Lesson Plan

Writing for Business: Composing a Résumé

Objective: Students will employ best practices in the writing of a résumé.

Workplace Readiness Skill: **Demonstrate reading and writing skills.**

Demonstration includes

- *reading and interpreting workplace documents*
- *effectively writing workplace documents, considering*
    - *ability to convey messages with clarity*
    - *professional tone, appropriate to audience*
    - *grammar*
    - *forms and conventions (e.g., formatting documents, using an email signature).*

Correlations to Other Workplace Readiness Skills:

- Demonstrate big-picture thinking.
- Demonstrate career- and life-management skills.
- Demonstrate information-literacy skills.
- Demonstrate professionalism.

Correlations to the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL):

- English: 6.DSR, 6.RV, 6.RI, 6.C, 6.LU, 6.W, 7.DSR, 7.RV, 7.RI, 7.C, 7.LU, 7.W, 8.DSR, 8.RV, 8.RI, 8.C, 8.LU, 8.W, 9.DSR, 9.RV, 9.RI, 9.C, 9.LU, 9.W, 10.DSR, 10.RV, 10.RI, 10.C, 10.LU, 10.W, 11.DSR, 11.RV, 11.RI, 11.C, 11.LU, 11.W, 12.DSR, 12.RV, 12.RI, 12.C, 12.LU, 12.W
- History and Social Sciences: CE.14

Instructional Steps:

1. ***Explain the lesson objective that students will use best practices to create a professional résumé that can be used for work, scholarship and award applications, and for college.*** Introduce the idea of a résumé as a professional, promotional document used to introduce yourself (your abilities, experiences, and accomplishments) to prospective employers.

2. ***Brainstorm résumé components.*** Ask students: *What types of things might an employer need to know about a prospective employee?* Answers should include education, skills, previous jobs, awards, certifications, industry credentials, volunteer and leadership experiences, mentorships/internships, and professional affiliations (e.g., with a Career and Technical Student Organization [CTSO]).

3. ***Differentiate between functional and chronological résumés.*** Explain that there are two types of résumés:

chronological résumés and functional résumés. When a résumé is organized chronologically, jobs are listed from most recent to least recent, and the job section is the first part of the résumé. When a résumé is functional, it is organized in a more nontraditional way, focusing on skills and accomplishments. For applicants with little work experience, this may be an appealing résumé format to use. Ask students to classify these two sample résumés from Read.Write.Think. according to whether each is chronological or functional. Ask, "What else do you notice about these examples?" Answers may include that they are brief, include contact information, educational information, skill information, job and volunteer experiences, and that information is presented in short phrases that begin with a verb such as "assisted" or "caring." Ask students if they can find any errors in these samples (In the second résumé, "delivered" is misspelled.) Ask, "Why might a small error such as this on a person's résumé impede his/her chances of getting a job?"

4. ***Draft résumé ideas.*** Ask students to begin thinking about experiences, skills, and goals as they begin to brainstorm ideas for their own résumés. Copy/distribute the Read.Write.Think. resource entitled My Résumé Ideas: Getting Started and/or Visualizing Your Résumé: Graphic Organizer to help students organize their thoughts and ideas.

5. ***Use Read.Write.Think Résumé Generator to draft résumé.*** For this step, students will need access to a computer and the Internet. Remind students to use their notes and ideas as they begin entering information into the Read.Write.Think. Résumé Generator tool. Point out the tool's features, such as the overview of résumés, the parts of a résumé, and the audio feature that enables students to hear information aloud. Remind each student to save/print a draft of his/her résumé.

6. ***Complete a peer review of each student résumé.*** At this juncture, share Resource #1: Résumé Review Rubric with students and remind them of the importance of careful proofreading and editing prior to sending a résumé to a prospective employer. Emphasize that the résumé and cover letter sent by applicants is the first impression they make on an employer; most employers receive many applications for any given job opening. Receiving a résumé and/or cover letter containing errors gives the employer an easy way to narrow down the number of people that he/she will invest time in with a job interview. Using the printed versions of the student résumés, have students work in pairs to edit/proofread each other's résumé drafts.

7. ***Edit/improve saved résumé using Résumé Generator.*** Ask each student to re-read his/her résumé and to make changes and improvements based on the peer review. Remind each student to save/print a final draft of the résumé.

Formative Assessment:

- Gauge student understanding during whole-group activities and discussions.
- Evaluate student résumé writing using Resource #1: Résumé Review Rubric.

Options for Adaptation/Differentiation:

- To offer scaffolding to students and to complete this activity in a shorter time frame, complete résumé idea brainstorming as a whole group. Rather than asking each student to create his/her own résumé, ask students to complete résumé drafts in small groups (these will be hypothetical résumés for practice only). Scaffolding can

also be incorporated by modeling best practices through the completion of a (hypothetical) résumé using a projected version of the Résumé Generator prior to asking each student to create a résumé.

- To offer an extension option to students, ask them to reflect in writing by answering the following questions:
  - What did you find particularly easy or difficult about the résumé writing process?
  - What do you like or dislike about your completed résumé?
  - What would you like to change about it?
  - Is a person's résumé ever actually complete? Explain.

Suggestions for Follow-up:

- Follow this lesson with another writing lesson focused on writing cover letters. Resources for this can be found in lessons 6, 7, and 8 of the Read.Write.Think. resource entitled "Résumés and Cover Letters for High School Students".
- Extend the lesson by completing an additional lesson, entitled "Using Email," related to the Workplace Readiness Skill related to effective use of telecommunications. The lesson can be found with the Workplace Readiness Skills (WRS) for the Commonwealth: Instructional Resources, from the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Resource Center.
- Build upon the concepts in this lesson by asking students to complete activities associated with the lesson on page 89, "Text vs. Email: Does it Really Matter?" in Soft Skills: The Competitive Edge, from the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy.
- Follow this lesson with another in which students complete activities associated with the lesson on page 81, "You Expect Me to do WHAT? TALK to People?" in Soft Skills: The Competitive Edge, from the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy.

Teacher Resources:

- Résumés and Cover Letters for High School Students, Read.Write.Think., National Council of Teachers of English.
  Soft Skills: The Competitive Edge, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy.
- Workplace Readiness Skills (WRS) Assessment: Virginia Overview, Career and Technical Education Consortium of States (CTECS).
- Workplace Readiness Skills (WRS) for the Commonwealth: Instructional Resources, Career and Technical Education (CTE) Resource Center.

Resource #1

Résumé Review Rubric

	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)
Résumé format	Format, margins, font choice, and spacing is neat and professional. Résumé is divided into appropriate sections that are easy to differentiate, following either a functional or a chronological format.	Format, margins, font choice, and spacing is mostly neat and professional. Résumé is divided into sections, following either a functional or a chronological format.	Format, margins, font choice, and spacing requires editing. Résumé is divided into sections, but the organization of these is unclear.	Résumé format does not follow conventions nor does it convey a professional image to a prospective employer.
Comments:				
Required content	Résumé includes contact information as well as the following, as applicable: job experience, academic information, awards, volunteer/ internship and/or mentorship experiences, skills; job descriptions are succinct and clear.	Résumé included contact information as well as most of the following, as applicable: job experience, academic information, awards, volunteer/ internship and/or mentorship experiences, skills; job descriptions are mostly clear and succinct.	Résumé information is inconsistent/incomplete. The following needs to be completed: contact information, job experience, academic information, awards, volunteer/internship and/or mentorship experiences, and skills (as applicable).	Résumé does not include contact information, nor did it include the following: job experience, academic information, awards, volunteer/ internship and/or mentorship experiences, skills.
Comments:				
Idea formation	Ideas within the résumé are developed and clear to the reader.	Ideas within the résumé are somewhat developed and clear to the reader.	Ideas within the résumé are incomplete or unclear to the reader.	Ideas within the résumé are not developed.
Comments:				

Organization and clarity	Student résumé is organized and clearly conveys all ideas. Conventional sections are used to differentiate job experience, skills, awards, etc.	Student résumé is somewhat organized and conveys most ideas. Conventional sections are used fairly well to differentiate most job experience, skills, awards, etc.	Student résumé requires additional organization and attention to detail. Conventional sections require additional editing to differentiate job experience, skills, awards, etc.	Student résumé is not organized and does not convey ideas. Conventional sections are not present and do not differentiate job experience, skills, awards, etc.
Comments:				
Vocabulary and language choices	Choice of vocabulary is professional and appropriate. Words chosen reinforce a professional image of the student.	Choice of vocabulary is somewhat professional and appropriate. Words chosen somewhat reinforce a professional image of the student.	Choice of vocabulary needs to be improved so that it is professional and appropriate. Some slang or simplistic words should be replaced.	Choice of vocabulary is not professional and appropriate. Slang or simplistic words replace those that would better represent the student.
Comments:				
Grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation	There are no grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors.	There is one grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation error.	There are two grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors.	There are more than two grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors.
Comments:				