

LEARNING EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

JA It's My Future[®]

■ Work and Career Readiness

JA It's My Future offers middle school students practical information to help prepare them for the working world. Students will develop the personal-branding and job-hunting skills needed to earn a job. Upon completing the learning experience, students will be able to research potential careers, create a basic resume, recognize appropriate behavior for a job interview, and differentiate between soft and technical skills. The learning experience consists of six 45-minute sessions led by a volunteer, with Additional Opportunities offered throughout.



CURRICULUM OUTLINE

Session	Overview	Objectives	Activities
My Brand	Students learn that they have their own personal brand and that the brand they build today will reflect on them in the future. They examine well-known logos to learn how individuals and companies create their brands and build their reputations. They assess their personal characteristics to define their own brands and then develop logos to represent themselves.	Describe the elements of a brand. Recognize the ability of personal branding to build a positive reputation for their personal life, as well as for their future career. Design a logo that expresses their personal brand.	Warm-Up: Watch the video, <i>We're Short a Guy</i> . Define key terms. Activity 1: Examine logos and taglines. Discuss having a personal brand. Activity 2: Complete the personal brand handout. Design a logo (on paper or online) to represent students' personal brand and share it with the class. Wrap-Up: Review the session's concepts and key terms.

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Career Paths, Clusters	Students are introduced to the 16 career clusters and the pathways through them. They take a career interest survey and learn about potential jobs within their preferred clusters. They share job information with other members of the class and discuss the importance of all jobs within a community.	Define careers clusters. Identify jobs in specific career clusters to explore further. Recognize the interconnectivity and value of all types of jobs.	Warm-Up: Define key terms and learn about the 16 career clusters. Activity 1: Take the Career Clusters Interests Survey (on paper or online) and explore the results. Share with their peers in a Walk and Talk exercise. Wrap-up: Review the session's concepts and key terms.
High Growth Careers	Students learn about the importance of being aware of which fields are growing and which are declining when making decisions about their own careers. They play a game that introduces information about high-growth occupations.	Identify specific careers that are forecast to have high-growth rates. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider a variety of factors when selecting a career. 	Warm-Up: Define key terms. Play a sorting game in which students examine careers and sort them into two categories: growing or declining. Activity: Play the Career Matchup game in which students learn about careers, education requirements, and job growth potential. Wrap-up: Review the session's concepts and key terms.
Career Mapping	Students see how early experiences can build transferable skills that contribute to future job success. They look at the lives of celebrities, focusing on the life experiences that led to their success. They learn about career maps by examining a sample and then create their own.	Identify jobs in specific career clusters that they would like to explore further. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan significant milestones they need to reach to earn a particular job. 	Warm-Up: Play Who Am I? to guess a celebrity and the experiences he or she had on the way to his or her career destination. Discuss the celebrities in the game to identify the skills and experiences that helped shape each celebrity's future career. Activity: Learn about a career map and examine a sample. Complete the personal career map handout and share it with the class. Wrap-Up: Review the session's concepts and key terms.

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On the Hunt	Students are introduced to the basics of looking, applying, and interviewing for a job. They play a game in which they must identify two truths and a myth about the job search process. They learn the fundamentals of creating a resume and engage in a simulation in which they identify appropriate skills for various jobs and decide on where to highlight those skills on a resume.	<p>Recognize basic job-hunting techniques, including looking for a job, applying, interviewing, and listing references.</p> <p>Recognize the importance of personal presentation and making a good impression, on paper and in person.</p> <p>Recognize the basic construction of a resume and the skills that should be highlighted on it.</p>	<p>Warm-Up: Learn about the job-hunting process and define key terms. Play Two Truths and a Myth to underscore facts about job hunting.</p> <p>Activity: Watch a video to learn five important resume tips. Through a resume builder, learn about the proper format for a resume and select the correct skills and experiences to apply for a specified position.</p> <p>Learn interviewing tips and watch a video that focuses on the soft skills enthusiasm and attitude.</p> <p>Wrap-Up: Review the session's concepts and key terms.</p>
Soft Skills	Students learn about the differences between technical and soft skills and why both are essential for getting and keeping a job. Students also complete a soft skills self-evaluation to determine which skills they already have and which they can work toward gaining. Finally, they role-play situations that require strong soft skills.	<p>Define and differentiate between technical skills and soft skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify specific soft skills they already possess and those they need to improve on. 	<p>Warm-Up: Watch a video about the soft skill communication and discuss as a class. Define key terms. Play a sorting game to sort skills into two categories: soft skills and technical skills.</p> <p>Activity: Complete the Soft Skills Self-Evaluation handout. In groups, students role-play some of the soft skills using a Role-Play Scenario card.</p> <p>Wrap-Up: Review the program's concepts and key terms.</p>

Need additional resources? Visit <https://connect.ja.org/>, JA Connect Resource Guide <https://data.ja.org/s/eBUAAA>, and <https://career.ja.org/>