1201

5 MINUTE CAREER ACTIVITIES

Activities to break the ice, fill down time, and get students excited to learn!

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5-Minute Activities for Learning

Objective: To reinforce, introduce, or conclude lessons on careers in the classroom. To create "teachable moments" with relevant scenarios during brief amounts of class time.

Description: 5-Minute Career Activities are quick, easy, and effective activities to fill extra minutes of class time. These short career activities can be used to introduce lessons, reinforce earlier learning, or used to conclude lessons.

CAREERS 5-MINUTE ACTIVITIES

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CAREERS 5-MINUTE ACTIVITIES

Subject: Researching Careers

Activity: Volunteer Options

Directions: Ask students: what are the benefits of volunteering in a career area you are interested in? From the employer perspective, what are the benefits of having volunteers on staff? What volunteer work have you done? What volunteer opportunities have you seen advertised? What places would you like to have a volunteer experience at?

Subject: Researching Careers

Activity: Likes and Career Options

Directions: Have students compile a list of their likes, hobbies, skills, and things they enjoy doing in one column. In a second column, list job options related to these likes. Ask students: should you make career decisions based on your likes, hobbies and skills? How important would you rank liking your career in the decision making process of choosing a career?

Subject: Researching Careers

Activity: Career Plan Draft

Directions: Tell students a career plan helps you determine your skills and interests, and what career options you might have. It usually compares two careers. Some career plans also have you look at current job openings in those fields to see what is available, where and what the requirements are. Have students write a draft of the questions that they think should be included in a career plan.

Subject: Researching Careers

Activity: Job Skills

Directions: Tell students when you consider different careers there are certain skills that are needed by many careers. These are called transferrable skills. Have students make a list of the skills that are needed in most jobs. Beside each skill, students should rank their ability to perform these skills. #1 = Poor, # 5 = Excellent.

Subject: Researching Careers

Activity: Job Benefits

Directions: Benefits provided by employers can make a job more attractive for some people, since it means an employee has fewer out-of-pocket expenses. The three most common employee benefits listed by the U. S. Department of Labor are paid leave (vacation, holidays, or sick leave), health insurance, and retirement plans. List which of these perks you would want to have and what you think their approximate value would be. Discuss the following questions: How much more would benefits add to your salary? Would you expect all or part of your insurance to be paid?

Subject: Deciding on a Career

Activity: Advice From Others

Directions: Ask students: what career do your parents think you should pursue? What do your grandparents think would be a good career for you? If you talked to a sibling or a best friend, what career do they see you in? Are any of the three the same? How do you feel about the options they suggested?

Subject: Deciding on a Career

Activity: Education IQ

Directions: When people attend school, they receive recognition when they graduate. The awards they receive recognize their educational accomplishment level and hard work. Match the words and abbreviations by drawing a line between an abbreviation in Column A and its corresponding description in Column B. Discuss the education required and job potential for each.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
M. S.	General Educational Development
A. A.	Bachelor of Arts
Ph. D.	Master of Arts
B. S.	Master of Science
Diploma	Doctor of Philosophy
Ed. D.	High school graduate or for short-term, customized training
M. A.	Bachelor of Science
G. E. D.	Doctor of Education
B. A.	Associate of Arts

Subject: Deciding on a Career

Activity: Careers vs. Jobs

Directions: Careers and jobs both provide an income, but there are some significant differences in them, too. Make a Venn diagram showing areas that they have in common and areas that are unique to careers and jobs. Discuss.

Subject: Deciding on a Career

Activity: Preferences

Directions: One way to determine which jobs would be best for you is to decide whether you like working with *data, people,* or *things*. Write down your first preference, then your second, then your third. Contemplate how you would feel if you were working in a job involving your first preference. Contrast this feeling with how you would feel if you were working in a job involving your second or third preference. Would you be flexible enough to work outside your first preference? Or would you need to stay within your first preference? What is the potential of becoming more flexible in your choices?

Subject: Deciding on a Career

Activity: Role Models

Directions: Role models are often influential in the choosing of a career. Think of a person you admire for what they do. If this is a person who is a family member or friend, you may wish to interview them; if this is a famous person or someone in the news, you could look up their biography online. Find out how they became interested in their career or what factors led to their choosing it.

Did they have natural talent in a particular area? Did they get an education in a certain field? Did they follow in a parent's footsteps? Did they have a belief or a value that motivated them to pursue a certain path? Why do you think this person's life is a role model for you? Why do you admire them?

Subject: Finding a Job

Activity: Job Sources

Directions: Have students list places or sources where they can learn about job openings. Students should be able to come up with at least 10 or more sources. After 4 minutes, have them share with a partner and see if they can each build their own list for the last minute.

Subject: Finding a Job

Activity: Researching Jobs in Newspaper Ads

Directions: Newspaper ads provide a variety of information, but not always the same information. Look at the job advertisement section of a newspaper and analyze the ads for the following:

- Jobs that require experience
- Jobs that prefer experience
- Jobs that are entry level
- Ads that list job benefits
- Jobs that require a phone call for more information
- Jobs that require submission of a resumé
- Jobs listed by employment agencies
- Jobs that require a diploma or degree

Subject: Finding a Job

Activity: Being a Professional

Directions: Transitioning from student life into a professional career can be a challenge. Student life is often less formal and more relaxed than the workplace and the expectations on a job can be different. On a piece of paper, make three columns. Entitle one column "Expectations" and list these words below it: Dress Code, Language, Relationships, Attitude, Celebrations, Etiquette.

At the top of the other two columns write "Student" and "Employee," and write under each column how the expectations might differ for a student and an employee. For example, how does a student dress for school compared to how an employee might dress for the job? Discuss with a partner *why* these expectations might be different.

Subject: Finding a Job

Activity: Online Job Sources

Directions: As a class, summarize what students know about searching for a job with online resources. What are the popular job internet search sites? How do you use them to find a job? List the search options. Write tips for someone who has never used an online job search engine before.

Subject: Finding a Job

Activity: Networking

Directions: Ask your students what is networking as it relates to finding a job? Have them list their networking sources. Who can they talk to? Consider the networking sources within the school, the networking sources within friends and the networking sources with those that their parents know. In addition, students may already have a job and can use that for additional options. Have students list the name of a person they could potentially network with and what connections they might have.

Subject: Earning Potential

Activity: What Do Hourly Wages Mean?

Directions: Put this chart on the board:

Hourly Wages	Weekly Income	Monthly Income	Taxes (-.28%)	Yearly Net Income (x12)
Minimum				
$10.00				
$15.00				
$20.00				

Have students calculate the amounts for the rest of the columns. Ask students: what did you learn about wages? How much an hour per year is a good salary? Could you move out and support yourself on these amounts?

Subject: Earning Potential

Activity: Does Education Change How Much You Earn?

Directions: Ask students: what is your earning potential based on the education you are willing to work for?

Earning Potential Based on Education	
High School	$37,584
Some College	$43,554
Associate Degree	$46,896
Bachelor's Degree	$66,689
Master's Degree	$79,628
Doctoral Degree	$132,817

What is the number of years each degree takes to earn? How do students analyze this data?

*Information from: * U.S. Census Bureau. Data in chart represents the mean earnings for both sexes and all races who worked full-time and year-round, according to the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey 2008 (Annual Social and Economic Supplement).*

Subject: Earning Potential

Activity: Learning Never Stops

Directions: Ask students to respond to the following questions: How many of you think you stop with your education once you graduate from high school? What does it mean "learning never stops"? How has technology changed the skills we need today to find jobs?

Subject: Earning Potential

Activity: Monthly Bills

Directions: As a class, discuss the following question: how much will it cost to move out and pay your bills on your own for one month? Have students make a chart with the items that they would have to pay for on their own and assign a dollar amount to them. What is the total? Compare this to what you say is the average for the monthly costs in your area. How much do students have to earn per hour to afford these expenses?

Subject: Resumé Writing

Activity: Online Resumés

Directions: Many companies now recruit employees online and expect to receive resumés online from potential applicants. Why? This shows you are computer-savvy! All of the fancy fonts, special formatting, and special paper used in a paper resumé often won't translate when sent online, so how will you make *your* resumé stand out? The first step is to find out ways to format properly when posting online. Find the definitions for the following formats for posting a resumé to the Internet:

- Scannable resumé
- E-mail resumé
- Plain text version or ASCII
- HTML for posting into a website

Subject: Resumé Writing

Activity: Purpose

Directions: Have students explain the purpose of a resumé. Ask them how is it used in the job seeking process? How is a resumé like writing an advertisement? How is it like a marketing tool? What might be the disadvantages of not learning about a resumé until after you graduate from high school? Why must one plan for their resumé?

Subject: Resumé Writing

Activity: Categories

Directions: As a class, come up with a list of options for the categories you would put information on your resumé? Make a list of categories, then re-organize them according to how they would be seen on the resumé.

Subject: Resumé Writing

Activity: Career Objective

Directions: Tell students that when you put an objective on your resumé, it must be clearly defined. An objective should be clear as to what your career goals are. Focus on how you would benefit the employer. Keep it concise and targeted. Here is an example: "Dedicated Computer and Information Science graduate pursuing a help desk-support position." Write 2 or 3 versions of their career objective.

Subject: Resumé Writing

Activity: Category Hints and Tips

Directions: As a class make a list of the hints, tips or the do's and don'ts when you write each of these categories on your resumé:

- Contact information
- Education
- Work Experience
- Skills and/or Activities

Subject: Resumé Writing

Activity: The Overall Look

Directions: Ask students the following questions about resumé writing:

1. What is the difference between the white space and the typed space on your resumé?
2. Do you use complete sentences on a resumé? Why or why not?
3. Do you use the word "I" on a resumé?
4. What type of font and font size should you use?
5. How many pages should your resumé be?
6. How long will a potential employer look at your resumé?

1. White space gives relief to the resumé reader's eye.
2. Resumés should have short, crisp statements and do not necessarily need to be complete sentences; you can frequently leave out the articles a, an, and the. You can also use a bulleted list.
3. It's assumed in a resumé that you are talking about yourself unless otherwise stated so it really isn't necessary and just takes up extra space. But perhaps more importantly, if you start using "I" it will get very repetitive.
4. 12 pt font should be used with resumés, simple clean font like Arial or Helvetica.
5. The length of your resumé will vary based on your experience. If you're a new graduate, or you have less experience, keep your resumé limited to one page. If you're a seasoned employee in the work force, it's OK to have your resumé a little longer.
6. Potential employers look at your resumé approx. 1 minute.

Subject: Cover Letters

Activity: Why? What?

Directions: With a partner, have students discuss the following questions: Why do you need to know how to write a cover letter? How is it used? What do you know about writing a cover letter? What would you like to learn about cover letter writing?

Subject: Cover Letters

Activity: First Paragraph

Directions: Tell students a job was posted in your high school career services office. You are applying for a part time job at a local grocery store, at a fast food restaurant or at the movie theatre. The first paragraph of a cover letter should explain what position you are applying for and how you heard about the job. It should then tell why you are interested in this position or the company. Have students write the first paragraph of a cover letter for one of the three part time jobs listed.

Subject: Cover Letters

Activity: Second Paragraph

Directions: Using the same job from the previous activity, have students continue writing the second paragraph. Here you explain "why you are qualified." Tell students to highlight some of their most relevant experiences and qualities. Choose 2-3 specific experiences or accomplishments to write about. Giving strong examples of why you are qualified is important.

Subject: Cover Letters

Activity: Closing Paragraph

Directions: Building on the previous two activities, have students write the closing paragraph. This part of the cover letter is short – about 4 sentences. Students should have a summary sentence, refer to the enclosed resumé, and thank them for their time. Students might also include how they will follow up with them.

Subject: Job Interviews

Activity: Writing a "Thank You" Note

Directions: Sending a "thank you" after an interview can boost your chances to get a job, according to Robert Half International. Which of the following is the best way to send a "thank you" to an employer?

- Send a text message from your cell phone
- Send a formal letter or note
- Send an e-mail
- Send an e-mail within 24 hours of interview, then follow up with a letter

(Correct answer: D – The e-mail tells the employer you are efficient, the letter shows you are a professional.)

Now, practice writing a thank you letter to follow up on an interview.

Subject: Job Interviews

Activity: Preparation is Key

Directions: Ask students what is the purpose of the job interview from the employer's standpoint and from you, the potential employee? How do you prepare for a job interview? Have them write down everything they know about the interview process and what they should do to prepare.

Subject: Job Interviews

Activity: Research the Company

Directions: Ask students what will you learn from going online to a potential employer's web site? During an interview, what kinds of questions would be appropriate to ask about the company? You should always have some questions prepared to ask them when they ask you "Do you have any questions?" Have students write some sample questions they could ask during a job interview.

Subject: Job Interviews

Activity: Grooming and Dress

Directions: Tell students to fold a piece of paper in half. In one column write Do's and in the other Don'ts. Have students think about how they should look for an interview? How will they make a good first impression from head to toe? Write down as many items in each column about grooming and dressing for the job interview.

Subject: Job Interviews

Activity: The Actual Interview

Directions: As a class, discuss the following questions: What time should you arrive for the interview if it is scheduled for 4 p.m.? How will you know where you are going? What do you take along to the interview? How do you greet the people once you arrive at the interview site? What manners should you display during the interview?

Subject: Job Interviews

Activity: Phone Interviews

Directions: Ask students why do employers often conduct a phone interview first? What are the benefits to the employer? If you are having a phone interview, what tips should you follow? Have students make a list to summarize what they have learned.

Subject: Job Interviews

Activity: Predict Job Interview Questions

Directions: Have students work with a partner and come up with a dozen interview questions that they think would most likely be asked. Ask students to put a star by the questions they would ask if they were the employer.

Subject: Job Interviews

Activity: Practice Questions

Directions: Give students some practice interview questions. Have them write out their answers. The answers should be at least 5 sentences long.

#1: Tell me about yourself.

#2: What are your career goals?

Subject: Job Interviews

Activity: More Practice Interview Questions

Directions: With a partner, have students try answering these interview questions. Decide if students should do this orally or write them out.

#1: Explain how you are a team player and how you demonstrate this skill.

#2: Describe and give examples of your work ethic.

Subject: Job Interviews

Activity: After the Interview

Directions: After a job interview it is important to send a follow-up thank you letter or an e-mail. Give students the task to write an e-mail thank you. It should thank them for their time, again state the position you are applying for, describe in two sentences why you are the best applicant and answer the question "What can you do for them?"

Subject: Job Interviews

Activity: Dealing with Rejection

Directions: What if you interviewed for a job, but you did not get it? What would you do? How can you learn from this experience? What is the best attitude in this circumstance? Talk to a partner and brainstorm ideas, then write a paragraph about the ideas you have.

Subject: Consumer Management Careers

Activity: What Are They?

Directions: Tell students to write the word "consumer management" vertically down a piece of paper. Have them use the beginning of each letter to write a sentence about careers in consumer management. Some hints include: customer service, administration, service jobs, financial institutions, entrepreneurs, managers, etc.

Subject: Consumer Management Careers

Activity: Skills of an Entrepreneur

Directions: In small groups have students discuss the following questions: Have you thought about owning your own business? What would it be? Do you know anyone who owns their own business? What do you think the skills are that are important in this career area? Make a list.

Subject: Consumer Management Careers

Activity: Business Plans

Directions: Tell students to imagine they are an entrepreneur and have to write a business plan. It will describe the product or service that you provide, how you will build a customer base, the types of advertising you will do, the number of employees you will have and more. Have students start a rough draft of a business plan for their own company.

Subject: My Career

Activity: Success or Failure Cycles

Directions: Draw two circles. On the inside of one circle, write "success" and the other, "failure." At the top of the success circle, write "Goals" and at the top of the failure circle, write "No Goals." Brainstorm what would come next in each cycle. If you set a goal, what are the chances of accomplishing it? By contrast, if you don't set a goal, what will you accomplish?

Most people want to be successful in their lives and their careers. Setting goals defines the direction your life will take and often results in success, positive self esteem, and the desire to set more goals. Not setting goals has the opposite effect. What impact could this have on preparing for a career? Discuss with a partner or write a paragraph to explain your thoughts.

Subject: My Career

Activity: Trends in the Workplace

Directions: Did you know that jobs can be trendy? For example, flex time careers are popular with those that want to work in a career area, but want a flexible schedule that would allow them to work part time or job share. Some employers are willing to offer this as a benefit. Brainstorm other trends that affect the workplace or the labor market. Can you predict what trends there might be in the future?

Subject: My Career

Activity: Job Preferences

Directions: Knowing what you like to do can help determine the right career. Have students respond to these questions: Do you like working with people or alone? Do you want to work indoors or outdoors? Do you want to work for a large or small company? Do you want to stay in the community or move away? What are your favorite school subjects? Come up with 10 working conditions that are important to you.

Subject: My Career

Activity: Dream Career

Directions: Ask students what will they be doing 10 years from now? Have them describe their career, job duties, the education they received and where they are living. What brings them job satisfaction? What have they achieved?

Subject: Job Skills

Activity: Multi-Tasking

Directions: Managers and others in leadership positions are often required to multi-task (do several things at the same time). Multi-tasking requires focus and concentration. Practice what this feels like by patting your head and rubbing your stomach at the same time. Now switch and rub your head while patting your stomach. How does this feel? Is it confusing to do both at the same time? Give an example of how multi-tasking might relate to a job. What kinds of tasks lend themselves to multi-tasking?

Subject: Job Skills

Activity: Protocols

Directions: A protocol is an accepted way of doing something, a code of conduct. Many companies have specific protocols guiding the behavior of their employees with regard to computer use and communication with others. Write a protocol for student use of computers in your school or student communication with adults in your school. If this protocol is followed, how can it help guide conduct of students and staff? In a similar way, how would a protocol set the tone for conduct in a job setting?

Subject: Job Skills

Activity: Learning a New Language

Directions: Knowing a second language, such as a foreign language, Braille, sign language, or Morse code can make you a more valuable employee and result in more pay in many job settings, especially those that require you to interact with customers. Make a list of jobs in the following industries where having these language skills might contribute to the hiring of an employee.

- Health Care
- Social Services
- Hospitality/Travel
- Education
- Fashion
- Child Care
- Law Enforcement
- Customer Service/Sales
- Finance
- Communications

Subject: Job Skills

Activity: Courtesy

Directions: Helpfulness is a virtue. Think about the last time you volunteered to help someone. Was it appreciated? If anyone has offered to help you, did you appreciate it? Take a survey today: Volunteer to help five or six different people with a task and record how many accept your offer. Discuss it in your group the next day. What significance does this have for a job?

It may not be in your job description, but being willing to help out will usually improve your acceptance, especially if you are willing from time to time to do your share, according to Susan Morem, author of *101 Tips for Graduates.* Making the coffee occasionally, filling the copier tray with paper rather than leaving it empty for the next person, picking up after yourself—these are all common courtesies that help out everyone and prevent resentment of coworkers.