Career Exploration: The Incredible Journey

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Essential Question(s)

- What career possibilities are there?

Summary

In this activity, students participate in hands-on career exploration stations then reflect on their new knowledge about career possibilities.

Learning Goals

Attachments

- Career Reflection—The Incredible Journey - Spanish.docx
- Career Reflection—The Incredible Journey.docx
- Career Reflection—The Incredible Journey.pdf
- Career Research Poster—The Incredible Journey - Spanish.docx
- Career Research Poster—The Incredible Journey.docx
- Career Research Poster—The Incredible Journey.pdf

Materials

- Career Reflection handout (attached; one per student)
- Career Research Poster handout (attached; one per student)
- Variety of career exploration activity materials
- Poster paper
- Markers

20 minutes

Knowledge Building

Provide time for students to complete each career station. Monitor students as they participate in the stations and provide help when necessary. Consider setting a timer to ensure that students have time to visit all stations.

20 minutes

Reflection

Have students return to their desks and give each student one copy of the **Career Reflection** handout. Provide students time to complete the reflection. Collect students' reflections as the finish them. Review each reflection to assess students' feelings about their new knowledge of careers. Use students' reflections to inform your next career awareness activities.

After you have reviewed the reflections, return the Career Reflections to students. Have students compile all of their Career Reflection handouts into a single collection after they have completed every career exploration station. This collection serves as a comprehensive list of the careers students have explored so they can review their favorites.

Research Rationale

When schools provide opportunities for students to explore careers during the years of secondary school, students are more likely to make informed decisions about the careers they choose to pursue after high school. Additionally, student engagement is increased and graduation rates improve when students are given time to learn about careers (Godbey & Gordon, 2019; James, 2024; Kim & Lee, 2023).

Preschool and elementary-aged students typically acquire ideas about which careers may fit their interests from a small pool of information and judge their ideas about careers based on common misconceptions (Masters & Barth, 2022). To overcome any misjudgments, early education centered around career exploration is necessary (Ginerva et al., 2024). Early career exploration ensures that students comprehend a wide range of potential career pathways and possibilities (Cinamon & Yeshayahu, 2021).

When developing a career education program, educators should include a variety of career interests and outcomes that allow students to determine their potential vocational strengths and talents (Ginerva et al., 2024; James, 2024; Kim & Lee, 2023). To create genuine connections about career possibilities, career exploration should incorporate activities that engage students in hands-on learning. Students are more likely to retain information about potential careers when they participate in hands-on activities that mimic the work of career professionals to the greatest extent possible (Godbey & Gordon, 2019; Groth, 2024; Oliveira & Araújo, 2022; Turnlund, 2019). By exploring job-specific tools or practicing job-related tasks, students find out what careers they are interested in learning more about and discover what careers they are not interested in pursuing (Turnlund, 2019).

Resources

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