7th Grade Campus Visit Companion Activity: What Jobs Need What Education?

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Time Frame 30-45 minutes

Essential Question(s)

What types of education are needed for different types of careers?

Summary

This 7th grade campus visit companion activity complements a college campus tour for students. To learn about different facets of college life, students will participate in a learning activity to familiarize themselves with college degrees and other postsecondary education (PSE) options for various careers. The campus visit and companion activity will help students and administrators set expectations for students to meet Oklahoma Academic Standards of being ready for college, career, and citizenship.

Learning Goals

- Describe three types of postsecondary education options.
- Recognize jobs that people with various types of degrees can get.

Standards

College and Career Preparation Standards 6–12 (6th -12th)

7.1 (K): Students will identify and compare different postsecondary education pathways, including traditional four-year colleges, community colleges, career technical education programs, apprenticeships, military service, and direct entry into the workforce.
7.1.1: Students will list and describe key characteristics of each pathway (e.g., program length, cost, admission requirements, types of credentials).
7.1.2: Students will discuss at least two advantages and two potential challenges for each pathway, showing they understand various factors (e.g., earning potential, flexibility, skill development, job market demand).

Attachments

- Card Sort Career Cards—What Jobs Need What Education - Spanish.docx
- Card Sort Career Cards—What Jobs Need What Education - Spanish.pdf
- Card Sort Career Cards—What Jobs Need What Education.docx
- Card Sort Career Cards—What Jobs Need What Education.pdf
- Card Sort Graphic Organizer —What Jobs Need What Education.docx
- Card Sort Graphic Organizer —What Jobs Need What Education.pdf
- Card Sort Graphic Organizer—What Jobs Need What Education - Spanish.docx
- Card Sort Graphic Organizer—What Jobs Need What Education - Spanish.pdf
- I Used to Think...But Now I Know—What Jobs Need What Education - Spanish.docx
- I Used to Think...But Now I Know—What Jobs Need What Education - Spanish.pdf
- I Used to Think...But Now I Know—What Jobs Need What Education.docx
- I Used to Think...But Now I Know—What Jobs Need What Education.pdf
- Presentation Slides—What Jobs Need What Education.pptx

Materials

- Presentation Slides (attached)
- Card Sort Career Cards (attached; 1 set per group or table)
- Card Sort Graphic Organizer handout (attached; 1 group or table)
- I Used to Think... But Now I Know handout (attached; 1 half-sheet per student)
- Pencils
- Clipboards

Engage

Presenter's Note: Prior Preparation

Before the session begins, print and cut out one set of the attached **Card Sort Career Cards** for each table (or one per the anticipated number of groups).

Use the attached **Presentation Slides** to guide the activity. Begin with **slide 2** to introduce this activity to students. Welcome students and let them know that this session presents an exciting opportunity to visit a college campus and gain valuable insights about the various degrees and career goals associated with college, as well as other postsecondary education (PSE) options.

Transition to **slide 3**, titled "Housekeeping: Norms," and discuss the list of expectations for the visit with students:

- Keep cell phones on silent.
- Behave like a guest—represent your school well.
- Leave campus as clean as it was when you arrived.
- Stay engaged in all activities.
- Ask related questions.
- Follow all instructions.
- Stay with your group.

Move to **slide 4** and briefly discuss the activity objectives with students.

Go to **slide 5**. To access students' prior knowledge, ask students whether they have ever been to a college campus before or about their other experiences with college campuses. Ask students to raise their hands if they have been to the campus you are visiting before. If they have, ask them why. For example, students may have attended a campus football game, visited an older sibling who attends, etc. Solicit a few responses from the group before moving on.

Explore

Move to **slide 6** and introduce students to the Always, Sometimes, or Never True strategy. Sort the class into groups of 2–3.

Move to **slide 7** and read the following statement to the group.

- A person who goes to college earns more money than a person who doesn't.

Provide time for each group to discuss and decide whether it is always, sometimes, or never true. Ask each group to be prepared to share their answer and reasoning, and invite students to choose a spokesperson for their group.

Display **slide 8** and inform the group that this statement is sometimes true—it depends on the job.

Repeat this for each statement and answer, moving through **slides 9–18.**

Presenter's Note: Presentation Slide Notes

The notes section in the presentation provides explanations for each of the statements. Use these optional resources to help explain to students the reasoning behind each statement.

Sample Student Responses

Opinions may vary about many answers, but a few of these statements are facts that have a basis in research. Other statements are simply viewpoints. Help students distinguish between the two using the Speaker Notes in the Presentation Slides. Other facts covered during this activity support many of these statements as well.

After each group has responded and all statements have been discussed, invite students to raise their hands if they like money. Ask a few students with raised hands to share out what they want to buy with their money.

Transition to **slide 19**, titled "Let's Talk About Money." Inform students that statistics show individuals with college degrees do make more money than an individual with just a high school diploma.

Go to **slide 20**. Introduce the essential question: "What types of education are needed for different types of careers?" Ask students to keep this question in mind throughout the next activity.

20 minutes

Explain

Go to **slide 21**. Introduce students to the Card Sort strategy. Sort students into groups of 2–5. Pass out the attached **Card Sort Graphic Organizer** and each set of the prepared Card Sort Career Cards (one set per group or one per table). Invite students to take each Career Card and match it to the appropriate category on the Card Sort Graphic Organizer—career tech, 2-year degree, or 4-year degree.

Presenter's Note: Scaffolding Activity

If students are uncertain, ask them to simply do their best—the answers will be revealed when everyone is finished. If you choose to give students a hint, consider revealing that there are four cards in each category. Alternatively, you may consider selecting one of the careers to discuss briefly and let students know which category it belongs in.

Ask students if they know the difference between 2-year colleges, 4-year universities, and career techs. Give the class a few minutes to share answers and guide their responses. You may also consider asking for students to share examples of 2-year colleges, 4-year universities, and career techs if they know of any.

Transition to **slide 22** to reveal the definitions for each category. Give students an opportunity to re-sort their cards based on the appropriate definitions. Ask the class to share any changes they made after discovering more about each category.

Now, transition to **slide 23** to reveal the Card Sort answers for occupations and salary averages in the "Career Tech" category. Repeat this process with **slide 24** (2-year degree) and **slide 25** (4-year degree). After revealing these answers, ask students whether they noticed a pattern about these careers and salaries, or if anything about the categories stood out to them. Ask students to think about advantages and potential challenges for each pathway (e.g., earning potential, flexibility, skill development, job market demand).

Presenter's Note: Salaries

All salaries on slides 23–25 reflect the national average as of January 2024.

Sample Student Responses

Students may notice that careers with higher education levels typically make more money, though there are exceptions to this. This ties back into the Always, Sometimes, or Never True activity. It is also important to note that the salaries listed are national averages.

10 minutes

Extend

Transition to **slide 26**. Introduce the graph on the slide, which illustrates differing amounts of average income based on education level. Ask students what they notice about the graph—does it support the data on the previous slides in terms of careers and their corresponding degree requirements? Did the degrees that required more education also tend to pay more? Ask students to think about real-world examples within their community that might support the information in the statement and the graph, and to keep an eye out for real-world examples like these in the future.

Display **slide 27**. Click to reveal the first of five benefits for attending college: "Earn $1 million more in your lifetime." Inform students that these are all backed by research (see the presenter's notes under the slide). Note to students that money was mentioned earlier in the presentation—research shows that the amount of money a degree holder makes over their lifetime adds up to $1 million more. Discuss this as a group. Advance to the next benefit when you are ready.

Presenter's Note: Presentation Slide Notes

The notes section in the presentation provides research-based explanations for each of the statements. Use these optional resources to help explain to students the reasoning behind each statement.

- Click to reveal the next benefit: "Be happier in your job." Discuss why this is true.
- Click to reveal the next benefit: "Increase your job options." Discuss why college grads have more job options.
- Click to reveal the next benefits: "Live longer and healthier" and "More satisfying family life." Discuss why this could be true.

Ask students to consider everything discussed so far, thinking back to the jobs in the Card Sort and all the information discussed in the presentation. Invite students to think about what job or career they are interested in. Have a few volunteers share out. Ask them, "What kind of education would you need for that job?"

Evaluate

Transition to **slide 28** and introduce students to the I Used to Think... But Now I Know strategy. Pass out a half-sheet of the attached **I Used to Think... But Now I Know** handout, a pencil, and a clipboard to each student. Ask students to reflect on their ideas about postsecondary education before this activity, listing at least one idea they had before in the "I Used to Think..." column. Then have students reflect on what they've learned today, writing down something new they've learned as a result of the campus visit in the "Now I Know..." column. Have their thoughts, opinions, or knowledge changed?

Follow-up Activities

In the year following this campus visit, consider implementing the 8th grade campus visit as a follow-up to this activity.

Research Rationale

College can be a life-altering experience for students, and not only academically. Here are just a few of the ways in which college can change students' lives for the better: earning a bachelor's degree will allow students to earn, on average, $1 million more than high school graduates over the course of their careers (Starrett et al., 2022). College offers students an opportunity to build relationships with mentors and peers that will benefit them throughout their careers (D'Agostino, 2022). College graduates tend to have more job satisfaction, jobs that offer a greater sense of accomplishment, more independence and opportunities for creativity, and more social interactions in their jobs than non college graduates (Wolniak & Engberg, 2019). College graduation increases the chances of employment. Over the last 20 years, the unemployment rate for college graduates has been approximately half that of high school graduates (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022). College helps students develop skills that prepare them for careers in the tech-driven economy, including nonroutine, abstract skills that aid in problem-solving, multitasking, and creativity (Oreopoulos & Petronijevic, 2013).

Resources

- Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. (2022, March 9). High school graduates with no college had unemployment rate of 4.5 percent in February 2022. The Economics Daily. https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2022/high-school-graduates-with-no-college-had-unemployment-rate-of-4-5-percent-in-february-2022.htm
- D'Agostino, S. (2022, August 4). Leveling the playing field for social capital. Can technology help equalize students' access to relationships that provide support, information and opportunity? Inside Higher Ed. https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2022/08/05/how-colleges-can-level-playing-field-social-capital
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Always, sometimes, or never true. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/145
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Card sort. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/147
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I used to think... but now I know. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/137
- National Association for College Admission Counseling. (2017). Step by step: College awareness and planning for families, counselors and communities. https://www.nacacnet.org/advocacy--ethics/initiatives/steps/
- Oreopoulos, P. & Petronijevic, U. (2013). Making college worth it: A review of the returns to higher education. *The Future of Children, 23*(1), 41–65.
- Starrett, A., Irvin, M. J., Limberg, D., & Ferguson, S. (2022). Rethinking the college-for-all ethos. Theory Into Practice, 61(4), 443-453.
- Wolniak, G. C. & Engberg, M. E. (2019). Do "high-impact" college experiences affect early career outcomes? The Review of Higher Education, 42(3), 825-858.