

What's After Graduation Lesson Plan

Overview

In this lesson students will be learning about the different options that they have after graduating high school. They will be looking at different careers and learning about what skills and level of education is required to be successful in those careers.

Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- Define different paths after graduation
- Have an idea of what they plan to do after graduation
- Understand different careers and the necessary skills to acquire those careers

Vocabulary

- **Career** is an occupation undertaken for a significant period of a person's life and with opportunities for personal and professional development.
- **College** is an educational institution or establishment, in particular one providing higher education or specialized professional or vocational training.
- **Career Cluster** is a group of careers that share common features.

Standards

This listing is based on the Jump\$tart National Standards for Personal Finance. To see how this lesson aligns with other standards (including for your state), visit: <https://www.personalfinancelab.com/standards-alignment/>

Employment and Income

- Standard 1. Explore job and career options.

Lesson Plan Includes

	Direct Instruction		Presentations
	Class Discussion		Technology-Based Activity
	Full Class Activities		Worksheets
	Small Group Activities		Assessments
	Individual Activities		External Resources

Activity Summary

- Introduction
 - Time: 5 mins
- PFL Budget Game
 - Time: 20 mins.
- Go to College or Start Working?
 - Time: 11 mins
- Dream Job Research
 - Time: 45 mins.
- One or the Other
 - Time 20 mins.
- Career Cluster Check-up
 - Time: 20 mins.
- Training After School
 - Time: 20 mins.

Introduction

Explain to students:

- That after they graduate high school, it will be the first time that they are not required to go to school anymore.
- This may seem pleasing to some students but they must decide what they do to support themselves.

Ask students:

- What are some options of what you can do after you graduate high school?

Explain to students:

- Today we will be looking at two main options of what to do after graduating.
- Those options are going straight into the workforce or continuing your education.
- Even if you have an idea of what you plan on doing after graduation, keep an open mind as we go through this lesson.

Independent Activities

Activities designed for students to learn independently, either in class or as homework. Some activities include presentations if you prefer to use them for direct instruction instead of independent study.

Independent Activities Include:

1. PersonalFinanceLab Budget Game.....**Time: 20 Minutes**
2. Go to College or Start Working? *Lesson*.....**Time: 11 Minutes**
3. Dream Job Research.....**Time: 45 Minutes**
4. One or the Other.....**Time: 20 Minutes**



1. PersonalFinanceLab Budget Game

Have students complete 20 minutes of the PersonalFinanceLab.com Budget Game.

Time: 20 Minutes

Type:  Technology-Based Activity

Required Resources: PersonalFinanceLab.com site license & computer access.

 Individual Activity/Homework

 Class Discussion

Resource Links

[Budget Game - PersonalFinanceLab](#)

How to Play the Budget Game

[Tutorial Video](#)

Getting Started

- Either as a class, or individually, students can watch the [How to Play the Budget Game](#).
- If your students need more help, there are [Tutorial Videos](#) on every aspect of the Budget Game.
- When setting up your class or session, select the option where students graduate and take on full-time jobs.
- Students will work 40h/week and will be responsible for new bills: **Health Insurance** and **Student Loan** payments.
- Instead of Studying students will have the option on weekends to do **Professional Development** to build useful skills and even earn a raise.
- There will be new Life Event cards after students enter the workforce that are more expensive than the Pop-up Cards during part-time mode.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the biggest financial decisions you'll face in your first few years out of college, and how do you plan to make them?
2. What are your goals for managing your finances, and what strategies do you think will help you achieve them?
3. How do you plan to balance your financial priorities with your personal and professional goals?

Key Takeaway

- Upon entering the workforce, you will need to allocate a significant portion of your income towards essential expenses, such as rent, utilities, and health insurance, while also prioritizing savings and debt repayment.
- To stay competitive in the job market and potentially earn a raise, you will need to make time for professional development on weekends, which may require trade-offs in leisure activities or adjustments to your spending habits.



2. Go to College or Start Working? Lesson

Assign your students this lesson on PersonalFinanceLab.com. In this lesson the concept of either going straight into the workforce or continuing your education after high school is evaluated. It addresses four different steps that students can go through to help them make a decision. Students will be required to complete the quiz at the end as an assessment. If used as homework, follow up with discussion questions the next day

Time: 11 minutes

Required Resources: PersonalFinanceLab.com site license & computer access.

Type:  Technology-Based Activity  Presentation
 Individual Activity/Homework  Assessment
 Class Discussion

Resource Links

[Go to College or Start Working? \(personalfinancelab.com\)](https://personalfinancelab.com)

Presentation

[Work vs Study GoogleSlides Presentation](#)

Discussion Questions

1. What is a negative of going to college?
2. How do you plan on determining what you do after high school?
3. Which choice will you go with?

Key Takeaways

- After high school, you have a choice to make: continue with education or enter the workforce.
- The job market is changing, so build skills and experience that can be applied to future careers and to stand out in the job market.
- In the workforce, focus on learning valuable skills through on-the-job training.
- In school, add a second major or minor, join student organizations, or attend conferences to build career and leadership skills.
- Building a network is essential for career success: join professional social networks like LinkedIn, volunteer groups, social clubs, peer groups, get an internship, or participate in extracurricular activities to build your network.
- Compare the costs of your chosen path.
- Consider the cost of school and the potential lost wages.
- Weigh the benefits of your chosen career against the costs.



3. Dream Job Search

In this activity students will use various job posting sites to research career options, education requirements, or internship opportunities.

Time: 45 Minutes

Required Resources: computer access

Type:  Technology Based Activity

 Class Discussion



Individual Activity/Homework



External Resource

External Resource Links

indeed.com

monster.com

simplyhired.com

linkedin.com/jobs

ziprecruiter.com

wayup.com

glassdoor.ca

careerbuilder.com

idealist.org

Instructions

1. Have students go to one of the resource links above to conduct their job and internship research.
2. Have students look up what they would currently consider to be their “Dream Job”.
 - I.e. Any job posting that would match something they really want to be doing.
3. Ask students to write down the job requirements for this position.
 - a. For education requirements, have students identify a university offering a program that would fit:
 - Have students record how long it would take to receive the required degree.
 - Have students identify the approximate tuition cost to completion.
 - b. For all “Work Experience” requirements, have students look up a more junior position that would help them reach the required experience for their dream job:
 - If the more junior position also has requirements to get hired, repeat the exercise for each position.
4. Once students are able to identify all the requirements to be qualified for their dream job, ask them to build a timeline showing how long it will take to get from where they are now to their dream job.
5. Ask students to identify how much money they think any education requirement will cost, and how much money they would earn for each year between now and when they would finally get hired for their dream job.

Discussion Questions

1. Seeing the full cost and time of getting to the Dream Job, would you switch career paths?
2. How happy would you be while on the path from where you are now until you reach where you want to be?
3. For your entire career path, how do you compare personal happiness/satisfaction in the work, with how much money you will earn at each job?
4. Does your Career Path open doors to attractive “endings” besides your Dream Job (such as higher income, flexibility, or very interesting “intermediate” jobs)?

Key Takeaways

- By mapping out your dream job, you learn the importance of education and experience in achieving your career goals.
- Planning and preparation are key to overcoming obstacles and setbacks, and will help you develop a strategy for success.
- Financial considerations, such as tuition costs and salary ranges, must be factored into career decisions.
- Flexibility and adaptability are essential in today's job market, and it's very beneficial to learn to be open to new experiences and opportunities.



4. One or the Other: Exploring Post-Graduation Options

In this activity students will be deciding which path they want to follow after graduating and then conducting research on that choice.

Time: 20 Minutes

Required Resources: computer access

Type:



Technology-Based Activity



Class Discussion



Individual Activity/Homework

Instructions

1. Have students pick one of the options below to conduct research on.
 - a. **Option A:** Students can conduct preliminary research into and identify up to 5 colleges that align with their interests and expectations. They must write 3-7 sentences on why they picked each school.
 - b. **Option B:** If students are not thinking about college at this time, but do have ideas for other types of educational/training pathways, they can conduct similar research. They must write 3-7 sentences on why they picked each job or pathway.
2. Have them turn in their work as an assessment.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the short-term and long-term benefits of achieving your career goals, and how will this program help you get there?
2. What are the key skills and knowledge areas that your program focuses on, and how do they align with your strengths and interests?
3. How does your program's curriculum compare to other similar programs in the market, and what sets it apart?
4. What are the typical job roles and industries that graduates from your program typically enter, and what are the job prospects like in those areas?
5. Are there any specific companies or organizations that you're interested in working for, and how does your program prepare you for those opportunities?
6. What are the salary ranges and growth prospects for graduates in your field?

Key Takeaways

- Make sure that your program prepares you for the job roles and industries that you're interested in.
- Consider the job prospects, salary ranges, and growth prospects for graduates in your field.
- Recognize that the job market is constantly evolving, and be prepared to adapt to changes in your industry.

Full Class & Small Group Activities

Small Group Activities are designed for small groups of 3-4 students. These resources are best used after full-class direct instruction and activities.

Small Group Activities Include:

5. Career Custer Check-up.....**Time: 20 Minutes**

Full Class Activities are designed for whole-class participation. These are best used along with the direct instruction portion of the lesson.

Full Class Activities Include:

6. Training After High School.....**Time: 20 Minutes**



5. Career Cluster Check-up

In this activity students will be introduced to the concept of career clusters and then do a group investigation on the concept as a whole while diving into different specific clusters.

Time: 20 Minutes

Required Resources: worksheet

Type:  Small Group Activity  Worksheet

 Class Discussion

Required Resource

Career Cluster Check-in Worksheet (p.12-13)

Instructions

- Introduce the term career clusters to students:
 - A **Career Cluster** is group of careers that share common features. If you like one job in a cluster, you will probably find other jobs in that cluster that you will like as well.
- Provide students with a few examples of career clusters:
 - **Health:** Workers in this cluster help people have healthy lives. Some work directly with people, some don't. This cluster contains jobs like home health aide, medical sonographer, pharmacy aide, and medical transcriptionist.
 - **Business:** Workers in this cluster help companies run smoothly. This cluster contains jobs like office clerk, receptionist, credit checker, and janitor.
 - **Public Safety:** Workers in this cluster protect people and enforce laws. This cluster contains jobs like security guard, court clerk, alarm installer, and life guard.
- Ask students:
 - Can you think of any other jobs that fall into these clusters?
 - Are there any other clusters that they can think of?
- Explain to students:
 - Career clusters are important because they help guide people in the direction of a career and with that they can decide if that career requires more education or if they can get a job with a high school diploma.
 - They will be doing a group investigation on career clusters.
- Split students into groups of 3-4 and pass out the worksheet.
- Once groups have completed the packet, either collect the worksheet or go over the answers as a class. Follow-up with the Discussion Questions.

Key Takeaways

- Career clusters are groups of careers that share common features, and understanding these clusters can help you identify potential career paths that align with your interests, skills, and values.
- Career clusters can vary in terms of the skills and education required, and some may require more formal education or training than others.

Answer Key

1. There are 16 Career Clusters.
2. The Career Clusters help you identify potential career paths and provide information on the skills and education required for each career.
3. Natural Resources Cluster
4. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Cluster
5. Architecture and Construction Cluster
6. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Cluster
7. Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications Cluster
8. Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications Cluster
9. Business, Finance, and Marketing Cluster
10. Information Technology Cluster
11. Education and Training Cluster
12. Education and Training Cluster
13. Finance Cluster
14. Financial Analyst, Financial Advisor, Accountant
15. City Manager, Government Administrator, Public Policy Analyst, Urban Planner
16. Health Science Cluster
17. Information Technology Cluster
18. Police Officer, Lawyer, Judge, Correctional Officer
19. Biologist, Chemist, Environmental Scientist, Geologist
20. Marketing Manager, Sales Representative, Customer Service Representative, Event Planner
21. Production Manager, Quality Control Inspector, Welder

Discussion Questions

1. Now that you have looked at all the Career Clusters, which one interests you the most?
2. What skills or education do you think you would need to get a job in this Career Cluster?
3. What kind of work environment do you think you would prefer in this Career Cluster (e.g. office, outdoors, etc.)?
4. Are there any specific job duties or responsibilities that you are particularly interested in or concerned about in this Career Cluster?
5. How do you think your interests, skills, and values align with the Career Cluster that interests you the most?

Career Cluster Check-In Worksheet

Questions

1. How many Career Clusters are there?_____
2. What do the Career Clusters do for you?

3. What Career Cluster teaches you to manage natural resources?_____
4. Water Treatment Plant Operator comes from which Career Cluster?_____
5. In this Career Cluster you get to design, build, and destroy things._____
6. If you had a job where you drilled holes in the ground in search of water, which Career Cluster would you be working in?_____
7. In this Career Cluster you get to use your creative talents in front of people or behind the scenes. What Career Cluster is this?_____
8. What Career Cluster allows you to act, direct, or produce?_____
9. In this Career Cluster you keep track of business expenses, or the quality of the personnel who work for the business. What Career Cluster is this?_____
10. In what Career Cluster would you find computer operators (not information technology)?

11. In this Career Cluster you would guide and instruct people. What Career Cluster is it?

12. You would find Librarians and Speech Pathologists in this field. What is the Career Cluster?_____

Career Cluster Check-In Worksheet

13. In this Career Cluster you deal with money and help people plan how to spend their money. What is the Career Cluster?_____

14. Name three jobs from the Finance Career Cluster.

15. Name four jobs from the Government and Public Administration Career Cluster.

16. In this Career Cluster you would focus on health and wellness. Many of the jobs focus on medicine._____

17. What is the name of the Career Cluster where you would find a system administer or a data analyst?_____

18. Name four jobs in the Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security Cluster.

19. Name four jobs in the Science Technology Cluster.

20. Name four jobs in the Marketing, Sales, and Service Cluster.

21. Name three jobs in the Manufacturing Cluster.

Discussion Questions

1. Now that you have looked at all the Career Clusters, which one interests you the most?
2. What skills or education do you think you would need to get a job in this Career Cluster?
3. What kind of work environment do you think you would prefer in this Career Cluster (e.g. office, outdoors, etc.)?
4. Are there any specific job duties or responsibilities that you are particularly interested in or concerned about in this Career Cluster?
5. How do you think your interests, skills, and values align with the Career Cluster that interests you the most?



6. Training After High School

This is a teacher led discussion centered around the options that students have after graduating college. The PowerPoint goes into detail about the different levels of training that is required to obtain different jobs.

Time: 20 minutes

Required Resources: Post High School Presentation

Type:  Full Class Activity  Presentation

 Class Discussion

Resource Links

[Post High School Education GoogleSlides Presentation](#)

Instructions

- Show the PowerPoint and have students ask questions throughout the process.
- Follow-up with Discussion Questions.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think that jobs required that amount of training?
2. Do you think you can get that job through a different type of training?
3. What other jobs fit is this group?
4. Do any of these careers interest you?
5. What job (if any) are you doing now, and what training was required to obtain this position?

Key Takeaways

- Identify a career or career field you're interested in and discover the skills needed for that career. Then, get as much education and experience related to your career interests as possible while still in high school.
- **On-the-job training:** formal training provided by an employer, often requiring an aptitude test.
- **Apprenticeship training:** work with experienced workers and complete classroom training, earning wages while learning.
- **Military training:** train in 140 occupations and receive benefits, including tuition assistance.
- **Certificate training:** six-month to one-year training that provides a certificate of completion.
- **Associate degree training:** two-year degree that prepares you for a specific career.
- **Bachelor's degree programs:** four-year degree programs available through state and private colleges and universities.

Conclusion

Explain to students:

- As you all learned today there are many different possibilities of what you can do after graduation.
- It is important to think about this no matter what grade you are in because you have to start planning and investing in your future.

Pass out a piece of paper and have students write a goal on the sheet of paper that is in regards to what they plan on doing after graduation.

Have students turn the piece of paper in at the end of the lesson.