

Job Skills & Workplace Readiness

Comprehensive Unit

Grades 9-12 | Life Skills & Transition Program

- ◆ 12 Detailed Lesson Plans
- ◆ Job Application Practice Set
- ◆ 30 Mock Interview Role-Play Cards
- ◆ 20 Workplace Communication Scenarios
- ◆ Dress Code Comparison Activity
- ◆ Pay Stub Analysis Worksheet
- ◆ Employer Expectations Poster Set

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson Plans

Lesson 1: Introduction to Workplace Readiness

Lesson 2: Identifying Job Interests and Skills

Lesson 3: Job Search Strategies

Lesson 4: Completing Job Applications

Lesson 5: Resume Basics for Beginners

Lesson 6: Interview Preparation

Lesson 7: Mock Interview Practice

Lesson 8: Workplace Communication

Lesson 9: Following Directions at Work

Lesson 10: Professional Behavior and Ethics

Lesson 11: Time Management on the Job

Lesson 12: Understanding Your Pay Stub

Job Application Practice Set

Mock Interview Role-Play Cards (30)

Workplace Communication Scenarios (20)

Dress Code Comparison Activity

Pay Stub Analysis Worksheet

Employer Expectations Poster Set

LESSON 1

Introduction to Workplace Readiness

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Objectives:

- Students will define workplace readiness and explain why it matters.
- Students will identify at least three skills employers expect from new hires.
- Students will articulate one personal goal related to employment.

Materials Needed

- Whiteboard and markers
- Handout: What Does It Mean to Be Work-Ready? (provided in this unit)
- Sticky notes (one per student)
- Chart paper for class brainstorm

Key Vocabulary

Workplace readiness: Having the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to succeed in a job.

Employer: A person or company that hires people to work.

Employee: A person who works for an employer in exchange for pay.

Soft skills: Personal qualities and social skills that help you work well with others.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction (5-10 min)

- Ask students: What do you think employers look for when they hire someone? Record responses on chart paper.
- Explain that today begins a unit on job skills and workplace readiness - the tools they need to get and keep a job.

Direct Instruction (10-15 min)

- Define workplace readiness using the vocabulary term. Discuss why it matters for life after high school.
- Present the top five skills employers want: reliability, communication, positive attitude, teamwork, and willingness to learn.
- Share 2-3 real-world examples of employees who succeeded or struggled because of these skills.

Guided Practice (10-15 min)

- Distribute the What Does It Mean to Be Work-Ready? handout. Read through it together as a class.
- As a group, sort examples of workplace behaviors into Work-Ready and Not Work-Ready categories on the board.

- Discuss each example, asking students to explain their reasoning.

Independent Practice (10-15 min)

- Each student writes one personal employment goal on a sticky note (e.g., I want to learn how to fill out a job application).
- Students complete the reflection question on the handout: Which workplace skill do I need to work on the most and why?

Closure (5 min)

- Students share their sticky notes and post them on a class Our Employment Goals poster.
- Teacher summarizes: Workplace readiness is a combination of skills we can all learn and practice.

Assessment

- Completed handout with thoughtful reflection answer.
- Participation in class discussion and sorting activity.
- Quality of personal employment goal on sticky note.

Differentiation / Adaptations

- Provide a word bank for the reflection question for students who need writing support.
- Pair students for the sorting activity to encourage peer discussion.
- Use picture-based examples for students who benefit from visual supports.

LESSON 2

Identifying Job Interests and Skills

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Objectives:

- Students will identify at least three personal interests that could connect to jobs.
- Students will distinguish between hard skills and soft skills.
- Students will match personal skills to at least two job categories.

Materials Needed

- Handout: My Skills and Interests Inventory (provided in this unit)
- Job category cards (Retail, Food Service, Office/Admin, Healthcare, Trades, Technology)
- Markers and colored pencils

Key Vocabulary

Hard skills: Specific, teachable abilities that can be measured, like operating a cash register or using a computer program.

Soft skills: Interpersonal qualities like communication, teamwork, and attitude.

Job category: A group of jobs that share similar tasks or work environments.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction (5-10 min)

- Ask: If you could work at any job right now, what would it be? Why? Allow 3-4 students to share.
- Explain that today we will explore what we enjoy and what we are good at, and how those connect to real jobs.

Direct Instruction (10-15 min)

- Explain the difference between hard skills and soft skills with concrete examples (hard: typing 40 WPM; soft: being patient with customers).
- Introduce the job category cards. Briefly describe each category and give 1-2 example jobs for each.
- Model completing a few items on the My Skills and Interests Inventory using a fictional student as an example.

Guided Practice (10-15 min)

- Students complete the My Skills and Interests Inventory with teacher support, circling interests and checking skills they have.
- In small groups, students share one interest and one skill, and group members suggest a job that might fit.
- Groups report back to the class with their suggestions.

Independent Practice (10-15 min)

- Students select two job categories that interest them most and write 2-3 sentences about why each appeals to them.
- Students list one hard skill and one soft skill they want to develop for their chosen job categories.

Closure (5 min)

- Class discussion: How do our interests and skills help us choose the right job?
- Preview next lesson: Next time we will learn how to actually find and search for jobs.

Assessment

- Completed My Skills and Interests Inventory handout.
- Written responses about two job categories with reasoning.
- Active participation in group discussion.

Differentiation / Adaptations

- Provide a simplified version of the inventory with pictures for students who need visual supports.
 - Offer a word bank of skills and interests for students who need help generating ideas.
 - Allow verbal responses instead of written ones for students with writing difficulties.
-

MOCK INTERVIEW ROLE-PLAY CARDS

How to Use These Cards:

1. Pair students up. One student is the Interviewer, the other is the Candidate.
2. The Interviewer reads the job setting and asks the three questions on the card.
3. The Candidate answers using professional language and good body language.
4. After the interview, the Interviewer uses the tip on the card to give constructive feedback.
5. Switch roles and use a new card!

CARD 1

Retail Cashier

Setting: Maplewood Gift Shop

Interview Questions:

- Why do you want to work in our gift shop?
- How would you handle a customer who is upset because an item is out of stock?
- Tell me about a time you had to handle money carefully.

Candidate Tip: Focus on making eye contact while answering.

CARD 2

Grocery Bagger

Setting: Valley Foods Grocery

Interview Questions:

- What makes you a good fit for a fast-paced grocery store?
- How do you make sure you put the right items in the right bags?
- Describe a time you helped someone carry something.

Candidate Tip: Speak clearly and loudly enough for the interviewer to hear.

CARD 3

Fast Food Crew

Setting: Burger Planet

Interview Questions:

- Why do you want to work at Burger Planet?
- Our restaurant gets very busy at lunch. How do you handle working fast under pressure?
- What does good customer service look like to you?

Candidate Tip: Try to use the interviewer's name at least once.

CARD 4

Dog Walker

Setting: Happy Paws Pet Care

Interview Questions:

- Tell me about your experience with dogs or other pets.
- What would you do if a dog you were walking started barking at another dog?
- How do you make sure you are on time for appointments?

Candidate Tip: Show your enthusiasm for animals with a smile.

CARD 5

Library Page

Setting: Maplewood Public Library

Interview Questions:

- Why are you interested in working at the library?
- How do you keep things organized?
- What would you do if a customer asked you a question and you didn't know the answer?

Candidate Tip: Practice sitting up straight with good posture.

CARD 6

Camp Counselor

Setting: Camp Sunshine Summer Program

Interview Questions:

- Why do you want to work with younger kids?
- How would you handle a camper who is not following the rules?
- Give an example of a time you were a good leader.

Candidate Tip: Use positive words like 'patient' and 'helpful.'

CARD 7

Coffee Shop Barista

Setting: The Daily Grind Cafe

Interview Questions:

- How do you memorize new information, like drink recipes?
- What would you do if a customer said their drink was made incorrectly?
- Are you comfortable standing for long periods of time?

Candidate Tip: End the interview by saying 'Thank you for your time.'

CARD 8

Custodian

Setting: Lincoln High School

Interview Questions:

- Why is cleanliness important in a school environment?
- How do you make sure you don't miss a spot when cleaning?
- Are you comfortable using cleaning equipment like mops and vacuums?

Candidate Tip: Make sure to give complete answers, not just 'yes' or 'no.'

#9201; BE ON TIME

- Arrive 5-10 minutes before your shift starts.
- If you are going to be late, call your supervisor immediately.
- Return from breaks and lunch on time.
- Being punctual shows you are reliable and respectful of others' time.

#9733; DRESS FOR SUCCESS

- Follow the dress code or uniform policy every day.
- Make sure your clothes are clean, neat, and wrinkle-free.
- Wear appropriate, safe footwear for your job.
- Good hygiene and grooming are part of a professional appearance.

☞ WORK TOGETHER

- Be willing to help your coworkers when they need it.
- Communicate clearly, politely, and professionally.
- Listen to others' ideas and respect different opinions.
- A positive team makes the workplace better for everyone.

☺ STAY POSITIVE

- Keep a good attitude, even when tasks are difficult or repetitive.
- Smile and greet customers and coworkers warmly.
- Accept constructive feedback gracefully and use it to improve.
- A positive attitude is contagious and makes you a pleasure to work with.

✓ FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS

- Listen carefully when your boss gives you a task.
- Ask questions if you do not understand the directions.
- Complete tasks the right way the first time.
- Following instructions keeps you safe and ensures quality work.

Thank You for Choosing

UM Printables

Your feedback helps me create the highest quality resources for special education and transition classrooms.

If you found this unit helpful, please take a moment to leave a review on Teachers Pay Teachers!

Your opinion matters!

Thank you for supporting small businesses and the students we serve.

UM Printables