

Lesson Plan

It Costs How Much? A Guidance Lesson for Personal Finance and Career Exploration

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College and Career Readiness has become a major component of the educational setting; however, many students struggle with their future goals. This type of lesson plan gives students the opportunity to explore their career interests from a perspective that incorporates financial considerations, allowing students to set career goals based on the projected cost of living they desire. Students can complete their research within one 45-minute class period, and can either complete the attached form or report out to the class on a subsequent day. This lesson works well in any secondary subject area that is exploring personal finance, budgeting, or college and career exploration. There are also possible usage in math classrooms or in sessions with school counselors

About Texas Reality Check Website

The website allows students to explore the financial obligations associated with their choice of lifestyle. Students will

First select a city to live in and then select essential necessities such as: Housing, Utilities, Food, Transportation and Health Care. This is followed by non-essential items: Entertainment, Personal Care and Miscellaneous. Finally the last two pages deal with Savings and Student Loan Debt. A total of all expenses is then provided. The goal is to find careers that pay the annual salary needed to cover your expenses. (Texas Work Commission, N. D.)

Students will then explore careers that meet the financial requirements needed to support the lifestyle picked by the students. The website offers job descriptions, salary ranges, projected availability of the jobs, and entry requirements. Many of the career profiles also link to short streaming videos containing interviews with professionals from the field.

Sample Lesson

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will become aware of cost of living depending on their own selections.
2. Students will explore careers that will allow them to meet their future goals.
3. Students will understand requirements for entering those careers.

Procedure:

- Students will need computer access with a Adobe Flash enabled.
 - Note: It is possible to access some features of the site from iphone/ipad technology through a text-only site <http://www.texasrealitycheck.com/text/>
- Students will complete the supplemental handout as they work.

- Have students open the following site: <http://www.texasrealitycheck.com/> (Note: Several other states have added similar Reality Check websites. See additional Resources section).
- Students will complete the information, such as desired location, type of housing, transportation, etc... (Note: Tell students to think about their future “dream” lifestyle).
- When students complete the information, they will receive a Total Expenses Summary. From here they may choose the option that allows them to look at the additional cost of a family or explore careers.
- To explore careers, students may choose a specific level of education and career focus, or they may choose the “I don’t Know, Include All” option. This option will show all possible careers options.
- Students will have a list of careers to explore based on salary requirements. Have them complete the supplemental handout as they explore careers.
- As students complete their research, they may work on their presentation method (oral, poster, group).
- Students present findings.

Timeline: 2-3 class Periods

Day 1 Conduct Research/Prepare Presentation

Day 2 Prepare Presentations (optional)

Day 3 Present Findings (optional)

Modifications for Striving, Advanced, or English Language Learners:

The nature of the website serves both striving and ELL students, as it combines text and visuals. Students may also work in pairs to explore career options. Advanced students may wish to begin to explore educational options associated with their career interest. Included below is the college search website Big Future, the student brochures available at Achieve Texas, and information on Financial Aid. Differentiation may also be provided through the means of presenting findings. This may include creating posters, oral presentations, or a career fair. The Achieve Texas student site also has brochures and other information available in Spanish.

Assessment:

Depending on the grade and level of the students, a number of different assessments may be used. Students may simply complete the attached guided learning document and they may create a presentation. This presentation may take the form of a poster, a formal presentation or a career fair where other students can explore the student findings.

Additional Resources:

<http://www.californiarealitycheck.com/>
<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>
<http://www.coloradorealitycheck.com/>
<http://www.achievetexas.org/Students.htm>
<https://fafsa.ed.gov/>
<http://www.lmci.state.tx.us/>

Reproducible:

Guided Learning “It Cost How Much?”

The total amount needed to lead my desired lifestyle is \$ _____

Did you add the family option? _____

If yes, how much is the addition of a family \$ _____

What was the biggest surprise in cost? Why?

List Two Career Options that would meet your financial needs.

<p>Career 1:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Salary Range</p> <p>\$ _____</p> <p>Entry Method</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Job Availability</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Career 2:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Salary Range</p> <p>\$ _____</p> <p>Entry Method</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Job Availability</p> <p>_____</p>
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What was the most interesting thing you learned from this exercise?

Next Steps (Bonus)

Now that you have explored possible career interest, what are your next steps?

- What are possible schools/programs that offer these careers?
- Cost?
- Entrance Requirements?
- What Classes should you take to meet these requirements?