Exit Ticket

Students reflect on what they learned about themselves and how greater self-awareness can support future education and career decisions.

Introduction Questions

- When someone asks, “What do you want to do after high school?” how do you usually respond?
- What are some things you enjoy doing both inside and outside of school?
- What is something you are proud of accomplishing?
- What experiences have helped shape who you are today?
- Why do you think understanding yourself is important before choosing a career?

Instructional Activities

Bell Ringer Reflection

- Display the question: ***When someone asks, "What do you want to do after high school?" how do you usually respond?***
- Ask students to respond independently for two to three minutes.
- Invite several students to share their responses, while reinforcing that it is okay not to have their future figured out yet.
- Explain that today's lesson begins with understanding themselves rather than choosing a specific career.

Class Discussion: Why Self-Awareness Matters

- Ask students to consider some of the experiences, interests, strengths, and values that influence the decisions they make.
- Use the Introduction Questions to facilitate a brief class discussion.
- Explain that self-awareness can help people evaluate future education and career possibilities based on what matters to them rather than simply choosing a job title.
- Introduce the My Journey Map as a way for students to bring several parts of who they are into one visual representation.

Self-Inventory

Ask students to begin by reflecting on the Self-Inventory questions included with the My Journey Map.

Guide students to consider:

- Interests and hobbies
- Strengths and skills
- Personal values
- Favorite subjects or learning experiences
- Accomplishments they are proud of
- Important experiences that have shaped them
- People who support them
- Skills they would like to develop
- Future dreams or goals

Remind students that they may keep personal experiences private and should only include information they are comfortable recording or sharing.

Circulate as students work and use additional prompts as needed to help students identify examples from their lives.

My Journey Map Creation

Display the sample Journey Map and briefly model how different pieces of information can be represented and connected.

Ask students to use their Self-Inventory responses to complete their My Journey Map.

Have students include the sections:

- Who I Am
- My Strengths
- My Interests
- My Values
- Important Experiences
- People Who Support Me
- Skills I Want to Develop
- My Future Goals
- One Word That Describes Me

Encourage students to personalize their maps using words, arrows, drawings, icons, symbols, or other visual connections.

Circulate and ask students questions that help them make connections among their experiences, strengths, interests, values, and goals.

Think-Pair-Share

- Place students with a partner or in a small group.
- Ask students to share only the portions of their Journey Map they are comfortable discussing.
- Invite students to share one strength, one interest, and one goal.
- Ask partners or groups to identify similarities and differences among their journeys.
- Reinforce that different interests, experiences, strengths, and goals can lead people toward different definitions and pathways of success.

Individual Reflection Exit Ticket

Ask students to independently respond to:

- What did you learn about yourself during today's activity?
- How might knowing more about yourself help you make future education or career decisions?

Collect the responses as an exit ticket.
Have students keep their My Journey Maps so they can revisit them during later lessons in the unit.

Reflection Questions

- What did you learn about yourself during today's activity?
- Which strength are you most proud of?
- What values are most important to you?
- What surprised you while completing your Journey Map?
- How might your interests and strengths help you in high school and beyond?
- What is one goal you have for yourself during high school?

Group Reflection / Discussion

In groups of three to four students, discuss:

- Share one strength, one interest, and one goal from your ***Journey Map.***
- How are your journeys similar?
- How are they different?
- Why is it important to recognize that everyone's path toward success may look different?

Encourage students to respectfully listen, ask questions, and celebrate each other's unique experiences.

Materials and Supplies

- My Journey Map
- Pencils
- Colored pencils or markers (optional)
- Chart paper or projector (optional)
- Slideshow presentation

Curriculum Resources

My Journey Map

See Figure 1.1

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Students complete a ***Self-Inventory*** and create a personalized ***My Journey Map*** demonstrating thoughtful reflection about their interests, strengths, values, experiences, and goals.

Students participate in class discussion, share portions of their Journey Map with peers, and complete an individual written reflection explaining how knowing themselves can help them make future education and career decisions.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

Using this student's completed Self-Inventory or Journey Map, generate personalized reflection questions, suggest careers or career clusters that align with their interests and strengths, recommend accommodations or scaffolds for students, or create extension activities that deepen self-awareness while remaining age-appropriate for a 9th-grade student.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

- Provide sentence starters for reflections.
- Allow students to complete the Journey Map digitally.
- Offer picture supports or icons for multilingual learners.
- Allow verbal responses using speech-to-text technology.
- Permit students to create their Journey Map as a timeline, mind map, slideshow, or infographic.
- Extend the lesson by having students interview a trusted adult about their life journey and compare similarities and differences.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Emphasize that this activity is about growth rather than having everything figured out. Encourage students to be honest while allowing them to keep personal information private if they are uncomfortable sharing. Celebrate differences and reinforce that there is no single "correct" pathway after high school.

Students will revisit their Journey Maps throughout the unit, making this lesson an important anchor for future learning about career pathways, goal setting, and postsecondary planning.

My Journey
Map

FIGURE 1.1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Reflect on different aspects of yourself and see connections among your experiences, strengths, interests, values, support systems, and future goals.

Who I Am

What words describe you?

What is important for someone to know about you?

My Interests

What do you enjoy doing in or outside of school?

What topics, activities, or problems interest you?

My Strengths

What are you good at?

What do other people say you do well?

My Values

What is important to you?

What qualities or beliefs guide your decisions?

My Journey
Map

FIGURE 1.1

Important Experiences

What experiences have helped shape who you are?

What accomplishments, challenges, opportunities, classes, activities, or events have influenced you?

Skills I Want to Develop

What do you enjoy doing in or outside of school?

What topics, activities, or problems interest you?

People Who Support Me

What are you good at?

What do other people say you do well?

My Future Goals

What is important to you?

What qualities or beliefs guide your decisions?

One Word That Describes Me

Choose one word that represents who you are right now.

OR HS.HECPS B.2

DURATION 50 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR CANDACE CHAPMAN

Lesson 2

Exploring Postsecondary and Career Pathways

Lesson Purpose

Students often hear terms such as college, trade school, military, or apprenticeship, but many have only a limited understanding of what these pathways actually involve. This lesson introduces students to the wide variety of postsecondary opportunities available after high school and reinforces that there is no single "right" path to success.

Students will learn the purpose, expectations, benefits, challenges, and career opportunities associated with each pathway while recognizing that different pathways meet different personal goals, interests, financial situations, and lifestyles. This lesson builds students' career literacy by helping them understand the many options available after graduation. It provides the knowledge necessary for students to begin connecting their own interests and strengths to possible future pathways, preparing them for the culminating lesson in which they make a personalized pathway choice.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Know the major postsecondary pathways available after high school, including four-year college, community college, apprenticeships, skilled trades, military service, workforce entry, and non-degree/certificate programs.
- Understand that each pathway offers different opportunities, requirements, timelines, costs, and benefits, and that successful careers can begin through many different routes.
- Be able to describe the characteristics of each pathway, compare similarities and differences using a graphic organizer, and explain why different students may choose different pathways based on their goals and circumstances.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- Career Pathways Graphic Organizer
- Pencils
- Highlighters (optional)

Technology

- Slideshow introducing each career pathway
- Pathway comparison examples or videos
- Projector or smartboard

Room Setup

Not applicable.

Teacher Preparation

- Display lesson objectives and pathway definitions.
- Prepare discussion questions and real-life career examples.
- Prepare a slide show introducing each career pathway

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Bell Ringer Reflection

Students brainstorm as many options after high school as they can think of.

2 STEP

Review Lesson 1

Review Lesson 1 and explain how understanding pathways builds on self-awareness.

3 STEP

Lesson Introduction

Introduce the concept of career pathways through direct instruction.

4 STEP

Pathways

Present each pathway, discussing education, training, cost, time commitment, benefits, and examples of careers.

5 STEP

Graphic Organizer

Students complete a graphic organizer throughout the presentation.

6 STEP

Students Compare and Discuss

Students compare and discuss pathways with a partner.

7 STEP

Class Discussion

Facilitate a whole-class discussion about myths and misconceptions surrounding different pathways.

Introduction Questions

- What options do students have after graduating from high school?
- Does everyone have to attend a four-year college?
- What careers can begin through apprenticeships or trade programs?
- Why might two students choose different pathways to reach similar career goals?
- What factors might influence someone's postsecondary decisions?

Instructional Activities

Bell Ringer Brainstorm

- Students respond to the Bell Ringer by listing all post-high school options they know.

Direct Instruction: Career Pathways

- The teacher reviews the previous lesson and introduces the concept of career pathways. The teacher presents each pathway (Higher Education, Community College, Apprenticeships, Skilled Trades, Military, Workforce Entry, Certificates/Non-Degree Programs), explaining requirements, advantages, challenges, costs, time commitments, and examples of careers.

Graphic Organizer Completion

- Students complete a ***Career Pathways Graphic Organizer*** throughout the presentation.

Partner Discussion

- Students complete a ***Career Pathways Graphic Organizer*** throughout the presentation.

Myth vs. Reality Discussion

- The teacher facilitates a class discussion correcting misconceptions and emphasizing that every pathway can lead to meaningful careers.

Exit Reflection

- Students complete an exit reflection identifying which pathway currently interests them most and why.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Students will complete a ***Career Pathways Graphic Organizer*** comparing each pathway's purpose, length, cost, benefits, challenges, and example careers. Students will participate in class discussion and complete an exit reflection explaining which pathway currently interests them and why.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

Create differentiated graphic organizers, provide simplified explanations for each career pathway, generate real-world examples of careers within each pathway, or personalize pathway recommendations based on student interests while maintaining age-appropriate language for 9th-grade students.

Reflection Questions

- Which pathway surprised you the most?
- Which pathway seems to fit your interests right now?
- What questions do you still have about different pathways?
- Why is it important to know about many different options before making future decisions?
- How could someone's goals influence the pathway they choose?

Group Reflection / Discussion

In small groups, discuss:

"If two students both want successful careers but have different interests, financial situations, or learning preferences, why might they choose different pathways? Share one pathway you found interesting and explain why it might be the best fit for someone."

Encourage students to respectfully challenge stereotypes about different education and career options.

Materials and Supplies

- Career Pathways Graphic Organizer
- Slideshow presentation
- Pencils
- Highlighters (optional)
- Projector or smartboard

Recommended Resources

Oregon Career Connected Learning Framework

https://www.oregon.gov/ode/learning-options/CTE/careerareas/Pages/default.aspx

O*Net Online

https://www.onetonline.org/

Curriculum Resources

Career Pathways Graphic Organizer

See Figure 2.1

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

- Color-code each pathway.
- Provide completed notes for students who need additional support.
- Include videos highlighting real professionals in each pathway.
- Allow digital completion of the graphic organizer.
- Provide sentence starters for English learners.
- Invite local guest speakers or recent graduates representing different pathways.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Focus on presenting every pathway as equally valuable while avoiding language that suggests one option is "better" than another. Encourage students to remain open-minded, reminding them that interests and goals may change throughout high school. Students are not expected to make permanent decisions during this lesson; instead, they are building awareness of future possibilities.

Career Pathways
Graphic Organizer

FIGURE 2.1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Use this page to take notes as you learn about each postsecondary and career pathway. Write short phrases or bullet points — you'll compare and discuss your answers later.

Pathway 1: Four-Year College

Description: _____

Education / Training Required: _____

Length of Training: _____

Cost: _____

Advantages: _____

Challenges: _____

Example Careers: _____

Who Might Choose This Pathway? _____

Pathway 2: Community College

Description: _____

Education / Training Required: _____

Length of Training: _____

Cost: _____

Advantages: _____

Challenges: _____

Example Careers: _____

Who Might Choose This Pathway? _____

Pathway 3: Apprenticeship / Skilled Trades

Description: _____

Education / Training Required: _____

Length of Training: _____

Cost: _____

Advantages: _____

Challenges: _____

Example Careers: _____

Who Might Choose This Pathway? _____

Career Pathways
Graphic Organizer

FIGURE 2.1

Pathway 4: Military Service

Description: _____

Education / Training Required: _____

Length of Training: _____

Cost: _____

Advantages: _____

Challenges: _____

Example Careers: _____

Who Might Choose This Pathway? _____

Pathway 5: Workforce Entry

Description: _____

Education / Training Required: _____

Length of Training: _____

Cost: _____

Advantages: _____

Challenges: _____

Example Careers: _____

Who Might Choose This Pathway? _____

Pathway 6: Certificates / Non-Degree Programs

Description: _____

Education / Training Required: _____

Length of Training: _____

Cost: _____

Advantages: _____

Challenges: _____

Example Careers: _____

Who Might Choose This Pathway? _____

OR HS.HECPS B.2
OR HS.HECPS B.1

DURATION 75–100 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR CANDACE CHAPMAN

Lesson 3

Connecting My Journey to My Future Pathway

Lesson Purpose

This lesson serves as the culminating activity for the mini-unit by helping students connect what they learned about themselves in Lesson 1 with what they learned about postsecondary pathways in Lesson 2. Students will revisit their ***My Journey Maps*** and intentionally analyze which pathway best aligns with their current strengths, interests, values, goals, and personal experiences.

Rather than selecting a pathway based solely on career popularity or outside influences, students will use evidence from their own self-reflection to justify a thoughtful decision. By connecting personal identity with future opportunities, students strengthen self-management, decision-making, and career planning skills that will continue developing throughout high school. Students will leave the lesson understanding that pathway decisions can evolve over time and that self-awareness is an ongoing part of future readiness.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Know that personal interests, strengths, values, and experiences can guide future education and career decisions.
- Understand that there is no single correct pathway and that pathway decisions should align with their own goals and circumstances.
- Be able to analyze their ***Journey Map***, identify the pathway that currently best fits them, justify their choice using evidence from both lessons, and develop initial next steps toward reaching their goals.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- ***Career Pathways Graphic Organizer Part 2***
- Pencils
- Highlighters (optional)

Technology

- Slideshow introducing each career pathway
- Pathway comparison examples or videos, if used
- Projector or smartboard

Room Setup

- Arrange seating for whole-class instruction followed by partner discussion.

Teacher Preparation

Prepare or review and modify Lesson 2's slideshow information for each of the postsecondary and career pathways included in the lesson:

- Four-year college
- Community college
- Apprenticeships
- Skilled trades
- Military service
- Workforce entry
- Certificate/non-degree programs

For each pathway, prepare information about its purpose, education or training requirements, typical length, cost considerations, advantages, challenges, and example careers.

Prepare several real-life career examples that demonstrate how different pathways can lead to meaningful careers.

Prepare common myths or misconceptions about postsecondary and career pathways for the Myth vs. Reality discussion.

Display the lesson objectives and pathway definitions.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Bell Ringer Brainstorm

Students will review as many options after high school as they can and use their responses to begin considering the variety of available pathways.

2 STEP

Review Career Pathways

Connect the lesson to students' self-awareness work from Lesson 1 and review the major postsecondary and career pathways, including their requirements, costs, time commitments, benefits, challenges, and career possibilities.

3 STEP

Myth vs. Reality Discussion

Follow-up on the disscussion from Lesson 2, disucss the misconceptions that were identified and how they can work to identify challenegs and misconceptions in the future, and reinforces that there are multiple routes to meaningful careers.

4 STEP

Complete the Career Pathways Graphic Organizer Part 2

Students will continute to build on thier organizer from Lesson 2, compamring key information on pathways.

5 STEP

Partner Pathway Comparison

Students compare their organizers and discuss similarities, differences, and factors that might make particular pathways a good fit for different people.

6 STEP

Exit Reflection

Students identify a pathway that currently interests them and explain what makes it worth exploring further.

Introduction Questions

- What did you learn about yourself during Lesson 1?
- Which pathway interested you most during Lesson 2?
- How do your interests connect to different career pathways?
- Why is it important to understand yourself before making future decisions?
- Can your pathway change as you grow? Why or why not?

Instructional Activities

Bell Ringer Brainstorm

- Display the question: **What options do students have after graduating from high school?**
- Ask students to independently review as many possibilities as they can recalll from lesson 2.
- Invite students to share their responses and record the different options where the class can see them.
- Ask whether there are options students have heard about but do not fully understand.
- Explain that the purpose of the lesson is tolook at thier ***My Jounrey Map*** and thier organizer and thinkabout which pathways fits them.

Review Career Pathways

Ask students to revisit what they learned about their interests, strengths, values, experiences, and goals during Lesson 1.

Review that understanding themselves is one part of future planning; they also need to understand the options available to them.

Review the major pathways:

- Four-year college
- Community college
- Apprenticeships
- Skilled trades
- Military service
- Workforce entry
- Certificate/non-degree programs

For each pathway, ask if they have any question from yesterday on the follwoing:

- What the pathway involves
- Education or training required
- Typical length of training or preparation
- Cost considerations
- Advantages
- Potential challenges
- Examples of careers that can begin through the pathway

During the review, use real-life career examples, pathway comparison examples, or short videos when appropriate.

Emphasize that pathways can overlap and that people may move between pathways as their interests, circumstances, and goals change.

Myth vs. Reality Discussion

- Present common statements or misconceptions about postsecondary and career pathways one at a time.
- Ask students to decide whether each statement represents a myth, reality, or something that depends on the individual situation.
- Have students use information from the lesson and their Career Pathways Graphic Organizer to explain their reasoning.
- Correct misconceptions as needed and reinforce that successful careers can begin through many different pathways.
- Ask students why stereotypes about particular pathways might prevent someone from considering an option that could be a good fit.

Complete the Career Pathways Graphic Organizer

- Distribute the ***Career Pathways Graphic Organizer Part 2.***
- Have students record information about how each pathway is (or is not) interesting to them as it is reviewed.
- Pause periodically so students can complete missing information or ask clarifying questions.
- Circulate and check that students understand the differences among pathways.

Partner Pathway Comparison

Pair students and ask them to compare their completed ***Career Pathways Graphic Organizers Part 2.***

Have partners identify:

- One similarity between two pathways they liked
- One important difference between two pathways
- One factor that could make a pathway a good fit for one person but not another

Ask students to consider factors such as interests, financial circumstances, learning preferences, career goals, desired timeline, and lifestyle and how that afftects them personally as they think about thier future.

Invite several pairs to share an observation with the class.

Instructional Activities

Exit Reflection

- Ask students to independently respond to:
- Which pathway currently interests you most, and why?
- What is one question you still have about that pathway?
- Remind students that their response represents what interests them right now and is not a permanent decision.
- Collect the responses or have students keep them for use in the next lesson.

Reflection Questions

- Which pathway best fits who you are today?
- Which strengths helped you make your decision?
- How did your Journey Map influence your pathway choice?
- What skills do you want to continue developing during high school?
- What is one action you can take this year to move toward your future goals?
- How might your pathway change as you continue learning about yourself?

Group Reflection/Discussion

In pairs or small groups, discuss:

"Share your chosen pathway and explain why it matches your strengths, interests, and values. Listen to your classmates' explanations and identify similarities and differences. Discuss how different students can be successful while choosing completely different pathways."

Encourage students to celebrate diverse goals and recognize that pathways are flexible throughout life.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Students will complete a Pathway Reflection Worksheet connecting evidence from their Journey Map to a selected career pathway. Students will justify their pathway choice using written evidence, participate in partner discussions, and create a personalized Next Steps Action Plan outlining experiences they can pursue during high school to support their goals.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

Adapt the Career Pathways Graphic Organizer and pathway explanations for [**student population or learning need**]. Preserve the seven pathways and the key comparison categories. Provide student-friendly vocabulary, sentence starters, and other supports that make the information more accessible without removing the opportunity for students to compare pathways and determine which options may align with different interests, goals, circumstances, and learning preferences.

Materials and Supplies

- Completed ***Journey Map***
- Completed ***Career Pathways Graphic Organizer***
- ***Pathway Reflection Worksheet***
- Pencils
- Colored pencils or markers (optional)

Recommended Resources

Oregon Career Connected Learning Framework

https://careerconnectoregon.org/

Curriculum Resources

Career Pathways Graphic Organizer

See Figure 3.1

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

- Allow students to present their pathway through a poster, slideshow, or video.
- Provide sentence stems and paragraph frames.
- Allow students to complete reflections verbally or using speech-to-text.
- Pair students with peer mentors for discussion.
- Extend the lesson by researching one career connected to their selected pathway or inviting local professionals to speak about their journeys.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Reinforce that students are selecting the pathway that best fits today, not making a lifelong commitment. Emphasize that goals, interests, and pathways often change as students gain new experiences. Celebrate diverse aspirations and encourage students to revisit their Journey Maps throughout high school as they continue to grow academically, socially, and personally.

Career Pathways

Graphic Organizer Part 2

FIGURE 3.1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Building on Lesson 2: Applying What You Learned About Career Pathways look at if this pathway is a good fit for you.

Pathway 1: Four-Year College

What are some advantages of this pathway: _____

What are some challenges of this pathway: _____

What career could you personally do in this pathway: _____

How do you feel about the cost of this pathway: _____

Does this pathway interest you? Why?: _____

Pathway 2: Community College

What are some advantages of this pathway: _____

What are some challenges of this pathway: _____

What career could you personally do in this pathway: _____

How do you feel about the cost of this pathway: _____

Does this pathway interest you? Why?: _____

Pathway 3: Apprenticeship / Skilled Trades

What are some advantages of this pathway: _____

What are some challenges of this pathway: _____

What career could you personally do in this pathway: _____

How do you feel about the cost of this pathway: _____

Does this pathway interest you? Why?: _____

Career Pathways

Graphic Organizer Part 2

FIGURE 3.1

Pathway 4: Military Service

What are some advantages of this pathway: _____

What are some challenges of this pathway: _____

What career could you personally do in this pathway: _____

How do you feel about the cost of this pathway: _____

Does this pathway interest you? Why?: _____

Pathway 5: Workforce Entry

What are some advantages of this pathway: _____

What are some challenges of this pathway: _____

What career could you personally do in this pathway: _____

How do you feel about the cost of this pathway: _____

Does this pathway interest you? Why?: _____

Pathway 6: Certificates / Non-Degree Programs

What are some advantages of this pathway: _____

What are some challenges of this pathway: _____

What career could you personally do in this pathway: _____

How do you feel about the cost of this pathway: _____

Does this pathway interest you? Why?: _____

COMPARE TWO PATHWAYS

The two pathways I am comparing: _____ and _____

One similarity: _____

One important difference: _____

One factor that could make one pathway a better fit: _____

OR HS.HECPS B.3

DURATION 50–60 MINUTES

1–2 speakers per Lesson.
This lesson can be repeated as many times as the schedule and speaker availability allow.

CONTRIBUTOR KIRSTEN LARWIN

Lesson 4

Guest Speaker Protocol / **Student Experience Protocol**

Lesson Purpose

This lesson helps students connect classroom learning with real-world career experiences by interacting with professionals from a variety of career pathways, including alumni and members of the local community. Through thoughtful preparation, active participation, and reflection, students develop a deeper understanding of the education, skills, challenges, and opportunities associated with different careers. Encouraging guest speakers to share authentic stories, including obstacles they have overcome, helps students recognize that career paths are rarely linear and that adaptability and perseverance are valuable career skills.

This lesson supports future readiness by strengthening students' communication, inquiry, and professional networking skills. Students practice asking meaningful questions, engaging respectfully with professionals, and reflecting on how each career aligns with their own interests, values, and goals. These experiences build on earlier lessons exploring career pathways and decision-making while preparing students for the unit's culminating career exploration project, where they will compare career options and make informed decisions about potential postsecondary and career pathways.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Know that there are many pathways to careers and that professionals often have unique educational, training, and career journeys.
- Understand that career success requires adaptability and lifelong learning and that challenges and setbacks are a normal part of career development.
- Be able to ask meaningful questions, engage professionally with guest speakers, and reflect on how different career experiences connect to their own interests, skills, and future goals.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- ***Guest Speaker Guiding Questions***
- ***Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form***
- Thank-you cards

Technology

- If requested by speaker

Room Setup

- Arrange seating so students can see and hear the guest speaker and participate in the Q&A.
- Provide students with access to the ***Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form*** during the presentation.

Teacher Preparation

- Secure guest speakers from various career fields in your community.
- Provide the ***Guest Speaker Guiding Questions*** to each speaker prior to their visit.
- Print or provide digital access to the ***Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form***.
- Review expectations for appropriate guest speaker etiquette and participation.
- Secure each speaker's mailing address so students can send a thank-you card after the visit.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Prepare for the Guest Speaker

Introduce expectations for professional guest speaker etiquette using the Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form and guide students in preparing two thoughtful questions.

2 STEP

Participate in the Guest Speaker Experience

Students listen to the guest speaker, record relevant information on the Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form, and participate in the facilitated Q&A.

3 STEP

Reflect on the Experience

Students may reorder their values if the discussion reveals new information about themselves.

4 STEP

Consider Alternate Perspectives

Students complete the reflection questions on the Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form and discuss what they learned about the speaker's career pathway and experiences.

5 STEP

Thank the Guest Speaker

Students contribute to a thank-you card recognizing the speaker's time and what they learned from the experience.

Introduction Questions

- What are you most curious about when someone talks about their career?
- When you think about a career, what is more important: the job title or the problem the person gets to solve? Why?

Instructional Activities

Prepare for the Guest Speaker

- Introduce the guest speaker experience and distribute the ***Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form.***
- Review expectations for appropriate etiquette during the presentation, including listening attentively, minimizing distractions, participating respectfully, and asking appropriate questions.
- Ask students to review the information they know about the speaker or career field and identify what they would like to learn.
- Have students compose two thoughtful questions they could ask the speaker. Encourage questions about topics such as education and training, career pathways, daily work, skills, challenges, unexpected opportunities, and advice for students.
- Review several student questions as a class and help students strengthen questions that are too broad or can be answered with a simple yes or no.

Participate in the Guest Speaker Experience

- Introduce the guest speaker and remind students to use the ***Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form*** to record information they want to remember.
- Have students listen for information about the speaker's education or training, career pathway, skills, challenges, opportunities, and experiences.
- Facilitate the Q&A during or following the presentation and invite students to ask their prepared questions as well as relevant follow-up questions that emerge from the presentation.
- Encourage students to notice ways the speaker's actual career journey may differ from what they expected.

Reflect on the Experience

- Following the presentation, ask students to complete the reflection section of the ***Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form.***
- Have students identify what they learned, record questions raised during the presentation and the speaker's responses, and determine whether they would recommend the speaker for future classes.
- Facilitate a brief partner, small-group, or whole-class discussion using the lesson reflection questions.
- Encourage students to connect what they heard to their own interests, skills, values, and possible future pathways.

Reflect on the Experience

- Following the presentation, ask students to complete the reflection section of the ***Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form.***
- Have students identify what they learned, record questions raised during the presentation and the speaker's responses, and determine whether they would recommend the speaker for future classes.
- Facilitate a brief partner, small-group, or whole-class discussion using the lesson reflection questions.
- Encourage students to connect what they heard to their own interests, skills, values, and possible future pathways.

Reflection Questions

- What did you learn from this guest speaker?
- What questions were raised by the group, and how did the speaker answer these questions?
- Would you recommend this speaker for future classes? Yes or no. Why?

Group Reflection / Discussion

Allow students time to discuss the reflection questions listed above.

Materials and Supplies

- Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form
- Guest Speaker Guiding Questions
- Thank-you cards

Curriculum Resources

Guest Speaker Guiding Questions

See Figure 4.1

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Students prepare thoughtful questions, record information from the guest speaker experience, and complete the reflection questions on the Student Guest Speaker Protocol Form.
- Students demonstrate appropriate guest speaker etiquette and participate in the Q&A by listening, asking questions, and responding respectfully.
- Students contribute a specific takeaway or expression of appreciation to the class thank-you card.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

Provide 3–5 thoughtful questions students could ask a career guest speaker in the field of:

_____.

This can help students who may feel stuck coming up with questions for certain career fields.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Secure thank-you cards for students to sign, and be sure to get each speaker's mailing address so the card can be mailed.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

Not applicable.

Guest Speaker
Guiding Questions

FIGURE 4.1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____ **Class:** _____

Directions: Thank you for sharing your career journey with our students! Rather than describing your job duties, we encourage you to tell the story of your career. Students connect best with personal experiences, challenges, and lessons learned.

Here are some questions to guide your remarks. Feel free to skip any that are not applicable to your experience.

PROMPT	EXPANDED PROMPTS
What problem or need does your job help solve?	Who do you help, and why does your work matter? What makes your work meaningful?
Tell us the story of how you got to where you are today.	Was your career path what you originally planned, or did it change along the way? What experiences helped shape your journey?
Describe a challenge or obstacle you have faced in your education or career.	How did you overcome it, and what did you learn from that experience? Looking back, would you change anything?
Can you share a memorable day or experience at work?	This could be a success, a difficult problem you solved, a mistake you learned from, or a moment that reminded you why you enjoy your career.
What skills or personal qualities have been most important to your success?	Are there skills that students can begin developing now, even while they are in high school?
What surprised you most about your career?	Is there anything people commonly misunderstand about your profession?
What advice would you give your high school self?	What do you wish you had known about careers, education, or life when you were our students' age?
What opportunities are available for students who are interested in your field?	Are there classes, clubs, internships, apprenticeships, volunteer opportunities, certifications, or college programs that would help them explore this career?

Guest Speaker
Guiding Questions

FIGURE 4.1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____ **Class:** _____

Overview: From time to time, we will host Guest Speakers in our classes. They'll be here to talk with you about a wide range of topics: Careers, College, Trade Schools, AVID, etc. It's important we remember to be respectful, engaged, and prepared.

Why have guest speakers?

- Gain knowledge from others who have expert information and/or advice
- Get glimpses into other schools, jobs, etc. we couldn't otherwise
- Gain perspective

What behaviors are expected when we have guest speakers?

- Stay in your seat during the presentation
- Clap respectfully when the speaker approaches the podium/microphone and then again when they have finished speaking
- No talking/side conversations - stay silent and attentive to the speaker
- Raise your hand if you have a question
- In MOST cases, the best etiquette is to wait to ask questions until the end, unless they invite you to ask questions during their presentation
- Cannot stress enough: Face the speaker, make eye contact, and be a good participant
- Take notes, be attentive
- You'll have 1-2 prepared questions ahead of time, but feel free to jot down questions if they come up as the speaker presents, so you can ask them when the time is appropriate.

Remember: They're our GUEST, and we need to make them feel welcome and appreciated. Also, please remember there are consequences for poor choices.

OR HS.HECPS B.3

DURATION 90–120 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR TIM ROWLEY

Lesson 5

Mock Job **Interview**

Lesson Purpose

In this lesson, students will practice interview skills and learn how to present themselves professionally and respond thoughtfully to questions. These questions will evaluate students' basic knowledge of an entry-level workplace, critical thinking, and ability to respond coherently to interview questions in a low-risk environment.

This lesson contributes to future readiness by providing students with authentic practice in a workplace scenario. Students will receive multiple opportunities to improve their interview performance through the use of AI-created prompts for the interview, as well as hot seat small-group interviews. Lastly, students will be given time to reflect on the experience, how to improve in the future, and how to use these skills in future employment opportunities.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Know common interview questions employers ask.
- Understand that interviewing is a skill that improves with preparation and practice.
- Be able to demonstrate professional communication in an interview setting and reflect on personal strengths and areas for growth.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- Mock Interview Handout, including sections to record four strengths, four areas for improvement, personal reflection questions, and small-group discussion questions
- AI Prompt Handout
- Bell Ringer questions
- Interview Questions/Evaluation Rubric, if using the non-AI adaptation

Technology

- Computer/tablet access
- Internet access
- Access to an approved AI program
- Access to the optional interview video, if using the video adaptation

Room Setup

- Arrange seating for individual interview practice and later discussion in groups of two to four.
- If students will complete AI interviews simultaneously, provide enough space for students to work without distracting one another.

Teacher Preparation

- Determine whether students will complete the mock interview individually using AI, in small groups using the Interview Questions/Evaluation Rubric, or through the included video as a class.
- Print or provide digital access to the ***Mock Interview Handout*** and ***AI Prompt Handout.***
- If using AI, test the mock interview prompt in the approved AI program before class.
- If using the small-group adaptation, prepare copies of the ***Interview Questions/Evaluation Rubric.***
- Decide whether to teach the lesson across one extended period or two class periods. If using two periods, plan for Day 2 to focus primarily on personal and group reflection.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Bell Ringer

Students discuss their comfort with talking about themselves, the importance of nonverbal communication, and situations in which they feel confident communicating.

2 STEP

Mock Interview

Students participate in a mock interview using AI or an identified adaptation and receive feedback on their interview responses.

3 STEP

Personal Reflection

Students use the Mock Interview Handout to record four strengths, four areas for improvement, and reflect on their interview performance.

4 STEP

Small-Group Discussion

Students discuss their interview experiences and reflections in groups of two to four using the questions provided in the Mock Interview Handout.

5 STEP

Whole-Class Debrief

Bring students back together to discuss patterns, strategies for improvement, and ways interview skills can support future employment opportunities.

Introduction Questions

- How does it make you feel to talk about yourself?
- How important do you think nonverbal communication is when talking to someone?
- What is something you feel confident talking about? Why?

Instructional Activities

Bell Ringer

Display the Bell Ringer questions:

- How does it make you feel to talk about yourself?
- How important do you think nonverbal communication is when talking to someone?
- What is something you feel confident talking about? Why?

Ask students to discuss the questions with table partners.

Invite several students to share responses with the class.

Connect the discussion to the lesson by explaining that interviews require people to talk about themselves while communicating confidence and professionalism through both verbal and nonverbal communication.

Mock Interview

- Distribute the **Mock Interview Handout** and **AI Prompt Handout**.
- Explain that students will practice responding to interview questions in a low-risk environment and use feedback to identify ways they can improve.
- Have students access the approved AI program and enter the provided mock interview prompt.
- Ask students to respond to one interview question at a time and review the feedback provided after each response.
- Remind students to provide complete, thoughtful answers rather than rushing through the interview.
- Have students continue until the interview is complete and the AI provides its final evaluation, including four strengths and four suggestions for improvement.
- If using the non-AI or video adaptation, follow the corresponding directions in **Optional Adaptations** rather than completing the AI interview.

Personal Reflection

- Ask students to record four strengths and four areas for improvement from their interview feedback on the Mock Interview Handout.
- Have students complete the personal reflection questions on the handout.
- Ask students to identify the area they believe is most in need of improvement and one action they could take to strengthen that skill.
- Encourage students to consider both their interview answers and their overall communication, including professionalism, confidence, clarity, and nonverbal communication.

Small-Group Discussion

- Arrange students in groups of two to four.
- Direct students to the small-group discussion questions on the ***Mock Interview Handout***.
- Have students discuss their experiences, including what they found challenging, what helped them feel more confident, and what they would do differently in another interview.
- Encourage students to share strategies rather than simply compare interview scores or feedback.

Whole-Class Debrief

- Bring the class back together after the small-group discussion.
- Use the personal reflection and small-group discussion questions to identify common strengths, challenges, and strategies.
- Discuss why body language and verbal communication both influence an interviewer's impression.
- Ask students how preparation and repeated practice might reduce anxiety and improve future performance.
- Close by asking students to identify how the communication skills practiced during an interview could also be useful in school, postsecondary education, and other professional situations.

Reflection Questions

- What communication skills did you demonstrate well?
- What is the area you believe is most in need of improvement? What is one action step you can take to increase your ability?
- How has practicing this interview increased your confidence?

Group Reflection / Discussion

- Why is body language just as important as verbal communication?
- How can preparation reduce anxiety?
- How can interview skills benefit students beyond getting a job?

Materials and Supplies

- Mock Interview Handout
- Computer access
- Access to AI/internet

Curriculum Resources

Mock Interview Handout

See Figure 5.1

AI Prompt Handout

See Figure 5.2

Interview Questions/Evaluation Rubric for Adaptation 2

See Figure 5.3

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Students complete a mock interview using AI or the selected non-AI adaptation and receive feedback on their performance.
- Students record four strengths, four areas for improvement, and complete the personal reflection questions.
- Students discuss strategies for strengthening interview performance and identify ways interview skills transfer to future employment and other settings.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

You are a professional hiring manager conducting a mock interview with a high school student applying for an entry-level position. Ask me one interview question at a time. Wait for my response before asking the next question. After each response, provide constructive feedback on my communication using the following criteria: professionalism, confidence, and answer quality. Ask follow-up questions if needed. The interview may have a maximum of 15 questions. At the end of the interview, provide a printable evaluation using the following categories: communication, professionalism, critical thinking, and overall interview readiness. Offer four specific suggestions for improvement and four strengths that were observed.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Consider setting aside two class periods for this lesson. Stress the importance of taking time to complete the interview. Students who provide complete answers rather than rushing through the process will have a fuller experience.

Day 2 should primarily focus on personal and group reflection. If time allows, watch the provided video as a class, pausing to allow for student input before hearing the speaker's response.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

If computer access is limited, have students partner up.

If computer or AI access is unavailable, place students in small groups of three to four. One student uses the provided interview questions while the other students provide feedback on the responses. Switch roles until each student has served as the interviewer, interviewee, and feedback provider.

Play the following video and pause after each question/tip given, allowing for student imput: **https://youtu.be/HG68Ymazo18**

Mock Interview
Handout

FIGURE 5.1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____ **Class:** _____

Directions: Use this handout to record what you learned from your mock interview. Reflect on your communication skills and identify ways to improve.

Interview Feedback

Four Strengths

_____

_____

_____

_____

Four Areas for Improvement

_____

_____

_____

_____

Personal Reflection

What communication skills did you demonstrate well?

_____

What is one area you want to improve?

_____

What action step could help you strengthen that skill?

_____

Small-Group Discussion

Use these questions when you meet with your group.

- Why is body language just as important as verbal communication?
- How can preparation reduce anxiety?
- How can interview skills benefit you beyond getting a job?

AI Prompt
Handout

FIGURE 5.2

Name: _____ **Date:** _____ **Class:** _____

Directions: Use this prompt in the approved AI program to complete your mock interview. Copy and paste the text below exactly as written.

You are a professional hiring manager conducting a mock interview with a high school student applying for an entry-level position. Ask me one interview question at a time. Wait for my response before asking the next question. After each response, provide constructive feedback on my communication using the following criteria: professionalism, confidence, and answer quality. Ask follow-up questions if needed. The interview may have a maximum of 15 questions. At the end of the interview, provide a printable evaluation using the following categories: communication, professionalism, critical thinking, and overall interview readiness. Offer four specific suggestions for improvement and four strengths that were observed.

After completing the interview, record your feedback on the Mock Interview Handout.

Interview Questions/Evaluation Rubric
for Adaptation 2

FIGURE 5.3

Name: _____ **Date:** _____ **Class:** _____

Directions: Use these questions if you are completing the interview with a partner or small group. One student acts as the interviewer, another as the interviewee, and others provide feedback. Rotate roles until everyone has practiced each part.

Sample Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What are your strengths?
3. Describe a time you solved a problem.
4. How do you handle feedback?
5. Why do you want this job?

Evaluation Rubric

CATEGORY	EXCELLENT	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Communication	Speaks clearly and confidently	Understandable but hesitant	Difficult to hear or unclear
Professionalism	Maintains eye contact, polite tone	Generally respectful	Distracted or informal
Critical Thinking	Gives thoughtful, specific examples	Answers are general	Struggles to explain reasoning
Overall Readiness	Demonstrates preparation and poise	Some preparation evident	Needs more practice

OR HS.HECPS B.3

DURATION 90-120 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR TIM ROWLEY

Lesson 6

Community **Involvement Project**

Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is for students to identify local nonprofit organizations, what they do, why they do it, and what opportunities students have to be involved. This ties directly to HECPS.B.3 and the key concept that students can identify local opportunities for community-based experiential learning.

Students will begin to develop civic-mindedness and explore the resources available in their community. Some students may also discover resources they or others may need to access in their own lives.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify two or more nonprofit organizations within the community, their mission statements, and at least two ways to be involved in supporting each organization.
- Develop greater awareness of their community and its needs.
- Explore opportunities to become involved in their community in something beyond themselves.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- List of nonprofit organizations in the local community , if you are in a rural community that does not have many nonprofit organization, please use the closests urban area near you to search for the information needed.
- Writing materials
- Community Involvement Project directions or research requirements

Technology

- Computer and internet access

Room Setup

- Arrange seating for individual reflection, table discussion, and research in groups of two or three.

Teacher Preparation

- Prepare a list of nonprofit organizations in your community for students who may struggle to identify organizations on their own.
- Determine whether students will complete the project as a written document or use one of the optional product formats.
- Review the Community Involvement Project research requirements and determine how students will document their sources.
- If possible, invite speakers from the local Chamber of Commerce or leaders of local nonprofit organizations to speak to the class ahead of time. This can be an impactful extension of Lesson 4.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Bell Ringer and Think-Pair-Share

Students identify needs within their community, consider whether support is available, and discuss how people might access that support.

2 STEP

Explore Community Needs and Organizations

Facilitate a class discussion about community needs and introduce how nonprofit organizations, government entities, and other organizations work to address them.

3 STEP

Introduce the Community Involvement Project

Review the project expectations and research requirements before students select organizations to investigate.

4 STEP

Research Local Nonprofit Organizations

Students work in groups of two or three to research at least two local nonprofit organizations, including their missions, histories, community impact, and opportunities for involvement.

5 STEP

Compile and Reflect on Findings

Students organize their research into the required product and consider how each organization addresses community needs and how people can become involved.

Introduction Questions

- What are some people or problems in the community that need help? (Do not use specific names of individuals)
- Is there help available for them?
- If there is help available, how would they access it?

Instructional Activities

Bell Ringer and Think-Pair-Share

Ask students to respond independently in their notebooks:

- What are some people or problems in the community that need help? (Do not use specific names of individuals)
- Is there help available for them?
- If there is help available, how would they access it?

After several minutes, have students discuss their responses with a table partner.

Invite students to share examples with the class without identifying specific individuals.

Explore Community Needs and Organizations

- Use students' Bell Ringer responses to facilitate a discussion about needs that exist within the local community.
- Explain that nonprofit organizations are created to address many community needs and that government entities and other organizations may also provide services and support.
- Ask students to identify organizations they already know about and what needs those organizations address.
- Share the prepared list of local nonprofit organizations as needed to expand students' awareness of available community resources and opportunities.

Introduce the Community Involvement Project

Explain that students will work in groups of two or three to investigate at least two nonprofit organizations within their community.

Review the required information students will research for each organization:

- Organization name
- Mission statement
- How and when it was founded
- What problem or community need it addresses
- At least two examples of its impact on the community
- At least two ways students or other community members can become involved

Introduce the Community Involvement Project (Continued...)

Explain the expected final product. Students may compile their findings into a three-page or longer document or complete an approved alternative format identified in Optional Adaptations.

Remind students to use reliable sources and document where they found their information.

Research Local Nonprofit Organizations

- Place students in groups of two or three and have each group select at least two local nonprofit organizations to investigate.
- Provide the prepared list of local organizations to students who need help identifying appropriate organizations.
- Have students use organization websites and other available sources to gather the required information.
- Circulate as students work, helping them distinguish between an organization's mission, the community need it addresses, its accomplishments, and opportunities for involvement.
- Encourage students to look beyond general descriptions and identify specific examples of how each organization has affected the community.

Compile and Reflect on Findings

- Have students organize their research into their final project.
- Ask students to review their work to ensure they have addressed all required research questions for both organizations.
- Have students consider which organization or opportunity for involvement most interests them and why.
- If students are presenting their work, provide time for groups to share their findings and highlight ways classmates could become involved in the community.

Reflection Questions

For each nonprofit organization, students consider:

- What is the name of the organization?
- What is its mission statement?
- How and when was it founded?
- How has this nonprofit organization affected the community? List two examples.
- What problem is it helping to solve?
- What are two or more ways you or someone else might get involved?

Group Reflection / Discussion

- Students use their reflections in a Think-Pair-Share format and again during a class discussion.
- The teacher may provide a list of possible nonprofit organizations in the surrounding community to support the discussion and research. This lesson can also serve as an extension of the guest speaker experiences in Lesson 4.

Materials and Supplies

- List of local nonprofit organizations
- Computer/internet access
- Writing materials

Curriculum Resources

Not applicable

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Encourage creativity in this process. If students are able, allow them to create a trifold and give an in-class presentation, individually or as a group. Some students may want to create a podcast and possibly interview someone from the nonprofit organization. Others might create a video that includes an interview with someone from the organization. Make sure students contact the organization and receive permission before filming anything.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Students research at least two local nonprofit organizations and demonstrate their understanding of each organization's mission, history, community impact, the problem or need it addresses, and at least two opportunities for involvement.
- Students present their findings in a three-page or longer document or an approved alternative format, such as a trifold presentation, podcast, or video.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

List nonprofit organizations within a 25-mile radius of **[community/location]**. For each organization, provide its name, general mission, and website or other source where I can verify the information.

Teacher Note: Adjust the distance as needed and verify all AI-generated organizations and information for accuracy before providing them to students.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

- Create a trifold presentation.
- Create a podcast.
- Create a video.

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OR HS.HECPS B.3

DURATION 45 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR MICHAEL MANSOUR

Lesson 7

Industry Specific **Project**

Lesson Purpose

Students will investigate a career of interest by researching the education requirements, job duties, salary, employment outlook, and workplace skills. They will organize their findings into a presentation, helping them connect personal interests and strengths with future career opportunities.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify the education and training required for a selected career.
- Explain the daily responsibilities and work environment of their chosen career.
- Analyze salary, projected job growth, and required skills using reliable sources.
- Create and deliver a three- to five-minute presentation using digital presentation software.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- Career research requirements or student research organizer
- Career presentation requirements

Room Setup

- Arrange seating for individual or small-group career research and presentation creation.
- Ensure students can view classmates' presentations.

Technology

- Tablet, or other provided devices
- Internet access
- AI technology, if used
- Career research websites
- Digital presentation software

Teacher Preparation

- Identify reliable career research websites students can use to investigate education and training requirements, job duties, work environment, salary, employment outlook, and workplace skills.
- Prepare a list of careers students may research or determine how careers will be assigned.
- Prepare or display the required research categories and presentation expectations.
- Determine whether students will complete and present the project within one class period or whether additional time will be provided for presentations.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Introduce Career Research Resources

Introduce students to reliable career research websites and review the information they will need to locate about their assigned career.

2 STEP

Research an Assigned Career

Students research their assigned career, gathering information about education and training, responsibilities, work environment, salary, employment outlook, and required skills.

3 STEP

Create the Career Presentation

Students organize their research into a digital presentation that communicates the most important information about the career.

4 STEP

Present Career Research

Students deliver a three- to five-minute presentation sharing what they learned about their assigned career.

Introduction Questions

- What influences people when choosing a career?
- Why is researching a career important before entering college or training?
- What makes a career a good fit for someone?

Instructional Activities

Introduce Career Research Resources

Introduce the career research project and explain that students will investigate an assigned career to better understand what someone would need to know before pursuing it.

Show students the career research websites they can use and briefly demonstrate how to locate reliable career information.

Review the required research categories:

- Education and training requirements
- Daily responsibilities and job duties
- Work environment
- Salary
- Projected job growth or employment outlook
- Required workplace skills

Review the expectations for the three- to five-minute career presentation.

Remind students that AI may be used to support their research when appropriate, but information should be verified using reliable career research sources.

Research an Assigned Career

- Assign each student a career to research.
- Have students use the identified career research websites to gather information for each required category.
- Ask students to record their findings in the provided research organizer or teacher-selected format before creating their presentation.
- Circulate as students research, helping them locate missing information and distinguish between education requirements, job responsibilities, workplace skills, and employment outlook.
- Ask students to note the sources they use so they can verify the accuracy of their findings.

Create the Career Presentation

- Have students organize their research into a digital presentation.
- Ask students to include the required information while selecting the details that would be most useful to someone considering the career.
- Remind students that the presentation should support what they say rather than simply contain large amounts of text to read aloud.
- Have students review their presentation to make sure each required research category is addressed and the information is supported by reliable sources.
- Provide time for students to briefly rehearse their three- to five-minute presentation.

Present Career Research

- Have students deliver their three- to five-minute career presentations to the class.
- Encourage classmates to listen for information that helps them understand how careers differ in education, responsibilities, salary, work environment, outlook, and required skills.
- After presentations, use the reflection questions to discuss what information students believe is most important to know when exploring a career.

Reflection Questions

- How much information do we need for a job?
- What specifics are important to know about a job?

Group Reflection / Discussion

Discuss:

- How much information do we need for a job?
- What specifics are important to know about a job?

Materials and Supplies

- Career research websites
- Student technology
- Digital presentation tools

Recommended Resources

Oregon Employability Skills

https://www.oregonemployabilityskills.org/

Curriculum Resources

Not applicable.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Students complete research addressing the education and training requirements, daily responsibilities, work environment, salary, projected job growth, and required skills of an assigned career using reliable sources.
- Students organize their findings into a digital presentation and deliver a three- to five-minute presentation communicating the most important information about the career.
- Students identify the types of information that are most useful when evaluating and comparing career opportunities.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

Use AI to help research a career, including education and training requirements, daily responsibilities, salary, employment outlook, and workplace skills. Verify the information using reliable career research sources.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Not applicable.

VERSION 1.0 — SCHOOL YEAR 26/27

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OR HS.HECPS B.3

DURATION 50–60 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR KIRSTEN LARWIN

Lesson 8

Internships / Mentorships / **Job Shadowing**

Lesson Purpose

This lesson moves students beyond learning about career pathways to actively accessing career exploration opportunities. Students will compare internships, mentorships, and job shadowing experiences before identifying an opportunity related to a career of interest. They will then practice professional communication by writing a letter or email of interest and rehearsing conversations they might have when reaching out to a potential mentor or employer. These experiences build confidence, initiative, and networking skills that students will use throughout high school, college, and their future careers.

This lesson supports future readiness by giving students practical tools to connect with professionals and seek out authentic learning experiences. Rather than waiting for opportunities to come to them, students learn how to advocate for themselves, communicate professionally, and build relationships that can expand their understanding of career options. As part of the larger Career Exploration unit, this lesson serves as a bridge between exploring career pathways and engaging with them firsthand, helping students make informed decisions about future education, training, and employment.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Know the difference between job shadowing, mentorships, and internships.
- Understand how to search for community partners to secure these types of opportunities.
- Be able to identify a potential career exploration opportunity and draft a professional email requesting information or expressing interest.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- Networking Map
- Email Draft Template
- Lesson Outline/Overview for teacher reference

Technology

- Internet-enabled student devices
- District-approved AI platform, if used

Room Setup

- Arrange seating for individual work, partner discussion, and internet research.

Teacher Preparation

- Review the Lesson Outline/Overview and the definitions of internships, mentorships, and job shadowing.
- Print or provide digital access to the Networking Map and Email Draft Template.
- Identify if your school/district allows for any type of credit for job shadowing, internships, and/or mentorships
- Determine whether students will use a standard internet search, an approved AI platform, or both to identify community partners.
- Decide whether students will actually send their professional emails or only prepare drafts for review.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Evaluate Ways to Find Opportunities

Students consider different strategies for finding career exploration opportunities and discuss why some opportunities may require students to actively seek them out.

2 STEP

Compare Career Exploration Experiences

Introduce internships, mentorships, and job shadowing and help students compare what each experience provides.

3 STEP

Map Your Network

Students complete the Networking Map to identify people within their existing circles who may help connect them with career exploration opportunities.

4 STEP

Search for Community Partners

Students search for local organizations, businesses, and programs that may provide or connect young people with internships, mentorships, job shadowing, or other professional experiences.

5 STEP

Draft a Professional Email

Students select a professional interest or opportunity and use the Email Draft Template to write a professional message requesting information or an opportunity.

6 STEP

Reflect and Identify a Next Step

Students reflect on what they learned about accessing career experiences and identify one action they could take to continue exploring a career of interest.

Introduction Questions

Reflect and Identify a Next Step

- How do people usually find internships or job shadow opportunities?
- Do you think most opportunities are advertised, or do people have to ask?
- Have you ever been given an opportunity because someone knew you or introduced you to someone else?
- What do you think an internship is?
- Have you ever heard someone talk about job shadowing? What do you think happens during one?
- What does a mentor do?
- What could you learn from spending time with someone who works in a career you're interested in?

Before the Networking Map

- If I asked you to find someone working in your dream career, could you?
- Who are the adults you interact with every week?
- Besides your family, who else might know people in different careers?
- Do you think your teachers, coaches, neighbors, or friends' parents could help connect you with someone?
- Why might networking be helpful, even if you don't know someone in your dream career?

Before Email Drafting

- What's the difference between texting a friend and emailing a professional?
- What information would someone need to know about you?
- How can you sound respectful and confident at the same time?

Instructional Activities

Evaluate Ways to Find Opportunities

- Present the three strategies from the lesson Hook and ask students to evaluate how effective each might be for finding an internship, mentorship, job shadow, or other career exploration opportunity.
- Use the introductory questions to discuss how people find professional opportunities and whether those opportunities are always formally advertised.
- Ask students to consider times when an opportunity came through someone they knew or through a personal connection.
- Explain that career exploration sometimes requires students to actively identify opportunities, ask questions, and reach out to people or organizations.

Compare Career Exploration Experiences

- Introduce and define ***job shadowing, mentorships, and internships***, including paid and unpaid internships.
- Ask students to compare the purpose, time commitment, level of participation, and potential benefits of each experience.
- Use the introduction questions to check students' existing understanding and clarify misconceptions.
- Ask students which type of experience currently sounds most useful to them and why.

Map Your Network

- Distribute the ***Networking Map***.
- Ask students to identify adults and connections already within their lives, such as family members, teachers, coaches, neighbors, friends' parents, employers, community members, or other trusted adults.
- Have students consider who these individuals know in addition to what they personally do for work.
- Ask students to identify people within their network they could approach for advice, an introduction, or information about a career field.
- Reinforce that networking does not require already knowing someone in a student's preferred career. A person's existing connections may lead to additional contacts and opportunities.

Search for Community Partners

Ask students to identify a career or professional area they would like to explore.

Have students search locally for businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, colleges, workforce organizations, chambers of commerce, youth employment programs, and other organizations that may provide or connect students with professional experiences.

Ask students to identify a career or professional area they would like to explore.

Have students search locally for businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, colleges, workforce organizations, chambers of commerce, youth employment programs, and other organizations that may provide or connect students with professional experiences.

Students may use a standard internet search, the provided AI Assist Prompt, or both, depending on district expectations.

Have students identify several possible organizations or opportunities and record:

- Organization name
- Type of organization
- Connection to their career interest
- Career exploration opportunities that may be available
- Website or contact information
- Possible next step for learning more

Remind students to verify AI-generated information using the organization's website or another reliable source.

Have students select the organization or professional opportunity they are most interested in contacting.

Instructional Activities

Draft a Professional Email

Distribute or direct students to the Email Draft Template.

Discuss the difference between communicating casually with a friend and contacting a professional.

Review the basic components of the email, including:

- Clear subject line
- Professional greeting
- Brief introduction
- Career interest or reason for contacting the organization
- Specific request or question
- Appreciation for the person's time
- Professional closing

Have students draft an email to the organization or professional they selected.

Ask students to review their email for clarity, professionalism, spelling, and whether the recipient can easily understand what they are requesting.

Have students practice explaining their request to a partner as though they were speaking to the professional in person or by phone.

Encourage students to follow through and send the email after teacher review when appropriate.

Reflect and Identify a Next Step

- Ask students to respond to the lesson reflection questions.
- Have students identify one action they could take within the next month to learn more about a career that interests them.
- Invite students to share possible next steps with a partner or the class.

Reflection Questions

- Which type of career exploration, job shadow, mentorship, or internship, interests you most? Why?
- What is one thing you learned about networking today?
- What is one action you can take this month to learn more about a career you're interested in?

Group Reflection / Discussion

- Use the reflection questions above for student discussion. Consider using the final question as an exit ticket.

Materials and Supplies

- Networking Map
- Email Draft Template
- Computer or other internet-enabled device

Recommended Resources

District-approved AI platform, if used

Curriculum Resources

Lesson Overview
See Fig. 8.1

Network Map and Email Template
See Fig. 8.2

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Not applicable.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

Not applicable.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Students identify people within their existing network who may help them access career information, connections, or professional experiences.
- Students identify and investigate local organizations or programs that may provide or connect students with internships, mentorships, job shadowing, or other career exploration experiences.
- Students draft a professional email requesting information about or access to a career exploration opportunity.
- Students identify one action they can take to continue exploring a career of interest.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

I am a high school student who is interested in learning more about a career in [career field]. I live in [city and state].

Help me identify organizations, businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, schools, colleges, hospitals, or community programs in my area that may offer opportunities such as job shadowing, mentorship, internships, career exploration programs, informational interviews, or volunteer experiences related to this career.

Include organizations that connect students with career opportunities, even if they do not directly offer internships, such as workforce development organizations, career centers, youth employment programs, chambers of commerce, or career education nonprofits. Explain how each organization could help someone my age explore this career.

For each opportunity, provide the organization's name, what they do, why they might be a good fit for a student interested in this career, a website or contact information if available, and suggested next steps for reaching out.

Finally, recommend the three best options for a high school student who is just beginning to explore this career and explain why you chose them.

Lesson
Overview

FIGURE 8.1

1. Hook

Display three scenarios.

- **Student A:** Waits for someone to offer them an internship.
- **Student B:** Emails three professionals asking to shadow them.
- **Student C:** Talks to a family friend and asks if they know anyone in the field.

Ask: ***Which student is most likely to gain experience?*** Why?

What do they all have in common?

Discuss that career opportunities often come from taking initiative.

2. Mini Lesson

Introduce the three opportunities.

1	2	3
Job Shadow Observe Hours–1 day Exploring careers	**Mentorship** Build relationship Weeks/months Guidance	**Internship** Hands-on work Days/weeks/month Experience

Then discuss:

- How to find each one
- Local examples
- School resources
- Family/community connections
- Online resources
- Etc.

3. Finding an Opportunity

Students choose one career they're exploring.

Use ***Network Map/Email Template*** to help students find potential opportunities in their circle of family and friends. Alternatively or in addition, students can use search engines, and locate ONE possible opportunity from their community could be:

- local business
- nonprofit
- hospital
- city department
- trades organization
- university lab

4. Communication Workshop

Now students actually practice.

A

Write an email requesting information. Use the template proviced as an example to share with students.

B

Role-play making a phone call. Partner uses a rubric:

- Introduced themselves
- Explained interest
- Asked politely
- Thanked the person

C

Practice introducing yourself in 30 seconds.

Like an elevator pitch.

5. Reflection

Students answer:

- Which opportunity fits me best?
- What was hardest about reaching out?
- What would make me more confident?
- What's my next step?

Network Map / Email Template

FIGURE 8.2

Name: _____ **Career I'm Interested In:** _____

Directions: Think about people you already know who could help you learn more about your career interest.

CATEGORY	PEOPLE I KNOW	POSSIBLE CAREER OR CONNECTION
Family		
School (teacher, counselor, coach)		
Friends' Parents		
Neighbors / Community		
Businesses I Visit		
Other		

My Best First Contact:

_____

_____

_____

_____

How could this person help me?

_____

_____

_____

_____

My Next Step:

- ☐ Talk to them
- ☐ Send an email
- ☐ Ask for a job shadow
- ☐ Ask about a mentor
- ☐ Ask about an internship

Sample email students could write to someone in their network:

Subject: Career Exploration Opportunity

Dear [Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name] or Hiring Manager,

My name is [Student Name], and I am a student at [School Name]. I am currently exploring careers that interest me, and I am especially interested in learning more about careers in [career field].

I am reaching out to ask if your organization offers opportunities for students to participate in a job shadow, mentorship, internship, or informational interview. I would appreciate the chance to learn more about your work, ask questions about your career path, and better understand what skills and education are important in this field.

I understand that you have a busy schedule, and I appreciate your time and consideration. If there are opportunities available now or in the future, I would be grateful to hear more about them. Thank you for supporting students who are exploring career possibilities.

Sincerely,

[Student Name]
[Grade Level]
[School Name]
[Student Email Address]

OR HS.HECPS B.3

DURATION 120-150 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR TIM ROWLEY

Lesson 9

Career Fair Etiquette **& Preparation**

Lesson Purpose

This lesson is designed to help students prepare for a successful and meaningful career or job fair. It is also designed to prevent student embarrassment that can occur from showing up without the necessary preparation and research having been done.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Prepare or update their resumes.
- Understand and prepare to dress appropriately for the career fair.
- Research participating employers and identify companies, career opportunities, and questions they would like to explore at the career fair.
- Understand the importance of body language.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- CFE Handout
- Resume Template
- List of companies attending the career fair
- Local clothing assistance resources

Technology

- Internet-enabled student devices
- Digital resume template or word-processing program
- Projector or classroom display, if presenting the CFE Handout

Room Setup

- Arrange seating to support individual resume development, discussion, and company research.

Teacher Preparation

- Obtain and prepare a current list of companies attending the career fair.
- Identify local or school-based resources that can assist students who need appropriate clothing for the event.
- Make digital resume templates available for students who do not already have a resume.
- Review and adapt the CFE Handout for your students as needed.
- Determine whether the CFE Handout will be distributed directly or presented as a slideshow.
- Ensure students have access to the websites or other information needed to research participating companies.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Consider Career Fair Readiness

Students respond to the introduction questions and discuss what it means to arrive at a career fair prepared.

2 STEP

Build or Update a Resume

Students create or update a resume they can use at the career fair.

3 STEP

Prepare for Professional Interactions

Students use the CFE Handout to explore appropriate dress, resumes, body language, and other expectations for interacting with employers.

4 STEP

Research Participating Companies

Students review the companies attending the career fair, research employers that interest them, and identify potential jobs or opportunities they would like to learn more about.

5 STEP

Assess Your Readiness

Students reflect on the impression they will make at the career fair and identify anything they still need to do to prepare.

Introduction Questions

Write a brief description for each of the following:

- How do you plan to dress for the upcoming career fair?
- What type of jobs would you like to interview for?
- What documents should you bring with you to the interview?

Instructional Activities

Consider Career Fair Readiness

Have students respond independently to the introduction questions:

- How do you plan to dress for the upcoming career fair?
- What type of jobs would you like to interview for?
- What documents should you bring with you to the interview?

Explain that students are not expected to know every answer yet. The purpose is to identify what they already know and what they still need to learn before attending the career fair.

Invite students to share their responses.

Encourage students to add to, respectfully agree with, or respectfully challenge ideas shared by classmates.

Use the discussion to introduce the importance of preparing intentionally before interacting with employers.

Build or Update a Resume

- Provide students with a digital resume template if they do not already have a resume.
- Have students create or update their resume with current education, experience, activities, skills, accomplishments, volunteer experiences, and other appropriate information.
- Support students who have limited paid work experience in identifying school, volunteer, extracurricular, family, or community experiences that demonstrate relevant skills.
- Encourage students to describe their experiences accurately and professionally.
- Students who need assistance describing an experience may use the AI Assist Prompt.
- Have students proofread their resume and make corrections before considering it ready to share with employers.
- Allow approximately 45–60 minutes for this portion of the lesson as needed.

Prepare for Professional Interactions

Distribute the CFE Handout or present its content as a slideshow.

Guide students through the career fair preparation topics included in the resource, including:

- Appropriate dress
- Preparing and bringing a resume
- Researching companies before the event
- Professional body language

Ask students to connect these expectations to what they learned about interviewing in Lesson 5.

Discuss how clothing, posture, eye contact, facial expressions, and other nonverbal behaviors can affect a first impression.

Share school or community clothing resources with students as appropriate. Present these as resources available to anyone who needs them rather than requiring students to disclose a need publicly.

Instructional Activities

Research Participating Companies

Provide students with the list of companies attending the career fair.

Have students review the list and identify companies or organizations they are interested in learning more about.

Students research their selected companies using company websites or other reliable sources.

For each company, have students identify:

- What the company or organization does
- Types of jobs or career areas represented
- Jobs or opportunities that may be relevant to students
- Skills or qualifications the employer may value
- One thing the student would like to learn from the employer at the career fair

Ask students to identify the employers they most want to speak with during the event.

Have students prepare at least one question they could ask each priority employer.

Assess Your Readiness

Ask students to revisit their original Bell Ringer responses and consider what they would change now.

Have students respond to the reflection questions:

- When people see me, what message am I sending by the way I present myself?
- When potential employers look at my resume, what type of person does it say that I am?
- Conclude by asking students to assess: Are you prepared for the upcoming career fair?

Have students identify at least one remaining action they need to complete before attending.

Reflection Questions

- When people see me, what message am I sending by the way I present myself?
- When potential employers look at my resume, what type of person does it say that I am?

Group Reflection/Discussion

During the class discussion, initiate the conversation using the Bell Ringer questions. When a student responds, ask other students for input, including whether they want to add to the response or respectfully agree or disagree with what was said.

Conclude by asking: ***Are you prepared for the upcoming career fair?***

Materials and Supplies

- CFE Handout for each student
- Available resume template
- List of local resources for students who may need assistance preparing for the career fair
- Computer or other device for resume development and research

Recommended Resources

Not applicable.

Curriculum Resources

CFE Handout

See Figure 9.1

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Students demonstrate understanding of appropriate dress, professional body language, and other expectations for interacting with employers at a career fair.
- Students create or update a resume that can be used during the career fair.
- Students research participating employers, identify priority companies or career opportunities, and prepare questions to ask during the event.
- Students assess their preparation for the career fair and identify any remaining steps they need to complete.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

When students are unsure how to professionally describe an experience on their resume, have them ask AI for assistance. For example:

I am a high school student creating a resume. Help me professionally describe this experience: "I volunteered to put Chromebooks away every day for my teacher." Keep the description accurate and do not add responsibilities I did not perform.

If the student is preparing for a specific job, add the job title to the prompt so the response can be tailored to that opportunity.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

This lesson could easily take three class periods. It is important to ensure that students are as prepared as possible for the career fair. For many students, this will be their first experience entering the professional world.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

Students who have extra time can use the AI prompt from Lesson 5 to complete a practice interview. To make the practice more relevant, add the specific job for which the student plans to interview to the prompt.

CFE
Handout

FIGURE 9.1

1.Who is coming to the Career fair?

The following is a list of companies that will be at the upcoming event. Write notes on what jobs they hire for, and which they are interested in.

COMPANIES	JOBS	NOTES

2. Prepare ahead of time:

Practice your introduction. Practice a concise pitch that highlights your current skills and future career goals.

3. Professional attire:

Appropriate clothing may include:

- Clean, ironed jeans without rips or holes
- Khakis or casual work pants
- A collared shirt, button-up shirt, polo, blouse, sweater, or other neat top
- Clean shoes, boots, loafers, or other workplace-appropriate footwear
- Light layers such as a cardigan, quarter-zip, or casual jacket if needed

Avoid:

- Clothing with offensive language, inappropriate graphics, or distracting messages
- Dirty, wrinkled, or heavily worn clothing
- Pajama pants, slippers, or clothing intended for sleeping
- Hats or hoods during employer conversations unless required for cultural, religious, or medical reasons

Remember:

- Dress one step nicer than your everyday school clothes. Employers are looking for professionalism, preparation, and a positive attitude more than expensive or formal clothing.

4. Behavior

Have your phone away, on silent. Never bring your phone out during an interview. When speaking, maintain eye contact. If you have a name tag, place it on the left side of your shirt by where a breast pocket would be (if you don't have one). This allows it to remain visible while shaking hands. Shake with your right hand, a firm grip. Do not fidget from foot to foot if standing, practice standing straight (knees bent a little to avoid passing out) and hands comfortably at your side or clasped in front of you.

5. While at the interview booth

Hand your resume directly to the interviewer, unless otherwise instructed. Actively listen to whom ever is speaking to you. Be engaged. If you are sitting, sit up straight, slightly leaned forward, good eye contact (blink normally). This demonstrates that you are hearing what is being said. Show interest in the community of the company and any potential roles that are available.

6. Before Leaving

Request a business card. If possible send a personalized thank you email within 24 hours of the fair. Reference key points of the conversation to demonstrate that you were listening and valued their time.

OR HS.HECPS B.1

DURATION 50-60 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTORS JODI HOWELL

Lesson 10

Know the **Competencies**

Lesson Purpose

This lesson introduces students to the employability competencies that consistently contribute to success across careers, industries, and postsecondary pathways. While technical knowledge and job-specific skills are important, employers consistently value transferable skills such as communication, collaboration, adaptability, resilience, and problem solving because they enable individuals to work effectively with others and navigate an ever-changing workplace. Through collaborative exploration, students build an understanding of each competency, recognize how these skills appear in authentic workplace settings, and begin to see them as learnable habits.

As the first lesson in the Know the Competencies, Practice the Competencies, Grow Your Competencies sequence, this lesson establishes the foundation for the learning that follows. Students first develop a shared understanding of the competencies before applying them to realistic workplace situations and reflecting on their own strengths and areas for growth. Together, these experiences help students connect employability skills to future career success while reinforcing that career readiness is not only about choosing a career pathway but also about developing the skills and dispositions needed to thrive within it.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify and describe the purpose of key employability competencies and explain why they are important across a variety of careers and workplace settings.
- Recognize and explain examples of employability competencies in authentic workplace situations, using evidence to support their thinking.
- Communicate their understanding of the employability competencies by collaborating with peers to teach each other their meanings, importance, and real-world applications.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- Employability Competencies Passport, one per student
- Oregon Employability Skills competency information, available digitally or as teacher-printed copies
- Chart paper or poster paper, one per expert group
- Markers
- Sticky notes, optional for gallery walk feedback or questions
- Tape or easels for displaying group posters

Room Setup

- Arrange students into pairs or trios for expert-group work.
- Prepare space around the room for ten competency posters and student rotation during the Employability Expo.

Technology

- Student access to the Oregon Employability Skills Curriculum site, or teacher-printed copies of the competencies
- Projector or classroom display
- Timer

Teacher Preparation

- Review the ten competencies in the Oregon Employability Skills Curriculum.
- Determine how each expert group will be assigned one competency.
- Print or provide digital access to the Employability Competencies Passport.
- Prepare printed competency information for students if devices or internet access will not be used.
- Determine the rotation pattern and timing for the Employability Expo.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Consider What Makes Someone Successful at Work

Students consider why people with similar qualifications may experience different levels of workplace success and discuss the role of employability competencies.

2 STEP

Become a Competency Expert

Students work in pairs or trios to investigate one Oregon Employability Skill and create a mini-poster explaining its meaning, importance, and application.

3 STEP

Participate in the Employability Expo

Students take turns teaching their assigned competency and rotating through other competency stations while completing their Employability Competencies Passport by recording a key idea and real-world example for each competency.

4 STEP

Debrief and Reflect

Students discuss patterns and differences among the competencies, complete the Passport reflection, and identify an employability skill they want to strengthen.

Introduction Questions

- Imagine two people apply for the exact same job. They have identical grades, identical experience, and identical resumes. One gets hired and quickly becomes a supervisor. The other struggles and eventually quits. What might explain the difference?

Instructional Activities

Consider What Makes Someone Successful at Work

Ask students:

Imagine two people apply for the exact same job. They have identical grades, identical experience, and identical resumes. One gets hired and quickly becomes a supervisor. The other struggles and eventually quits. What might explain the difference?

Allow students to consider the question independently and then discuss their ideas.

Use their responses to introduce employability competencies as transferable skills and behaviors that contribute to success across careers and workplace settings.

Become a Competency Expert

Create one/or more (depending on the amount of groups you have) groups, using pairs or trios depending on class size.

Assign each group one competency from the Oregon Employability Skills Curriculum.

Provide students with digital or printed information about their assigned competency.

Explain that each group will become the class expert on its competency.
Each group creates a mini-poster that answers:

- What does this competency actually mean?
- What does it look like?
- What does it not look like?
- Why would an employer care?
- What is one real-life example?
- What is one “Do/Don’t”?

Participate in the Employability Expo

Half of each group remains at its station as presenters while the other students rotate through the stations.

Rotate approximately every two minutes.

As students visit each station, they complete their Employability Competencies Passport by recording:

- One key idea: What does this competency mean?
- One real-world example: What might this competency look like?

Encourage students to focus on understanding and summarizing rather than copying directly from the posters.

Presenters explain their competency and respond to questions from visitors.

After the first rotation, presenters and visitors switch roles so every student has an opportunity to both teach and learn.

Debrief and Reflect

Use the closing discussion to explore questions such as:

- Which competency surprised you?
- Are some competencies more important than others, or does their importance depend on the situation?
- Which competencies do you think employers notice first?
- Which competency seems easiest to develop? Which might take more practice?
- How are these competencies useful outside of a job or career?

Students then complete the Reflection and Exit Ticket on their Employability Competencies Passport:

- Which competency do you think employers value the most? Why?
- One thing I learned today that changed or expanded my thinking about workplace success is…
- The employability skill I most want to strengthen this year is _____ because…

Reflection Questions

Not applicable.

Group Reflection / Discussion

Use the following questions for a closing discussion:

- Are some competencies more important than others, or do they depend on the situation?
- Which competencies do you think employers notice first?
- Which competency do you think is easiest to develop? Which might take more practice?
- How are these competencies useful outside of a job or career?

Materials and Supplies

- Employability Competencies Passport
- Chart or poster paper
- Markers
- Employability Passport
- Tape or easels
- Student devices or printed competency information

Recommended Resources

Oregon Employability Skills Curriculum

https://www.oregonemployabilityskills.org/oes-exploration-curriculum

Curriculum Resources

Employability Competencies Passport

See Figure 10.1

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Students collaboratively create an Employability Competency Poster that explains their assigned competency, its importance in the workplace, and examples of the competency in action.
- During the Employability Expo, students communicate their learning by teaching their competency to peers.
- Individually, students complete an Employability Competencies Passport by recording one key idea and one real-world example for each competency.
- Students complete the Passport reflection and exit ticket, identifying what they learned about workplace success and one employability skill they want to strengthen and why.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

Not applicable.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

Rather than using a World Cafe structure, students could present without rotating while other students take notes during the presentations.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Teachers may need or want to fill in missing components on the student-generated posters while students work or during presentations so all students receive correct information.

Extension idea: The Oregon Employability Skills Curriculum includes Influencer Videos for each skill. Teachers could embed these into the lesson as a before or after activity, have students evaluate the videos, or have students include information from them in their expert group work process.

Employability Competencies
Passport

FIGURE 10.1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: As you visit each Employability Expo station, record one key idea and one real-world example for each competency. Focus on understanding, not copying.

EMPLOYABILITY COMPETENCY	ONE KEY IDEA (What does this competency mean?)	REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE (What might this look like?)
Adaptability / Flexibility		
Analysis / Solution Mindset		
Collaboration		
Communication		
Digital Literacy		
Empathy		
Entrepreneurial Mindset		
Resilience		
Self-Awareness		
Social Diversity/Awareness		

Reflection

Which competency do you think employers value the most? Why?

Exit Ticket

1. One thing I learned today that changed or expanded my thinking about workplace success is...

2. The employability skill I most want to strengthen this year is _____

   because... _____

OR HS.HECPS B.1

DURATION 50-60 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR JODI HOWELL

Lesson 11

Practice the **Competencies**

Lesson Purpose

Understanding employability competencies is only the first step. Students must also recognize how these skills are applied in authentic workplace situations. In this lesson, students analyze and role-play realistic scenarios that require them to identify, evaluate, and demonstrate employability competencies such as communication, collaboration, adaptability, empathy, and problem solving. Through discussion and performance, students experience how these competencies influence workplace relationships, decision-making, and overall success. They also discover that workplace challenges rarely require a single competency, but instead call for multiple skills working together.

As the second lesson in the Know the Competencies, Practice the Competencies, Grow Your Competencies sequence, this lesson bridges understanding and self-reflection. Students move beyond defining employability competencies to applying them in meaningful contexts, preparing them to evaluate their own strengths and areas for growth in the final lesson.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Analyze realistic workplace scenarios to identify the employability competencies being demonstrated, challenged, or missing, using evidence to support their reasoning.
- Demonstrate appropriate employability competencies by collaboratively role-playing workplace situations and applying strategies that lead to positive workplace outcomes.
- Explain how multiple employability competencies work together to influence communication, collaboration, problem solving, and success in workplace settings.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- Workplace Scenario Cards, teacher-generated using the provided AI prompt or created independently
- Workplace Challenge Analysis & Competency Tracker, one per student
- Employability Competencies Reference Sheet from Lesson 10 or classroom display

Room Setup

- Arrange desks or tables to allow students to work in collaborative groups of three to five.
- Prepare space for groups to perform brief workplace role-plays.

Technology

- Projector or classroom display
- Timer

Teacher Preparation

- Prepare enough Workplace Scenario Cards for each group to receive a scenario.
- Review the scenarios to ensure they are appropriate for students and provide opportunities to apply multiple employability competencies.
- Make the Employability Competencies Reference Sheet from Lesson 10 available digitally, in print, or as a classroom display.
- Print or provide digital access to the Workplace Challenge Analysis & Competency Tracker.
- Determine student groups and the order for role-play presentations.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Spot the Skill

Students analyze a short workplace scenario and identify the employability competencies being demonstrated, challenged, or missing.

2 STEP

Analyze a Workplace Challenge

Students work in small groups to analyze a workplace scenario, identify the main challenge and relevant employability competencies, and support their thinking with evidence.

3 STEP

Improve the Situation

Students determine what the employees could say or do differently and prepare a brief role-play demonstrating the original situation and an improved response.

4 STEP

Track Competencies in Action

Groups perform their role-plays while classmates use the Competency Tracker to identify the competencies demonstrated and record evidence they observe.

5 STEP

Reflect and Close

Students discuss which competencies had the greatest impact across the scenarios and complete the Reflection & Exit Ticket.

Introduction Questions

Not applicable.

Instructional Activities

Spot the Skill

Present the Taylor and Jordan scenario.

Ask students:

- What is the main problem in this situation?
- Which employability competencies are being demonstrated?
- Which competencies are missing or breaking down?

Students think independently, discuss with a partner, and then review their thinking as a class.

Explain that workplace challenges often involve multiple employability competencies working together. Tell students they will analyze a workplace situation and determine how using those competencies differently could improve the outcome.

Analyze a Workplace Challenge

Place students in small groups and provide each group with a Workplace Scenario Card.

Students complete Part 1 of the Workplace Challenge Analysis & Competency Tracker.

Students:

- Briefly summarize what is happening.
- Identify the main workplace challenge.
- Explain their thinking.
- Identify the employability competencies present in the situation.
- Determine which competencies are missing, breaking down, or need improvement.
- Identify evidence that supports their thinking.

Encourage students to consider multiple competencies rather than searching for one correct answer.

Improve the Situation

Students complete the Improve the Situation portion of their worksheet by determining what the employees could say or do differently.

Using their response, groups prepare a brief role-play showing:

- The original workplace situation.
- An improved version demonstrating how employability competencies could lead to a better outcome.

Give groups time to determine roles and rehearse their scenarios.

Track Competencies in Action

Groups perform their original and improved workplace scenarios.

As students watch the other groups, they complete Part 2: Competency Tracker.

For each group, students record:

- The competency or competencies demonstrated.
- Evidence they observed during the role-play.

After each performance, briefly discuss what changed and how the demonstrated competencies influenced the outcome.

Reflect and Close

Facilitate a brief discussion about the competencies students observed across the different workplace situations.

Students then complete the Reflection & Exit Ticket:

- Which employability competency seemed to have the biggest impact across today's workplace challenges? Why?
- How has your thinking changed? Before these lessons, I thought employability skills were...

Reflection Questions

Not applicable.

Group Reflection / Discussion

In small groups, discuss:

- Which employability competency had the greatest impact on the outcome of today's workplace scenarios?
- How did multiple employability competencies work together to improve the workplace situations?

Materials and Supplies

- Workplace Scenario Cards
- Workplace Challenge Analysis & Competency Tracker
- Employability Competencies Reference Sheet
- Projector or classroom display
- Timer

Recommended Resources

Oregon Employability Skills Curriculum
https://www.oregonemployabilityskills.org/oes-exploration-curriculum

Curriculum Resources

Workplace Challenge Analysis & Competency Tracker

See Figure 10.1

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Students complete Part 1 of the Workplace Challenge Analysis & Competency Tracker by identifying the main workplace challenge, analyzing the employability competencies present or needing improvement, supporting their thinking with evidence, and proposing an improved response.
- Students collaboratively demonstrate the original workplace challenge and an improved version showing how employability competencies can contribute to a more positive outcome.
- Students identify employability competencies demonstrated during peer role-plays and record evidence they observed.
- Students reflect on which employability competency had the greatest impact across the workplace challenges and explain how their thinking about employability skills has changed.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

I am teaching a high school Career Exploration and Preparation lesson focused on employability competencies. Create 10 realistic workplace scenarios that are appropriate for students in grades 9–12. Each scenario should be 1–2 short paragraphs and involve common workplace situations that students could realistically encounter in part-time jobs, internships, volunteer experiences, or future careers.

The scenarios should require students to analyze employability competencies such as:

- Adaptability/Flexibility
- Analysis/Solution Mindset
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Digital Literacy
- Empathy
- Entrepreneurial Mindset
- Resilience
- Self-Awareness
- Social Diversity/Awareness

Design each scenario so that multiple competencies are present. Some should be demonstrated effectively, while others should be missing, challenged, or in conflict. Do not identify the competencies within the scenario.

Include a variety of workplace settings, for example: retail, food service, healthcare, construction, education, manufacturing, technology, recreation, customer service, agriculture, and office environments.

Avoid scenarios involving illegal activity, severe safety concerns, or topics that may be emotionally distressing for students. Keep situations realistic, relatable, and appropriate for classroom role-play.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Extension Activity Idea: Invite students to interview an adult they know, such as a teacher, coach, employer, family member, mentor, or community member, about the employability competencies they use in their career. Students can ask which competencies are most important, how those skills have contributed to success, and what advice they would give someone entering the profession.

Students then reflect on what they learned, compare the interview responses to their own self-assessment, and identify one competency they would like to continue developing.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

Not applicable.

Workplace Challenge Analysis & Competency Tracker

FIGURE 11.1

Name: _____ **Scenario/Group:** _____

Directions: As you visit each Employability Expo station, record one key idea and one real-world example for each competency. Focus on understanding, not copying.

Part 1: Analyze Your Workplace Challenge

What's happening? Briefly summarize the workplace situation.

What is the main workplace challenge? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Teamwork
- ☐ Conflict
- ☐ Customer Service
- ☐ Time Management
- ☐ Responsibility
- ☐ Problem Solving
- ☐ Other: _____

Explain your thinking.

Which employability competencies are present? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ Adaptability/Flexibility
- ☐ Analysis/Solution Mindset
- ☐ Collaboration
- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Digital Literacy
- ☐ Empathy
- ☐ Entrepreneurial Mindset
- ☐ Resilience
- ☐ Self-Awareness
- ☐ Social Diversity/Awareness

Which competency (or competencies) is missing, breaking down, or needs improvement?

What evidence supports your thinking?

Improve the Situation

What could the employees say or do differently to improve the outcome?

Workplace Challenge Analysis & Competency Tracker

FIGURE 11.1

Part 2: Competency Tracker

As you watch other groups perform, identify the competencies that helped improve each workplace situation.

GROUP	COMPETENCY(IES) DEMONSTRATED	What evidence did you observe?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Reflection & Exit Ticket

Which employability competency seemed to have the biggest impact across today's workplace challenges? Why?

How has your thinking changed? Before these lessons, I thought employability skills were...

OR HS.HECPS B.1

DURATION 50-60 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR JODI HOWELL

Lesson 12

Grow Your **Competencies**

Lesson Purpose

This lesson provides students with an opportunity to reflect on their own employability competencies and connect them to a future career of interest. After learning about the competencies and applying them in authentic workplace situations, students evaluate their current strengths, identify areas for growth, and consider how these transferable skills support success across careers. Students recognize that employability competencies are developed over time through school, work, extracurricular activities, volunteering, and everyday experiences. This lesson reinforces the idea that career readiness is an ongoing process of continuous learning and personal growth.

As the culminating lesson in the Know the Competencies, Practice the Competencies, Grow Your Competencies sequence, this experience brings together students' understanding of workplace expectations with their own aspirations and experiences. Students leave with a clearer understanding of how their strengths align with future opportunities and a personalized plan for continued growth.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Evaluate their current employability competencies by identifying personal strengths and areas for growth using a self-assessment.
- Explain how employability competencies connect to a chosen career pathway, giving specific examples of why those competencies are important for success in that profession.
- Develop a personal growth plan that identifies realistic strategies for strengthening one or more employability competencies in preparation for future educational and career opportunities.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- Employability Competencies Self-Assessment: Career Reflection & Growth Plan, one per student
- Career exploration notes or career profile from previous lessons
- Employability Competencies Reference Sheet from Lesson 10 or classroom display

Room Setup

- Arrange seating for independent reflection with opportunities for brief partner discussion.

Technology

- Student digital devices, if completing the resource digitally
- Projector or classroom display

Teacher Preparation

- Print or provide digital access to the Employability Competencies Self-Assessment: Career Reflection & Growth Plan.
- Ask students to have their career exploration notes or career profile from previous lessons available.
- Make the Employability Competencies Reference Sheet from Lesson 10 available digitally, in print, or as a classroom display.
- Prepare to display the Ready for Day One prompt and discussion questions.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Bell Ringer: Ready for Day One?

Students reflect on the strengths they would bring to their future career and skills they believe they still need to develop.

2 STEP

Reconnect to Career Exploration

Students revisit the career they previously explored and record their chosen career pathway.

3 STEP

Complete the Employability Self-Assessment

Students independently assess their current level of confidence with each employability competency.

4 STEP

Connect Competencies to Career Success

Students identify the competencies most important for their chosen career and identify their own strengths and areas for growth.

5 STEP

Develop a Personal Growth Plan

Students identify specific strategies for continuing to strengthen one or more employability competencies.

6 STEP

Reflection and Closure

Students reflect on what they learned about themselves and identify the competency they believe will make the biggest difference in their future.

Introduction Questions

Imagine that tomorrow is your first day in the career you've chosen to explore. Reflect:

- What is one strength you would bring with you on your first day?
- What is one thing that might make you feel nervous or less prepared?
- Write three to five sentences explaining your thinking.

Transition: Today you'll think about which employability competencies are already strengths and which you can continue developing before that first day arrives.

Instructional Activities

Bell Ringer: Ready for Day One?

Students respond to the Ready for Day One prompt about the strengths they would bring to their future career and any skills they believe they still need to develop. Students may briefly discuss their responses with a partner.

Reconnect to Career Exploration

Students revisit the career they previously explored and record their chosen career pathway, reinforcing the connection between employability competencies and future career goals.

Complete the Employability Self-Assessment

Students complete Part 1 of the Employability Competencies Self-Assessment: Career Reflection & Growth Plan, independently rating themselves on each employability competency based on how consistently they demonstrate it today.

Connect Competencies to Career Success

- Students complete Parts 2–4 of the worksheet.
- Students identify three employability competencies that are most important for their chosen career and explain why each matters.
- Students then choose three competencies total: 1–2 strengths and 1–2 areas for growth. For each strength, students reflect on how they developed the competency and how they can continue strengthening it. For each growth area, students explain why it is important and identify an action they can take to improve.

Develop a Personal Growth Plan

Students complete Part 5 of the worksheet by identifying:

- Their biggest employability strength.
- The competency they most want to improve.
- One person who can help them develop this competency.
- One commitment they will make to themselves.

Reflection and Closure

Students complete the Final Reflection on the worksheet:

- One thing I learned about myself through this reflection is...
- The employability competency that will make the biggest difference in my future is _____ because...

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Students will:

- Complete an Employability Competencies Self-Assessment to evaluate personal strengths and areas for growth.
- Analyze the employability competencies most important to a chosen career pathway and explain their significance.
- Develop a Personal Employability Growth Plan that identifies strengths, growth areas, and specific strategies for continued skill development.
- Participate in partner or small-group discussions reflecting on personal strengths, career connections, and future goals.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

Not applicable.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Not applicable.

Reflection Questions

- Which employability competency do you believe will have the greatest impact on your success in your chosen career?
- After completing your self-assessment, what is one employability competency you are most proud of and one you would like to strengthen?.

Group Reflection/Discussion

Not applicable.

Materials and Supplies

- Employability Competencies Self-Assessment, Career Reflection & Growth Plan
- Career exploration notes or career profile from previous lessons
- Employability Competencies Reference Sheet from Lesson 10 or classroom display
- Writing utensils or digital devices for completing reflections
- Projector or classroom display

Recommended Resources

Oregon Employability Skills Curriculum
https://www.oregonemployabilityskills.org/oes-exploration-curriculum

Curriculum Resources

Employability Competencies Self-Assessment / Career Reflection & Growth Plan
See Figure 12.1

Employability Competencies Self-Assessment
/Career Reflection & Growth Plan

FIGURE 12.1

Name: _____ **Career of Interest:** _____

Part 1: My Employability Self-Assessment

Directions: Rate yourself on each competency based on how consistently you demonstrate it today. There are no right or wrong answers—this is an opportunity for honest reflection.

EMPLOYABILITY COMPETENCY	I NEED MORE PRACTICE	I'M DEVELOPING	I'M USUALLY SUCCESSFUL	THIS IS ONE OF MY STRENGTHS
Adaptability/Flexibility	☐	☐	☐	☐
Analysis/Solution Mindset	☐	☐	☐	☐
Collaboration	☐	☐	☐	☐
Communication	☐	☐	☐	☐
Digital Literacy	☐	☐	☐	☐
Empathy	☐	☐	☐	☐
Entrepreneurial Mindset	☐	☐	☐	☐
Resilience	☐	☐	☐	☐
Self-Awareness	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social Diversity/Awareness	☐	☐	☐	☐

Part 2: Connecting My Career

Directions: Think about the career you've chosen. Which three employability competencies are most important in this career?

1. _____

Why? _____

2. _____

Why? _____

3. _____

Why? _____

Employability Competencies Self-Assessment
/Career Reflection & Growth Plan

FIGURE 12.1

Part 3: My Strengths

Choose 1–2 competencies that are strengths for you.

Strength 1: _____

Competency _____

How have you developed this competency?
(Think about school, sports, clubs, work, volunteering, hobbies, family responsibilities, etc.)

How can you continue strengthening this competency?

Strength 2: (optional) _____

Competency _____

How have you developed this competency?

How can you continue strengthening this competency?

Part 4: My Growth Opportunities

Choose 1–2 competencies you would like to continue developing.

Growth Area 1 _____

Competency _____

Why is this important for your future career?

What is one action you can take during the next month to improve?

Growth Area 2 (optional) _____

Competency _____

Why is this important?

One action I will take:

Part 5: My Employability Growth Plan

My biggest employability strength is

The competency I most want to improve is

One person who can help me develop this competency is

One commitment I will make to myself is

Final Reflection

Complete the statement.

One thing I learned about myself through this reflection is...

The employability competency that will make the biggest difference in my future is...

because...

OR HS.HECPS B.2

DURATION 45 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR MICHAEL MANSOUR

Lesson 13

Job Detective

Lesson Purpose

Students will become detectives by examining a workplace email and using clues within the communication to determine what kind of job the person may have. Students work backwards, identifying responsibilities, skills, and competencies described in the email and using those clues to identify possible careers.

The lesson helps students recognize that understanding a career involves more than knowing a job title. By investigating the work people actually perform, students begin to identify the tasks, expectations, and unwritten responsibilities associated with different careers.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Know general information about a variety of careers.
- Understand the tasks, skills, and responsibilities described in workplace communication.
- Identify possible careers based on evidence about tasks, skills, and responsibilities.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- Job Detective Investigation Sheet, one per student
- Job Detective Workplace Email, teacher-generated using the provided AI prompt or created independently

Technology

- Projector or classroom display
- Student devices with internet access for career research
- AI technology, if available

Room Setup

Not applicable.

Teacher Preparation

- Prepare or display the opening logic puzzle included in the lesson.
- Use the AI Assist Prompt to generate a Job Detective Workplace Email, or create one independently.
- Review the workplace email to ensure the clues are realistic, appropriate for students, and do not make the career immediately obvious.
- Print or provide digital access to the Job Detective Investigation Sheet.
- Identify career research resources students can use to investigate their career predictions.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Think Like a Detective

Students solve a short logic puzzle using clues and elimination to introduce the process they will use during the Job Detective activity.

2 STEP

Investigate the Email

Students examine a workplace email and use the Job Detective Investigation Sheet to identify clues about the employees' tasks, responsibilities, skills, competencies, tools, and workplace expectations.

3 STEP

Make Your Career Prediction

Students use evidence from the workplace email to identify a possible career and support their prediction with specific clues.

4 STEP

Research the Career

Students research their predicted career, compare their findings with the clues in the email, and determine whether the evidence supports or changes their original prediction.

5 STEP

Reflect and Discuss

Students identify responsibilities or workplace expectations they discovered through their research and discuss what the activity reveals about understanding careers beyond a job title.

Introduction Questions

- What makes jobs easy to understand?
- How should a work email be written?
- Do jobs have extra responsibilities that are not listed in job postings?

Instructional Activities

Think Like a Detective

Display the following puzzle:

Three people work at a local business: Alex, Jordan, and Taylor. One is a manager, one is a technician, and one is a customer service representative.

- Alex does not supervise employees.
- Jordan rarely interacts directly with customers.
- The technician is not Alex.

Who has each job?

Have students work independently or with a partner to solve the puzzle.

Ask:

- What clues helped you eliminate possibilities?
- Did any single clue give you the answer, or did you have to combine clues?
- What evidence supports your conclusion?

Explain that students will use the same process to investigate a workplace email.

Investigate the Email

Provide students with the teacher-generated Job Detective Workplace Email and the Job Detective Investigation Sheet.

Students read the email and use the Investigation Sheet to record clues about:

- Tasks and responsibilities
- Skills and competencies
- Tools and technology
- People the employees interact with
- Workplace expectations

Make Your Career Prediction

Students use the evidence they recorded to identify a possible career.

On the Job Detective Investigation Sheet, students:

- Identify their career prediction.
- List three pieces of evidence supporting their prediction.
- Identify another career that could reasonably fit the evidence.

Emphasize that there may be more than one reasonable answer. Students should focus on supporting their prediction with evidence.

Research the Career

- Students research their predicted career using reliable career information sources.
- On the Job Detective Investigation Sheet, students record their career research findings and compare them with the workplace email.
- Students determine whether the research supports or changes their original prediction and identify responsibilities or workplace expectations they discovered through research that were not obvious from the job title.

Reflect and Discuss

Invite students to compare their predictions and findings.

Discuss:

- Could more than one career reasonably fit the clues?
- Which clues were most useful?
- Did your research support or change your original prediction?
- What responsibilities or workplace expectations did you discover that you might not know from the job title alone?

Reflection Questions

Not applicable.

Group Reflection / Discussion

In small groups, students discuss:

- What makes jobs easy to understand?
- How should a work email be written?
- Do jobs have extra responsibilities that are not listed in job postings?

Materials and Supplies

- Job Detective Investigation Sheet
- Job Detective Workplace Email
- Student devices with internet access
- Career research resources
- Projector or classroom display

Recommended Resources

Not applicable.

Curriculum Resources

Job Detective Investigation Sheet

See Figure 13.1

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Students complete the Job Detective Investigation Sheet by identifying and recording clues from a workplace email about tasks, responsibilities, skills, competencies, tools, and workplace expectations.
- Students identify a possible career and support their prediction with at least three pieces of evidence from the email.
- Students research their predicted career and determine whether the research supports or changes their original prediction.
- Students identify responsibilities or workplace expectations discovered through their research that were not obvious from the job title.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

Create a realistic workplace email for a high school Career Exploration and Preparation activity called Job Detective.

The email should be an exchange between two employees working in the same career field. Do not state their job titles, employer, industry, or career field directly.

Include subtle clues that students can use to infer what type of work the employees do. Incorporate clues related to:

- Typical job tasks and responsibilities
- Workplace skills or employability competencies
- Tools, equipment, technology, or documents used
- People they interact with
- Deadlines or workplace expectations
- Professional responsibilities that may not appear directly in a job title

Choose a career that high school students can reasonably investigate using common career research resources. Include enough clues for students to develop a well-supported prediction, but do not make the answer immediately obvious.

Write the email using realistic professional workplace communication and keep it short enough for students to analyze during one class period.

After the email, provide a separate teacher answer key identifying the intended career, the clues embedded in the email, and other careers students might reasonably infer from the evidence.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Not applicable.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

The teacher can select a puzzle that is appropriate for their class and students.

VERSION 1.0 — SCHOOL YEAR 26/27

Use the QR code to contribute to the ongoing improvement of this resource.

Job Detective Investigation Sheet

FIGURE 13.1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Use clues from the workplace email to investigate the job, record your findings, and draw a career conclusion based on evidence.

Record clues about tasks and responsibilities.

Record clues about skills and competencies.

Record clues about tools, technology, people, and workplace expectations.

Identify a career prediction.

List three pieces of vidence supporting the prediction.

Identify another career that could reasonably fit the evidence.

Record career research findings.

Determine whether the research supports or changes the original prediction.

Identify responsibilities or workplace expectations discovered through research that were not obvious from the job title.

OR HS.HECPS B.1

DURATION 45 MINUTES

CONTRIBUTOR MICHAEL MANSOUR

Lesson 14

Wheel of **Destiny**

Lesson Purpose

Students will have knowledge of many career choices for their future but may not be sure how to decide which careers are in their wheelhouse. In this lesson, students reflect on their own priorities and consider which careers may be the best fit for them.

Students consider factors such as salary, flexibility, workplace culture, location, and growth. They use these priorities to compare career choices and recognize that making an informed career decision often involves weighing multiple factors.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify more than one career they may want to pursue.
- Understand their own priorities, such as salary, flexibility, workplace culture, location, and growth.
- Compare their priorities to a list of career choices to make informed decisions about potential career paths.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- Paper or digital space for students to rank career priorities and complete the Career Write-Up

Technology

- School issued student device
- Kahoot or another quiz platform
- Career exploration quiz, teacher-selected or created using the provided AI Assist Prompt
- Spinning wheel, paper or digital
- AI technology, if available

Room Setup

Not applicable.

Teacher Preparation

- Prepare a Which Job? career comparison quiz using Kahoot or another available quiz platform. Select an existing quiz or use the provided AI Assist Prompt to generate questions.
- Review quiz questions and answers for accuracy before using them with students.
- Prepare a paper or digital spinning wheel for the Wheel of Destiny.
- Determine how students will record their career priorities and complete the Career Write-Up.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Kahoot (or Another Quiz Platform): Which Job?

Students respond to career comparison questions that highlight differences among careers and introduce factors people may consider when making career decisions.

2 STEP

Identify Your Priorities

Students consider factors such as salary, flexibility, workplace culture, location, and career growth and rank the factors based on what matters most to them.

3 STEP

Wheel of Destiny

Students place their highest-priority factors onto a spinning wheel. They spin the wheel, and the selected factor becomes the deciding priority they will use to select a career.

4 STEP

Career Write-Up

Students identify a career based on the priority selected by the wheel and consider how well that career aligns with the other priorities the wheel did not select.

Introduction Questions

- What jobs look good but don't provide all the things that match your personal interests, skills, and priorities?

Instructional Activities

Kahoot (or Another Quiz Platform): Which Job?

Using Kahoot or another available quiz platform, students look at job titles and respond to career comparison questions such as:

- Which job has a high salary?
- Which job has more days off in one work year?
- Which job works in cold weather?

Briefly discuss responses and use the questions to introduce the idea that careers differ in many ways beyond their job duties.

Identify Your Priorities

Ask students to consider the factors that may matter to them when choosing a future career.

Possible priorities include:

- Salary
- Flexibility
- Workplace culture
- Location
- Career growth

Students may identify additional factors that are important to them.

Students rank their career priorities from most important to least important and identify their highest-priority factors to use in the Wheel of Destiny.

Instructional Activities

Wheel of Destiny

- Students use a spinning wheel, either on paper or digitally. They place their highest-priority factors onto the wheel.
- Students spin the wheel. The factor selected becomes the deciding priority they will use to identify a career.

Career Write-Up

Students identify a career that aligns with the priority selected by the wheel. They then write about how the career aligns, or does not align, with the other priorities the wheel did not select.

Reflection Questions

- Do you sometimes assume jobs have certain qualities without researching them?
- Do you know what you will need or value in your future?
- Will your career choice come down to one factor?
- Will you consider other priorities when deciding?

Group Reflection/Discussion

In small groups, discuss:

- What makes a job a good job?
- What is important to you?
- Is your highest priority the right priority for you?
- How will you decide among future career options?

Materials and Supplies

- Kahoot or another quiz platform
- Which Job? career comparison quiz
- Spinning wheel, paper or digital
- Paper or digital device for recording career priorities and completing the Career Write-Up

Recommended Resources

Wheel of Names

https://wheelofnames.com/

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Students participate in the Which Job? career comparison quiz and consider how careers differ across factors that may influence career decisions.
- Students identify and rank the factors that are most important to them when considering a future career.
- Students use the Wheel of Destiny to explore how one priority can influence a career decision.
- Students complete a Career Write-Up considering both the selected priority and their other priorities when evaluating a career.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

The teacher can select a puzzle that is appropriate for their class and students.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Not applicable.

Curriculum Resources

Not applicable.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

For Teacher Preparation: Which Job? Career Comparison Quiz

Create a 10-question career comparison quiz for high school students called "Which Job?" that can be entered into Kahoot or another quiz platform. The purpose is to help students recognize that careers differ in ways beyond job duties and salary, and that people may value different things when choosing a career.

For each question, give students four different careers as answer choices and ask them to identify which career is most likely to match a particular characteristic or priority.

Include questions about:

- Salary
- Typical work schedule
- Amount of time off
- Indoor vs. outdoor work
- Working in hot or cold conditions
- Physical demands
- Flexibility
- Travel
- Education or training required
- Opportunities for career growth

Use a wide variety of careers and industries. Make the questions appropriate for high school students and avoid making one type of career appear better than another.

For each question, provide:

- The quiz question
- Four career answer choices
- The correct or best-supported answer
- A one-sentence explanation

Base factual answers on reliable career information such as the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook. If a question does not have one clearly defensible answer, revise it rather than guessing.

The goal is to get students thinking: *"**What matters to me in a career, and do I actually know whether the careers I am considering provide it?**"*

OR HS.HECPS B.1

DURATION 60 MINUTES
possible to split into two lessons.

CONTRIBUTOR KIRSTEN LARWIN

Lesson 15

Overcoming **Setbacks**

Lesson Purpose

This lesson helps students recognize that setbacks are a normal part of the college and career journey and that resilience is a skill that can be developed. Through real-world scenarios, collaborative problem-solving, and reflection, students examine common challenges such as college rejection, unsuccessful job or internship applications, financial obstacles, and workplace difficulties. They identify productive strategies for responding to setbacks, seeking support, and adapting their plans while maintaining progress toward their goals.

This lesson supports future readiness by helping students develop the confidence, perseverance, and adaptability needed to navigate an ever-changing world. As part of the HECPS B unit, it reinforces that career and educational pathways are rarely linear and that setbacks can become opportunities for learning and growth. By creating a personal Resilience Toolbox for overcoming future challenges, students leave the lesson better prepared to make informed decisions, solve problems, and persist through obstacles in both college and career settings.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Know common setbacks that may occur during the college and career process and strategies for responding to them effectively.
- Understand that setbacks are a normal part of achieving personal, educational, and career goals and can provide opportunities for growth and learning.
- Be able to analyze a setback, identify appropriate resources and support, and develop a plan to overcome challenges and continue working toward their goals.

Teacher Preparation

Materials / Handouts

- "Now What?" Scenario Cards, teacher-generated using the provided AI Assist Prompt or created independently
- "Learning from Others" readings, teacher-generated using the provided AI Assist Prompt or selected independently
- Paper or digital space for students to create their Resilience Toolbox
- Writing materials

Technology

- Projector or classroom display
- AI technology, if used to prepare scenario cards or readings

Room Setup

- Arrange 6–8 stations around the room for the "Now What?" Scenario Stations.
- Arrange seating to support small-group and whole-class discussion.

Teacher Preparation

- Prepare a board, chart paper, or shared display with two columns labeled College and Employment.
- Prepare 6–8 "Now What?" Scenario Cards featuring realistic college and career setbacks. Use the provided AI Assist Prompt or create the scenarios independently.
- Review all scenarios to ensure they are appropriate for students and allow for multiple productive responses.
- Prepare 6–8 short "Learning from Others" readings. Use the provided AI Assist Prompt or select appropriate readings independently.
- Prepare paper or a digital format for students to create their Resilience Toolbox.

Instructional Sequence

1 STEP

Brainstorming Setbacks

Students identify possible college and employment setbacks and consider which are within or outside of a person's control.

2 STEP

"Now What?" Scenario Stations

Students rotate through realistic setback scenarios and identify productive next steps and sources of support.

3 STEP

Read About Real People

Students examine how other people responded to setbacks and identify resilience strategies that contributed to their next steps.

4 STEP

Build a Resilience Toolbox

Students identify strategies they can personally use to respond to future setbacks and continue working toward their goals.

5 STEP

Reflect and Discuss

Students reflect on resilience, sources of support, and actions they can take when future plans do not go as expected.

Introduction Questions

- What challenges or setbacks could someone experience during the college application process or while finding a job?
- Which of these setbacks are within your control?
- Which are outside your control?
- How do people respond to setbacks?
- Could strategies that have worked for other people work for you?
- When you face a setback, what can you do next?

Instructional Activities

Brainstorming Setbacks

Ask students: ***What challenges or setbacks could someone experience during the college application process or while finding a job?***

Record answers in two columns: **College and Employment.**

Possible **College** responses:

- Rejected from first-choice college
- Not accepted into a program
- Didn't earn a scholarship
- Financial challenges
- Low SAT/ACT scores
- Didn't meet a deadline
- Homesickness
- Changing majors

Possible **Employment** responses:

- Didn't get an interview
- Wasn't hired
- Didn't get promoted
- Fired from a job
- Difficult coworker
- Negative feedback
- Didn't get accepted for an internship
- Business closed

Then ask:

- Which of these setbacks are within your control?
- Which are outside your control?

Use this discussion to introduce resilience.

"Now What?" Scenario Stations

Create 6–8 stations around the room. Each station presents a realistic setback. For example:

Scenario: You applied to your dream college. You were not accepted.

Students discuss:

-
- How might you feel?
- What should you NOT do?
- What are three productive next steps?
- Who could help?

"Now What?" Scenario Stations (Continued...)

After students rotate through the stations, discuss the different ways people might productively respond to the same setback.

Read About Real People

Provide short stories about people who experienced setbacks.
Possible examples include Michael Jordan, Oprah Winfrey, Steve Jobs, Walt Disney, Sara Blakely, and others of your choice.

Students identify:

- What was the setback?
- How did they respond?
- What helped them succeed?

Have students share the strategies they identified and discuss which strategies could be useful when they experience their own setbacks.

Build a Resilience Toolbox

Students create a toolbox titled: "When I Face a Setback, I Can..."

Students identify strategies they could use, such as:

- Ask for feedback
- Revise my plan
- Talk to a mentor
- Practice interview skills
- Apply again
- Explore another pathway
- Improve my resume
- Learn a new skill
- Stay positive
- Ask for help

Encourage students to add strategies from the scenarios, readings, and class discussion that would be useful to them personally.

Reflect and Discuss

Students reflect on resilience, sources of support, and actions they can take when future plans do not go as expected.

Reflection Questions

- Which setback do you think would be hardest for you? Why?
- What is one strategy you could use to overcome a disappointment?
- Why is asking for help a sign of strength rather than weakness?
- What does resilience mean to you?
- How can setbacks help people grow?
- Think about a time you overcame a challenge. What did you learn about yourself?
- If you experience a setback in the future, what is one action you will take instead of giving up?

Group Reflection/Discussion

Use the reflection questions above to facilitate small-group or whole-class discussion. Encourage students to compare the different strategies people can use to respond to setbacks and identify sources of support that could help them continue moving toward their goals.

Materials and Supplies

- "Now What?" Scenario Cards
- "Learning from Others" readings
- Paper or digital materials for the Resilience Toolbox
- Writing materials

Recommended Resources

Not applicable.

Curriculum Resources

Not applicable.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Students identify realistic college and employment setbacks and consider which are within or outside of a person's control.
- Students analyze setback scenarios and identify productive next steps and sources of support.
- Students identify resilience strategies used by people who experienced educational, career, or professional setbacks.
- Students create a personal Resilience Toolbox identifying strategies they can use when facing future challenges.
- Students complete an individual reflection identifying actions and sources of support they can use when experiencing a future setback.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS

- Divide the lesson into two class periods if additional time is needed for scenario discussions or readings.
- Allow students to work individually, with a partner, or in small groups when analyzing scenarios.
- Provide sentence starters or discussion frames for students who need additional support.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Not applicable.

AI ASSIST PROMPT

For Teacher Preparation: "Now What?" Scenario Cards

Act as a college and career readiness educator designing classroom discussion cards for high school students.

Create 10–12 realistic scenario cards about setbacks students might experience while preparing for college, entering the workforce, or exploring careers. The scenarios should encourage students to practice resilience, problem-solving, and decision-making rather than focusing on failure.

Include a variety of situations related to college admissions, scholarships and financial aid, internship applications, job interviews, workplace challenges, career exploration, networking, mentorships, academic struggles, changing career goals, time management, and balancing school, work, and personal responsibilities.

Each scenario should be 2–4 sentences, realistic and appropriate for grades 9–12, present a challenge without including the solution, and encourage multiple possible responses instead of one correct answer.

After each scenario, include these discussion questions:

- What is the setback or challenge?
- How might this person be feeling?
- What are three positive next steps they could take?
- Who or what resources could help them?
- What might this person learn from this experience?

Make the scenarios diverse and inclusive so students from different backgrounds and future plans can relate to them. Include college pathways as well as careers, apprenticeships, military service, community college, and entering the workforce directly after high school.

Write the scenarios in a format that can easily be cut apart and used as classroom discussion cards.

For Teacher Preparation: "Learning from Others" Readings

Create 6–8 short, high-school-appropriate readings about well-known people who experienced a documented educational, career, or professional setback and continued working toward their goals. Use people from a variety of careers, industries, and backgrounds.

For each person, briefly explain the setback, what they did in response, and what happened next. Focus on the specific strategies they used, such as seeking help, changing their approach, developing new skills, finding another pathway, persisting, or adapting their goal. Do not invent or exaggerate details.

End each reading with these questions:

- What setback did this person experience?
- What did they do next?
- What resilience strategies can you identify?
- Which of these strategies could you use in your own life?

Career Exploration **& Preparation**

Extension Opportunities

Purpose

These strategies extend career exploration and preparation beyond the classroom by connecting students with professionals, community organizations, authentic experiences, and family members. They provide opportunities for students to apply what they have learned about career pathways and employability competencies in real-world settings, while building relationships and experiences that can inform future education, training, and career decisions.

Community Partnership

CONNECT WITH YOUR LOCAL EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT

Instructional Activity

Connect with your local Education Service District (ESD) to identify guest speakers representing a variety of professions and trades.

An ESD may have a staff member who can help educators coordinate with local organizations and community partners to arrange career speakers.

Learning Objective

Students expand their awareness of career options by learning directly from professionals about their work, education and training, and career experiences.

Implementation Notes

This strategy coordinates directly with Lesson 4: Guest Speaker Protocol/Student Experience Protocol.

Experiential Learning

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Instructional Activity

Students volunteer a minimum of two hours with one of the nonprofit organizations they researched during Lesson 6: Community Involvement Project.

Students document their experience using the provided volunteer tracking form.

Volunteer Experience Tracking Form:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yFnytgG3bJoeWqV6gqvpPoJxmsvZfXQ9sCD-Zumtsws/edit?usp=sharing

Learning Objective
Students apply their community research through direct experience, contribute to their community, and explore the personal and career-related value of service.

Implementation Notes
This is an extension of Lesson 6. The intent is for students to both give back to their community and explore the fulfillment that can come from contributing to something beyond themselves.

Future Pathway Exploration

DIGITAL FOOTPRINT AND PERSONAL BRANDING

Instructional Activity
Extend the lessons on exploring and applying employability competencies by asking students to consider how those competencies are communicated through their digital presence and personal brand.

Students can examine how online communication, professionalism, accomplishments, interests, and digital behavior may shape how they are perceived by colleges, employers, mentors, and other professionals.

Learning Objective
Students understand how their digital presence can communicate employability competencies and influence future education and career opportunities.

Implementation Notes
This strategy could be incorporated as an extension to the ***Know the Competencies, Practice the Competencies, and Grow Your Competencies lesson sequence.***

Community Showcase

STUDENT-LED CAREER FAIR

Instructional Activity
Extend the ***Career Exploration Project*** assessment by having students present their career research through a student-led career fair.

For example, ninth-grade students could create career displays and presentations for middle school students. Each student becomes the "career expert" for the occupation or pathway they researched and shares what they learned with a younger, authentic audience.

Learning Objective
Students synthesize and communicate their career research while strengthening presentation and communication skills and helping other students expand their awareness of future possibilities.

Implementation Notes
This strategy can serve as an authentic audience for the Career Exploration Project rather than requiring an additional assignment.

Parent Engagement

CAREER CONVERSATIONS AT HOME

Provide simple discussion prompts or interview questions that encourage students to talk with a parent, caregiver, or trusted adult about careers, work experiences, education and training, and employability skills.

Family Career Panels
Invite parents, caregivers, and community members to share their career journeys, highlighting a variety of education, training, and career pathways.

Take-Home Career Exploration Activities
Extend existing lessons through short family conversations. For example, during the employability competencies sequence, students could review the competencies with a parent, caregiver, sibling, or other trusted adult and ask:

- Which of these competencies do you see as strengths for me?
- Which could I continue developing?
- Which competencies are most important in the work you do?
- How have you developed these competencies through your own experiences?

Students can bring insights from these conversations back to class for discussion and reflection.

Student-Led Conferences

Incorporate students' career goals, postsecondary plans, and employability competency reflections into existing student-led conferences so families can participate in career and future-planning conversations already built into the school year.

Learning Objective

Students strengthen their understanding of career pathways and employability competencies by discussing their interests, strengths, goals, and future possibilities with the adults who know them well.

Reflection and Debrief

SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROPOSAL

Instructional Activity

Following a guest speaker, volunteer experience, career fair, family conversation, or other career-connected experience, provide structured opportunities for students to process what they learned and connect it to their own future.

Possible reflection prompts include:

- What did this experience help you understand about careers or the workplace that you did not know before?
- What employability competencies did you observe or practice?
- What surprised you?
- Did this experience change or reinforce anything you were thinking about your future?
- What is one question you still have?
- What is one next step you could take based on what you learned?x

Learning Objective

Students make meaning from career-connected experiences by connecting what they observed or experienced to their own strengths, interests, competencies, and future pathways.

Implementation Notes

Reflection can be completed through writing, small-group discussion, an exit ticket, or another brief format appropriate to the experience.

OR HS.HECPS B

Career Exploration **& Preparation**

Assessment Strategies

Purpose

These assessment strategies provide students with multiple ways to demonstrate what they have learned about themselves, career and postsecondary possibilities, and the process of preparing for future opportunities. Assessments emphasize application, research, reflection, decision-making, and communication rather than recall. Together, they provide evidence that students can explore career possibilities, connect those possibilities to their own interests and strengths, engage with authentic career experiences, and make informed decisions about future pathways.

B.1
HS.HECPS

Career Exploration Project

Student Assignment

Throughout this unit, you have explored your interests, strengths, values, and possible career pathways. Now it is time to put everything together by researching one career that interests you and presenting your findings to the class.

Create an 8–10 slide presentation using Google Slides, PowerPoint, Canva, or another approved presentation program. Research a career using reliable sources and:

- Explain the education and training required.
- Describe job responsibilities, salary, and employment outlook.
- Connect your personal interests, strengths, and values to the career.
- Explain whether the career currently seems like a good fit for you and why.
- Reflect on your future education and career goals.
- Present your findings clearly using effective speaking and presentation skills.

This project is not about choosing the career you will have forever. It is an opportunity to explore possibilities and practice research, communication, reflection, and decision-making.

What Mastery Looks Like

Use a rubric that considers whether the student:

- Completes accurate career research using reliable

sources.
- Includes the required career information with accurate details.
- Makes clear connections between the career and their personal interests, strengths, values, and goals.
- Demonstrates thoughtful reflection about career fit and future possibilities.
- Organizes information effectively and uses appropriate visuals.
- Communicates clearly with good pacing and limited reliance on notes when presenting.

Implementation Notes

This project brings together career research, self-reflection, and future planning into one comprehensive presentation. It can also be extended into the student-led Career Fair described in the Extension and Career-Connected Learning Strategies, providing students with an authentic audience for their work.

B.2
HS.HECPS

My Pathway Evidence Portfolio

Assessment Strategy

Personal Career and Pathway Reflection

Student Assignment

Students revisit evidence they created throughout the unit, including their My Journey Map, pathway exploration, career research, competency self-assessment, and other relevant lesson activities.

Using evidence from at least three unit activities, students respond to three questions:

- What have I learned about myself? Identify interests, strengths, values, skills, or priorities that may influence future decisions.
- What possibilities fit what I know about myself right now? Identify at least two careers, industries, or postsecondary pathways that could align with those characteristics and explain why.
- What do I want to explore next? Identify one question, experience, person, course, or opportunity that could help you learn more before making future decisions.

Students may complete the assessment as a written reflection, digital portfolio, one-page visual, or brief recorded reflection.

What Mastery Looks Like/How to Measure:

Students demonstrate mastery when they:

- Identify specific personal interests, strengths, values, skills, or priorities.
- Use evidence from multiple unit experiences rather than relying on general statements.
- Connect personal characteristics to realistic career or postsecondary possibilities.
- Explain the reasoning behind those connections.
- Recognize that interests and career plans can evolve over time.
- Identify a meaningful next step for continued exploration.

Implementation Notes

This assessment intentionally builds from Lessons 1–3 and can incorporate evidence from later lessons. Students should be allowed to use the work they have already completed rather than recreating it. The goal is to assess whether students can synthesize what they have learned about themselves and use that information to guide future exploration.

B.3
HS.HECPS

Career-Connected Experience Reflection

Assessment Strategy

Experience-to-Opportunity Analysis

Student Assignment

Students select one authentic career-connected experience from the unit. This might include a guest

speaker, mock interview, community involvement project, industry-specific project, internship/mentorship/job shadow experience, career fair, or another approved experience.

Students reflect on the experience by addressing:

- What did you learn about this career, industry, workplace, or community opportunity?
- What education, training, skills, or competencies did you observe?
- What surprised you or challenged something you previously believed?
- What did you notice about how professionals communicate, work with others, solve problems, or respond to challenges?
- Did the experience make you more or less interested in this career or pathway? Why?
- What is one opportunity you could pursue next to learn more?

Students conclude by identifying a concrete next step, such as contacting a professional, researching a training program, seeking a job shadow, exploring an internship, attending another career event, or investigating a related career.

What Mastery Looks Like

Students demonstrate mastery when they:

- Describe what they learned from an authentic career-connected experience.
- Identify specific career expectations, skills, competencies, education, training, or workplace practices they observed.
- Make meaningful connections between the experience and their own career exploration.
- Reflect on whether the experience changed or strengthened their thinking.
- Identify a realistic next opportunity for continued career exploration.

Implementation Notes

This assessment can follow several experiences already included in the unit and does not require an additional standalone activity. It can be completed after **Lesson 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9**, allowing educators to select the experience most appropriate to their local context. If students participate in multiple career-connected experiences, the same reflection structure can be reused so students can compare what they learn across experiences. they are “on deck.”

Career Exploration & Preparation

Supplemental Resources

Activities

Building a Career Pathway
https://oregongoestocollege.org/resources/building-career-pathway

Career 20 Questions
https://oregongoestocollege.org/resources/career-20-questions

Career Charades
https://oregongoestocollege.org/resources/career-charades

Career Journey Interview Exchange
https://oregongoestocollege.org/resources/career-journey-interview-exchange

Name that Job
https://oregongoestocollege.org/resources/name-job

Posters

ABCs of Careers
https://oregongoestocollege.org/resources/abcs-careers-posters

Career Pathways
https://oregongoestocollege.org/resources/career-pathways-poster

Toolkits

Career and College Day
https://oregongoestocollege.org/toolkits/career-day

Career Exploration
https://oregongoestocollege.org/toolkits/career-exploration

Other

101 Careers
https://oregongoestocollege.org/resources/101-careers