

Students have big dreams. We can help.



Students can make their dreams come true in many ways. Access to engaging, quality teaching and learning is certainly important. Creating career connections in the classroom allows students to see how high school coursework is relevant to their future careers, whether they enter a career directly from high school or after college or training. Simply put, career connections give students a reason to put forth effort in high school.



How does this fit in to what I'm already teaching? Consider one of these approaches when planning your next unit.

LEAD-IN: Introductory activity that establishes career connections and answers the why-do-we-have-to-learn-this-anyway question. (e.g., *simulation or real-work problem based upon the academic knowledge or skill*)

STUDENT ACTION: A project or assignment where students apply career connections. (e.g., *identifying a real-work problem, then researching and developing a solution using academic knowledge and skills*)

REFLECTION: A follow-up activity or discussion that emphasizes career connections (e.g., *group or individual response analyzing application of*

ALIGN CLASSROOM AND WORKPLACE LEARNING

Discover what your students want to do and be when they grow up. Create career connections through your instruction. Align informational text reading to student career choices.

Meet with a business, industry or community organization to map academic content to authentic workplace projects.

Partner with a business or community organization to show students how what they are learning connects to different jobs.

Rethink assessments to include student reflections on how they might use what they have just learned in their future career (See next page for ideas.).

Use project based learning, requiring students to work in teams to find solutions to an authentic workplace or community problem while learning and applying academic knowledge and skills as well as employability skills.

Invite a professional from your community who represents a company, business or industry to share information relative to their career and workplace. Tip: Provide them with information ahead of time that explains what students have been learning so they can include connections in their presentation.

Choose literature or informational text that focuses on an aspect of work, careers or a career field.

Integrate All Aspects of an Industry into instruction (See reverse side for more information).

GAIN SUPPORT FROM CLASSROOM OR WORKPLACE MENTORS

Connect your classroom with university scholars to promote discovery, research and learning. Volunteer professors from the Southern Connecticut State University **Visiting Scholar Program** expose students to diverse fields of research through experiential learning in social studies, English, science, math, music, language and health/physical education. (<http://more.southernct.edu/visiting-scholars/>)

Partner with business or community organizations to mentor students as they complete a gold standard project-based learning unit of study.

Schedule a field trip to a workplace that uses the academic knowledge and employability skills you are requiring of students.

Invite an partner from a business, industry or community organization to assist in revising curriculum units with a focus on integrating employability skills and designing units of study that integrate authentic workplace experiences.

Participate in teacher externships to learn about local business, industry and community organizations to gain first-hand experience with application of the academic knowledge and employability skills you teach. Create units of study that integrate what you learn.

Arrange a virtual exchange with your students and professionals for technical mentoring.

Assist advisory students in making career

ALL ASPECTS OF AN INDUSTRY

All Aspects of an Industry (AAI) identify the different functions performed within an industry and the forces that shape it.

When teachers integrate AAI in unit planning, students foster critical thinking skills. It draws upon basic and advanced skills in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health/physical education, art, music, world languages, career/technical education courses and even projects students complete in extracurricular clubs.

Learners who gain strong experiences in and a comprehensive understanding of these concepts and skills are more likely to be successful in their career experiences.

THE NINE ASPECTS

PLANNING: How an organization plans, including goals and objectives; types of ownership (public, private); relationship of the organization to economic, political and social contexts; assessment of needs.

MANAGEMENT: Structure and process for effectively accomplishing the goals and operation of the organization using facilities, staff, resources, equipment and materials.

FINANCE: Accounting and financial decision-making processes; methods of acquiring capital to operate; management of financial operations including payroll.

TECHNICAL AND PRODUCTION SKILLS: Specific skills and techniques for production; basic skills (math, communications, technology, time management, creative thinking); ways of organizing production work.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES OF TECHNOLOGY: Technological systems used in the workplace and their contributions to the product or service; the mathematical, scientific, social and economic principles that underlie the technology.

LABOR ISSUES: Rights of employees and related issues; wages, benefits and working conditions.

COMMUNITY ISSUES: The impact of the company on the community and the community's impact on the company.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT: Practices and laws affecting the employee, the surrounding community and the environment.

PERSONAL WORK HABITS: Non-technical skills and characteristics expected in the workplace (applied academic skills, critical thinking skills, interpersonal skills and ability to contribute to effective relationships, resource management, information use, communication skills, systems thinking and technology use).

Sample Learning Opportunities

- ⇒ Explore physics applications by studying the school's heating/cooling system.
- ⇒ Bring documents from the workplace to use as source materials; analyze the annual report in an English class; examine city ordinances in a social studies class; or, use trade journals in an economics class.
- ⇒ Study how art is used in public places. Plan an extended field trip or design an "art walk" guide.
- ⇒ Before beginning a group project, study the elements that make up an effective team. What is needed at a worksite or a classroom to build a good team? How can you become an effective participating team member?
- ⇒ Research how cultural diversity can have an impact on an organization.



An All Aspects Example

Students in the tenth grade hold a car wash every year to raise money for a class trip. The teacher could incorporate **All Aspects** into this activity by involving students heavily in planning, management, marketing, finance, labor relations and environmental safety.

Students might be asked to break the overall process into tasks and schedule shifts and assignments. They could help choose a location for their venture and negotiate with the owners.

Students could identify production needs (hoses, buckets, soap, wash mitt, towels), research the costs of different products available in the market and make recommendations, cognizant of environmental and worker safety impacts.

Students might estimate a price for their services, based on a reasonable projection of business levels, costs of production and a comparison of prices in the market. Students might create a marketing campaign advertising the car wash.

Lessons in social studies, science, English and math could link to provide students with the



RETHINKING ASSESSMENT: Make career connections with reflective prompts

At the end of new learning, ask students to reflect on how the learning might be used in their future career. Consider revising Student Learning Outcomes to include statements about how students will be able to explain how content-specific skills and employability skills applied in your class are used in both college and in the workplace. Here are some classroom reflective prompts:

- What knowledge, information and ideas did you learn through (**insert learning target**) that relate to careers you are interested in?
- Which of the skills that you used through (**insert learning target**) translate to the skills needed to be successful in the workplace; how are these skills applied in the careers you are interested in?
- How did learning (**insert learning target**) impact your career interests? Which areas of (**insert learning target**) are you interested in exploring further and finding out more about related careers?



MAKING CAREER CONNECTIONS DURING ADVISORY

Create opportunities to make career connections during advisory by getting to know your students' aspirations for the future. Help them explore career options, set goals and put forth effort during high school. Here are some reflective prompts you might want to consider:

- What are your career interests, skills and values?
- What are your career goals? In other words, what do you want to be when you grow up?
- What courses will you take in high school to reach your goals?
- What activities will you participate in throughout high school and beyond that will help you reach your goals?
- What education and training will you complete through high school and beyond?
- What businesses, industries or community organizations would you be interested in knowing more about? Are there professionals you would like to interview to learn more about their profession? At what local businesses, industries or community organizations would you like to visit, job shadow or intern?