CTE RESOURCE UNIT

Entrepreneurship & Business Fundamentals

Grades 9-12 | 4-Week Unit | 20 Lesson Plans

Business & Finance CTE Pathway Aligned

Business Idea Generation | Market Research | Business Plans
Marketing Basics | Financial Projections | Legal Structures | Shark Tank Pitch

UM Printables

Premium Educational Resources

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UNIT OVERVIEW

Entrepreneurship & Business Fundamentals

Unit at a Glance

Course	Entrepreneurship & Business Fundamentals
Grade Level	9-12
Duration	4 Weeks (20 Lessons, 50 minutes each)
CTE Pathway	Business & Finance
Prerequisites	None - introductory unit
Culminating Assessment	Mini Shark Tank Pitch Presentation

Unit Description

This four-week CTE unit introduces students in Grades 9-12 to the foundational concepts of entrepreneurship and business. Through a progressive sequence of 20 lessons, students move from ideation and opportunity recognition through market research, business planning, marketing strategy, financial projection, and legal structure selection. The unit culminates in a Mini Shark Tank pitch presentation where students showcase their original business concepts to a panel of peers. Aligned to the Business & Finance CTE pathway, this unit develops critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and analytical skills essential for future business leaders and entrepreneurs.

CTE Standards Alignment

Standard Code	Standard Description
CTE.BF.1.1	Analyze the principles and concepts of entrepreneurship.
CTE.BF.1.2	Identify and evaluate business opportunities and ideas.
CTE.BF.2.1	Conduct market research to determine feasibility of a business idea.
CTE.BF.2.2	Develop a business plan including marketing, financial, and operational components.
CTE.BF.3.1	Describe the marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) and its application.
CTE.BF.4.1	Interpret financial statements and create basic financial projections.
CTE.BF.5.1	Compare and contrast legal structures for a business (Sole Proprietorship, Partnership, LLC, Corporation).
CTE.BF.6.1	Develop and deliver a persuasive business pitch to potential stakeholders.

Essential Questions

Q: What makes a business idea viable, and how do entrepreneurs identify problems worth solving?
Q: How does market research inform and shape a business concept?
Q: What are the critical components of a comprehensive business plan?
Q: How do the 4Ps of marketing work together to reach a target audience?
Q: Why is understanding financial projections and legal structures essential for a new business?
Q: How do entrepreneurs effectively communicate their vision to secure resources and support?

Key Vocabulary

Entrepreneur, Value Proposition, Target Market, Market Research, Business Plan, Revenue Stream, Startup Costs, Marketing Mix (4Ps), Branding, Profit & Loss Statement, Break-Even Point, Sole Proprietorship, Partnership, LLC, Corporation, Pitch Deck, Equity, Elevator Pitch

Assessment Overview

Assessment Type	Description	Weight
Formative	Daily exit tickets, class discussions, worksheet completion, peer feedback.	30%
Business Plan Draft	A completed business plan template developed over Weeks 1-3.	30%
Mini Shark Tank Pitch	Culminating presentation of the business idea using a pitch deck.	40%

1 WEEK 1: BUSINESS IDEA GENERATION & MARKET RESEARCH

Lessons 1-5

LESSON 1

Introduction to Entrepreneurship

Duration: 50 min

OBJECTIVES

Define entrepreneurship and identify key characteristics of successful entrepreneurs.
Differentiate between an idea and a viable business opportunity.
Analyze real-world examples of entrepreneurial success and failure.

MATERIALS

Whiteboard/Projector, Sticky notes, Handout: Entrepreneur Profile

WARM-UP / BELL-RINGER

Write down one product or service you used today. Who do you think created it, and what problem does it solve?

DIRECT INSTRUCTION

Define Entrepreneurship: The process of creating, launching, and running a business, taking on financial risks in the hope of profit.

Discuss key traits: resilience, adaptability, vision, risk-tolerance, and passion.

Contrast Idea vs. Opportunity: An idea is a thought; an opportunity is a favorable set of circumstances with market demand.

Case Studies: Briefly analyze Sara Blakely (Spanx) and Elon Musk (Tesla/SpaceX) regarding how they identified opportunities.

GUIDED PRACTICE

In small groups, students brainstorm a list of 5 local entrepreneurs or businesses.

Groups identify the core problem each business solves and present one to the class.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Students complete the 'Entrepreneur Profile' handout, identifying an entrepreneur they admire and listing three traits that make them successful.

Students write a brief reflection: 'Could I be an entrepreneur? Why or why not?'

CLOSURE

Share-out: What is the most important trait an entrepreneur can have and why?

ASSESSMENT

Exit Ticket: Explain the difference between an idea and an opportunity in 2-3 sentences.

DIFFERENTIATION

Provide a word bank of entrepreneurial traits for the profile handout. Offer advanced students a secondary case study on a tech startup failure.

HOMEWORK / EXTENSION

Interview a family member or friend about a business they started or wish they started. Take 3-5 bullet point notes.

LESSON 2

Identifying Problems & Opportunities

Duration: 50 min

OBJECTIVES

- Recognize that successful businesses solve specific problems or fulfill needs.
- Conduct a 'Complaints Audit' to identify everyday frustrations.
- Frame a problem into a potential business opportunity.

MATERIALS

Whiteboard/Projector, Chart paper, Markers

WARM-UP / BELL-RINGER

What is the most frustrating part of your typical morning routine? Why?

DIRECT INSTRUCTION

Concept: Problems are the seeds of opportunity. If a problem affects enough people, solving it is a business.

Types of needs: Functional (saves time, makes money), Emotional (reduces stress, brings joy), Social (connects people, builds status).

Framework: 'How Might We...' statements. Example: 'How might we make it easier for students to find study groups?'

GUIDED PRACTICE

The Complaints Audit: Groups list 10 common complaints or frustrations they hear from peers or family.

Groups categorize each complaint as Functional, Emotional, or Social.

Groups select their top 2 complaints and rewrite them as 'How Might We...' opportunities.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Students independently list 5 personal frustrations.

Select the most frustrating item and draft a brief paragraph explaining who else might share this problem and why.

CLOSURE

Class Discussion: How does changing a complaint into a 'How Might We' statement change your perspective?

ASSESSMENT

Teacher observation of group categorization and individual 'How Might We' draft.

WEEK 3: MARKETING BASICS & FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

3

Lessons 11-15

LESSON 11

Marketing Basics & the Marketing Mix

Duration: 50 min

OBJECTIVES

- Define marketing and its role in a business.
- Identify and explain the 4Ps of the Marketing Mix: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion.
- Apply the 4Ps to a real-world product.

MATERIALS

Projector, Marketing Mix (4Ps) Worksheet (Resource included later), Sample product packaging/images

WARM-UP / BELL-RINGER

Think of the last time you bought something you didn't strictly need. What convinced you to buy it?

DIRECT INSTRUCTION

Definition: Marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives.

The Marketing Mix (4Ps): The set of tactical actions a business takes to bring a product to market.

Product: What you are selling (features, quality, branding, packaging).

Price: The amount customers pay (pricing strategy, discounts, perceived value).

Place: Where and how the product is distributed (retail store, e-commerce, direct-to-consumer).

Promotion: How customers learn about the product (advertising, social media, PR, sales).

GUIDED PRACTICE

Groups are assigned a familiar product (e.g., a specific energy drink, a popular video game).

Groups complete the 4Ps worksheet for their assigned product, detailing specific strategies for each 'P'.

Groups present their 4Ps analysis to the class.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Students begin filling out the Marketing Mix (4Ps) Worksheet for their own business idea.

Focus on clearly defining the 'Product' features/benefits and brainstorming at least three 'Promotion' strategies.

CLOSURE

If you only had enough money to execute one of the 4Ps well for a new business, which one would it be and why?

ASSESSMENT

Teacher reviews the 4Ps worksheet for accurate application of concepts to the student's business idea.

DIFFERENTIATION

Provide a completed 4Ps example for a similar business to serve as a model. Challenge advanced students to introduce a 5th P (People or Positioning) and explain its relevance.

HOMEWORK / EXTENSION

Complete the Marketing Mix (4Ps) Worksheet for your business. Be specific about your pricing strategy and distribution (Place).

LESSON 12

Branding & Positioning

Duration: 50 min

OBJECTIVES

- Define branding and identify the components of a brand (logo, colors, voice, tagline).
- Understand brand positioning and how a business differentiates itself in the market.
- Develop a basic brand identity for their business concept.

MATERIALS

Projector, Brand Identity Kit Template, Colored pencils/markers

WARM-UP / BELL-RINGER

What comes to mind when you see a red bullseye logo? Or a half-eaten apple? Why do these images trigger specific thoughts?

DIRECT INSTRUCTION

Branding is more than a logo; it is the overall perception of a company in the minds of consumers.

Components of Brand Identity: Name, Logo, Color Palette (and the psychology of color), Typography, and Brand Voice (tone of communication).

Positioning: How you want your brand to be perceived relative to competitors. (e.g., Budget-friendly vs. Premium luxury; Eco-friendly vs. High-tech).

Unique Selling Proposition (USP): The one factor that makes your business different from the competition.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Choose two competing brands (e.g., Coca-Cola vs. Pepsi, Nike vs. Adidas).

Identify the target audience, brand voice, and positioning for each. How do they differentiate themselves?

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Students complete the Brand Identity Kit Template for their business.

Sketch 2-3 logo concepts, choose a primary color scheme (with hex codes or colored pencils), and write a brand tagline.

Write a 2-sentence USP statement that defines their brand's unique position in the market.

CLOSURE

Share your tagline with the class. What emotion or promise does it convey to the customer?

RESOURCE 3: MARKETING MIX (4Ps) WORKSHEET

Lesson 11 Application

Instructions: Define the 4Ps for your business concept. Ensure that each 'P' aligns with your target market and value proposition.

PRODUCT ***What are you selling?***	**Features:** What does your product/service do? List key features. **Benefits:** How do those features help the customer? List key benefits.
PRICE ***What will you charge?***	**Pricing Strategy:** Cost-plus, Competitive, Value-based? **Price Point:** $______ per unit/service. **Justification:** Why did you choose this price?
PLACE ***Where will you sell it?***	**Distribution Channel:** Brick-and-mortar, E-commerce, Pop-up? **Location/Platform:** Specifically where? (URL, Address, Platform)
PROMOTION ***How will customers find you?***	**Advertising Channels:** Social media, SEO, flyers, radio? **Promotional Launch Tactic:** What is your first major marketing action?

RESOURCE 4: FINANCIAL PROJECTION TEMPLATE

Lessons 14-15 Application

Instructions: Estimate your financials for the first 3 months of operation. Use the formulas provided in class. (A digital Google Sheets version of this template with auto-calculating formulas is available on the TPT product page).

SECTION 1: STARTUP COSTS (One-Time Expenses)

Expense Item	Estimated Cost ($)
Equipment / Technology	
Initial Inventory / Supplies	
Legal / Registration Fees	
Website / Branding Setup	
TOTAL STARTUP COSTS	**$0.00**

SECTION 2: 3-MONTH PROJECTED PROFIT & LOSS

Category	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3
Revenue (Units Sold x Price)			
(-) Cost of Goods Sold (COGS)			
= Gross Profit (Revenue - COGS)			
(-) Fixed Expenses (Rent, Insurance, etc.)			
(-) Variable Expenses (Marketing, Shipping)			
= Net Profit / (Loss)			

SECTION 3: BREAK-EVEN ANALYSIS

Formula: Break-Even Units = Total Fixed Costs / (Price per Unit - Variable Cost per Unit)

Metric	Your Estimate
Price per Unit / Service	$
Variable Cost per Unit	$

RESOURCE 6: PITCH PRESENTATION RUBRIC

Mini Shark Tank Assessment

Instructions: This rubric will be used by the teacher to evaluate your Mini Shark Tank Pitch. Review it carefully to ensure your presentation meets the exemplary criteria.

Criteria	Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)
Business Concept & Value Proposition	Clearly and passionately articulates the problem and solution. Value proposition is highly compelling and unique.	Articulates the problem and solution. Value proposition is clear but may lack a strong unique differentiator.	Problem or solution is vague. Value proposition is unclear or not compelling to the target market.	Fails to clearly state a problem or solution. No clear value proposition provided.
Market Analysis & Strategy	Target market is specifically defined. Marketing mix (4Ps) is highly strategic, realistic, and aligned with the audience.	Target market is defined. Marketing mix is clear and generally aligned, but some elements may lack specific strategy.	Target market is too broad or undefined. Marketing mix is incomplete or strategies are unrealistic.	No clear target market. Marketing strategies are missing or entirely unfeasible.
Financial Viability	Financial projections are realistic, mathematically accurate, and clearly explain the path to profitability and break-even.	Financial projections are present and mostly accurate. Path to profitability is stated but may lack some justification.	Financial projections are incomplete, mathematically flawed, or fail to demonstrate an understanding of costs/revenue.	Financial projections are missing, or show no understanding of basic business math.
Presentation Skills	Excellent eye contact, vocal projection, and pacing. Confidently handles Q&A; without getting flustered.	Good eye contact and volume. Hesitates slightly during Q&A; but provides adequate answers.	Reads heavily from notes or screen. Mumbles or speaks too quickly. Struggles to answer basic Q&A.;	No eye contact, inaudible, or completely unprepared. Cannot answer questions about the business.
Pitch Deck Design	Slides are visually stunning, professional, and use high-quality graphics. Text is minimal and impactful.	Slides are neat and legible. Text may be slightly heavy, but the deck supports the presentation well.	Slides are cluttered, hard to read, or contain excessive text. Visuals are low quality or missing.	No pitch deck provided, or deck is illegible/disorganized and detracts from the pitch.

Total Score: ______ / 20 **Grade: ______**

RESOURCE 7: PEER JUDGING SCORE SHEET

Mini Shark Tank Evaluation

Instructions: As a 'Shark', use this sheet to evaluate your peers' presentations. Be fair, constructive, and specific. Score each category from 1 (Beginning) to 5 (Exemplary).

Presenter / Business Name: ____

Criteria	Score (1-5)	Comments / Constructive Feedback
Problem & Solution *Is the problem real? Is the solution viable?*		
Market Opportunity *Is the target market clear? Will people buy it?*		
Financial Plan *Do the numbers make sense? Can it be profitable?*		
Presentation & Confidence *Did they speak clearly? Handle Q&A well?*		
Overall Pitch *Would you invest in this business?*		

Total Score: ______ / 25

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