



Playing the Field

December 18, 2017

Students Will Be Able To

1. Explore a variety of careers around them

2. Evaluate their strengths and interests related to those careers

Materials

None, aside from something for students to write with and on.

Introduction

Your job or career may seem like it's a long way off, but odds are pretty good you're going to end up spending more time at work than you do at home. Hopefully this makes you want to find something you enjoy, that you're good at, and that provides the money you want so you can spend your time when not at work living the kind of life you always wanted. It's a tall order, and there are a lot of options.

The goal today is give you a set of skills to explore what's around you. You'll do more targeted exploration later if you take Career Explorations, and as you develop your 4-year plan for high school. Today, however, we're just going to pique your interest and help you know what to look for in what's around you.

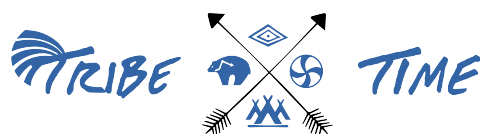
Sometimes people talk about playing the field. In dating terms, this means that you're dating a lot of different people. Seeing what you like. Seeing what you don't like. Think of this as dating your future. Go play the field. That way, the game you end up playing is one that you like.

Activity 1 – The Game of Concentration

For this activity, students will explore the careers around them playing a game of elimination that ultimately results in a winner, but gives all students a long list of options to think about in terms of careers they can choose.

Activity 2 – Bragging it Up

This activity has students exploring their strengths and interests through the process of affirmation. The class discusses what affirmation is and isn't, and students then compete to list as many affirmations about themselves as possible.



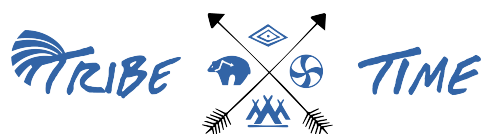


Activity 3 – The Million Dollar Question

Students explore the types of things they want and need in their future, and then sort them accordingly. This helps them get a general idea of what kinds of jobs they'll need to support the kind of life they want to lead.

Activity 4 – Graduation Day

Students place themselves at the day of their graduation. They do a stream of consciousness writing about what they are going to do with their lives now that school is over. They should try to pull in things from other parts of the lesson today, but only as it applies to what they write.





Activity 1: The Game of Concentration

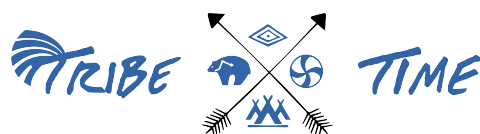
The goal of this activity is to get students to identify as many job options as they can. A variety of prompts will hopefully get them started, and it's not meant to identify every career option. Just to illustrate that a million options exist right here. It plays on a popular rhyming game played by kids for years.

In short, the students form pairs or groups and chant the following to get the game started – choosing a category:

This is a game of concentration; no repeats or hesitation. Pick it first and pick it fast, or you will find that you've been passed. The category is _____

- *Your Parents or Your Friends' Parents Jobs*
- *Jobs located in Preston*
- *Work-From-Home Jobs*
- *Odd Jobs*
- *Cache Valley Jobs*
- *Jobs That Make You Rich*
- *Sales Jobs*
- *Jobs That Make You Happy*
- *Jobs You Would Be Good At*
- *Etc.*

Each student then rapidly states a job that fits the category. If more than 5 seconds go by or the same job is stated within the same round, that student is out and steps back. The rest of the players continue until only one student remains. The game can be repeated as many times as needed with different topics or groupings.





Activity 2: Bragging it Up

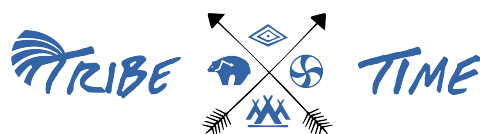
This activity has students exploring their strengths and interests through the process of affirmation. Begin by guiding students through a discussion about the following core tenants of affirmations as applied to this activity:

- An affirmation starts with the words “I am...”
- Affirmations are positive, and never include the word “not”
 - Ex: “I am comfortable sharing my opinions with others,” instead of “I am not afraid to speak up.”
- Affirmations are short
- Affirmations are specific
 - Ex: “I am quick to compliment someone who is sad” instead of “I am kind.”
- Affirmations are things happening now in the present tense
 - Ex: “I am good at helping others use technology,” instead of “I have helped a lot of people use technology.”
- Affirmations are about you and your skills and behavior – at least for this activity

Once the class has discussed what affirmation is and isn’t, students take several minutes to list as many affirmation statements as they can. To get them started, give them categories like “my interactions with others,” “skills that help me in school,” or “things I do to make and keep friends,”

As an addition to the activity, students can pair off and without looking at what they’ve written, spar back and forth with a partner in a brag-off. The one who can brag about themselves the most is the winner and has one more affirmation to add to the list.

To conclude the activity, draw students’ attention to the skills and affirmations you’ve heard that will help them identify potential careers, areas of interest, and areas where they didn’t have much to say and could work to build their skill.



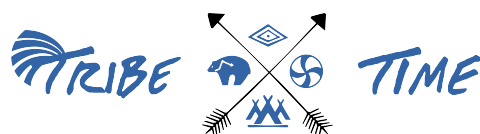


Activity 3: The Million Dollar Question

In this activity, start simple. Have students write down, draw or even just tell a neighbor the types of things they want to be able to buy when they are adults and get to control their own income and spending. Once students have taken time to really think about it, have them share the highlights with the class. This will likely result in a lot of things that fall into the 'want' category instead of the 'need' category.

Take a minute to ensure students understand the difference between a want and a need. You can use food as an example. Some students may say they want to eat out every night. That's the 'want' version. The 'need' version of that want would be that they need to be able to eat. Have students go over what they've come up with and identify a 'want' and a 'need' version of each item.

Have them then look at just their needs for a minute. Using the careers around them here, have them identify which careers they've discussed today that would fit their needs. Then have them do the same for their wants. Ideally, they'll find a number of jobs for each that fit the bill – pun intended. If not, it's at least something they can keep in mind.





Activity 4: Graduation Day

This activity centers on what an English teacher would call stream of consciousness. Stream of consciousness is basically intellectual vomit. Students can write literally anything that comes into their head. In its true form, there is no topic. For this activity, it's probably more appropriate to call it a guided stream of consciousness because they should write as much as they can, but try to keep what they are going to do next now that they have graduated at the forefront of what they write.

An example of how this can be done is provided below. Keep in mind, however, that there is no right or wrong way to write this kind of thing, because it's about what's in your consciousness and not the consciousness of someone else.

"What should I write about? Well, I guess since this assignment is about writing about what to do now that I'm graduated, I should write about that. I can't believe I'm graduated. I can't believe Joey graduated. For real. I've never seen someone play so many video games. Maybe that's what he'll do. Make video games. There's going to be a big party tonight, so that's cool. But after that? I have no idea. I could probably go to college, but which one? USU is close, but I kind of want to get away from my parents. Man, I bet my dad is surprised to see me graduate. I don't really want to job like his, because he's always gone. I also want to be able to buy a four-wheeler. Or maybe a really, really big 4K UHD HDTV. Like 100 inches. Do they even make them that big? I bet *The Last Jedi* would look great on that. That was such a great movie. I can't believe that Rey's father is..."

This activity is all about projecting themselves into the future, and is a great activity to have them circle back to as enrichment on Conditioning days. Kids usually have a hard time getting started, but once they get that there aren't really any rules about what they write, about grammar, or about not just talking about themselves, they usually run with it. If kids are having a hard time getting started, have them try talking to themselves about what they're thinking or model it for them. Don't plan it. That would defeat the purpose. Heck, you can even talk/write about not knowing what to say to a bunch of kids to show them how to do this. In the end, again, it's all about getting them to think ahead to what they want to do and be.

