

Lesson Plan

INTRODUCTORY CAREER & COLLEGE PLANNING

“Where would I like to go in my life?”

Suggested grade levels: Designed for grades 9 through 12.



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SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVELS

Designed for Grades 9 through 12.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- **Explore ideas**, based on their interests for college majors, careers and potential pathways after high school,
- **Start a dialogue** with their teacher or guidance counselors on their post high school pathways,
- And **know where to go** for additional research on their desired pathways

PREWORK

Students can take the **National College & Career Pathways Survey** as homework or during a remote school day. This project can be easily added to your learning management system, so students have easy access to the links to take the college and career assessment and to explore careers in more detail.

RESOURCES

[National College & Career Pathways Survey](#)

[Student Research Foundation Website](#)

[Student Research Foundation Research Reports](#)

CLASS OUTLINES

OVERVIEW

An introductory lesson to help high school students identify possible college majors and career directions.

Students who already have a strong interest and sense of direction will emerge from the class with a more focused perspective; and students who do not will come away with a stronger sense of which careers and majors might be good for them to explore. Students who will benefit from more counseling or specialized career-planning courses will be identified by the teacher for later follow-up.

PRELIMINARY WORK

Before this class, students should take the [National College & Career Pathways Survey](#). This self-administered survey helps students identify the kind of college they would most like to attend, the branch of the military they might join, as well as to better understand potential careers that might be right for them.

5 MINUTE DISCUSSION

“Welcome students and explain that the goal of the class is to help them begin to identify their career and college interests.”

CLASS OUTLINES CONTINUED

MODULE ONE (20 MINUTES)

General discussion about career planning. Some suggested questions to ask your students:

- **“How many of you already have a general or specific idea about the kind of work or career that interests you the most?”** Ask for a show of hands, then go around the room or virtual setting and have students state what they are most interested in doing professionally, and why. Stress that “I don’t know” is an acceptable answer. Record responses in form at the end of this class plan.
- **“How many of you are thinking about going to college?”** Ask for a show of hands, then ask students who raised their hands to talk about either the kinds of colleges they are considering or to talk about specific colleges they are considering, and why.
- **“How do you think you could get a better idea about your possible career direction?”** Discuss different options, including: school classes; aptitude tests that your school’s guidance office offers; internships and jobs; and study in college that will help students identify their majors. Record names of students who require follow-up, including counseling from your school’s counseling department.
- **“What do you think will happen if you make a college, job or career decision that you need to change later on?”** The goal of this question is to depressurize the process of identifying career interests. Point out that picking a career is a process of discovery that allows: the ability to explore and discover new types of work; the ability to change majors in college; the opportunity to change jobs or careers at any stage of life. It is not imperative to get it right the first time!
- **How many of you are going to begin working a job after high school instead of going into the military or going to college?”** Ask for a show of hands and ask the students who raised their hands to talk about the jobs they are considering. Also ask them what they have done so far to prepare for those jobs.
- **“How many of you are thinking of going into a branch of the military?”** Ask for a show of hands, then ask students who raised their hands to talk about the branch of the U.S. armed services they are thinking about and why.

CLASS OUTLINES CONTINUED

MODULE TWO (20 MINUTES)

Discussion of what students learned/started thinking about after taking the **National College & Career Pathway Survey**. Some questions to ask include:

- **“How many of you found it helpful to take the Career survey?”** Ask for a show of hands.
- **“Did any of you not find it helpful to take the National College & Career Pathway Survey?”** Ask for a show of hands and ask students to explain why they felt that way.
- **“Did the survey help any of you to think more about the kind of college you might attend? Did it help any of you identify any specific colleges where you might apply?”** Ask for a show of hands and invite students to explain more. Record the names of students who already have career expectations in the form at the end of this class plan; they should be contacted for follow-up after this class session.
- **“Did the survey help any of you to think more actively about joining the military?”** Ask for a show of hands and invite students to explain more. Record the names of students who already have career expectations in the form at the end of this class plan; they should be contacted for follow-up after this class session.
- **“Did the survey help any of you discover careers or types of work that you hadn’t thought about before?”** Ask for a show of hands and invite students to explain more. Record the names of students who discovered new career expectations in the form at the end of this class plan; they should be contacted for follow-up after this class session.
- (Optional question if time allows.) “The Survey asked you about eight different skills: Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving, Creativity and Innovation, Local/Regional Citizenship, National Citizenship, Global Citizenship and Digital Citizenship. What do you think about them? Do you think it is important to think about them as you plan what you will do after you have finished high school?”

FOLLOW-UP FORMS

Use these forms to keep track of your own notes!

Which students already had career expectations **before** this class, and what were they?

Which students will require **additional help** identifying their career choices?

Which students will require additional help identifying their **recruitment** into a branch of the U.S. military?

FOLLOW-UP FORMS

Which students already had preliminary interest **in certain kinds of jobs**, and what were they?

Which students expressed interest in pursuing the following career options and who are therefore candidates for specialized sessions to help explore more?

Technical Studies Candidates: Which students were interested in STEM or other technical careers, and in what way? (List names)

FOLLOW-UP FORMS

Language and Learning: Which students were interested in teaching or studying literature or language? (List names)

Healthcare Fields, including Psychology and Counseling: Which students were interested in preparing to work in healthcare, and in what way? (List names)

Performing Arts: Which students were interested in preparing to work in the performing arts (in music, dance, theater, for example), and in what way? (List names)

FOLLOW-UP FORMS

Fine and Visual Arts: Which students were interested in preparing to work in the fine or visual arts (as art history majors, studio art majors, computer arts majors, for example), and in what way? (List names)

Other Career Paths: Were there students who expressed interest in pursuing work in careers that are not addressed in the areas described just above, and in what way? (List names)
