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Using Portfolios as a Resource to Support Transition
into Post-Secondary Programs for Students with Disabilities

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Abstract

The purpose of this project is to review current transition practices for students with disabilities, and to present a curriculum guide which meets areas lacking in current transition instruction. Research establishes that there are deficits in student preparedness for post-secondary programs. In transition training, an intense focus has been placed upon legal implications and measurable student outcomes, without emphasizing the need to teach students how to make choices and self-advocate for the future. Research further indicates that the most successful transition training programs are based upon teaching self-determination skills such as problem solving, self-assessment, goal setting, and self-advocacy. (Cobb & Alwell, 2009; Lindstrom et al. 2007; Campbell-Whatley, 2008). A transition curriculum which embraces these best practices, *Building Transition Portfolios*, is presented in this project. This curriculum project includes a guidebook of lesson plans designed to provide support to teachers in leading students through the process of developing self-awareness, functional goal setting skills, and employment preparedness. As students progress through the curriculum, a personal portfolio of work is created, called a Transition Portfolio. Implications for this model are examined, and developed as the end product of this project.

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Using Portfolios as a Resource to Support Transition
into Post-Secondary Programs for Students with Disabilities

Chapter One

Introduction

As a former secondary special education teacher, the most disheartening stories I hear about students who have graduated from high school are those that involve the student being unemployed, living at home, and playing video games all day. Although this unfortunate plight does overtake both disabled and non-disabled youth alike, research reveals that youth with disabilities are more likely than non-disabled peers to not enroll in post-secondary programs or to be unemployed after leaving high school (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, & Knokey, 2009). What has gone wrong? From insufficient coordination between programs, to a lack of preparation in earlier years, students with disabilities are being inadequately prepared or supported for life after high school. Researchers and educators alike are saying that a new and improved approach to transition is necessary if students are going to be successful in adulthood.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to present a Transition Portfolio model as a support for students with disabilities to make a successful post-secondary transition. A Transition Portfolio is a collection of student work related to the areas of self-determination, employment skills, and personal coping strategies. In the process of creating these portfolios, students are learning self-acceptance, job skills, organization, and empowerment to communicate their needs. As students move out of high school, Transition Portfolios serve as an advocacy tool that they will share with program directors and future employers. There is a significant need for increased training at the high school level to prepare students more adequately for jobs and continuing education. Not

only will portfolio examples be presented, but this study will also present a comprehensive model of a curriculum guide for educators to use in instructing their own students to design a Transition Portfolio.

Preview Literature

Key areas of research are: (a) aspects of successful transition training, (b) self-determination as a transition intervention, and (c) teaching self-determination effectively. In a systematic review of literature, Test et al. (2009) found that the four areas of transition that were predictors of success for students with disabilities in future education, employment and independent living, were (w) inclusion in general education, (x) paid employment/work experience, (y) self-care/independent living skills, and (z) student support. Cobb & Alwell (2009) identified the most successful intervention of transition to be student-focused planning, which means an increased individualization of goals and education for the student.

In a qualitative research project in which school staff, young adults with disabilities, employers, and vocational rehabilitation counselors were all interviewed to determine the key components to a successful transition, the primary recommendation made by all four groups of participants was the need for students to have self-knowledge (Lindstrom et al. 2007). Self-knowledge, or self-determination, is defined as the ability to possess and demonstrate awareness, self-concept, advocacy, realization, self-esteem, acceptance, empowerment, reflection, control, and regulation (Campbell-Whatley, 2008). Wehmeyer et al. (2007) concurs that in order to be successful in making life choices and moving towards student centered planning, the prerequisite skill that students must learn first is self-determination. Malian & Nevin (2002) also agree that self-determination is a significant predictor of success in transitioning, and should be taught through curriculum and integrated instruction.

In recommending strategies and activities as good practice for teaching self-knowledge, Lindstrom et al. (2007) recommend that students complete self-assessments, interest inventories, or other career planning tools in order to determine and better understand their own strengths and weaknesses. Students should also learn about their own disabilities and the specific needs that they have (Lindstrom et al., 2007). Nevin, Malian, & Williams (2002) present strategies for teaching self-determination, such as teaching and applying advocacy skills in real life situations, and teaching problem solving and decision making skills through mock conflict situations related to employment or relationships.

Preview Methodology

In this project, a Transition Portfolio model will be presented, as well as a curriculum guide to teach students how to develop their own Transition Portfolio. The Transition Portfolio will be developed first, and will be a model of the desired outcome. Portfolios are divided into sections: (a) “Personal Bio”, (b) “Planning for the Future”, and (c) “Employment Skills”. Sections were designed based on research that shows the need to teach students self-determination, disability awareness, and career training (Lindstrom et al., 2007; Nevin Malian & Nevin, 2002; Cobb & Alwell, 2009). Portfolios are intended for Jr. High and High School students with mild/moderate disabilities.

In the curriculum guide, educators will be provided with lesson plans, templates, and resources to properly instruct their students in creating a Transition Portfolio. In the “Personal Bio” section, the focus is on teaching students self-awareness and self-concept. This project builds upon the models of teaching self-determination as presented by Lindstrom et al. (2007), and Campbell-Whatley (2008). In the “Planning for the Future” section, students will learn to be aware of their own individual needs and goals for the future and will practice communicating

them. This serves as a source of self-advocacy, and promotes consistency of strategies used across settings. In the “Employment” section, students will describe job options, practice filling out applications, create a resume, and create a list of desired future jobs. Creating transition portfolios is a long-term process in which students continue to build and add to their work throughout their years in secondary education.

Significance of Study

In presenting a guidebook for educators to instruct and help students design their own Transition Portfolios, it is the hope of the author that more students will develop better self-awareness, receive employment training, and become more adequately prepared for the transition into adulthood. Although portfolios have proven to be a successful tool in education, this is the first time they have been used as a guide in the area of post-secondary transition.

Conclusion

As an increasing number of students with disabilities are entering the adult world, there has been a growing need to improve transition services for students with exceptional needs. For the past 30 years, transition practices have been criticized as being ineffective in preparing students for post-secondary programs (California Department of Education (CDE), 2006). A greater focus needs to be put on student-centered planning, and on educating students how to make better decisions and build action plans for their future. Through developing Transition Portfolios, students learn self-awareness skills and disability awareness. They also gain understanding about their individual learning styles, their strengths and weaknesses, and their future goals. As students develop the ability to make well-informed decisions for their future, they are more likely to have a successful transition out of high school into a future employment or education program.

Definitions

Within this project the term “Individual Education Program,” or IEP, means a written document for each individual with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with education code (California Department of Education, 2006).

The definition of the term “self-determination” is the ability to exhibit and possess the traits related to self such as: awareness, self-concept, advocacy, realization, self-esteem, acceptance, empowerment, reflection, control, and regulation (Campbell-Whatley, 2008).

The words “transition” or “transition services” refer to the specific program that is put into place for each student with disabilities starting by age 16, including specific postsecondary goals and action plans to meet these goals within the IEP. This plan is implemented by the educational district and special education teacher and is intended to train students with the skills they need for life after high school (California Department of Education, 2006).

“Transition Portfolio” is a broader term used in this project to refer to a collection of student work that is compiled and organized within a binder that is prepared for the purpose of presenting class work relating to transition.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

Introduction

The transition from high school to young adulthood is a daunting step for any student. Consider then, how much more difficult this transition is for students with disabilities. Research reveals that youth with disabilities are less likely than their non-disabled peers to enroll in post-secondary programs or to be employed after leaving high-school (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, & Knokey, 2009). There are many different aspects that need to be addressed in order to properly prepare students with disabilities for post-secondary transition. Career exploration, employment skill training, self-awareness training, assistive technology, family involvement, goal setting, and interagency collaboration are all domains that have been identified as necessary to address in a transition program (Lidstrom et al. 2007; Kohler, 1996). The purpose of this study is to review the research to determine the specific aspects of successful transition training, to understand the aspects of self-determination as a transition intervention, and to explore recommended methods on how to teach self-determination to students with disabilities.

Transition Practices

Since the 1970's, transition practices have been criticized as being ineffective in preparing students for post-secondary programs. The lack of organization and consistency in programs has been identified as a large part of the problem. In *A Composite of Laws* published by the California Department of Education in 2006, the state concludes: "there is insufficient coordination between educators, adult service providers, potential employers, and families and students in order to effectively plan and implement a successful transition program". Furthermore, "in the adult community are programs that support dependence rather than

independence” (Section 56460, 4.5-2). As more and more students with disabilities are entering the adult world, there has been an increased focus on how to improve transition services for students with exceptional needs. Transition services have been mandated for 20 years with marginal improvements in post-school outcomes (Wagner et al., 2005). In 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004 mandated that all students with an IEP should have a Transition Plan in place by the age of 16 (IDEA of 2004, Section 614, d, VIII). This Transition Plan implements post-secondary goals based on student interviews and assessments in the areas of employment, postsecondary education, community participation, and independent living. Beyond this legislative measure, researchers and educators are saying that additional support is needed if students are going to make successful transitions.

In a study done by the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (2009), transition practices of sixty-three different research studies were surveyed and the results were categorized into 5 practices: a) student-focused planning, b) life skills instruction, c) employment skills instruction, d) family involvement, and e) program structure (Test et al. 2009). The transition practices that produced strong evidence of success were in the areas of teaching life skills and teaching purchasing skills. All of the other practices were supported with moderate levels of evidence. In a follow up study, Test et al. (2009) undertook a second systematic review of literature to determine the overall predictors of success in postsecondary programs. The results revealed sixteen predictors of success in the areas of post school education, employment, and independent living which included: (a) career awareness, (b) community experiences, (c) exit exam requirements/high school diploma status, (d) inclusion in general education, (e) interagency collaboration, (f) occupational courses, (g) paid employment/work experience, (h) parental involvement, (i) program of study, (j) self-

advocacy/self-determination, (k) self-care/independent living, (l) social skills, (m) student support, (n) transition program, (o) vocational education, and (p) work study. The four areas that were predictors of success for all three areas of postsecondary programs (education, employment and independent living) were (i) inclusion in general education, (ii) paid employment/work experience, (iii) self-care/independent living skills, and (iv) student support.

Researchers have also found that a successful transition program must support the student as the main participant in the process. In a systematic review of transition practices over the last 20 years, Cobb & Alwell (2009) identified the major successful intervention to be student-focused planning. This includes activities such as student led IEP's, and additional planning meetings between the student and support people. It also revealed that career planning must be based on individual's specific strengths, and vocational training should include real work experiences focusing on social skills and accessing job mentors. As more programs begin working towards providing student-centered planning, the need to teach self-determination as a transition practice has become more evident. Wehmeyer et al. (2007) would argue that in order to be successful in making life choices and advocating during planning meetings, the prerequisite skill that students must learn is self-determination. Current research continues to identify self-determination as an underlying key component in promoting a successful transition for students with disabilities (Cobb, Lehmann, Newman-Gonchar, & Alwell, 2009; Wehmeyer et al. 2007; Lindstrom et al. 2007; Campbell-Whatley 2008).

Self-Determination

In a qualitative research project by Lindstrom et al. (2007) school staff, young adults with disabilities, employers, and vocational rehabilitation counselors, were all interviewed to determine the most critical components in creating a successful transition from school to work

for students with disabilities. The primary recommendation made by all four groups of participants was that students need to have self-knowledge. For this purpose, self-knowledge was defined as “the ability to make choices and decisions based on one’s own needs and preferences” (p. 5). In a study by Campbell-Whatley (2008) the author defines self-determination as the ability to exhibit and possess the traits related to self such as: (a) awareness, (b) self-concept, (c) advocacy, (d) realization, (e) self-esteem, (f) acceptance, (g) empowerment, (h) reflection, (i) control, and (j) regulation. These skills allow students to set goals for their future, and to be empowered to realize these goals.

Studies show that when taught self-determination skills and strategies, students are more successful in school and engagement in tasks (Martin et. al, 2003). Wehmeyer et al. (2007) used the Arc’s Self-Determination Scale [Define] to measure (a) autonomy, (b) self-regulation, (c) psychological empowerment, and (d) self-realization in a sample of 180 students with special needs. When the results of this assessment were correlated with students’ transition knowledge and skills, the study revealed that self-determination is a significant predictor of overall transition understanding and skills. In a review of transition literature on self-determination Malian & Nevin (2002) also found that “self-determination is a predictor of successful transition to adult life” (p. 73) and that it is teachable through curriculum and integrated instruction. Campbell-Whatley (2008) agrees that students should be taught self-determination strategies, as it leads to better autonomy and allows students “greater control over their choices, behavior, and lives” (p. 137).

Teaching Self-Determination

Based on their findings that teaching self-determination is the number one recommendation for a successful transition made by counselors, teachers, and young adults with

disabilities, Lindstrom et al. (2007), recommended strategies and activities as good practice for teaching self-knowledge. They suggested that students complete self-assessments, interest inventories, or other career planning tools to determine strengths and weaknesses. Each student should also learn about his/her disability and the needs that each of them has. Teachers should be meeting individually with students to discuss interests and career goals, and should be using interviews to determine student centered planning approaches for future services.

Campbell-Whatley (2008) also supports teaching self-determination through addressing students' specific disabilities, and instructing them on how to understand their strengths and weaknesses and what coping skills work for them. Nevin, Malian, & Williams (2002) used a pre-service curriculum that infused self-determination with student centered skills to prepare special education interns to impact students' learning. As interns instructed students, the outcomes of the students' self-determination skills were measured and qualitative reports showed improvement in both intern and student competency. Based on the findings, several recommendations for teaching self-determination were made. First, use an authentic context for practicing self-determination skills (such as the IEP), and apply advocacy skills in real life situations, such as in advocating for a class at school, or in a social situation. Second, teach problem solving and decision making skills through mock conflict situations related to employment or relationships. Finally, model self-determination through developing an IEP that reflects student needs, and involve the student in the process.

In a study done by Thomas and Dykes (2010), the researchers recommended teaching self-determination as a key component of Response to Intervention (RTI) in the area of transition. They recommend teaching the ability to express interests and preferences through role-play, modeling, and completing student reflection journals that help students understand

their interests and develop these interests into future goals. They also propose increasing the frequency of field trips into the community, with an emphasis on practicing social skills and self-esteem on the outing, and reflecting on the experiences afterwards. Acknowledgement of student progress is also important, they contend, and more positive attention should be focused on students' accomplishments in the areas of independence and self-responsibility. Finally, they conclude that students need to have the ability to practice problem solving in school situations such as classroom chores, or school leadership opportunities.

Summary of Chapter

In a 1998 study, Wehmeyer and Schwartz found that “Out of the nearly 900 transition related goals, there were none that indicated students were being taught the skills they need to make choices, solve problems, make decisions, set and achieve goals, or understand themselves” (p. 82). From the research, we know that self-determination is a major factor in promoting a successful transition to adult life for students with disabilities. Self-determination is teachable, but it must be taught in ways that are effective and will remain with students throughout their life experiences. Through providing students with self-assessment activities and disability awareness projects, students can gain better understandings of their own self-concepts. In teaching strategies of problems solving skills, real life applications, and modeling, teachers can equip students to be self-advocates and to apply self-determination in their transition choices and goals. It is the goal of this project to present a model of self-determination activities and strategies that will support students to develop a personal portfolio of work that will serve them in their transition to postsecondary programs.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Introduction

A significant reason why students with disabilities are not being adequately prepared for life after high school is that teachers do not have the proper resources to teach students the skills they need. Research shows that students must receive intentional training in the areas of self awareness, life skill awareness, and job skill training in order to make a more successful post-secondary transition (Test et al. 2009). An important element in this process is the order in which these skills are taught. Too often, when teaching transition skills, the focus is placed on independent living skills and employment preparedness, and the pre-requisite skill of self-awareness is overlooked in the process. Teaching self-awareness is the number one recommendation for a successful transition from counselors, teachers, and young adults with disabilities (Lidstrom et al. 2007 & Wehmeyer et al. 2007). Students need to have a plan that guides them through understanding their own individual interests, needs, and strengths first, in order to help them progress towards developing skills for the future (Wehmeyer et al. 2007) . The curriculum developed as a part of this project, entitled *Building Transition Portfolios*, was designed as a guidebook comprised of lesson plans and templates to support teachers in leading students through the process of self-awareness, then helping them progress in developing life skills and employment preparedness. Through this process, students are also developing their own personal portfolio of work called a Transition Portfolio.

Design

Building Transition Portfolios is a curriculum guide on how to teach students with mild-severe disabilities the skills they need to make a successful post-secondary transition, and how to

present these skills in their own Transition Portfolio. A Transition Portfolio is a collection of student work related to the areas of self-determination, personal coping strategies, goals for the future, life skills, and employment skills. Through developing portfolios, students are learning self-concept, life skills, job awareness, organization, and empowerment to communicate their needs. As students move through and out of high school, Transition Portfolios can serve as an advocacy tool that they will share with friends, family, program directors and future employers.. Portfolios are divided into sections: Personal Bio, Planning for the Future, and Employment Skills.

Setting

The process outlined in *Building Transition Portfolios* can start as early as 6th grade and as late as 12th grade. The specific curriculum for this project was designed for a Practical Skills Class that is made up of diverse learners with autism, developmental delays, and emotional needs. The students ranged in grade levels from 7-12th, and their academic skills varied from primer-4th grade in reading and math. Due to this design, this curriculum is more applicable to students with moderate disabilities who will most likely transition to supported employment and supported living programs. However, it can be adapted to fit any level of student ability and recommendations are made within the curriculum on how to modify it according to student needs.

Instrument

The materials contained in *Building Curriculum Portfolios* consist of : (a) overview and “how to” guide for the curriculum, (b) 15 step-by-step lesson plans that include objectives and state standards, (c) Materials for each lesson plan that include: handouts, templates, visuals aids, checklists, self-assessments, goals setting sheets, PowerPoint presentations, videos, and job

applications, (d) resources that correspond to each lesson including online tools, assessments, transition handbooks, and interactive websites.

Procedures

The lesson plans developed for this project were designed by using a template that includes: (a) Objectives,(b) State Curriculum Standards,(c) Materials, (d) Resources to use (e) Step- by-Step Instructional Strategies, and(f) Accommodations & Modifications. Each lesson provides step-by-step instruction on how to guide students through the learning and creating process. Templates, handouts, and visual aids are also included for each lesson. Lessons are kept open ended so that a teacher can modify the lessons as necessary to fit the needs of his/her class. There are 15 different lessons in this curriculum; each lesson is intended to include 30 minutes of instructional time, and 30 minutes of independent work for students to create their portfolio pages.

Sections were designed based on research that shows the need to teach students self-determination, life skills, and career training (Cobb & Alwell, 2009). The self-awareness section was developed first in the Personal Bio section. The lessons were created to help students learn about themselves, and how to communicate their feelings and personal preferences. Lessons were designed to address self-awareness at the most basic level in order to help students build a foundation on which to grow. After students learn to identify emotions such as happy, sad, angry, and bored, they are learn how to cope with different feelings, and express strategies that are specific to their needs. Students also learn to identify their personal strengths and weaknesses and how to express these to others.

The second unit of the curriculum, Planning for the Future, focuses on teaching students to understand what a “Transition Plan” is, and how to be self-advocates in this process. This

section teaches students to how to develop self-awareness and supports them in making choices about the future through self-reflection and self-assessment activities. By understanding their own abilities and determining their dreams, students are then enabled to create their own goals and plans for the future. This allows them to present their aspirations within the Transition Plan, as well as in transition discussion and meetings.

The last unit of *Building Transition Portfolios*, called Employment Skills, was developed based on the sequential steps of the job process: determining employment goals, looking for a job, creating a resume, filling out applications, and interviewing. In this section, students learn how to research jobs in which they are interested, and set goals for entry jobs as well as long-term careers. Students also receive instruction in how to search for job openings online, practice filling out applications, and participate in mock interviews.

Summary

Building Transition Portfolios is a long-term process in which students will continue to build and add to their work. Portfolios are intended for students to use as a reference for coping strategies, social skills activities, charting growth of skills and accomplishments, and practicing mock interviews. Transition Portfolios give a voice to students; they are a form of communication that serves as the student's advocate for the future. As students' move from one program into another, the goal in creating these portfolios is that they will take their portfolios with them as a source of personal advocacy and support.

Chapter Four

Project Presentation

Introduction

Within the area of transition, there is an overwhelming amount of different standards, checklists, and IEP expectations that are placed on teachers in order to prepare their students for post-secondary programs. In my years of teaching a Practical Skills class, I was unable to find an organized curriculum that showed me how to effectively teach the skills needed for transition at the level my students needed. Resources available included employment training curriculum, or life skills books, but none of these curricula provided a complete transition guide that enabled students to learn necessary skills from start to finish.

Curriculum Overview

In order to address all the levels of transition, self-awareness needs to be included as the initial teaching unit of a successful transition curriculum. To assist students' ability to understand and communicate their own abilities in these areas, the self-awareness lessons of this curriculum were designed as basic as necessary to support all level of students. This self-awareness unit titled "Personal Bio" begins by teaching students to identify their emotions, and understand activities and events that evoke these emotions. Students also learn how to apply coping strategies in the classroom and in the community. The next unit presented is called "Future Plans" and includes lessons that help students to practice assessing their own skills and set goals in areas of life skills and future plans.

The final lessons are presented in the unit called “Employment”, and focus on helping students develop career awareness and practice the steps of job searching, writing a resume, filling out applications, and interviewing.

Project Presentation

For the complete manual of *Building Transition Portfolios* curriculum guide, please refer to the Appendix. In this Chapter, an overview of the different sections of *Building Transition Portfolios* is provided with pictures of student work included. These student samples were designed based on classroom lessons that I taught regarding self-awareness and employment skills.

Figure 1 is the cover page of a student’s Transition Portfolio. This portfolio is a collection of that is designed to teach and demonstrate a student’s skills in the areas of self-determination/self-concept, transition and life skills, and employment interests/preparedness, in order to prepare the student for transition to post-secondary programs.

Figure 1.

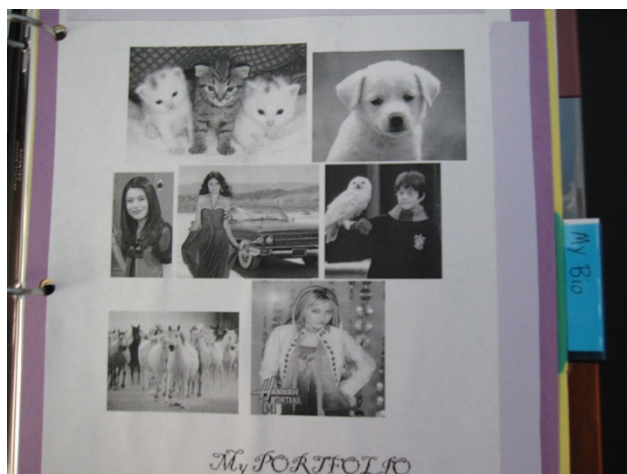


Figure 2 is an example of a page from the first section of Transition Portfolios called “Personal Bio”. In this section, students are taught to identify and communicate self-awareness skills such as likes/dislikes, strengths/weaknesses, and coping strategies.

Figure 2.

Things I am good at (strengths):

- I am good at cooking my lunch.
- I am good at spelling.
- I am good at finding movies at the library.
- I am good at morning routine in class.
- I am good at sharing with my friends.

Things I am not good at (weaknesses):

- It is difficult for me to wait.
- P.E is not my strength.
- Eating new food.
- I don't like changes in the schedule.

Figure 3 includes a sample page of a student's goals regarding future plans. Students develop goals and plans about the future in the second section of Building Transition Portfolios in the section “Planning for the Future”. In this section, students become aware of the Transition Plan and how to advocate for themselves in this process. They learn to express goals about their future, to assess their own skills regarding independent living, and to set realistic goals that they can work towards. Students will also include personal supports that help them at school or in the community in this section. Figure 4 includes an example of a template that a student might use when planning trips in the community.

Figure 3.

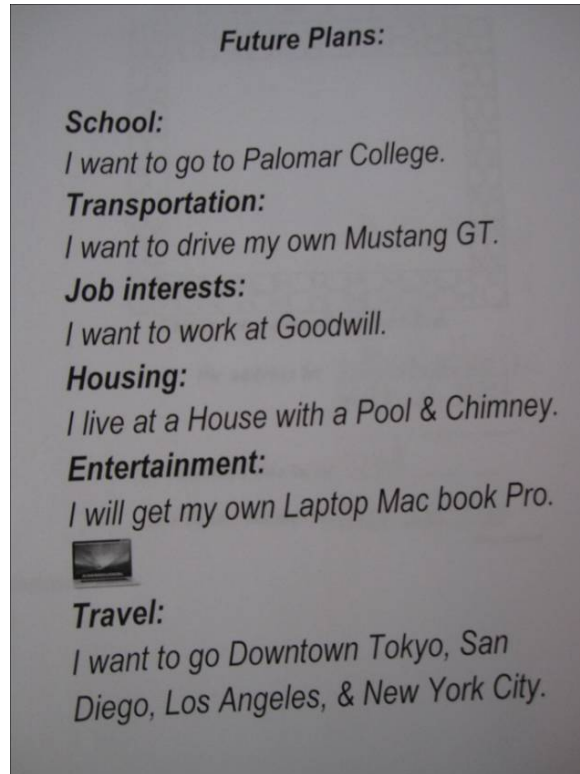


Figure 4.

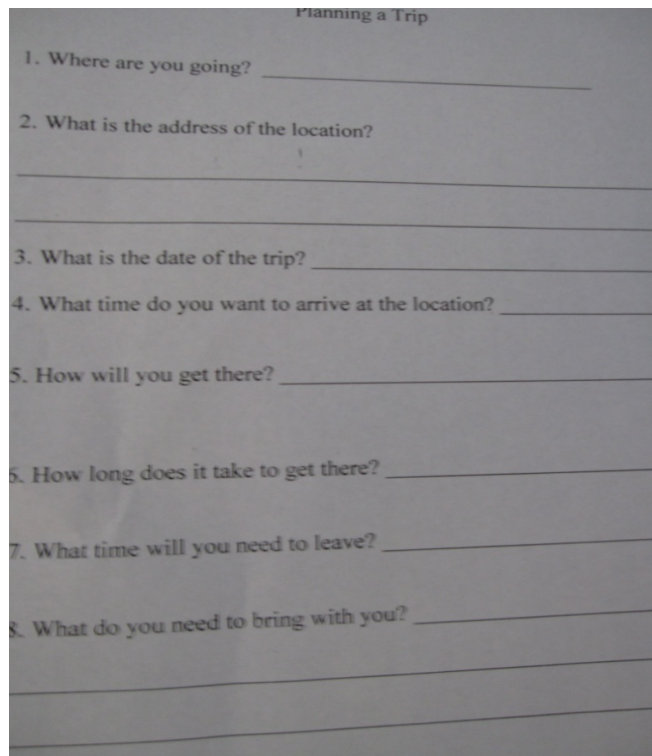


Figure 5 provides an example of student work in which a student researched and watched a video online about a job he was interested in. This is an example of a lesson provided in the “Employment Skills” section of the curriculum. In this section, students learn about different kinds of jobs, and to explore jobs that they might be interested in. Students also practice looking for jobs online, practice creating a resume (see Figure 6 for an example of a student resume), filling out applications, and practicing mock interviews.

Figure 5

“Builder”

Job Skills

1. What are some jobs that you are interested in?

BUILDER

Go to the website

<http://www.cacareerzone.org/graphic/index.html>

1. Click on “Explore Industry Sectors” button.
2. Look over the different categories of jobs.
3. Find the category that you are interested in.
4. Watch one of the videos about the jobs.

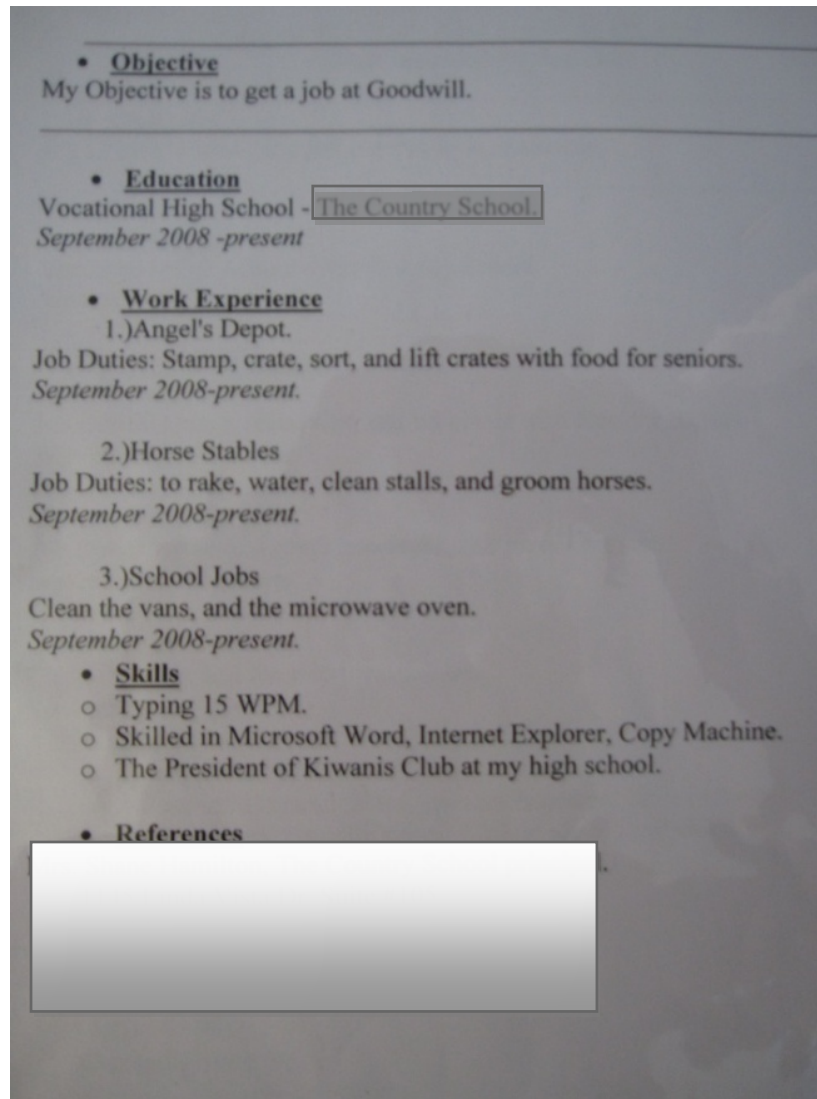
What job did you watch a video about? the builder

What are some of the duties of this job?

building a sky scraper

Do you think you would like this job? yes

“Building a sky scraper”

Figure 6

Summary

Building Transition Portfolios guides students through self-exploration and educates and prepares them to make goals and choices about their future. Through the process, students are not only receiving information, but they are producing portfolios that serve as a form of self-advocacy for them. These portfolios can be used as tools for students to practice communicating their ideas to others. As students grow and change, their portfolio adapts with

them; they are custom made by each student and can always be modified or added to in order to include new sections. Recommendations for this project are previewed in the next chapter.

Chapter Five

Project Recommendations

Lessons Learned

When *Building Transition Portfolios* was initially developed, there appeared to be very few curriculums that were similar in design and organization. However, through the process of researching for this curriculum, several other guidebooks were located that supported teachers in instructing students in different topics of transition skills. Some of these guidebooks were focused on job training, while others offered guidelines to teach self-awareness. It was encouraging to find that there exist helpful resources available for teachers to use.

In reviewing these various resources, many were specialized to address a certain population, age group, or outcome. There were few resources that supported students in the population of the moderate disability range. Most curricula found were directed toward high functioning students with mild disabilities. There were also very few resources developed to help students build a Transition Portfolio.

In developing this project, it became difficult to synthesize the main components of the guidebook. Since transition encompasses nearly every area of life for these students, it can be complicated to narrow down the essential skills that students will need as they tackle the world beyond high school, as outlined in the guidebook chapter entitled “Planning for the Future”. Once the units on Life Skills took shape, it became apparent that the possibilities for this unit could be endless. By focusing the lessons in this area toward assessing life skills and setting goals, it will provide students and teachers more of a focus on areas to target.

Education Implications

Through extensive research surrounding this topic, many online resources and strategies were found that would be very useful to teacher of a transition class. Resources and instructional techniques have been included in this curriculum for teachers to utilize and implement with the lessons throughout the learning process. Using instructional strategies that encompass a wide range of learning styles is recommended. For example, when teaching self-awareness skills, the research has demonstrated that the most effective approach is to use role-play in order to engage students in mock problem solving situations, so that they learn how to identify emotions and use coping techniques. Additionally, when exploring job opportunities with students, best practice strategies include the use of visuals, videos, guest speakers, and field trips in the community to support students effectively learn about various careers.

Project Implementation Plans

The intent for implementation of this project includes presenting this project to a school where I was employed for a time, and to offer services in implementing it in the Practical Skills class for which it was originally designed. It is my plan to equip the current teacher of this course to implement these strategies and the program so that students can gain the most benefit from this curriculum. If it is successful in this setting, other sites may be interested in the project and it can be presented to them as a support curriculum to utilize. Another way to make it available is to post it on the Internet.

It is recommended that the Portfolio model be adopted as a support within the transition field. Within the IEP, there is a consistent model for teachers to use to assess student need and create goals in target areas. However, there is not a consistent model for students to use in presenting their own choices and skills regarding the future. Portfolios would be a very effective way for students to present their voice within IEP and transition meetings. In addition, Transition

Portfolios are an important model to use since they help provide connection across programs. In my experience, once a student has moved into a transition program, there is often little contact with the new teacher. The main advocate for the student in these transitions is the parent and the student. If students create a well developed portfolio that they bring into their new program, a better transition can be made by the future teacher through allowing the student to use familiar templates, coping strategies, and life skills supports.

Limitations of Project

One of the limits of this project is that not all of the lesson plans were applied in the classroom before they were published in this curriculum. It would have been beneficial to teach the lessons in the classroom setting first, in order to assess their effectiveness and formulate necessary modifications.

Another limitation of this project is that it was developed for a class that had daily access to student computers. It will be more difficult to implement this curriculum for a classroom that has limited access to computers. In order to properly develop portfolios, students will need computer access and will need to be able to navigate the internet and computer word processing programs. Teachers may need to give additional support to students when researching and typing on the computer.

Future Research or Project Suggestions

Because the spectrum of Transition services encompasses such an extensive skill set, it is recommended that additional units and lessons be added to this project. Areas for further growth include the areas of life skills, community skills, relationship skills, and leisure activities.

An effective way to design a unit on life skills would be to break the topic down into more specific categories. For example, the skill of “cooking” could be broken down into several

different lessons: (a) meal planning (b) making a grocery list, (c) grocery shopping, (d) paying for a purchase, (e), reading a recipe, and (f) making a meal. Each of these lesson could include templates and visuals to use, and could also provide checklists and goal sheets for the teachers to utilize as an assessment tool. The other categories of life skills that would be important to add include: house cleaning, self-care, time management, transportation, and using community and health services. There is also potential to develop a similar plan for the areas of community skills, relationship skills, and leisure.

Conclusion

Through application in the classroom, and in examining the research, it has become evident that the field of transition still has many areas in need of increased development. One of the significant areas to target is improving student- centered planning. If educators are going to promote student choice in transition, it is necessary that they instruct students on how to make informed decisions and guide them in building action plans for their future. This is a process that is based on students' self-awareness, and determination to set goals for their adult life. *Building Transition Portfolios* empowers students to become more self-determined, and to gain increased control over their own choices and progress. If transition is truly about the student, then they should be the ones to determine the steps they will take in their journey towards adulthood.

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- See References section in Building Transition Portfolios for additional resources.*

Appendix: Building Transition Portfolios

Building Transition Portfolios

**For students with disabilities mild-severe,
Grades 6-12**

By: Heidi R. Fikse

2012

Building Transition Portfolios

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Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to present a curriculum on how to teach students with mild-severe disabilities the skills they need to make a successful post-secondary transition, and how to present these skills in their own Transition Portfolio. A Transition Portfolio is a collection of student work related to the areas of self-determination, personal coping strategies, goals for the future, employment skills, and life-skills. In the process of creating these portfolios, students are learning self-concept, job skills, life skills, organization, and empowerment to communicate their needs. As students move through and out of high school, Transition Portfolios serve as an advocacy tool that they will share with friends, family, program directors and future employers.

Rationale

Why Transition?

The term “transition” refers to the specific program that is mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990, 1997, 2004) put into place for each student with disabilities starting by age 16. It includes specific postsecondary goals and action plans to meet these goals within the IEP. This plan is implemented by the educational district and special education teacher and is intended to train students with the skills they need for life after high school (California Department of Education, 2006).

Within the area of transition, there is an overwhelming amount of different standards, checklists, and IEP expectations that are set on teachers in order to have their students prepared. In my years of teaching a Practical Skills middle school/high school class, I found no organized curriculum that showed me how to *teach* the skills needed for transition at the level my students needed. There was employment training curriculum, or life skills books, but none of these curriculums tied together in a way that I could progress through in an organized manner.

I found that as I was teaching employment-training curriculum to my class, there were areas of knowledge that my students seemed to be missing in order to be successful in employment training. For example in the application and interview process, students are asked questions such as “Tell me a little about yourself” or, “What are some of your strengths? What are some of your weaknesses? Where do you see yourself in 10 years?” Students were unable to respond to these questions. They had no frame of reference in which to understand how to communicate about themselves. I started to realize that if I was going to prepare students for adulthood or employment, I needed to start by teaching them the pre-requisite skill of self-awareness.

In order to address all the levels of transition, self-awareness needs to be included as the initial teaching unit of a successful transition curriculum. To help students understand and communicate their own abilities in these areas, I designed the

self-awareness lessons to be very basic as was necessary to help all level of students learn to understand themselves.

Why Portfolios?

1. To organize learning, serve as a reference tool, and a source of self-advocacy for students in the Transition Process:

Portfolios are a way of organizing student work, and serve as a resource book for students. It is the hope of the author, that after students have finished this curriculum, they will practice using their portfolio as a reference for coping strategies, for social skills activities, mock interviews, and for charting growth of skills and accomplishments. I encourage teachers to remind students to reference their Transition Portfolios and also to help students continue to add to Transition Portfolios as they progress through grade levels and change and develop in their abilities. Finally, Portfolios give a voice to students; it is a form of communication that serves as their advocate for the future. Students can use it to advocate for their Transition goals placed in the IEP, and they can also bring it to IEP meetings to show to the planning team.

Who is this guide for?

This curriculum guide was designed for a 6th-12 grade Practical Skills Class composed of a range of diverse learners with autism, developmental delays, and emotional needs. The students' academic levels range from primer to 4th grade in reading and math. Due to this design, the curriculum is more applicable to students with moderate disabilities who will most likely transition to supported employment and supported living programs, but it can be adapted to fit any level of student.

How to Use this Guide

Understanding the Lesson Plans

Each lesson outlines for the teacher:

- Objectives
- State Curriculum Standards (based on the SEACO Mod/Severe curriculum guide)
- Materials (handouts and templates are included with each lesson)
- Resources to use (helpful websites and online tools)
- Instructional strategies
 - Introduce the topic
 - Modeled instruction
 - Guided practice/Checking for understanding
 - Independent Practice
- Accommodations & Modifications

- ❖ Each lesson provides step-by-step instruction on how to guide students through the learning and creating process. Teacher may modify the lessons as necessary to fit the needs of his/her class.

- ❖ There are 15 lessons in this curriculum. Each lesson is intended for 30 minutes of instructional time, and 30 minutes of independent work for students to create their portfolio pages. These sessions can be broken up into separate time frames as needed.
- ❖ Although this curriculum is geared towards creating a printed portfolio, students could also create a digital portfolio (PDF, PowerPoint, website, etc) that could be shared electronically with others.
- ❖ State Curriculum Standards included with each lesson are based on the Curriculum Guide for students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities published by the Special Education Administrators of County Offices.

Overview

Sections of teaching units are broken down into three parts:

- Personal Bio

This section of the curriculum is designed to teach students to understand themselves, their emotions, their preferences, and their strengths and weaknesses. Lessons are broken down at a very simplistic level, but the author thought it was necessary to address this topic at the basics in order to build a foundation on which to move forward.

- Planning for the Future

In this section, students will begin to think about their goals for the future: where do they want to live? To work? What kind of hobbies or clubs would they like to be involved in? Students will begin to assess the kinds of skills they will need to have in order to live a more independent life, and will set goals in areas of life skills.

- Employment Skills

In this section, students will research the different kinds of jobs they are interested in. They will practice looking for jobs online, fill out applications, and practice interview questions.

Extensions

Areas to consider adding to Transition Portfolios include teaching and creating pages regarding the areas of **life skills**:

- Support for living
- Self-care
- Buying and preparing meals
- Household chores
- Time management
- Transportation
- Using community and health services

Unit 1 Personal Bio

Unit I. Lesson 1: All About Me

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Self-Awareness

Objective: To introduce the idea of learning about self and why it is important. To help students understand the terms “self-awareness” and “self-advocacy”. To help students voice some of their own preferences.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO Health Standard 3.5 Student will identify own feelings.

Health Standard 3.6 Student will express feelings in a socially appropriate manner

Health Standard 3.7 Student will express or demonstrate concern/sympathy towards others.

Materials: “All about Me” worksheet and template.

Extensions: Use the following strategies to help students discover “who they are”:

- Group discussion
- Role play
- Internet websites
- Learning and or self/management websites

Resources:

- For a handbook that teaches self-determination and has many helpful templates go to:
<http://www.ltschools.org/files/www/file/self-advocacy%20ResourceHandbook.pdf>
- For a student self-advocacy guide: <http://www.selfadvocacy.org/>

Instruction:

Lesson Introduction

1. Ask students: “does anyone know what the word ‘self-awareness’ means?” Write the word on the board, and if students are having trouble, prompt them to look at the word “self”. Tell them to look around the room and point to who “self” is. Model for them by pointing to yourself. Explain to them that “self awareness” means knowing all about yourself. It means that you know what kinds of things each of us likes like to do, doesn’t like to do, things good at, or not good at, things that help us to learn, and even what want to do when you grow up. Say, “All of these things are what make you you!” This is the definition of self-awareness.
2. Tell students that they are going to start a new unit in which they will learn all about themselves and that they are going to make pages about themselves, about future

plans, job skills, and skills that they need to live on their own. All of these pages will be placed into their very own book called a “Transition Portfolio”.

3. Ask students if they know what the word “self-advocacy” means and write it on the board. Tell students that this means to tell others about yourself. Explain that they can use their Transition Portfolio to show to friends or family, or even after they graduate high school they can use it to show to program directors or employers.

Modeled Instruction

4. Show students some of the sample pages of the Transition Portfolio. Explain that today they are going to fill out a sheet that is all “about me”. Show them the template, and model for them by filling out some of your own interests.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

5. Pass out the templates and have students fill out their own sheets. Walk around and check their answers. Help students that might need more help, use prompts such as, if you could choose any meal, what would it be?

Independent Practice

6. Once students have finished, handwriting their hobbies, instruct them to type their answers at the computer lab when they are able, and have them include pictures of some of their hobbies on the sheet. (if students do not know how to do this, model for them a picture they like, have them right click, select “copy” and then click back on their word document. Then they can right click again, select “paste” and the image will appear).
7. Once students are finished, pair students with a partner, and have them ask each other about their interest. Remind them that learning to communicate about themselves with others is called “self advocacy”. After students are sharing with each other, discuss with them what they found out about their partner. Ask them in which ways they found that they were similar or different than their partner. Discuss the importance of understanding that different people have different interests, and that we learn to accept and appreciate others differences.

Accommodations & Modifications:

Depending upon the ability and age of the class, teachers can modify this lesson by using higher level or more basic language. For advanced learners, use this time to focus more on why self-awareness is important: to understand why we do things, to get along better with others, to communicate our needs to others, etc. Have students ask each other questions related to their worksheets and discuss together what they found out about their peers that they didn't already know. Discuss in what ways they had similar or different interests with their partners.

All About Me

My name is _____

I like to be called _____

My favorite food is _____

My favorite color is _____

My favorite sport is _____

My favorite game is _____

My favorite book is _____

My favorite movie is _____

My favorite TV show is _____

My favorite animal is _____

My favorite subject in school is _____

Unit 1, Lesson 2: What do I like to do?

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Self-Awareness

Objective: For students to understand the emotion of being happy, and to make a list of the things and activities that they like to do.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO Health Standard 3.5 Student will identify own feelings.

Health Standard 3.6 Student will express feelings in a socially appropriate manner

Health Standard 3.7 Student will express or demonstrate concern/sympathy towards others.

Materials:

“Things I like to do” picture worksheet and template.

Instruments: This lesson was adapted from Lesson from SELF curriculum (Everson and Pedgrift, 2005).

Resources:

- For an overview of self-knowledge go to:
<http://www.mychildsfuture.org/parents/item.htm?id=100&edlvl=2>

Instruction:

Lesson Introduction

1. Introduce the topic to students by showing them pictures of different people smiling (see handout 1). Ask students, “how do you think these people are feeling?”. Affirm correct response and discuss possible reasons why they might be happy. (hanging out with friends, watching a tv show, swimming at the beach, etc).
2. Ask students to model what a happy face looks like, and instruct them to look around at each other and notice how everyone looks. Instruct students to think about what kinds of things make them feel happy.
3. Ask for students to share out about what makes them happy. Let students know that these things that make them happy could be considered activities that they “like to do” or “hobbies”. Explain that the work “hobbies” means activities that make you feel happy.

Modeled Instruction

4. Show students the template for “things I like to do” and explain that they are going to fill in the sheet with their own ideas. Model for them by telling them a few things that make you happy as a teacher.
5. Remind them that activities that they like to earn during reward time, or at lunch time would be good examples of a things they like to do. Tell students they should try to come up with at least 5.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

6. As students are filling out their worksheet, walk around and check their answers. Help students that might need more help, use prompts such as “what do you like to do in your free time?”

Independent Practice

7. Once students are finished handwriting their hobbies instruct them to type their answers at the computer lab when they are able, and have them include pictures of some of their hobbies on the sheet. (if students do not know how to do this, model for them how to go to Google, type in a subject, and click on Google images. Once they have found a picture they like, have them right click, select “copy” and then click back on their word document. Then they can right click again, select “paste” and the image will appear).
8. Have students place their final products into their Transition Portfolio under the “Personal Bio” section.

Accommodations & Modifications:

Depending on the ability and age of the class, you can modify this lesson by using higher level or basic language. For advanced learners, use this time to focus more on “hobbies” and instruct them to ask each other about their favorite leisure activities. For a more basic approach, focus on the emotion of happy, and instruct students to write a list of activities of “things that make me feel happy”.



Things I like to do:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Unit 1, Lesson 3: What do I not like do?

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Self-Awareness

Objective: For students to understand the emotions of sadness, anger, or boredom and to express some of the things that make them feel these emotions.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO Health Standard 3.5 Student will identify own feelings.

Health Standard 3.6 Student will express feelings in a socially appropriate manner

Health Standard 3.7 Student will express or demonstrate concern/sympathy towards others.

Materials:

“Unhappy” picture worksheet and “things I don’t like to do” template.

Resources:

- For online self-assessments:
<http://www.educationplanner.com/students/index.shtml>

Instruments: This lesson was adapted for the classroom from Lesson from SELF curriculum (Everson and Pedgrift, 2005).

Instructional Strategies

Introduction

1. Introduce the topic to students by showing them pictures of different people with sad faces. Ask “how do you think these people are feeling?”. Affirm correct response and discuss possible reasons why they might be unhappy. (has to do the dishes, doesn’t like to do math).
2. Ask students to model what a unhappy face looks like, and instruct them to look around at each other and notice how everyone looks. Instruct students to think about what kinds of things make them feel sad or unhappy.
3. Next, show them pictures of people doing common non-preferred activities (doing dishes, doing homework, cleaning their room, working out). As you are showing them the pictures, ask them to raise their hand if the picture is showing something

they like to do, or something they don't like to do. Ask them to share out about other things that they don't like to do.

Modeled Instruction

5. Show students the template for “things I don't like to do” and explain that they are going to fill in the sheet with their own activities. Model for them by telling them a few things that make you feel unhappy.
6. Ask for students to share out about what makes them unhappy. Let students know that these things that make them unhappy could be considered activities that they “don't like to do” or “non-preferred activities”. Remind them that activities that make them feel bored, frustrated, angry or sad would be non-preferred activities. Tell students they should try to come up with at least 5.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

7. Ask students are filling out their list, walk around and check their answers. Help students who might need more help, use prompts such as “what are some things that you don't like to do at school ? At home?”
8. Discuss with students that everybody has different things that they don't like to do. Ask students to share why it is important to do things even when we don't want to sometimes. Use the example of cleaning their room. What will happen if they never clean their room? (Their room will become so messy that they can't find anything or sleep on their bed). What will happen if they don't do math at school (they won't be able to graduate and won't be able to find a good job).

Independent Practice

9. Once students are handwriting things they don't like to do instruct them to type their answers at the computer lab when they are able, and have them include pictures of some of their non-preferred activities on the sheet. (if students do not know how to do this, model for them how to go to Google, type in a subject, and click on Google images. Once they have found a picture they like, have them right click, select “copy” and then click back on their word document. Then they can right click again, select “paste” and the image will appear).
10. Have students place their final products into their Transition Portfolio under the “Personal Bio” section.

Accommodations & Modifications:

Depending on the ability and age of the class, modify this lesson by using higher level or basic language. For advanced learners, use this time to focus more on “non-preferred activities” and instruct them to discuss their lists with each other. For a more basic approach, focus on the emotion of unhappy, or sad, and instruct students to write a list of activities of “things that make me feel sad”.





Things I don't like to do:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Unit 1, Lesson 4: What to do when I am upset

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Self-Awareness

Objective: For students to understand the emotions of anger, sadness, and boredom, and to identify strategies they can use to help them cope with these emotions.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO Health Standard 3.5 Student will identify own feelings.

Health Standard 3.6 Student will express feelings in a socially appropriate manner

Health Standard 3.7 Student will express or demonstrate concern/sympathy towards others.

Materials:

“What to do when I feel...” template.

Resources: For behavior strategies and printable charts and visuals go to:

www.cindysautisticsupport.com

Instructional Strategies:

Introduction

1. Review with students the lesson from the day before by asking them, “who remembers what we learned about yesterday?” (Accept reasonable responses). Remind students that they learned about “things I don’t like to do” Have them share out some things from their list.
2. Ask students, how do you feel when you have to do things that you don’t like? Write student responses on the board as they share out. Look over the responses and notice the main themes of feelings.

Modeled Instruction

3. Ask students to share how they act when they feel sad (crying, shut down, ignore others, withdraw, lock themselves in the bathroom). Ask them what kinds of things they can do to help themselves or others feel better when they are sad. (ask for a break, talk to a friend, go for a walk, listen to music). After students share with you examples of ways they comfort themselves when they are sad, use them for discussion.

4. Explain to students that not everyone feels comforted in the same ways. Point out that one student might like time away when he is sad, while another might like to be around people to make her feel better. It is important to know what helps you feel better so that you can tell others. Tell students that things that help them feel better when they are sad, angry, or bored are called “coping strategies”.
5. Show students the “what to do when I feel...” sheet. Instruct them to fill out the section on sadness: “some things that make me feel sad are”, and the section on how to deal with sadness: “when I feel sad, some things that make me feel better are”. Model for them by filling it out first.
6. Repeat these steps for the section on boredom and anger by discussing with students first, then instructing them to fill out their sheets.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

7. As students are filling out their sheets, walk around and help them come up with ideas as necessary. Remind them that the activities that help them feel better when they are upset should be appropriate strategies that could be used in the classroom or at home.

Independent Practice

8. Once students are finished filling out their worksheet instruct them to type their answers at the computer lab when they are able, and have them include pictures of some of their coping activities on the sheet. (if students do not know how to do this, model for them how to go to Google, type in a subject, and click on Google images. Once they have found a picture they like, have them right click, select “copy” and then click back on their word document. Then they can right click again, select “paste” and the image will appear).
9. Have students place their final products into their Transition Portfolio under the “About Me” section.

Accommodations & Modifications:

Depending on the ability and age of the class, modify this lesson by using more higher level or more basic language. For advanced learners, use this time to focus more on “coping strategies”, and discuss mock problem scenarios that they might encounter at school or home and how they could deal with it. For a more basic approach, focus on the basic emotions of bored, angry, sad and try to come up with 1-2 ways to deal with each emotion. **Teachers may also want to print visuals of each coping strategy and make a chart that students can access when feeling upset.**

"What to do when I feel..."

Some things that make me feel sad are:

When I am sad, some things that help me feel better are:

Some things that make me feel angry are:

When I am angry, some things that help me feel better are:

Some things that make me feel bored are:

When I am bored, some things that help me feel better are:

Unit 1, Lesson 5: Identifying Strengths

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Self-Awareness

Objective: For students to understand some things that they are “good at” and that these activities are called “strengths”

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO Health Standard 3.5 Student will identify own feelings.

Health Standard 3.6 Student will express feelings in a socially appropriate manner

Health Standard 3.7 Student will express or demonstrate concern/sympathy towards others.

Materials: “Strengths” picture worksheet and “Things I am good at: my strengths” template.

Resources: For more detailed lessons and templates regarding self-knowledge see Middle School Transition Guide at: <http://www.dcn-cde.ca.gov/portfolios.html>

Instructional Strategies:

Introduction

1. Show students photos of people earning awards, getting good grades, or winning an art show. As you go through each picture, ask students to identify what the people are doing in the picture and to identify whether they are good at or not good at that specific activity. Once students have gone through the pictures, explain to them that all of these people in the pictures are “good at” the things they are doing. Tell them that another way to say this is as a “strength”. If someone is good at math, then math is strength for th
2. em. If someone is good at cooking then cooking is strength for them. Tell them you want them to take a couple of minutes and think about what they are good at, and what are strengths in their own life. Point out a few strengths that you already know about each student to get them thinking.

Modeled Instruction

3. After a few minutes ask students to share out about some things that they are good at. Based on responses, point out that different people have different strengths, and that is what makes each student so special. Also means that students can help each other out in their areas of strength.

4. Show students the strength template and explain to them that they are going to fill out their own sheet of things that they are good at. Share with students that this is an important activity because they will most often be asked to share their strengths when they are interviewing for a job one day. Model for students by filling out some strengths on the template first. Remind them to write full sentences starting with, “I am good at...”

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

5. As students are filling out their sheets, walk around and help them come up with ideas as necessary. Remind them that the activities that they enjoy the most are often ones that they are good at.

Independent Practice

6. Once students are handwriting things their strengths, instruct them to type their answers at the computer lab when they are able, and have them include pictures of some of their non-preferred activities on the sheet. (if students do not know how to do this, model for them how to go to Google, type in a subject, and click on Google images. Once they have found a picture they like, have them right click, select “copy” and then click back on their word document. Then they can right click again, select “paste” and the image will appear).
7. Have students place their final products into their Transition Portfolio under the “About Me” section.

Accommodations & Modifications:

Depending on the ability and age of class, modify this lesson by using higher level or basic language. For advanced learners, use this time to focus more on strengths of character and how this applies to employment situations. For a more basic approach, focus on the phrase “things I’m good at” and prompt students by showing them pictures of different activities.



Things I am good at: My Strengths

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Unit 1, Lesson 6: Identifying Weaknesses

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Self-Awareness

Objective: For students to understand some things that they are “not good at” and that these areas are called “weaknesses”.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO Health Standard 3.5 Student will identify own feelings.

Health Standard 3.6 Student will express feelings in a socially appropriate manner

Health Standard 3.7 Student will express or demonstrate concern/sympathy towards others.

Materials: “Weaknesses” picture worksheet and “Things I am not good at: My Weaknesses” worksheet

Resources:

- For a book of inspirational quotes and stories from students with disabilities on how they didn’t give up, and how they overcame difficulties go to:
<http://www.nichcy.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/st3.pdf>

Instructional Strategies:

Introduction

1. Show students pictures of people struggling with different activities. As you go through each picture, ask students to identify what the people are doing in the picture and to identify whether they are good at or not good at that specific activity. Once students have gone through the pictures, explain to them that all of these people in the pictures are “not good” at the things they are doing. Tell them that another way to say this is as a “weakness”. Explain that a weakness means an area in our lives that we have difficulty with, or that we are not very good at. Ask if any students would be willing to share about things that they feel they are “not good at”.

Modeled Instruction

2. Remind students that everyone has weaknesses in the lives and that is ok. Just like muscles that are weak and need exercise, by working out to make them stronger, everyone can also “work out” other areas of weakness. Ask students: “For example, if someone is not good at being organized, should they just give up? Or should they keep working on it?” It is important to know what our areas of weakness are so that

we can remember not to get too frustrated by them, but to keep on trying our best. Share with students that this is an important activity since they will most often be asked to share their strengths when they are interviewing for a job one day.

3. Show students the template for “Things I am not good at”. Model for them how to fill it out by writing some of your own weaknesses.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

4. As students are filling out their sheets, walk around and help them come up with ideas as necessary. Remind them that the activities that they don't enjoy doing are often ones that they are not as good at.

Independent Practice

5. Once students are filling out their sheet, instruct them to type their answers at the computer lab when they are able, and have them include pictures of some of their non-preferred activities on the sheet. (if students do not know how to do this, model for them how to go to Google, type in a subject, and click on Google images. Once they have found a picture they like, have them right click, select “copy” and then click back on their word document. Then they can right click again, select “paste” and the image will appear).
6. Have students place their final products into their Transition Portfolio under the “About Me” section.

Accommodations & Modifications:

Depending on the ability and age of the class, you can modify this lesson by using higher level or basic language. For advanced learners, use this time to focus more on “weaknesses” and lead a class discussion regarding areas of weaknesses and comparing how different students struggle with different things. For a more basic approach, focus on the emotion of “things I am not good at” , and try to help students remember to keep a positive attitude by always trying their best.



Things I am not good at: *My Weaknesses*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Unit 2 Planning for the Future

Unit 2, Lesson 7: Transition

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Future Plans

Objective: To help students understand what “Transition” means, and to prepare them to participate in their own transition process.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO English/Language Arts:

Standard 12.2 Student will use printed material to obtain information on desired item.

Standard 19 Student will share information and ideas, speaking audibly in complete, coherent sentences.

Instruments:

- Transition handout rewritten from the California Department of Education, Special Education Division (Kilburn & Reichle, 1999).
- “Personal Values Inventory” taken from *Middle School Transition Portfolio Guide* (Dawson , Thoni, & Harvell) <http://www.dcn-cde.ca.gov/portfolios.html>

Materials: “It’s about your life...about life after high school” handout.
“Personal Values Inventory” handout.

Resources:

- If you have not already discussed what an IEP is with your students, you may want to include a lesson at this time. A great guide to the IEP for students can be found at: <http://nichcy.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/st1.pdf>
- For a wonderful teacher guide to transition with links to online interests profiles go to: <http://www.nhspeciald.org/TransitionSection.shtml>

Instructional Strategies:

Introduction

1. Ask students, “by a show of hands, how many of you have ever heard the word ‘transition’ before? What do you think that word means?” Write the word Transition Plan on the board and explain to students that these words mean preparing students

for life after high school. Pass out handout: *It's About Your Life... about life after high school* to students.

Modeled Instruction

2. Together with students, read and discuss the transition handout. Depending on the abilities of your students, go through the information at an appropriate pace and define difficult vocabulary for students. Make sure to touch on the point that students will now have a plan about their future called their "Transition Plan". They get to be part of this plan along with their parents, teachers, and school district.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

3. After reviewing the Transition handout, ask students to raise their hands if they think they already have a lot of ideas about what they want for their future. Ask them to raise their hands if they have only a few ideas about what they want for the future. Explain to them that it is ok if they don't know, and that you are here to help them look at many different options and learn more about what their interests are.

Independent Practice

4. Explain to students that one way to help themselves and others get to know about them is by answering questions about themselves. Pass out the personal values inventory and ask students to fill it out. When they are finished, have them discuss their answers with a partner.
5. Have students include this finished inventory in their Transition Portfolio under the section: "Planning for the Future".

Accommodations & Modifications:

6. Depending on the ability and age of the class, you can modify this lesson by using higher level or basic language. For advanced learners, use this time to focus more on the Transition Plan and the IEP, and you could even show them what it looks like. For a more basic approach, focus on the idea of making plans for the future .

It's About Your Life... about life after high school

It's time to begin the serious business of thinking about your Dreams, exploring your Options, expanding your Abilities, and answering your Questions as you prepare for your "transition" from school to adult life.

The people who made our laws felt it was very important for you and your teachers to work together to make sure that you can get the help you need to be all that YOU CAN BE!

The law gives you the right to be part of the planning choices about your future. From now on, it is important for you to be part of your IEP team that plans your "Individual Education Program".

Planning for when you're grown-up

1. Prepare for your transition from school to adult life.

"What do you want to be when you are grown up?" You might get asked that a lot.

Now that you are 14 or older, this question is starting to become more important to you.

When teachers or parents talk about transition planning, they are talking about how to help you prepare for life after high school. Your IEP and what you do in school should include activities and opportunities to help you:

- **Find out about yourself: your dreams, abilities, interests, & options**
- **Learn about careers, jobs, & living on your own.**
- **Learn about banking, voting, medical services, & how to use buses.**
- **Use tools such as: interest inventories and assessments, community exploration**
- **Learn how to speak up for yourself and how to make choices.**

2. Active participation in your IEP

By age 14, you must be part of the IEP meeting to plan transition activities. Your team must include YOU and your parents, if you are under age 18. Other team members are: a special education teacher, a general education teacher, and an administrator. Other people who are working with you may also be included. At the IEP meeting, based on your ideas, interests, and abilities, you and members of your team will identify and develop goals for your future in what is called a "Transition Plan". It will include:

- **What you future goals are**
 - **When, where, and how they will be carried out**
 - **What you are expected to do**
 - **What the school is expected to do**
 - **Who will help you**
 - **Outcomes: what happened**
- Transition handout rewritten from the California Department of Education, Special Education Division (Kilburn & Reichle, 1999).

Personal Values Inventory

Directions: Read each phrase below and check the box that indicates which one is important to you. When finished, discuss your responses with a partner.

Value Statement	Really Important	Important	So-So Important	Not Important
Taking responsibility for my actions				
Having nice teachers				
Being liked by my friends				
Having time alone				
Going to college				
Looking good				
Taking care of my body				
Living in a nice house				
Finishing high school				
Making my parents happy				
Getting a job				
Having a family				
Making my own decisions				
Getting good grades				
Making lots of money				
Being a great athlete				
Add you own:				

This table was taken from *Middle School Transition Portfolio Guide* (Dawson , Thoni, & Harvell) <http://www.dcn-cde.ca.gov/portfolios.html> (Diagnostic Center, North).

Unit 2, Lesson 8: Future Plans

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Future Plans

Objective: For students to think about life after high school, and to express some of their dreams for the future.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO Health Standard 3.5 Student will identify own feelings.

Health Standard 3.6 Student will express feelings in a socially appropriate manner

Materials: “Planning for my future” worksheets pages 9-17 accessed at:
<http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/transition/Articles/PlanningWorkbook.pdf>

Instruments: This lesson was adapted from *Middle School Transition Portfolio Guide* (Dawson , Thoni, & Harvell) <http://www.dcn-cde.ca.gov/portfolios.html> .

“Planning for my future” worksheet, taken from *Planning for your Transition from High School to Adult Life*. (Condon & Brown) <http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/transition>

Resources: For articles, checklists, and timelines for transition go to:
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/fh/meshn/transition.htm>

Instructional Strategies:

Introduction

1. Ask students if they remember what the word “transition” means. Remind them that it means to start planning for the life after high school. Let students know that today they are going to work on writing down some of their dreams and hopes for the future. Write the phrase on the board “someday I want to be....” Tell the students that you want them to stop and think about how they would finish that sentence. Allow students to share out their responses.
2. Ask students, “is it ok to have dreams about what you want to do someday? What is the different between dreams and reality?” Explain to students that as they start to think about the future, it is important to think about your dreams matching who you are as a person. For example if you are scared of fire, you might not want to work as a fireman someday. Or if you don’t like talking to people, you might not want to chose a job in customer service.

Modeled Instruction

4. Instruct students to look back at their portfolio pages that they have made about things they like to do, and things they are good at. Remind students to keep their strengths and interests in mind when thinking about the future.
5. Show students the “my future” worksheet and point out that there are different categories on the worksheet such as education, community, home, and employment. Explain to students that in their official Transition Plan goals will be made for them in these four areas, and they will be the ones that get to decide what kinds of goals go in their plan.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

6. Pass out worksheets to students. Read questions out loud to students, and define any vocabulary they might not understand. After each set of questions, allow students to free write or draw on the blank worksheet.

Independent Practice

7. Due to the amount of writing in this lesson, it is up to the teacher’s discretion if they would like their students to type a final draft.
8. Have students place their finished worksheets into their Transition Portfolio under the “Future Plans” section.

Accommodations & Modifications:

Depending on the ability and age of the class, you can modify this lesson by using higher level or basic language. For advanced learners, use this time to focus more on future plans, and identifying steps towards reaching these goals. For a more basic approach, focus on the idea of “future plans” or “grown up” and what the students picture themselves doing when they are older.

Unit 2, Lesson 9: Assessing Life Skills

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Planning for the Future **note: this is not intended to be a comprehensive unit of all life skills, rather an overview for students to identify, evaluate, and communicate their needs and abilities in these areas. It is recommended that extensive time be taken to teach skills in each of the life skills areas below.*

Objective: To help students understand what kinds of skills are important to have when they get older, and in what areas they will need support. For students to include visuals and templates that help them in class and in the community.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO History/Social Science

Standard 3.4 Student will follow/plan daily activities using lists/schedules.

Materials: Life Skills assessment handout

Resources:

- Assessment tools for students with significant disabilities for supported adulthood | <http://www.ndpc-sd.org/documents/STSPI/2009/InstitutePresentations2009/ToolsforTransitionAssessmentforStudentswithSevereCognitiveDisabilitiesMorningstar.pdf>

Instructional Strategies:

Introduction

1. Ask students “how many of you would what types of things do you need to do in order to live on your own?” (prompt them to think about what their parents do). Accept reasonable responses and remind them that a few weeks ago you discussed future plans and talked about where students would like to live in the future.
2. By a show of hands ask how many of them would like to live on their own or with roommates someday. Remind them that if they want to live without their parents, then they are going to have to work hard to do things on their own. Write on the board “things I need to do to live on my own”. Ask for responses and record down student responses. In order to keep the lists practical and applicable to students, keep the list more general. Add to the list as necessary.

Modeled Instruction

3. After you students are finished brainstorming, give each student their own handout with the self-evaluation. Explain to them, that this handout includes many of the things they will need to be able to do in order to live on their own or with a roommate. Remind them that you don't expect them to be able to do all of these things, but you want them to start thinking about the importance of learning and practicing life skill. Model for them how they can fill the chart out by choosing either "I can do it myself, I need a visual chart, I need a chart and some help, or I need a lot of help".

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

4. Tell them that you are going to have them check for each task in the box that they think applies to them. Explain that after they fill out their checklist that you are going to conference with each one of them individually to discuss how you as the teacher think they are doing for each item, and that you are going to score them as well (you can use the same checklist, just use a different color pen to distinguish teacher & student).

Independent Practice

5. As students are filling out their charts, monitor their work and help them as necessary. If you see a student checking "I can do it myself" for every task, have them stop and discuss with them what it means to do something without any help. If students already have visual aids that they use at school, include a copy of these in their portfolio for future reference. If a student checks that they need a visual aid for a task that they don't already have, work together with the student to make a checklist or picture steps that they can follow when performing that task.
6. Have student include their Life Skills checklist in their portfolio under "Planning for the Future" section.

Life Skills

	I can do it myself	I need a visual chart	I need a chart & some help	I need a lot of help
Plan a meal				
Go Grocery shopping				
Paying for a purchase				
Read a recipe				
Cook a meal				
Clean bathroom				
Vacuum				
Sweep				
Clean my room				
Dust				
Wash windows				
Brush my teeth				
Take a shower				
Dress for the weather				
Do laundry				
Follow safety rules in the home				
Read a calendar				
Follow a schedule				
Tell time				
Plan ahead				
Find a location online				

Map out directions				
Take the bus/sprinter				
Follow safety signs/crosswalk				
Use the phone				
Make an appointment				
Fill out forms with name, phone # & address				

Unit 2, Lesson 10: Setting Goals

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Planning for my Future

Objective: To help students understand areas that they want to work on in their lives, and to set specific goals that they can work towards.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO History/Social Science

Standard 3.4 Student will follow/plan daily activities using lists/schedules.

Materials:” My Life Skills Goals” worksheet

Resources: The Arc’s Self-Determination Scale | For youth with cognitive disabilities

<http://www.beachcenter.org/Books/FullPublications/PDF/TheArcsSelfDeterminationScale.pdf>

Instructional Strategies:

Introduction

1. Ask students to review their Life Skills assessment sheets from the previous lesson. Instruct them to look over their checklist, and notice any areas in which they needed a lot of help in order to perform the skill. Ask students to share out what they noticed some of their difficult areas were.

Modeled Instruction

2. Pose the question to the class: “how do you think that you are going to get better at those skills that you need a lot of help with?” Accept reasonable responses, and point out that just like when you discussed how they could work to strengthen areas of weakness, they can also work to get better in different life skills.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

3. Show students the goal setting sheet and explain to them that in order to get better at things, it is important to write down what you want to get better at, and how you plan to improve. This is called a “goal”. Ask for students to see if they can think of an example of some different kinds of goals and share with the class (goals to get better in school, to lose weight, to get a high score on a video game, etc). Explain that you can make goals about any activity in your life that you would like to change or get better in. Tell students that today they are going to make 3 goals about their future in the areas of life skills.
4. Instruct students to use their life skills chart and identify 3 areas that they would like to get better at. (remind them that they would want to pick an area that they need “a

lot of help” in). After students have identified the areas, model for them how to write it as a goal on the goal template by writing in the targeted area, the measurement scale that they want to move up to, and the steps and timeline that they will follow to work towards the outcome. Model for students this example:

I want to get better at doing Laundry

I currently achieve this goal by: (circle one) doing it by myself / **doing it with a visual**/ doing it with a visual and some help/ doing it with a lot of help.

If exact prompt amount is known please indicate:With a visual and 4 verbal prompts.

I will work to reach this goal with the following amount of prompts:
With a visual and 2 verbal prompts

I want to reach this goal by the following amount of time: (circle one) six weeks/ eight weeks/ 12 weeks/ Other: _____

My action plan to reach this goal is to: Practice doing Laundry at the rate of 2 times a week for 30 minutes.

Independent Practice

5. Monitor students as they are filling out their goals sheets and help them come up with practical goals that can be measured and are achievable for the students. Remind students that it is best to pick a measure of independence that is up just one level from their current level (if they currently do it with a visual and some help, they should try to do it with just a visual). Also show students how to chart their progress on the chart under each goal. It is recommended to use some kind of incentive/reward to help students be motivated to meet their goals.
6. Have students place their goals into their Transition Portfolio under the “Planning for the Future” section. Instruct students to keep data on their goals weekly, you may want to have student fill out data directly after completing one of their goal tasks.

Accommodations & Modifications:

Depending on the ability and age of the class, you can modify this lesson by using higher level or basic language. For advanced learners, use students to be more independent at making goals and action plans. For a more supported approach, students may need guidance on how to set a realistic goal and an action plan to match it.

Unit 3 Employment Skills

Unit 3, Lesson 11: Job Interests

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Employment Skills

Objective: For students to research different jobs that they are interested in.

State Curriculum Standards:

- **SEACO ELA standard 24.4** Student will identify and relate work experiences/skills relevant to job.

Instruments:

“Career Exploration on the Internet” worksheet taken from

Oesch, M. & Bower, C. (2009). *Integrating Career Awareness in the ABE & ESOL Classroom. Section III, Lesson 1*. Retrieved April 15, 2012 from: sabes.org/workforce/integrating-career-awareness.pdf

Resources:

- A fun site geared for high school students to learn all about work: http://www.youthhood.org/jobcenter/lw_jobs.asp
- Ideas for teaching vocational skills, workplace readiness, and career development: <http://www.paulabliss.com/index.html>

Materials: “Job Interest” Worksheet, “Career Exploration on the Internet- B” worksheet accessible at: <http://sabes.org/workforce/ica-worksheets/index.htm>

Instructional Strategies:

Introduction

1. Lead a class discussion in which you ask students, “What are some school subjects that you are good at? What are some things that you like to do in your free time?” Tell students to refer to their “My Strengths” page in their portfolio and share with the class some of their strengths.
2. After you are finished discussing these questions, ask students, “When you think about your future, what kind of job would you like to have someday?” Ask students to think about whether the jobs that they are interested in are related to things they like to do, or to their strengths. Explain to them that sometimes it can be helpful to look into jobs that they have similar interests and strengths to. For example, if a student likes animals, a job that they might be good at would be working at an animal shelter.

Modeled Instruction

3. Show students the Job Interest worksheet and refer to the first two questions. Explain to students that sometimes the jobs that we want to get when we are older may be called “careers”. These are jobs that we work towards by getting special education and training. Some examples of careers include: Teachers, Police, Firefighter, Businessperson, Nurse, or Veterinarian (show students pictures). Explain to students that most people do not start out right away in these jobs since they require a lot of training. Explain to students that most teenagers and young adults usually start out in jobs that do not require college education or specific work experience, these are called “entry -evel jobs”. Some examples of entry-level jobs include: grocery store bagger, hotel busboy, store clerk, fast food worker, and maintenance worker (show students pictures). Explain that these jobs can also be careers, and many grown ups will stay in these jobs for a long time as well.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

4. Instruct students to fill out the Job Interest worksheet and monitor their work. Help them find videos of different jobs on the website. If you cannot find a specific job (Macy’s Clerk) look for a more general job that is similar (retail worker).

Independent Practice

5. Instruct students to research up to 4 different jobs (teacher may extend this lesson to another day) and include the information they find onto the “Career Exploration” worksheet.
6. Have students place their finished Job Interest worksheet into their Transition Portfolio under the “Employment” section.

Jobs that require advanced training



Jobs that require basic training and skills



Job Interests

What are some jobs that you are interested in having as a teenager/young adult?

What are some jobs that you would like to have when you get older?

Go to the website <http://www.cacareerzone.org/graphic/index.html>

1. Click on “Explore Industry Sectors” button.
2. Look over the different categories of jobs.
3. Find the category that you are interested in.
4. Watch one of the videos about the jobs.

What job did you watch a video about? _____

What are some of the duties of this job?

Do you think you would like this job? _____

If you were not able to find the job you were looking for on this website, you can also try <http://www.bls.gov/k12/index.htm>

Using the information you found on this job, fill out the chart on Page _____, continue to research at least 3 other jobs and fill out the chart for these jobs as well (2 should be on jobs that you could get during high school).

Unit 3, Lesson 12: Looking for a Job

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Employment Skills

Objective: To teach students effective strategies to find job openings.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO English/Language Arts:

Standard 12.2 Student will use printed material to obtain information on desired item.

Standard 19 Student will share information and ideas, speaking audibly in complete, coherent sentences.

Materials: “Job search” handout, Newspaper classifieds, Internet access

Resources:

- America’s Career InfoNet (includes videos of different jobs)– www.acinet.org
- World-of-Work Map – www.act.org/wwm/index.html

Instructional Strategies:

Introduction

1. Remind students, “In our last lesson, we researched different jobs that we are interested in. Can some of you share about what jobs you would like to have in the future?” After students respond, ask “If you were going to try to get one of those jobs, what would you do?” Write “How to find a job” on the board. Write student responses under it, and when students are finished sharing, look over the answers and make sure to add Internet sites, newspaper classifieds, word of mouth, help wanted signs, and asking businesses. Discuss each of these techniques with students and give examples.

Modeled Instruction

2. Explain to students that there are many different ways to find jobs, and it is important to use many different resources to find out all of the job options available. Ask students what search engine they would use if they were going to look for a job on the Internet. Show them the Job search worksheet and explain to them that there are many different websites to find jobs, and that some might be better than others. That is why it is important to use a variety of sites when searching for a job.
3. Also explain to students that when searching for jobs, they will most likely need to search by category. Go to Craigslist.com or show students the following categories:

• [accounting+finance](#) • [admin / office](#) • [arch / engineering](#) • [art / media / design](#) • [biotech / science](#) • [business / mgmt](#) • [customer service](#) • [education](#) • [food / bev / hosp](#) • [general labor](#) • [government](#) • [human resources](#) • [internet engineers](#) • [legal / paralegal](#) • [manufacturing](#) • [marketing / pr / ad](#) • [medical / health](#) • [nonprofit sector](#) • [real estate](#) • [retail / wholesale](#) • [sales / biz dev](#) • [salon / spa / fitness](#) • [security](#) • [skilled trade / craft](#) • [software / qa / dba](#) • [systems / network](#) • [technical support](#) • [transport](#) • [tv / film / video](#) • [web / info design](#) • [writing / editin](#)

Explain to them that they will need to first click on a category, and then they can look for the specific job they might be interested in. For example, if they wanted to work at a grocery store, they would first need to search under the category food/bev/hosp and then they can scroll through jobs by date, or they can also type in their job title now that they are under the right category.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

4. Instruct students to go to the computer lab to search the Internet. As students are looking for jobs, offer them help as needed to navigate the Internet and to find the job they are looking for. Remind them that they want to look for jobs close by, that they have experience for, and that has good hours.

Independent Practice

5. After students have finished searching and have filled out their sheets, have them come back to class and discuss how successful they were at finding jobs. Ask them which resource had the highest amount of jobs that they were interested in. Have students compare and discuss what site/source they thought was the best.
6. Have students place their finished job search worksheets into their Transition Portfolio under the “Employment” section.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Job Search

What job are you interested in?

Go online to www.craigslist.com to search for jobs. From your search, how many jobs did you find that you were interested in? _____ find the one you are most interested in and write down:

1. Job title: _____
2. Experience needed: _____
3. Hours of work: _____
4. Where do you apply? _____

Go online to www.monster.com to search for jobs. From your search, how many jobs did you find that you were interested in? _____ find the one you are most interested in and write down

1. Job title: _____
2. Experience needed: _____
3. Hours of work: _____
4. Where do you apply? _____

Go online to www.snagajob.com to search for jobs. From your search, how many jobs did you find that you were interested in? _____ find the one you are most interested in and write down

1. Job title: _____
2. Experience needed: _____
3. Hours of work: _____
4. Where do you apply? _____

Look in the daily newspaper under the classifieds section. Find the help wanted column and look for the job that you are interested in. From your search, how many jobs did you find that you were interested in? _____ find the one you are most interested in and write down

1. Job title: _____
2. Experience needed: _____
3. Hours of work: _____
4. Where do you apply? _____

Unit 2, Lesson 13: Creating a Resume

* Note this lesson may need to be extended over a period of 3-4 different class periods.

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Employment Skills

Objective: For students to understand what a resume and what it is used for, and for them to create their own resume.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO English/Language Arts:

Standard 12.2 Student will use printed material to obtain information on desired item.

Standard 16.5 Student will utilize keyboard/device for writing functions.

Instruments:

Online resume generator retrieved from:

readwritethink International Reading Association (2012). *Resumes and Cover Letters for High School Students*. (Seible). Retrieved April 27, 2012, from

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/resumes-cover-letters-high-30847.html?tab=6#tabs>

Printable resume worksheet retrieved from:

CREW Career Center (2011). *Resume Worksheet*. Retrieved April 27, 2012 from

<http://www.crew.cc/Services/Resume/>

Materials: Please review and choose one of the following resume guides to use:

- For an online Resume Generator, Sample Resumes, and an instructional plan, go to :

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/resumes-cover-letters-high-30847.html>

- For a printable resume worksheet with sample resumes go to:

<http://www.crew.cc/Services/Resume/> and click on “resume worksheet (pdf)” link.

Resources:

For many great resources on career services for high school students:

<http://teacherweb.com/NC/GarnerMagnetHighSchool/CareerServices/index.html>

Instructional Strategies:**Introduction**

1. Explain to students that when they want to apply for job, it is often required that they give the employer a resume. Ask the students to share about what kind of information would be in a resume. Accept reasonable answers and discuss as a class.

Modeled Instruction

2. If you would like to use the online resume builder, go to the Resume Generator at http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/resume_generator/ . If you would like to use a printed guide, go to <http://www.crew.cc/Services/Resume/> and print the resume worksheet (pdf) from CREW Career Center. Instruct students to look at a sample resume at <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/resumes-cover-letters-high-30847.html> Discuss the different sections with students and answer any questions they might have. Explain to them that they are going to create their own resume.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

3. Following the guidelines of the resume guide you have chose, help students complete the sections of their own resume. This may need to be broken up into 2-3 class lessons depending on student ability and time constraints.

Independent Practice

4. After students are finished developing the different sections of their resume, have them pick the style of resume they like the most from the 3 sample resumes. Instruct students to type or produce their resume following the format of the sample they chose.
5. Have students place their final products into their Transition Portfolio under the "Employment" section.

Unit 3, Lesson 14: Filling out Applications

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Employment Skills

Objective: For students to learn how to fill out a job application.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO English/Language Arts:

Standard 15.3 Student will use appropriate letter size in the document.

Instruments:

Starbucks Application retrieved from:

Job-applications.com(2012). *Starbucks Application*. Retrieved April 27, 2012 from

<http://www.job-applications.com/starbucks-application/>

Materials: *Starbucks* application accessible at:

<http://www.job-applications.com/starbucks-application/>

Resources

For more information about filling out job applications and for sample applications:

<http://www.employmentspot.com/employment-articles/filling-out-a-job-application/>

Instructional Strategies:

Introduction

1. Explain to students that in addition to wanting a resume, many employers require job candidates to fill out a job application. Or sometimes, they will only need to fill out an application and not turn in a resume. Every company had their own application that each look a little different, but there are several main parts of most applications:

- I. Personal Information
- II. Education
- III. Former Employers
- IV. References

Write these four categories on the board and discuss with students what kind of information will be included in each section.

Modeled Instruction

2. Pass out Starbucks Applications found in Appendix C. Have students preview the application and notice the different sections. Explain to them that you are going to have them pretend that they are applying for a job at Starbucks, and today they are going to practice by filling out an application.

3. Point out the section where there are questions such as “what do you like about coffee?”, and “why would you like to work for Starbucks Coffee Company?”. Discuss as a group what some possible answers to these questions could be, and write appropriate responses on the board for students to reference.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

4. Help students fill out their applications by explaining different questions as you go along. Be ready to provide students with their personal information (such as address and phone number) if they don't already know it.

Independent Practice

5. Have students place their filled out applications into their Transition Portfolio under the “Employment” section.

Unit 2, Lesson 15: Interviewing for a Job

Subject taught: Transition Skills

Grade level: 6-12th

TOPIC of lesson: Employment Skills

Objective: For students to formulate answers to interview questions, and to practice responding to common interview questions.

State Curriculum Standards:

SEACO English/Language Arts

Standard 21.1 Student will attend and respond to speaker

Standard 21.3 Student will participate in communicative dialogue with person or group on specific topic.

Instruments:

“Interview” video taken from:

About.Com. *Job Interview Tips for Teens* [youtube video]. Retrieved April 8, 2012 from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gimnRgv4zIY&feature=player_embedded

“Interview Guidelines” handout retrieved from:

University of Portland Office of Career Services (2012). *Interview Guidelines*. Oregon
Retrieved April 26, 2012 from <http://www.up.edu/showimage/show.aspx?file=10798>

Materials:

“Interview” video at:

<http://quietube2.com/v.php/http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gimnRgv4zIY>

“Interview Guidelines” handout (link up PDF in appendix D)

Resources:

- Interview Questions handout (question and answers)
http://www.mvpsource.com/interview_questions.html)

Instructional Strategies:

Introduction

1. Review with students what they have learned so far about getting a job: “ who can tell me the steps that you need to take in order to find a job?” (1. Decide what kind of job you want, 2. Find job openings, 3. Submit application/resume). Ask students, “what happens after you turn in your application? Does the company call you and say

‘you’re hired?’” Accept appropriate responses, and then explain to students that before they can be hired they must be interviewed by the company. Ask for students to share what they know about interviewing.

Modeled Instruction

2. Pass out “Interview Guidelines” handout to students and review the information with them. Remind that when they go to an interview, it is important that they should bring the resume and their portfolio. Review dress guidelines and non-verbal behavior with students. Show them the Interview PowerPoint and discuss the information. Show students the Interview video and ask them what they thought some examples of good and bad interview behavior was from the video.

Guided Practice/Checking for Understanding

3. Pass out “Interview Questions” and guide students through writing complete sentences that they could formulate into verbal answers in an interview.

Independent Practice

4. When students are finished writing their answers, practice asking them interview questions and allow them to use written responses in order to answer questions in complete sentences.
5. Have students type their answers and include in the Transition Portfolio under the “Employment” section.

Extensions: Interviewing is a difficult skill that requires repeated practice with your students. It is recommended that students practice answering questions 1x a week starting with a visual template, and as they get familiar with their answers, work at answering without a visual. When students are ready, have them practice a mock interview with an outside professional (principal, local business owner, etc) who can give them feedback on their performance.

Accommodations & Modifications:

Depending on the ability and age of the class, you can modify this lesson. For advanced learners, see resource at <http://www.mypsosource.com/interview-questions.html> for more advanced interview questions. For beginning learners, focus on 2-4 basic questions and have them practice answering questions in complete sentences.

Interview Questions

1. What are some school subjects that you are good at?
2. What are your strengths?
3. What are your weaknesses?
4. What makes you a good worker?
5. Why do you want this job?
6. What is your personality like?
7. What do you want to be doing in 5 years?

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