

3. Career Exploration (4 hours)

Purpose/Abstract: To introduce students to the different career families			
NCCCS Adult Education Standards: R.3.2.1, W.1.2.1, S.1.1.1, M.1.1.2			
Learning Objective: <i>By the end of the session, students will be able to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use appropriate tools to explore multiple career clusters ● Develop an exemplar scenario for one or more soft skills ● Identify place value with <, >, and/or = 			
Soft Skills	communication enthusiasm & attitude teamwork networking problem solving & critical thinking professionalism	Resources	Education.com place value lesson (assign this lesson to your students) Skills to Pay the Bills (STPTB) (for instructor reference to define each soft skills category) NC Career Clusters (direct students to this website for the research activity) Handouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tower Building Challenge - Reflection - 1 for each student ● Career Cluster and Pathways Research - 1 for each group ● Short Story: A Day in the Life of ____ - 1 for each student ● Reflection Slip - 1 for each student
Additional Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Index cards with one soft skill written on each, one set per assigned group ● Building blocks, one set per assigned group ● Tower Building Challenge - Reflection (printed scaffolded version as needed) ● Career Cluster Research (printed scaffolded version as needed) ● Short Story: A Day in the Life of _____ (printed scaffolded version as needed) ● 8 poster boards/ poster paper 1 for each group ● Art supplies (glue, glitter, markers, etc.) ● OPTIONAL but encouraged: Place value unit manipulatives ● Pencils, paper ● Computers for student use 			
Icons	Activity	Check-In	Review

PREPARATION

- Ahead of the lesson, assign students the Education.com place value lesson and download/print the [worksheet](#).
- Review the [Instructional Support Guide](#) and print/prepare referenced scaffolds.
- Print handouts.
- Familiarize yourself with the [NC Career Clusters](#) and activities below utilizing this resource.
- Familiarize yourself with [O*NET](#), though it won't be used directly in this lesson.



- Familiarize yourself with [Skills to Pay the Bills](#), though it won't be used directly in this lesson.

INTRODUCTION (30)

Welcome students to class and begin with the following icebreaker:

- List the following questions on the board:
 - What is a career you've always been interested in?
 - What is one skill you feel confident in?
 - What is one challenge you've overcome in your life?
 - What is something you're excited to learn in this class?

Instruct students to find a partner and choose 2-3 questions, taking turns answering each question.

Allow 15 minutes for this activity.

◊ REVIEW

Have students share their partner's responses to each question.

Review the responses and guide a brief discussion on commonalities and differences.

Introduce the topic of career families and explain that today, they will be exploring the multiple career families and the various pathways in each.

Instructor notes:

Be sensitive to students' needs and willingness/reluctance to share at any point and verbalize that your classroom is a safe space.

VOCABULARY, READING, and WRITING (1 hour)

Remind students that throughout your time together, every lesson will focus on soft skills.

Ask students to share their own definition of the soft skills they've been introduced to.

💬 SOFT SKILL CHARADES (15 minutes)

Divide the class into small groups (3-4 students per group)

Give each group a set of soft skill cards.

Instruct one member of the group to pick a card from the pile and act out the soft skill without speaking while the other members of the group try to guess which skill is being acted out.

After a successful guess, the next group member takes a turn acting out a soft skill.

Tell groups to repeat this until all the skill cards are covered.

Guide a discussion around the importance of each soft skill and how they can be applied in various situations.

💬 TEAM BUILDING CHALLENGE (30 minutes)

Give each team the same set of building blocks.

Explain that each team has a set amount of time to build the tallest tower possible.

Set the timer for 15 minutes and allow the teams to start building. While they are building, observe how each team communicates, solves problems, and works together. After the time is up, have each team present their tower to the class and explain how they built it. Have the class vote on the tallest and most stable tower.

Give students 15 minutes to individually write a short paragraph about what skills were necessary to complete the challenge successfully (communication, problem-solving, teamwork, enthusiasm & attitude, critical thinking).

 REFLECTION (15 minutes)

✓ Ask for volunteers to read their paragraph.

Facilitate a group conversation to explore how the application of soft skills assisted them in overcoming their challenge, and discuss ways in which they can enhance these abilities.

Instructor notes: Check that all students get a chance to participate in charades and tower building. Not all students might be willing/able to write, so consider pairing them with another student for the writing activity.

Lower Level

Higher Level

Provide sentence starters to help them write the paragraph as given:

One way we used communication skills effectively was _____.

In order to solve the problem, we _____.

Everyone on the team showed enthusiasm by _____.

We solved the challenge by _____.

Some ways we critically analyzed the challenge were _____.

We worked well as a team by _____.

Encourage them to come up with alternative strategies for building the tallest and most stable tower, taking into account the skills and resources available in their team. Additionally, they could be asked to reflect on how the skills they identified as necessary for success in the activity can be applied in other real-life situations, such as in the workplace or in personal relationships.

GROUP PROJECT (45 min)

 RESEARCH and PRESENTATION

Divide students into eight groups. Provide each group with poster boards or poster papers and art supplies. Assign each group two career families from [OneStop Career Clusters](#).

Instruct each group to research and create a presentation about the different career pathways within that career family.

Tell them that an overview of each pathway is enough for the presentation as they will learn more in later lessons.

Allow ample time for research and presentation preparation.

Have each group present their findings to the class.

Instructor note: The handout contains the scaffolded template for lower level students to encourage them to contribute to creating the presentation. Explain to students that career families are commonly called career clusters and that you may be using these terms interchangeably throughout the lessons.

Lower Level	Higher Level
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Provide a handout with a template and sentence starters to help contribute to the presentation.

Encourage them to use creative methods of presentation, such as infographics. Allow them to choose their own research sources and encourage them to go beyond the surface level information if there is time.

Instructor notes:

Not all students have the same artistic abilities or enthusiasm! Encourage creativity and consider assigning a student to be in charge of different aspects of the activity, such as a planner, a scribe, decorators, etc..

MATHEMATICS (45 min)

To review place value, remind students that each digit in a number represents a different place value. Write two or three examples on the board.

Introduce the concept of comparing numbers using prior knowledge of place values and the $<$, $>$ and $=$ symbols with the following examples:

- Comparing 37 and 94 using the place value chart to show that the digit in the tens place determines which number is greater.
- Comparing 125 and 205 by looking at the hundreds place first, then the tens and ones places.
- Comparing 312 and 231 by comparing the digits in the hundreds place first, then the tens and ones places.
- Comparing 99 and 100 by looking at the digit in the tens place, which is 9 in both numbers, then comparing the digit in the ones place.

Direct students to practice this [game](#) from [Place Value 3 | Education.com](#) to further reinforce the concept, using visuals or manipulatives.

Provide this [worksheet](#) for students to compare numbers using greater than, less than, or equal to symbols.

Circulate the classroom to provide assistance as needed.

Guide students through the steps of comparing numbers or clarifying any misconceptions they may have. Review answers with the class, discussing common mistakes or misunderstandings.



Have students explain their reasoning for comparing certain numbers in a certain way or provide additional examples for further practice.

Wrap up this section by asking students to share one thing they learned about comparing numbers. Provide feedback to their answers and clarify any confusion.

Lower Level	Higher Level
<p>Provide a sentence starter for comparing numbers, such as "I think that ____ is greater/less than/equal to ____ because ____."</p> <p>Use manipulatives, such as base ten blocks or a number line, to help students visualize and compare the numbers.</p> <p>Provide examples of comparing numbers using visuals or real-world scenarios, such as "If I have 10 berries and my friend has 15 berries, who has more?"</p>	<p>Encourage students to create their own compare-and-contrast problems to challenge their peers.</p> <p>Provide more complex numbers to compare, such four or five digit numbers.</p>

INDEPENDENT WORK TIME (45)

Instruct students to choose any one job that interests them from the career pathways researched earlier. Tell them to write a short story about a typical day in the life of someone who works in that job. Encourage them to include examples of the soft skills needed in that job. Allow ample time for writing and revision. Provide assistance as needed.

Lower Level	Higher Level
<p>Provide sentence starters or fill-in-the-blank outlines to guide them in writing the short story. For example, "A day in the life of someone who works as a _____ begins with _____."</p> <p>Encourage them to use pictures or drawings to represent the events in their story.</p> <p>Provide one-on-one assistance during the writing process.</p>	<p>Encourage them to use descriptive language and details paint a vivid picture of a day in the life of someone in that job.</p> <p>Allow them to peer review and provide feedback to their classmates' stories.</p>



WRAP-UP & REFLECTION (15 min)

◉REVIEW

Have students share their stories with a partner.

Ask for volunteers to share their story with the class.

Facilitate a discussion about the importance of identifying and developing soft skills and how the soft skills will help in whatever job they choose in pathways that interest them.

End the class with a gratitude exercise to help students focus on positive aspects of their lives. Ask them to write down three things they are grateful for and share with the class if they feel comfortable.

Distribute exit slip to students.

Ask for a few volunteers to share their reflections.

Collect and review answers.

Instructor notes:

Inform students that the reflection slip will be the same after every lesson. Take some time reviewing each question on the slip and pause for student questions. Provide any assistance completing the slips for this and the next few classes until students are comfortable with the process.

Tower Building Challenge - Reflection

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Write a short paragraph in the space below about what skills were necessary to complete the challenge successfully (communication, problem-solving, teamwork, enthusiasm & attitude, critical thinking).

Tower Building Challenge - Reflection

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Write a short paragraph in the space below about what skills were necessary to complete the challenge successfully (communication, problem-solving, teamwork, enthusiasm & attitude, critical thinking).

One way we used communication skills effectively was _____.

In order to solve the problem, we _____

Everyone on the team showed enthusiasm by _____.

We solved the challenge by _____.

Some ways we critically analyzed the challenge were _____.

We worked well as a team by _____.

Career Cluster and Pathways Research

Directions: Use this template to help you structure your presentations.

Introduction:

Today we will be presenting about [list the two career clusters].

Our group has researched [list the two career clusters] and we would like to share our findings with you.

Key components:

The [career cluster1] includes [fill in the blank with key career pathways].

One of the main skills needed for [career cluster or pathway] is [fill in the blank with key skills].

The [career cluster2] includes [fill in the blank with key career pathways].

One of the main skills needed for [career cluster or pathway] is [fill in the blank with key skills].

Job opportunities:

People who pursue [pathways] can work in [fill in the blank with 1-2 job opportunities].

Some companies that hire people for [career cluster or pathway] include [fill in the blank with company names].

Conclusion:

In conclusion, we have learned that [list the two career clusters] can be a great option for those interested in [fill in the blank with interests].

Thank you for listening to our presentation about [list the two career clusters].

Career Cluster and Pathways Research

Directions: Use this template to help you structure your presentations.

Introduction:

Today we will be presenting about _____.

Our group has researched _____ and we would like to share our findings with you.

Key components:

The _____ includes _____.

One of the main skills needed for _____ is _____.

The _____ includes _____.

One of the main skills needed for _____ is _____.

Job opportunities:

People who pursue _____ can work in _____.

Some companies that hire people for _____ include _____.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, we have learned that _____ can be a great option for those interested in _____.

Thank you for listening to our presentation about _____.

Short Story: A Day in the Life of _____

Directions: Choose any one job that interests you from the career pathways you researched with your group earlier. Write a short story about a typical day in the life of someone who works in that job.

Short Story: A Day in the Life of _____

Directions: Choose any one job that interests you from the career pathways you researched with your group earlier. Write a short story about a typical day in the life of someone who works in that job. Use this template to help you.

A day in the life of someone who works as a _____ begins with _____. As a _____, one of the important things to do every day is _____. Working in the field of _____ requires _____ skills, which are used every day during tasks such as _____.

At the start of a workday, someone who works in _____ typically _____ to prepare for the day ahead. The job of a _____ can be challenging, but one of the best things about it is _____, which makes it all worthwhile. When someone works in _____, it's important that they have _____ skills in order to _____

Reflection Exit Slip

In one sentence, describe what you learned in this lesson.

Today, I learned _____.

Is there anything you still need help understanding?

One question I have is...

Circle the emoji that shows how you feel about your mastery of content in this lesson.



Happy



Smart



Confused



Sad



Angry