

Make an Escape: Career Exploration Using Digital Breakouts

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Time Frame 60 minutes

Essential Question(s)

How can integrating technology into a learning environment shape students' career exploration?

Summary

This professional development session focuses on authentic instruction and implementation of technology in the classroom. During this session, participants explore the K20 Center Mentoring Team's materials, resources, and activities through a digital breakout session. Participants will have an opportunity to explore a pre-made digital breakout based on the various career clusters and assess the value of embedding breakouts in instruction. Additional career exploration resources and ideas to increase student engagement are also included in this session. Participants are encouraged to bring their own technology to this session so they can fully engage in the activities.

Learning Goals

- Engage in a digital breakout that integrates career exploration with technology.
- Analyze the resources and determine how they can be incorporated into the curriculum.

Attachments

- Digital Breakout How-to Guide—Make an Escape.pdf
- Presentation Slides—Make an Escape.pptx

Materials

- Presentation Slides (attached)
- Digital Breakout How-To Guide (attached)
- Note Catcher and Resources Sheet (attached)
- Sticky notes
- Poster paper
- Markers
- Pens/pencils
- Individual devices
- Internet capabilities
- Projector with computer connections

Engage

Presenter's Note: Setup

Prior to the presentation, set up four posters around the room. Label two posters "Parking Lot" for participants to write down questions that they want to come back to at a later time. Label the other two posters "How Am I Feeling? What Am I Thinking?" for the evaluation activity.

Begin with the attached **Presentation Slides.**

Show **slide 2** to display presentation title, "Make an Escape: Career Exploration Using Digital Breakouts."

Welcome participants and introduce yourself and your background.

Show **slide 3**. Share the essential question: *How can integrating technology into a learning environment shape students' career exploration?*

Share the session objectives on **slide 4.** Inform the participants that by the end of the presentation, they will evaluate how well the objectives were met.

1. Engage in a digital breakout that integrates career exploration with technology.
2. Analyze the resources and determine how they can be incorporated into the curriculum.

Transition to **slide 5**. Share pertinent background about the K20 Center at the University of Oklahoma, as well as the GEAR UP goals for GEAR UP for the FUTURE, GEAR UP O+K=C, and GEAR UP for MY SUCCESS.

The K20 Center is an educational research center founded in 1995. The Center was previously awarded two GEAR UP grants and currently has three GEAR UP partnership grants that were awarded in 2018 and run through 2025. These grants include GEAR UP for the FUTURE, GEAR UP O+K=C, and GEAR UP for MY SUCCESS.

- Increased cohort student engagement in learning and increased percentages of students who are academically prepared for post-secondary education (PSE) upon graduation;
- Increased high school graduation rates and PSE enrollment rates;
- Increased students' and families' knowledge and understanding of PSE options, preparation, and financing.

Mention to the participants that the GEAR UP grants we work with serve our cohort students, who are currently in 9th & 10th grades.

Display **slide 6.** Share the instructional strategy Always, Sometimes, or Never True with participants. Review the statements on **slides 7-11** with participants as a whole group. *Remember, the goal of this activity is not for participants to get all of the answers correct, but to engage them in meaningful conversations.*

1. Middle school is a key time period to begin more focused career exploration with students.
    - Answer - **Always True**. Explain that students start thinking about career goals in elementary school, but middle school is a perfect time to start a consistent focus on career exploration.
2. Students should know what career they want before enrolling in a postsecondary education institution.
    - Answer - **Sometimes True**. The goal of career education is to introduce students to knowledge of career options before PSE. Many, however, may still be researching the best career path for them when they enter PSE institutions.
3. Businesses want employees with more than a high school diploma.
    - Answer - **Sometimes True**. This depends entirely on the career choice and the business.
4. People with a college education generally have more careers to choose from.
    - Answer - **Sometimes True**. Earning a college degree can, in fact, increase a person's career options. Additional opportunities can also come from a student's completing a career technical and/or vocational program and receiving certification.
5. Over the course of a lifetime, a college graduate will earn twice as much as a high school graduate.
    - Answer - **Sometimes True.** Research shows that, on average, students who earn a college degree will earn $1 million more in their lifetime than high school graduates over the course of their careers (Abel & Deitz, 2014).

Explore

Display **slide 12**. Explain that because we have three different grants, we are able to serve schools from all over Oklahoma. The map displays the 88 schools we serve across Oklahoma. We use a two-grade cohort model serving roughly 12,222 students. Share the link to the GEAR UP Infogram and allow participants to explore it.

Display **slide 13**. Share with participants that K20 Center offers a wide variety of career services, including events such as our virtual Career Expo, Career Cafes, College2Career Forum, career cluster activities, and peer mentoring programs. We will look more closely at these services throughout the presentation. If participants want more information on these services, invite them to reach out to the mentoring team at gearupmentor@groups.ou.edu.

Display **slide 14**. Pass out the attached **Digital Breakout How-To Guide** and **Note Catcher and Resources Sheet** to each participant. Explain that the guide offers additional support they may need when they explore the breakout activity.

Display **slide 15.** Share the basics of digital breakouts.

Display **slide 16.** Share the link to the Career Exploration Google Site with participants. Instruct them to use their handouts to keep track of the activity and to take any notes they think will help them. Use the timer on the slide to help them keep track of their remaining time.

Explain

Display **slide 17.** Introduce participants to the instructional strategy, I Notice, I Wonder. Ask them to share with the group what they noticed, liked, found to be helpful, or connections they can make with their students/teaching. If participants are not sharing, teammates can share what they noticed/overheard/talked about while circulating the room during the breakout.

Ask participants the following:

- Of the videos they explored, which ones do they think will most benefit their students?
- How can they implement these videos in their classrooms?
- How can they incorporate these resources into their classrooms?
- Which activities do they think their students will be most likely to participate in?
- How can they use the Career Cluster Infogram in their classroom to support student career exploration?

Extend

Display **slide 18**. Turn participants' attention to the other side of the Note Catcher. Several additional helpful resources for career exploration are listed here. We also have two other programs outside of our ZIYC (Zoom into Your Career) videos, our Career Cafe and College2Career forum. These are other ways we connect businesses with students.

Find these links on the resources page. If you have any interest in finding out ways to help students in career exploration, please connect with us. We can assist you in finding out which of our programs works best for you.

Provide participants with time to review the linked information in their handouts.

Evaluate

Display **slide 19** and share the instructional strategy, How Am I Feeling? What Am I Thinking?

Have participants use a sticky note. Ask them to draw a line diagonally or down the middle to create halves. On one side, ask them to draw a picture representing how they feel after the session. On the other side, ask them to write a sentence explaining what they understand or think now. This could be a question or a comment that they have regarding their learning or a description of the experience itself.

Once participants have completed their sticky notes, please add them to one of the two posters located (where they are) in the room.

Research Rationale

- Students can use Google Docs and the other Google Apps to collaborate on group projects. These resources enable them to all write on one document or presentation at the same time. Normally, group work falls on one student or a few in the group, but with Google Apps for Education (GAFE), students can sit separately and contribute simultaneously.
- The teacher can also review the work of each student, further encouraging students to do their part during projects. Using GAFE, teachers can access student work at any given time to check for progress, provide feedback, review or grade assignments.
- A case study done at in 2011 at the KIPP Academy of Opportunity in Los Angeles, California, found that students were likely to be engaged in interactive learning and collaboration while using Google Apps. Teachers liked the apps because they could provide more resources at once and allow students to choose areas which best supported their work (Google, 2011).
- Authentic lessons create opportunities for collaboration, which lead to the exploration of multiple perspectives and various points of views to be heard during a lesson.
- Researchers found that "[a]uthentic learning environments need to provide collaborative learning where, for example, more able partners can assist with scaffolding and coaching, and where teachers provide appropriate learning support" (Herrington, J., 2014; Collins et al., 1989; Greenfield, 1984).
- Herrington, J. et al., describe the four components in an authentic lesson as follows:
    - Students should seek to solve a real-life problem to which they attach emotional commitment as well as a cognitive interest.
    - The problem should be sufficiently open-ended so that there are a variety of strategies for its solution.
    - The problem-solving strategies and "solutions" developed should encourage students to change their actions, beliefs, or attitudes.
    - The problem should have a real audience beyond the classroom. Authentic tasks are more worthy of the investment of time and effort in higher education than de-contextualized exercises and tasks (Herrington & Herrington, 2006).

Google Apps for Education (GAFE) do not replace the teacher, but provide a tool that facilitates authenticity during instruction.

Resources

- Abel, J. and Deitz, R. (2014). Do the benefits of college still outweigh the costs? *Current issues in economics and finance*, Vol. 20. Number 3. https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/research/current_issues/ci20-3.pdf
- Google for Education. (2011). Case studies and stories from grade school to grad school. Impact stories from around the globe | *Google for Education*
- Herrington, A., & Herrington, J. (2006). What is an authentic learning environment?. In *Authentic Learning Environments in Higher Education* (pp. 1-14). IGI Global. http://doi:10.4018/978-1-59140-594-8.ch001
- Herrington, J., Parker J., Boase-Jelinek, D. (2014). Connected authentic learning: Reflection and intentional learning. *Australian journal of education.* Vol. 58, Issue 1. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0004944113517830
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Always, Sometimes, or Never True. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/145
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Careers. Student Activities. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/search?type=student-resources
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