

On Track

YOUR CAREER DISCOVERY GUIDE

2007 EDITION Corresponding Lesson Plans

October 2006

Dear Educator,

Most of the supplemental material contained here is designed to be flexible enough to fit the needs and time criteria of just about any classroom, regardless of whether you teach one major subject, a cluster of subjects, all subjects, or supervise an after-school program. You may also use these plans to kick-off or plan entire events!

Some of the activities include more specific details, such as advance preparation, lesson goals, or the kinds of subjects/skills that will be used; other lesson plans contain one simple, overall objective. These are noticeably indicated in either blue or purple text. Additional suggestions, like discussion questions or guest speaker ideas, simply serve to provide an alternative route to the same objective. Teaching tips are included to underscore specifics that are relative to this age group. As the teacher, you can overlap, delete, edit, improvise, or follow the directions as they are written—you know your students, and know what will work best with them.

As previously stated, we took time constraints into consideration—some of the activity suggestions take a matter of minutes while others could be extended over a period of time. Again, the amount of time spent on many of the lesson plans can be adjusted to fit your schedule accordingly.

Finally, we have provided modifications to many of our suggestions to compensate for varying maturity levels, classroom sizes, available resources, and interests.

We hope we have provided enough material to give you a firm foundation, but enough “wiggle room” to customize the lessons in a way that will reach your students.

Sincerely,

The staff at *On Track*

Pages 2–3: “You Can Get Paid to Talk!”

Group activity: Host your own talk show.

Subjects encompassed: Speech, Language Arts, Creative Writing, Reading, History

Objective: Students will understand the “organics” of interviewing/responding beyond the “mechanics” of interviewing/responding

Goals:

- Learn basic interviewing techniques and etiquette
- Craft a conversation and improvise/redirect conversation
- Develop investigative skills that reach beyond the obvious
- Communicate observations effectively enough that the target audience understands and has a true account

Advance preparation: Predetermine the type of people/personalities for your students to research and “assume”—historical figures, celebrities, artists, musicians, people in the news/current events, famous authors or scientists, etc. (if you are studying a particular genre, period in history, etc., this would be a great way to combine lessons).

Also, predetermine whether you will select these individuals and have students draw their names from a hat or allow students to select their own.

Ask students, “When reading about your favorite celebrities or athletes, what kinds of things do you want to know?” Write their answers down on the board.

Then ask them, “When you are meeting a new friend, what are the sorts of things you may ask to get to know them better?”

Divide students into pairs and either allow them to select their own figures or have them draw names from a hat (see [Advance Preparation](#), above). For example, you may decide students may choose Olympic athletes from 2004, famous artists from the 17th century, “one-hit wonder” groups from the 1970s, etc.

Working in pairs, students will research both figures. If they are researching their own figure, they do so with the mindset of answering questions. As they research their partner’s figure, they need to do so with the mindset of asking questions*. Each pair will take a turn interviewing one another without saying “who” they are. The rest of the class will try and guess who is being interviewed based on the information they learn from the interview.

Modification: You could divide this project over a period of several weeks. Simply assign a new pair each week and either once or twice a week, have the pair conduct their interviews. This would also work in groups of three, possibly four, if you wanted to make it seem more like a talk show or roundtable discussion.

***Teaching tip:** When working with this age group, the amount of time allotted for research really depends on how you select the figures represented; for example, A-list

celebrities or 2005 MTV Video Music Award Winners would not take as much time for junior high students to research.

Individual activity: Common threads?

Subjects encompassed: Reading, Language Arts, Social Studies

Objective: Basic skills, talents, and passions may be used in a variety of career choices.

Goals:

- Create a link between what is accomplished in school to future career options
- Think in terms of combining various interests with potential career choices
- Work on developing basic skills that can be specialized later in a chosen field

As a class, ask students to name well-known figures in the following fields:

- Actor/actress
- Minister/preacher
- Newscaster
- Salesperson
- Politician
- Teacher
- Motivational speaker
- Radio personality

On their own paper, have students write down this list and answer the following questions:

- What characteristics do they have in common?
- How does each of these individuals differ?

Individual activity: Famous talk

Subjects encompassed: Speech, English/Literature, History

Objective: Word choice and delivery style is often as important as subject matter when making an impact with others.

Goals:

- Consider the audience and discern appropriate words that will resonate accordingly
- Develop courage to take a stand on difficult issues
- Define a famous speaker's style and how it contributed to his/her impact

Ask students to select a famous speech from history to research (use the article's sidebar as a starting point). Ask them to research not only the orator but also what was happening in the world during the time the speech was delivered (or what prompted the speaker to address a crowd on a certain subject). If possible, ask them to view the person making the speech. Have them write a paper that answers the following questions:

- Why was it important that this particular person deliver this speech (as opposed to someone else)?
- What was happening in the world/industry/politics/etc. that prompted this speech?
- To whom was he/she addressing?

- Review the text of the speech:
 - Which words jump out?
 - Are there other words this person could have used and made the same point?
 - Why do you think he/she chose to word this speech in this particular way?
 - Was it effective?
 - (If caught on tape) What kind of style is used to deliver the speech? Does it help or distract? Why?
 - (If not available to view) What sort of style do you think he/she used to deliver the speech? Are there clues within the text that would support your belief? Explain.
 - How long (approximately) was the speech? Do you think the amount of time contributed to its effectiveness? Why or why not?
- If this same speech was made today, do you believe it would resonate with a similar audience? Why or why not?

Modification: Ask each student to present his or her findings in 10 minutes or less. They may use visuals.

Group activity: Make a presentation.

Subjects encompassed: any

Objective: Develop a speaking style that strikes a balance between comfort level and effectiveness.

Goals:

- Discover a speaking style that suits one’s individual personality
- Develop skills that make public speaking less intimidating
- Measure audience and effectiveness

Divide students into groups of three. Ask them to research a topic that is relative to the subject you teach – each topic must answer a “does” question, “how” question, or a “why” question; for example, “Does a listener of heavy metal music have a greater risk of getting tinnitus?” or “Why are writing skills important to an accountant?”. As a group, they will give a presentation; each group member must have an opportunity to address the class, and encourage groups to include visuals in their presentations.

Modification: Ask groups to tackle a current social or political issue.

General activity: Guest speaker idea

Subjects encompassed: Any

Invite a career counselor (from a local college, career center or career service) to administer a personality profile/career options assessment.

For more information:

National Communication Association - A non-profit organization of researchers, educators, students, and practitioners, whose academic interests span all forms of human

communication; the oldest and largest national organization serving the academic discipline of Communication: www.natcom.org

Talent Zoo – specializes in creative career opportunities and includes articles, helps, etc.: www.talentzoo.com

“A Guide to Communications Careers” – An Alumni & Student Career Development Resource produced by the Penn State College of Communications Alumni Society, this document outlines various career options in communications and some step-by-step progressions in some of the more popular fields: www.psu.edu/dept/comm/handbook/guide.htm

Pages 4–5: “Who’s Solving the World’s Biggest Problems?”

Subject: Reading, English/Language Arts, Science

Objective: When something doesn’t make sense, trying a different approach can bring about resolution.

Goals:

- Develop problem-solving skills
- Make order out of chaos
- Discover how taking time to examine the ordinary and overlooked can often lead to something exciting

Individual activity: Funnier funnies.

Advance preparation: Purchase several copies of the Sunday newspaper and clip/laminate various frames from the comics. As best you can, try and make all of the frames from each comic strip about the same size.

Mix up the comic strip frames and put them on a table, facedown. Each student selects 7–10 frames (they can decide the exact number) with which to work. Have students pass one of their frames to the person on their right. Then allow students to select a frame from the collection of the student to their left. Have students try and create a sequenced story from their frames. After about 5–7 minutes, ask students, “Who needs to trade a frame or delete a frame from their story?” Students must then negotiate with each other, but can only add/eliminate one frame from their collection. Ask each student to read his comic strip.

Modification: Pass out the frames yourself, putting them facedown on each student’s desk. On the first pass, students are not allowed to see which card they will pass. Allow them to turn over two frames. On the second pass, they are allowed to choose from those two. Proceed with the rest of the activity as written.

Individual activity: Invention intentions.

As a class, read the “Meet Ryan Landis” section on page 5. Ask each student to think about one household object they would like to see improved and write a plan for how they would improve it (depending on your timeframe, you may also ask students to bring their objects into class to examine and observe as they write).

Here, you may take two courses of action:

1. Have each student read aloud his idea. As a class, determine the best idea and try to develop a prototype. Depending on the class size, you may want to consider selecting the best 3–4 ideas and dividing the class into groups—but make sure the person who came up with the ideas is assigned to its respective group.
2. Ask each student to develop a prototype of his idea.

Modification: If you choose option #2, consider having an invention showcase for other classes to visit and observe.

Individual activity: Look to the past to solve the future.

Subjects encompassed: History, science, math, geography

Develop a list of various problems that were solved by engineers, large and small: cross-country travel, mail/package delivery, seatbelts in automobiles, etc. Ask each student to research the history of the problem, previous attempts that were made to solve the problem, and what ultimately proved successful.

Next, ask them to pick a place (anywhere in the world) and identify a problem that exists in that particular area. Based on what they researched about past problems that were solved, how would they go about solving this particular, current problem?

Prepare to write/discuss their findings.

Teaching tip: Encourage students to locate those problems that were solved by female or other minority engineers.

Group activity: Brain teasers.

Using some of the web links listed at the end of this lesson plan, secure various types of brainteasers—lateral, hieroglyphics, mathematical, rebus, etc. Divide the class into groups of 3–4. Post each teaser, one at a time, and allow the groups a few minutes to solve each one.

Teaching tip: Sudoku is very popular among students right now! Purchase some Sudoku puzzles at your local dollar store and keep plenty on hand for students' free time or to fill a Friday afternoon.

For more information:

Brain Teasers (Houghton Mifflin): <http://www.eduplace.com/math/brain/>

Teachers and Families.com: <http://www.teachersandfamilies.com/open/puzzle/>

National Society of Professional Engineers: www.nspe.org

Shell Oil: www.shell.com/careers

Sudoku.com: www.sudoku.com

Page 6: “Spotlight on Teens”

Subjects encompassed: Reading, Social Studies

Objective: Learn from the past, look toward the future, but make a difference in the present.

Goals:

- Discover a bigger world and bigger purposes.
- Initiate some sort of change in your immediate world.
- Look for needs and fulfill them

Individual or group activity: Discussion questions.

After reading the article on page 6, answer the following questions:

- What “hold-over” item from David’s childhood served as the symbol/instrument to this project?
- Do you have an old toy or gadget from your childhood that sparks a community service idea?
- Describe your idea.
- How did Jeanine combine her passion for academics with her passion to help others?
- What is neuroscience? Does this seem to complement or contradict what we know about Jeanine? Why?
- Do you have two interests that you wish you could combine? What are they, and how would you do it?

Group activity: Make a difference right now.

Post the “Six Ways to Make a Difference” located on page 6. As a class, determine three or four areas within your school that could use improvement.

Divide the class to have the same number of groups as areas on your list. Assign each “task force” one of the areas from the list. Since the problem has been identified (ex. “muddy patches on front lawn,”), ask each group to list 3–4 potential solutions (ex., plant flowers, install benches, build an ornamental rock garden, etc.). Each group will select two of their predetermined solutions and draft their approaches to achieve them (Step #5, “Develop a Plan”).

Ask each group to share their strategies. As a class, vote on the better plan for each group.

Modification: If you have more time or plan to use a few minutes of class time spanning several days, have students develop their lists of 3–4 potential solutions, but not predetermine two. Instead, ask each group to identify two individuals with whom they need to discuss the issue they’re trying to resolve—make sure you review their ideas, as you may know other “go-to” persons within your school who could help students more.

Allow students ten minutes to go to those individuals and schedule an appointment with them within the next three days (an appointment—rather than impromptu conversation—is critical, because if they need to talk to other faculty members, their schedules may not

correspond with yours. Others, such as administrators or staff, may have time right then and there to discuss the matter). These meetings should not last longer than 30 minutes.

Depending on your subject and timeline, you may also have them conduct additional research.

Once students review their collected data, they are to determine and develop only two of their solutions and create the most plausible courses of action for each.

Depending on what is presented, you may consider passing one or two of these along to the appropriate decision-makers.

For more information:

Career Planning at About.com - Various articles, contact information, personality profiles, and step-by-step procedures: <http://careerplanning.about>

Youth Venture- an organization that helps young people age 12–20 create, launch, and lead sustainable, community-benefiting clubs, businesses, and organizations:
www.youthventure.org

Pages 7–10: “The Dynamic Duo”

Individual or group activity: Q&A/Discussion

Objective: Determine how to turn facts into applicable values, ethics, and behavior decisions.

Subjects encompassed: Any

Goals:

- Reading comprehension
- Retain facts that can be applied to work and life
- Think about hobbies or sports that could develop into careers and areas of service

Use the following questions to initiate discussion (or, as an individual activity, will spark a different direction of thought for the individual student) that builds critical thinking skills:

1. What does a quarterback do?
2. What is the responsibility of the receiver?
3. Name two of Peyton Manning’s accomplishments.
4. Name two of Marvin Harrison’s charities/causes.
5. Why is it important that these two work well together?
6. What are some similarities/differences between these two?
7. Do you think it was important to both men that they finished college? Why or why not?
8. In order to work well as a team, is it necessary for all teammates to be friends? Why or why not?

Group activity: Team-building*

Subjects encompassed: Mathematics, Science, Social Studies

Objective: Success usually requires more than one person.

Goals:

- Learn how to problem-solve with a partner
- Work with another person to accomplish a specific task
- Value the input of a partner

Advance preparation: Purchase some foam/soft footballs or miniature footballs from a dollar store. If possible, get each one in a different color.

Assign students in pairs—do not let them select their own partners. Give each pair their own football (if multiple colors were not possible, give each the opportunity to personalize their game ball). With one person as the quarterback and the other the receiver, have each pair pass their ball ten times. Have the pair calculate the percentage of completed passes. Then, ask each pair to switch roles, pass the ball again ten times, and calculate the percentage of completed passes. See if there was any improvement the second time around.

Modification: Using a mathematical formula for probability, ask each team/pair to determine the probability of completed passes, and then complete the exercise as written above. See how close they come to predicting their outcomes.

***Teaching tip:** this exercise works especially great in math classes.

Group activity: Teamwork.

Subjects encompassed: Mathematics, Science, Social Studies

Objective: Create a functional team dynamic.

Goals:

- Look for strengths in each person
- Encourage and balance one another's weaknesses
- Strategize as a team, but listen to your leader
- Perform your assigned task at your best ability

Advance preparation: Purchase 4–5 very small Lego® sets, all the same. Put each one in an individual paper bag and staple shut.

Divide students into teams—do not distribute the Legos yet. Ask each team to identify their members' strengths and each team member identify his/her own weaknesses*.

Explain to the class, “Now that you have a better idea of what each person brings to the table, I have a timed task for you that requires assembly. Now, based on your team's strengths and weaknesses and not knowing exactly what the task is, see if you can determine which roles each teammate needs to play—each person needs a role, even if more than one person has the same role. For example, who will be your leader, who will be your problem-solver, who will carry out the actual assignment, who will assist whom, etc. Maybe some teammates will have dual roles.” Give students 5–8 minutes to make decisions.

Then say, “Each task is inside these paper bags. You are not to open them until I say ‘go.’” Distribute bags and then time students with a stopwatch.

Allow the winning team five minutes or so to explain their winning strategy.

Modifications: Purchase different Lego sets and round-robin them, timing each one. The team who assembles the most sets explains their winning strategy. Another idea: Give each team 30 seconds with each set; when time is called, each team—regardless of where they are in the assembly process—must pass the set to the next. Once each team has had at least one turn with each set, stop and see how far along the sets were built.

***Teaching tip:** It is *very* important that other students identify an individual's strengths, but *equally important* that the individual student, not the other teammates, identify his own weaknesses. By hearing positive observations from their peers, students are

encouraged; identifying their own areas that may need strengthening is a respectful way for students to create self-awareness.

For more information, visit:

Indianapolis Colts, official site: www.colts.com

Teamworkonline.com - Portal to sports jobs, employment, careers and internships with the NBA, NHL, NFL, PGA, MLB, MLS, NASCAR, Houston Texans, MLB, STAPLES Center, and includes various helps: www.teamworkonline.com

The Leader's Institute – Includes free team-building tips: www.leadersinstitute.com

Pages 11–15: “Jobs for the 21st Century”

Individual and group activity: Who’d have thought?

Subjects encompassed: Any

Objective: Personality is just as important to consider when looking at career options as skill, talent, interest, and education levels.

Goals:

- Learn how to assess one’s own personality
- Understand that most people cannot be categorized in terms of one personality
- Clarify that life experience can alter our personalities

Advance preparation: Pass out enough dictionaries so that every two or three students has at least one.

Write down the following words on the board, allowing plenty of space between each one, and ask students to define them—they may use a dictionary for assistance, but they need to come up with their own definitions:

- Practical
- Logical
- Artistic
- Social
- Administrative
- Conservative

Allow students to come up with examples, too, of what they mean to clarify their definitions.

Then ask students, “These words may also be used to describe a person’s personality. Based on these definitions, can you think of any jobs or careers that would be appropriate for each of these?”

Now ask students to complete the personality test located on page 11 and read carefully the results section at the bottom of the page.

Have each student locate the section on the following pages that best describes their dominant personality and have them read about some of the career options listed there. Ask them to choose one that *either* appeals to them *or* one they have never heard of, and have them research their choice. Assign students a half-page to 2/3-page report on this particular job or career.

Individual activity: Create a “resume” and “apply” for a job

Subjects encompassed: Reading, Social Studies, Language Arts

Objective: Students begin to recognize details and differences that can give them the edge in the job market.

Goals:

- Learn the early version of a resume - a personal data sheet
- Recognize what they could contribute to the workplace
- Organize work history, skills, and strengths into a time-saving, concise document
- Complete a clean and neat job application properly

Advance preparation: Find resume examples that can be printed from the Internet. Pick up various job applications around the area and make a list of the most common information request on each one.

Show and discuss resume and job application examples.

Help students create a personal data sheet that could be used to apply for an after-school job or volunteer position that reflects the kinds of information on the list you made from the applications you collected. Explain how various chores at home can translate into practical skills: baby-sitting could be listed as “works well with children” or “experience in caring for young children,” for example.

Talk about references and the kinds of people who make good references (pastors, coaches, teachers, someone from the field who knows them personally, etc.).

Using the information on their personal data sheet, ask them to fill out the application—and neatness counts! Explain the importance of a clean, error-less application; suggest making a “practice” copy to complete in pencil before filling out the “real” copy in ink.

Remind them that EVERY line should have something written in it—even an “n/a” (not applicable) or strike-through to indicate that they saw the entry and did not overlook it.

Modification: Instead of (or in addition to) letting students practice filling out a local job application, conduct a lesson on taking a personal data sheet and converting it to a cover letter/resume; then ask students to select a job from monster.com and write a cover letter as if they were applying for the position. They may need to conduct additional research to learn more about the job and field in which they are “applying.”

Group activity: Career Day

Subjects encompassed: Any

Objective: Learn specific details about a variety of careers and choosing career tracks; have opportunity for one-on-one time with industry professional

Goals:

- Discover why classes, skills, and processes that seem insignificant now could weigh heavily on the future (an accountant spends a great deal of time writing, for example - most associate accountants working with numbers and nothing else)
- Learn how personality reflects on career satisfaction (i.e., just because someone is a math whiz doesn’t mean they must work with numbers - they may want to pursue ballet dancing or playing the cello).
- Develop research and oral communication skills

Work with school administrators, parents, and area professionals and sponsor either a classroom or school-wide Career Day. This may take the form of parents coming in to deliver a presentation or booths set up in an unused room for students to peruse.

Modification: Have students research career fields and/or companies that interest them and allow them to design and decorate “booths” in your classroom. Invite younger students to come and ask them questions about their “careers” or “companies.” Make sure your students dress for the part!

For more information:

Monster.com – contains articles, profiles, and job listings: www.monster.com

Encyclopedia of Associations - A wealth of information on every industry association from bee-keeping to well-diggers. Provides contact information for students to write for more (free of charge) information about various career fields:

<http://library.dialog.com/bluesheets/html/bl0114.html>

Career Builder.com – contains job listings, articles and interview tips:

www.careerbuilder.com

Page 16: “Ten Easy Steps...”

Subjects encompassed: Reading, Social Studies, Physical Education

Objective: The significance of goal-setting.

Goals:

- Cast a wide net now to set long-term goals
- Value the importance of accountability
- Learn to use time wisely

Individual activity: Research project.

Using Step #8 on page 16, ask students to clip magazine/newspaper articles or images that interest them or contain information about a personal hobby/dream/passion of theirs. Using the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* web site (see address below), have students research these areas of interests and find three related careers. Have them determine the kind of education, courses, and other pertinent data (i.e., location, travel, salary, etc.) as it relates to each.

Have students write a half-page report on their findings and answer the questions, “Do you see yourself doing something like this in 10 years? 20 years? 30 years? Why or why not?”

Group activity: Accountability.

Review the “10 Easy Steps” article as a class. Ask each student to write down a personal goal—they do not have to share it with anyone, but it could be to improve grades, make more friends, lose weight, etc. Have them sign their names to their goals and give them to you.

Divide students into pairs. Ask each pair to find ways they can “get back” 30 minutes of time between the time school dismisses and 9:00 p.m. each night. Some of their answers may include watching less television, not text messaging/talking on the phone as much, etc.* Either way, each student must find a way to bank 30 minutes of spare time and apply it to the goal they shared with you. Again, they do not have to share this goal with their partner, but they need to list how they plan to utilize the 30 minutes that they have budgeted to attain this goal (or, if the goal is long-term, take a step in the right direction). Have partners make two copies of their lists, one for themselves and one for their accountability partner.

Depending on your timeline, have each pair meet for 5–7 minutes each day for two weeks (though three weeks would be better) to discuss whether or not they made proper use of their 30 extra minutes. At the end of each “session,” pairs are supposed to help each other determine a “what can I do to get back on track/stay the course/improve my chances?” action to complete for the next day.

***Teaching tip:** In certain cases, students this age may have more than 30 minutes of free time already, or may not realize how truly busy they are. You will need to gauge each student’s response and be prepared to help when they say, “I really can’t find a way to trim down my after-school stuff,” or “I already sit at home for two hours every afternoon.

I don't need another 30 minutes of nothing." For example, if your academic star wants to improve his grades when he could benefit from more sunshine/exercise, encourage him to reconsider his original personal goal—but do not insist on it.

For more information:

Occupational Outlook Handbook (U.S. Department of Labor web site, guidance office, or library): Excellent resource, published quarterly, gives information on salary, training, prospects, and cross-referencing: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

Mindtools.com – Contains more than 100 essential life, career training and management training skills, freely available and outlined: www.mindtools.com

Mygoals.com – Another site for personal and professional goal-setting; includes tools: www.mygoals.com