Unit 1: Career Exploration

Content Area: **Business Management and Information**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **4 weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

The Career Exploration course is designed to prepare students for post-secondary success by refining the hard and soft skills demanded by the 21st century workplace. Students will learn how to effectively utilize programming to meet professional objectives. Moreover, students will learn to navigate the job search process including researching open positions, developing a resume and cover letter, interviewing with prospective employers, and composing follow up thank you letters. Emphasis is placed on refining communication skills, including speaking and listening skills, written communication, such as composing proper emails, how to self advocate, and the importance of leaving a positive digital footprint. Students will leave the course better prepared to enter the college or career setting giving them an advantage in an increasingly competitive environment.

This unit is part of the larger aforementioned course sequence and specifically focuses on career exploration where students will gain a competitive advantage by preparing for college and career tasks and refining hard and soft skills. By the end of this unit, students will be able to express their strengths and areas to improve upon during the college and career process, write a professional email, engage in a telephonic interview, engage in the application process, and formally present examples of each aspect.

Students in Career Exploration classes are supported in developing foundational skills that promote independence and success in the workplace. With individualized instruction, students engage with core business concepts and current events in ways that build confidence and real-world communication skills. The curriculum emphasizes speaking and listening development, peer collaboration, and guided exploration of career interests tailored to each student's strengths, needs, and postsecondary goals.

This course fulfills the 2.5 credits in 21st century skills coursework required by Cranford Public Schools and the state of New Jersey for graduation.

Essential Questions

Essential Questions:

- What are the skills necessary for future success in the workforce?
- How can an individual best prepare for post-secondary programs?

Enduring Understandings

Enduring Understandings:

- To gain a competitive advantage, both hard and soft skills are necessary to apply and transfer throughout college and technical programs.
- The demands of 21st Century employees are varied and require individual alignment of skills, behaviors, and interests

Students Will Know

Students will know:

- Terms, concepts and individuals (including, but not limited to): post-secondary, short term goal, long term goal, four-year institution, public and private university, tuition, bachelor's degree, master's degree, major area of study, minor area of study, personality, values, aptitude, hard skills, soft skills
- The differences and similarities of "college ready" and "career ready."
- Soft skills are interpersonal skills that an individual can apply to their future employment such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, time management, decision making and organization.
- Hard skills are job-specific tasks that require training and education for individual success such as: technical skills, computer skills, data analysis skills, marketing skills, public speaking and presentation skills, and management skills.
- There are various pathways and avenues to determine college and career readiness which includes individual interests and skills.
- Expectations of different employers or programs in terms of requirements, experience and education.
- Hard and soft skills can be transferable to different experiences to achieve success.

Students Will Be Skilled At

Students will be skilled at:

- Identifying employment and training options and their required preparation.
- Assessing personal strengths and areas to improve upon for future success.
- Creating goals and measurable steps towards achievement.
- Evaluating progress of goals to determine adaptations as needed.
- Writing a professional email during multiple phases of the college or career path.
- Preparing for and conducting in-person, online (ex: Zoom) and phone interviews.
- Organizing a presentation which summarizes information in a clear manner.
- Selecting the proper software or tool to communicate information.
- Navigating technology and programming.
- Expressing active listening and responses.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

When taking a Career Exploration course, students demonstrate differentiated proficiency according to their ability to answer the essential questions through formative and summative assessments. Many of the performance tasks below can be implemented as formative and/or summative assessments. As teachers strive for students to demonstrate proficiency, they will need to create additional or alternative assessments based on demonstration or absence of skill.

Formative Assessments:

- Do Nows/ Exit Slips
- Class Activities
- Hard and Soft Skills Scenarios

Summative Assessments:

- Email Etiquette Task
- Phone Interview Feedback
- Career Exploration Project

Alternative Assessments: Career Exploration Journal - students can engage with each objective and produce a journal reflection which includes key terms and ideas, as well as individual research.

Learning Plan

This unit plan includes but is not limited to:

Self-Reflection Tests: Students will use online tools to explore their future career path based on their responses to questions regarding their personality, learning styles, values, skills, and interests. Students will analyze this information to make an informed decision about their future.

Hard and Soft Skills Scenarios: After a vocabulary lesson regarding hard and soft skills, students will be presented with a variety of scenarios regarding different individuals and their professions. They must identify the skills, label it as “hard” or “soft” and determine if it was helpful, or how the individual can improve these skills. This activity can be scaffolded in an “I Do - We Do - You Do” approach. A self reflection exit slip or homework assignment can ask students to assess where their skills are presently.

Email Etiquette: Students will prepare to apply their skills to inquire about potential job opportunities by learning how to write a professional email. Students will engage in direct instruction regarding how to properly format an email. Then, using an exemplar and checklist, students will engage in the revision process of sample emails before creating their own.

How to Engage in a Phone Interview: If a student inquires about a job/program and is asked to interview the first step may be over the phone. Students will watch a video regarding the Dos and Don'ts of phone interviews. Then, they will be provided with a list of common phone interview questions to prepare for based on their career pathway. Finally, they will get into groups of three: an interviewer, an interviewee, and an observer to take notes and provide feedback on a fictional phone interview.

Career Exploration Project: Students will research a desired career or technical pathway based on their previous two activities and results. Through the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, students can select a career cluster and determine the skills, pathways, resources etc. needed for their role.

- Part I: Research of Requirements of Career
- Part II: Email to a business/program regarding this specific career requesting interview questions or a phone interview to engage in simulation.
- Part III: Interview and Reflection
- Part IV: Report information using selected tool

Note: Other strategies to address the learning objectives may include, but are not limited to direct instruction, self and peer review, think-pair-share activities, creating visual representations film analysis, Socratic seminars, small group discussions, simulations, jigsaw activities, gallery walks, web quests, and/or inquiry or

problem based learning projects.

Materials

The design of this course allows for the integration of a variety of instructional, supplemental, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available In addition to the materials below, the following link connects to district approved textbooks and resources utilized in this course: Core Book List.

The following are approved resources that teachers can include to further unit related objectives:

North Carolina State University Learning Style Questionnaire

DISC Personality Test

Big Five Personality Test

Occupational Outlook Handbook - US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Work Values Assessment

Scholastic: Hard and Soft Skills Activity

NextGen Personal Finance Workplace Skills Lessons

Purdue Online Writing Lab: Email Etiquette

Tufts University: Professional Email Etiquette

Indeed Student Interview Video and Tips

Any additional resources that are not included in this list will be presented to and reviewed by the supervisor before being included in lesson plans. This ensures resources are reviewed and vetted for relevance and appropriateness prior to implementation.

Standards

9.2.12.CAP.3: Investigate how continuing education contributes to one's career and personal growth

9.2.12.CAP.4: Evaluate different careers and develop various plans (e.g., costs of public, private, training schools) and timetables for achieving them, including educational/training requirements, costs, loans, and debt repayment.

9.2.12.CAP.5: Assess and modify a personal plan to support current interests and postsecondary plans.

9.2.12.CAP.6: Identify transferable skills in career choices and design alternative career plans based on those skills.

9.2.12.CAP.7: Use online resources to examine licensing, certification, and credentialing requirements at the local, state, and national levels to maintain compliance with industry requirements in areas of career interest.

9.2.12.CAP.8: Determine job entrance criteria (e.g., education credentials,

math/writing/reading comprehension tests, drug tests) used by employers in various

industry sectors.

9.3.12.BM.1 Utilize mathematical concepts, skills and problem solving to obtain necessary information for decision□making in business.

9.3.12.BM.3 Explore, develop and apply strategies for ensuring a successful business career.

9.3.12.BM□ADM.2 Access, evaluate and disseminate information for business decision making.

9.3.12.ED.1 Apply communication skills with students, parents and other groups to enhance learning and a commitment to learning.

9.3.12.ED.2 Demonstrate effective oral, written and multimedia communication in multiple formats and contexts.

9.3.12.ED.3 Use critical thinking to process educational communications, perspectives, policies and/or procedures.

9.3.12.ED.4 Evaluate and manage risks to safety, health and the environment in education and training settings.

9.3.12.ED.5 Demonstrate group collaboration skills to enhance professional education and training practice.

9.3.12.ED.8 Demonstrate ethical and legal behavior within and outside of education and training settings.

9.3.12.ED.10 Apply organizational skills and logic to enhance professional education and training practice.

9.3.12.ED.11 Demonstrate group management skills that enhance professional education and training practice.

9.3.IT.6 Describe trends in emerging and evolving computer technologies and their influence on IT practices.

9.4.12.CI.1: Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze, and use creative skills and ideas (e.g., 1.1.12prof.CR3a).

9.4.12.CI.2: Identify career pathways that highlight personal talents, skills, and abilities (e.g., 1.4.12prof.CR2b, 2.2.12.LF.8).

9.4.12.CI.3: Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement, and transition (e.g., 2.1.12.PGD.1).

9.4.12.CT.2: Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving (e.g., 1.3E.12profCR3.a).

9.4.12.CT.3: Enlist input from a variety of stakeholders (e.g., community members, experts in the field) to design a service learning activity that addresses a local or global issue (e.g., environmental justice).

9.4.12.CT.4: Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or other project and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes.

9.4.12.TL.1: Assess digital tools based on features such as accessibility options, capacities, and utility for accomplishing a specified task (e.g., W.11-12.6.).

9.4.12.TL.2: Generate data using formula-based calculations in a spreadsheet and draw conclusions about the data.

RST.9-10.4. Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to grades 9-10 texts and topics.

RST.9-10.5. Analyze the relationships among concepts in a text, including relationships among key terms (e.g., force, friction, reaction force, energy).

RST.9-10.7. Translate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., a table or chart) and translate information expressed visually or mathematically (e.g., in an equation) into words.

RST.11-12.1. Accurately cite strong and thorough evidence from the text to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to precise details for explanations or descriptions.

RST.11-12.2. Determine the central ideas, themes, or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms.

RST.11-12.3. Follow precisely a complex multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks; analyze the specific results based on explanations in the text.

RST.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to grades 11-12 texts and topics.

RST.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

RST.11-12.8. Evaluate the hypotheses, data, analysis, and conclusions in a science or technical text, verifying the data when possible and corroborating or challenging conclusions with other sources of information.

RST.11-12.9. Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.

RH.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

WHST.9-10.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

WHST.9-10.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

WHST.9-10.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

WHST.9-10.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

WHST.9-10.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

WHST.9-10.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

WHST.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

WHST.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

WHST.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

WHST.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

WHST.11-12.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task,

purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

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In accordance with New Jersey's Chapter 32 Diversity and Inclusion Law, this unit includes instructional materials that highlight and promote diversity, including: economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disabilities, and religious tolerance.

The standards in this unit reflect a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including the humanities, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship.

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

This link includes content specific accommodations and modifications for all populations:

Career Exploration Accommodations

These additional strategies are helpful when learning Career Exploration content and skills:

- Highlighter for close reading and annotation strategies
- Bolded terms in directions
- Reading texts aloud for students to assist in comprehension and analysis
- Providing opportunities for text-to-speech for written responses.
- Use visual presentations of all materials to include graphic organizers for writing.