

THE INTERVIEW

The intent of this lesson plan is two-fold: to teach students how to work as a cohesive unit and to bolster their confidence level as they begin their journey toward *Life Beyond High School*. We will focus on honing their skills as interviewees. They will assume roles as interviewers, as well as interviewees. This will help them anticipate potential questions and how to offer appropriate and considered responses.

ESSENTIAL UNIT GUIDING QUESTION: How does the use of strategies in interview settings enhance students' confidence and success as they enter the job market?

LESSON: How does role-play strengthen students' abilities as speakers and listeners?

LESSON OVERVIEW: With each lesson building on the previous one, students will learn to effectively plan for and execute mock interviews. Students will also meticulously complete job applications, resumes, and interview thank you letters. Students also will learn strategies to effectively increase their reading and writing skills.

STANDARDS: **Alaska ELA: SL.11-12.1.** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively ... **SL.11-12.6.** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate and addressing intended audience needs and knowledge level. **W.11-12.4.** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization style, and features are appropriate to task, genre, purpose, and audience.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS: National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH): *The Immigrant Experience in California through Literature and Theatre*-related materials; *Undesirable Elements*, by Ping Chong; Internet articles, rubrics, and exercises.

ESTIMATED TIMING: 55 minutes/day over a period of 10 weeks. *Unrelated assignments will be completed during this time, also.*

LESSON DETAILS:

Lesson 1: Personal Interviews – Students will start with personal interviews and eventually “graduate” to business interviews.

*Distribute *modified* Personal Narrative Form (PNF) and give instructions on how to complete it. (*Students are instructed to **refrain from** including any personal details that they do not wish to share with others.*)

1st – Students will spend the remainder of the period filling out their individual PNFs. Forms must be completed by the next class period.

- 2nd – Students will be assigned partners. Each of them will spend approximately 20 minutes interviewing the other one about her/his childhood, family, travels, ambitions, etc.
- 3rd – As the group reconvenes, each student will take 5 minutes to tell the class what s/he learned about her/his partner.
- 4th – Each student will be given her/his partner’s Personal Narrative Form. Students are to use the PNFs and the notes from their personal interviews to write short biographies about their partners. (*Although the students are instructed not to include anything that cannot be shared, the PNFs are **NOT** to leave the classroom.* This experience is meant to be a bonding exercise within the group.)

Lesson 2: What do you want to be when you grow up?

- 1st – Students will write three short sentences in their notebooks, answering each of the following questions:
 - a. What was your 1st assigned chore/task as a young child?
 - b. What do you remember as the 1st career/job you wanted to pursue as you were growing up?
 - c. When you were young, what did you consider to be the worst job you could imagine having?
- 2nd – With a partner, students discuss those memories and how their goals have, or haven’t, changed.
- 3rd – As a class, students share what they’ve learned and discuss short-term and long-term goals.
- 4th – Homework (due in one week): Using at least one of their sentences as inspiration, students will write a short story about a job interview. (3-paragraph minimum.)

Lesson 3: With graduation in mind, students will think about filling out job applications for part and full-time positions.

- 1st – In their notebooks, students will write down three jobs they might be interested in.
- 2nd – With a *different* partner, students will use at least one of the jobs listed in their notebooks to discuss some of the things to consider when searching for a job and filling out an application form.
- 3rd – As a group, discuss the results. Then, distribute copies of *Twelve Steps to a Successful Job Application* Handout. Students will compare their answers with the handout.
- 4th – Students will learn/review how to write and send a formal letter. Distribute *Writing Formal Letter: Example* and *Envelope* Handout.
Homework: Students will create *Job Application Cover Letters*.
- 5th – At the beginning of the next class, the instructor will collect applications & re-distribute them to different pairs of students who will critique grammar and word choice.
- 6th – As a group, offer suggestions to improve applications.
Homework: Students will edit their applications. (To be completed and turned in the next class period.)

Lesson 4: Interview Questions & Answers

- 1st – Students will take, and then discuss a quick *Interviewing Skills Quiz*.
- 2nd – Brainstorm a list of potential interview Qs & As / Dos & Don'ts.
- 3rd – Discuss the merits and pitfall of them all.
- 4th – Distribute & discuss *Common Job Interview Questions Handout*.
- 5th – Distribute & discuss *Common Job Interview Mistakes Handout*.

Lesson 5: Finally! The Interview

The first series of interviews are set up to be fun and hopefully relaxing. The potential jobs are: hot dog vendor at a sports arena; clown for children's parties; janitor at a pre-school; manicurist at a doggie day-care; human billboard for an income-tax company; still model for a senior citizens' art class; etc.

Based on the number of students in the class, cards numbered from 1 – (?) will be

- 1st – The student with card #1 will be the first interviewer.
- 2nd – The interviewer may use the *Common Job Interview Questions Handout* to form her/his questions.
- 3rd – The interviewer will then select one card from a pile labeled *Interviewee* and one card from a pile labeled *Job*.
- 4th – The students will have one day to prepare for their interviews.

This will continue until all of the students have had a chance to be the interviewer and the interviewee. From here, students will start conducting interviews based on jobs they might actually apply for. (*Toward the end of the process, the instructor will ask community members to act as interviewers.*)

- 5th – Each student must bring her/his senior portfolio, resume, and application to the interview.
- 6th – S/he must also have a list of questions available to ask the interviewer.
- 7th – Job-appropriate dress attire is required.

After each interview, there will be a critique session. *Every* student will be asked for positive feedback and suggestions. Suggestions will begin with, "Have you considered ...?" Sentences/suggestions that begin with, "You should ..." are not acceptable!

- 8th – Students will write a formal Thank You letter to each of the employers with whom they interviewed.

DIFFERENTIATION: To be determined by individual student needs.

ASSESSMENTS:

- Observation during class discussions and group activities
- Presentations / Interviews
- Classwork: resumes, job applications, thank you letters

Handouts, Exercises, & Rubric

TWELVE STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL JOB APPLICATION

1. Always be dressed and groomed appropriately when picking up or dropping off an application. This is when you make your first impression!
2. Create a sample, generic application with all dates of your employment, work history with job descriptions, phone numbers and at least three references. *Use this as a tool* when completing job applications so you have all the information at hand.
3. Use a black pen and print neatly on paper applications.
4. Read and follow all instructions carefully.
5. Complete all information. If there are questions that do not apply, write “n/a.” Do not write “see résumé,” even if you have provided one. Avoid leaving anything blank.
6. Write “will discuss at interview” if you have something you prefer to explain in person, such as having been fired or if you have a felony conviction.
7. Do not give specific salary requirements. Write “open” or “negotiable.”
8. Always be truthful and do not over exaggerate on job titles or job responsibilities.
9. Make sure that you have permission from the people that you list as references. References should be people who know your work habits, such as former employers, supervisors or members of organizations in which you have volunteered.
10. Be sure to sign and date the application.
11. If you haven’t heard anything within a week after submitting the application, follow up with the company. Let them know that you are interested in the position. Also find out how long they keep job applications on file.
12. Keep in mind, the goal of your application is the door to your interview!

<https://goodprospects.goodwill.org/build-skills/apply-jobs/twelve-steps-successful-job-application>

Common Job Interview Questions

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are your strengths? 2. What are your weaknesses? 3. Why are you interested in working for [insert company name here]? 4. Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10 years? 5. What can you offer us that someone else can not? 6. Are you willing to relocate? 7. Are you willing to travel? 8. Tell me about an accomplishment you are most proud of. 9. Tell me about a time you made a mistake. 10. What is your dream job? 11. How did you hear about this position? 12. What would you look to accomplish in the first 30 days/60 days/90 days on the job? 13. Discuss your resume. 14. Discuss your educational background. 15. Describe yourself. 16. Tell me how you handled a difficult situation. 17. Why should we hire you? 18. Would you work holidays/weekends? 19. How would you deal with an angry or irate customer? 20. Give a time when you went above and beyond the requirements for a project. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. What is your dream job 22. What was your biggest failure? 23. What motivates you? 24. What's your availability? 25. Who's your mentor? 26. Tell me about a time when you disagreed with your boss [or teacher]. 27. How do you handle pressure? 28. What are your career goals? 29. What gets you up in the morning? 30. Are you a leader or a follower? 31. What was the last book you've read for fun? 32. What are your co-worker pet peeves? 33. What are your hobbies? 34. What is your favorite website? 35. What makes you uncomfortable? 36. What are some of your leadership experiences? 37. How would you fire someone? 38. Would you work 40+ hours a week? 39. What questions haven't I asked you? 40. What questions do you have for me?
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Common Job Interview Mistakes

1. Arriving late.	24. Yawning.
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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Arriving too early. 3. Lighting up a cigarette, or smelling like a cigarette. 4. Bad-mouthing your last boss. 5. Lying about your skills/experience/ 6. Wearing the wrong (for this workplace!) clothes. 7. Forgetting the name of the interviewer. 8. Wearing a ton of perfume or aftershave. 9. Shaking hands too weakly, or too firmly. 10. Wearing a Bluetooth earpiece. 11. Failing to research the employer in advance. 12. Failing to demonstrate enthusiasm. 13. Inquiring about benefits too soon. 14. Talking about salary requirements too soon. 15. Being unable to explain how your strengths and abilities apply to the job in question. 16. Failing to make a strong case for why you are the best person for this job. 17. Forgetting to bring a copy of your resume. 18. Failing to remember what you wrote on your own resume. 19. Asking too many questions or no questions at all. 20. Being unprepared to answer the standard questions. 21. Failing to listen to what the interviewer is saying. 22. Talking more than half the time. 23. Interrupting your interviewer. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 25. Neglecting to match the communication style of your interviewer. 26. Slouching. 27. Bringing along a friend, or your mother. 28. Chewing gum, tobacco, your pen, your hair. 29. Laughing, giggling, whistling, humming, etc. 30. Saying “you know,” “like,” “I guess,” and “um.” 31. Name-dropping or bragging or sounding like a know-it-all. 32. Asking to use the bathroom. 33. Being falsely or exaggeratedly modest. 34. Wearing sunglasses. 35. Failing to make eye contact (or making continuous eye contact [stalker-like]). 36. Taking a seat before your interviewer does. 37. Becoming angry or defensive. 38. Complaining that you were kept waiting (or about anything at all)! 39. Speaking rudely to the receptionist. 40. Letting your nervousness show. 41. Over-explaining why you lost your last job. 42. Being too familiar and jokey. 43. Sounding desperate. 44. Checking the time. 45. Oversharing (TMI). 46. Sounding rehearsed. 47. Leaving your cell phone on. 48. Failing to ask for the job.
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Writing Formal Letter: *Example*

Lee Grey
2 Center Street
Utica, NY 13502

Sender's Full Name and Address

June 15, 2016

Date

Kit Black, Manager
Utica Uniforms
Utica, NY 13502

Recipient's Full Name and Address

Dear Ms. Grey:

Salutation

I wish to apply for the job of retail clerk as advertised in the Observer-Dispatch of 06/13/2016.

I am a recent high school graduate and am eagerly looking forward to entering our community's workforce, on a full-time basis.

For the past two years, I have worked part-time at a local processing plant. However, I am interested mainly in retail. I am reliable, efficient, and focused. I believe you would find me to be a valuable asset to your team of workers.

I look forward to hearing from you. If you have any further questions or require any additional documentation, please contact me using the above information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Complimentary Close

Lee Grey

Signature

Lee Grey

Sender's Full Name (printed)

ADDRESSING AN ENVELOPE FOR A FORMAL LETTER: EXAMPLE

Sender's Full Name

Street Address
City, State and Zip Code



Mr. Lee Grey 2 Center Street Utica, NY 13502	Stamp
Ms. Kit Black, Manager Utica Uniforms 468 Broadway Blvd. Utica, NY 13502	



Recipient's Full Name
Company Name
Street Address
City, State and Zip Code

INTERVIEWING SKILLS QUIZ

True or False?

- 1.** You should schedule your first interviews with companies or organizations in which you are most interested.
- 2.** You do not have to answer questions regarding age, sex, race, national origin, or marital status.
- 3.** Conducting an informational interview can be an effective way to find a job.
- 4.** At a medical school interview, it is not necessary to repeat information provided in the application process.
- 5.** It is important to discuss salary requirements early in the interview.
- 6.** When asked about your background, spend two minutes or so unless questioned further.
- 7.** Avoid eye contact with the interviewer since it will make him or her uncomfortable.
- 8.** If you are asked if you have any weaknesses, you should never give any.
- 9.** The interviewer expects you to be well-informed about the company, organization, or graduate program.
- 10.** The most productive method to obtain a job is through recruiters, personnel agencies, and online postings.

<https://www.sa.miami.edu/toppel/mainSite/portals/0/assets/pdfs/interviewingSkillsHandbook.pdf>

INTERVIEWING SKILLS QUIZ

ANSWERS

1. **FALSE** You should schedule some interviews to get experience prior to the ones in which you are most interested.
2. **TRUE** Employers should not ask these questions, but they can be discussed if you bring them up.
3. **TRUE** Yes, they can provide valuable networking contacts.
4. **FALSE** The content of your personal statement and secondary application is important information about why you want to go to medical school, and should be elaborated on in the interview.
5. **FALSE** Don't discuss until the job offer has been extended.
6. **TRUE** Review the Tell Me About Yourself section on page 14.
7. **FALSE** Maintaining eye contact shows that you are interested and that you have good communication skills.
8. **FALSE** Give one weakness and then follow-up with a positive action plan for improvement.
9. **TRUE** Research is a critical component to the interview process and you must be prepared and knowledgeable.
10. **FALSE** Networking is the best way to make career contacts. 70-80% of your career success is a result of your ability to build and use your network of contacts.

<https://www.sa.miami.edu/toppel/mainSite/portals/0/assets/pdfs/interviewingSkillsHandbook.pdf>

MOCK INTERVIEW ASSESSMENT

Job Applicant: _____ Interviewer: _____

Position Sought: _____ Date of Interview: _____

Criteria	1	2	3	4	Score
First Impressions / Appearance	Unprofessional	Somewhat untidy	Overall neat	Appropriate	
Body Language	Fidgeting extremely distracting	Fidgeting a bit distracting	Minimal fidgeting	No fidgeting	
Verbal Communication	Displays lack of interest in interview and position	Displays some interest; still forming goals	Displays interest in interview; able to articulate goals	Articulate w/well-formed ideas matching goals w/position	
Response to Questions	Inappropriate responses to questions	Confused and/or incorrect responses to questions	Acceptable responses to questions	Thorough and accurate responses to questions	
Interviewer Questions	No questions asked of interviewer	Asks questions unrelated to position	Asks appropriate questions related to position	Asks appropriate questions which show evidence of research about company/position`	
The Closing!	Leaves w/disinterest	Polite goodbye w/handshake	Proper goodbye w/handshake & eye contact	Professional: Thanks interviewer by name and asks about follow-up.	

Document Review	1	2	3	4	Score
Sr. Portfolio	None provided	Needs major revisions	Acceptable, w/minor errors	Excellent	
Resume	None provided	Needs major revisions	Acceptable, w/minor errors	Excellent	
Application	None provided	Needs major revisions	Acceptable, w/minor errors	Excellent	
Interviewer Questions	None provided	Needs major revisions	Acceptable, w/minor errors	Excellent	
Thank You Letter	None sent	Needs major revisions	Acceptable, w/minor errors	Excellent	

Recommendation	HIRE! 👍	Place on File. 🤔	Not hire, at this time. 😞

Overall Evaluation/Comments:



Adapted

Interview Questionnaire Packet

Skip any question you do not feel comfortable answering. Do not share any details that you do not wish to share with your classmates. Only share information that it's okay for everyone to know!!

Please answer these questions to the best of your knowledge. Do not worry if you do not know an answer, skip that question if necessary. Please use as much space as necessary.

What is your full name? Do you have a separate traditional or cultural name?

Does your name have any special meaning, and were you named for anyone?

What is your current occupation? This may include a job, studies, a career path, or other work.

Where and when were you born (Date, year, city, country)?

What time of day were you born and what season/time of year was it (rainy season, winter, harvest time)? Are there any special stories about the day you were born (you were born during a blizzard, in a taxi, on your mother's birthday, etc.)?

What is your earliest memory?

Who raised you and who lived in your home(s) growing up?

Please share the names and some background of the people who raised you.

Do you have siblings? Did you grow up with your siblings?

What language did you speak growing up? What language(s) do you speak at home now?

Did you have a relationship with grandparents/family elders growing up? Please share their names and backgrounds.

Do you know how your grandparents met? Are there any stories about their history?

**Was there a person in your life who had a profound influence on shaping the person you are today? If so, please give an example of how they influenced you.
Please share any unique or unusual stories about your family's history**

What are some holiday, festival, or cultural traditions that you experienced growing up, including foods? (Wedding ceremony, naming ceremony, harvest festival, etc.). Do you currently observe/celebrate them?

If not born in the US, what was the first “American” meal that you ate?

If not born in your current city, how long have you lived there, and what brought you there?

What do you like about living in your city? What do you dislike about living in your city?

What are some of the major issues that you see as currently pressing within your city or (self-identified) community?

How do you define your cultural identity?

Do you have memories/experiences of feeling like an outsider/other in the community you grew up in? In your current community?

What are some assumptions (positive or negative) that people make about you or people who share your cultural identity?

Where/with whom have you found a sense of belonging or support?

Where is “home” for you? If “home” is not where you currently live, what do you miss?

What are you passionate about?

Are there any other details about yourself that you wish to share?

Participant Information – CHRONOLOGY

NAME: _____

Please fill out the below form with major events that have happened in your lifetime. These should include the date of your birth, births and deaths of close family members, and moves between cities or countries. Also include relevant historical events that impacted you, such as war or natural disaster. Use the back of this page or additional pages as necessary

Example:

YEAR	EVENT
1980	I am born in the Bronx, NY
1984	My parents split and I am sent to live with my grandmother in Pennsylvania
1990	I start taking dance lessons. Dance becomes a refuge for me.
1994	My grandmother dies and I return to live with my mother
1994	I get a scholarship to a summer dance program and leave home for the first time. It is freeing.
1996	I fall in love for the first time.
1998	I go to college to study dance. I don't fit into the program's view of a dancer. I drop out.
2001	9/11 happens. My mom's best friend is killed.
2003	I am in a serious car accident. I struggle with depression.
2005	I go back to school for dance education. I find my passion again.
2007	My dad and I reconcile before his death.
2012	I meet my life partner.

ETC

YEAR	EVENT
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Participant Information Form- NAMES

Please list 6-10 names that are common names in your culture OR family history Please also note if the name has any special meaning (e.g.: Rosa means Rose, Hakim means wise, Aiko means beloved), or if it is the name of an important religious, cultural or, political figure.

Also, if you grew up in a family or community where nicknames were common, please provide examples of names and their nicknames.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Participant Information Form – POEM / WHAT DO YOU THINK OF

POEM

Please provide a poem (in English or in the language you feel most comfortable speaking), that is meaningful to you and in some way reflects cultural background or personal identity. This poem can be one you have written yourself or by any author.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF?

In the space below, please write what you think of when you think of your country/place of birth or community.

These impressions can be anything that comes to mind: smells, sights, people, and traditions.

Examples:

I think of my grandmother cooking gallo pinto and the smell of onion and cilantro. . .

I think of how the light looks at 11:30pm during the White Nights. . .

I think of the chanting of the call to prayers. . .

I think of the wildflowers that grew in the empty field behind my house. . .
