

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES REGIONAL

Curriculum ideas have been included to provide school staff with concrete ideas for implementing career education and guidance strategies with students. The following classroom activities are taken from the list of Connections 2002 Award of Distinction winners. Connections is a conference devoted to developing and disseminating activities innovations throughout the State of Illinois. These activities have been provided as examples of experiences that can meet career development needs of learners in the following levels:

Internet Based Career Portfolios Edit

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ABSTRACT

Historically students have maintained their Individual Career Portfolios (ICP), required in many Education-to-Career programs, with pen, paper, folders, handouts, binders, etc. As time passes, these documents can become quite cumbersome. Students transfer to other schools, projects are lost, portfolio information becomes irrelevant or is damaged quite frequently. The value of the ICP as process often terminates with a move, a teacher change, district change, graduation or deterioration of the materials.

Illinois Valley Community College in partnership with Education-to-Careers, has created an Internet Based Career Portfolio (IBCP) that will provide the student a safer, more flexible tool that will not become obsolete as they relocate, change grades, add courses or change directions. The IBCP lends itself to life-long learning as students now have the capacity to archive in an electronic folder of their past reports, works of art, poems, essays, grades, projects, collaborative learning experiences and other significant learning experiences.

As technology advances and additional band width becomes available, students will be able to add video clips or other technological components to their career portfolio. The IBCP contains the student's best work with the guidance and approval of their classroom teacher. The IBCP's have also proven to be invaluable tools for teachers during teacher/parent conferences or teacher evaluation periods. The IBCP's have been used to chart student progression, have served as a valuable student self-evaluation tool, and is a source of pride among students.

In addition, these IBCP's will likely be used by college students, adults entering adult education programs, teachers seeking recertification credit, local workforce development initiatives, or students entering additional programs in career and technical education.

Connecting Counselors

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ABSTRACT

How do you make counselors in rural schools aware of the terrific opportunities available to their students in the construction trades and manufacturing fields? Representatives from Starved Rock Associates for Vocational and Technical Education, Marshall, Putnam and Woodford County Regional Offices of Education, the IBEW Local 176, the Illinois Valley Contractors Association, The Carus Chemical Corporation, and the Harper-Wyman Corporation worked together to develop a four-day experience for area counselors that gave them the opportunity to see and hear from a variety of people who have careers in the construction trades and manufacturing fields.

During the four-day experience, local guidance counselors experienced OSHA training, met with representatives from Vissering Engineering and visited three construction projects in the Illinois Valley area. The participants also visited the Local 422 Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Apprentice Training Center and the Electricians Apprentice Training Center in Joliet as well as the Operator 150 Training Center. The counselors were able to take an entrance exam to experience first-hand the levels of mathematics necessary to be accepted into these programs. They were also able to talk to young apprentices to find out what benefited them in their high school experiences, as well as what would have better prepared them for their apprenticeship. Visits to our local Carus Chemical and Harper-Wyman Corporations rounded out this experience and updated the counselors' "mental image" of what a modern manufacturing facility looks like.

The activity provided the guidance counselors with an opportunity to participate in very frank and open discussions about the construction trades and manufacturing fields. As one participant wrote, "...the sincerity of the various presenters in wanting to help and work with educators was apparent. They all seem to want to build their own little "family" of workers and the schools should help supply them with the best for the "educational family."

Career Club for Kids

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ABSTRACT

The Career Club for Kids (CCK) was initiated after the LaSalle County Housing Authority approached Starved Rock Associates for Vocational and Technical Education (SRAVTE) and asked the educators to create a career exploration program for children under the care of the LaSalle County Housing Authority.

Through SRAVTE, Career Club provides the children with a career exploration program one day each week. The Career Club was organized to support six career clusters. These career clusters are introduced to the students through speaker volunteers – who visit the club and discuss their careers each week. The speakers are encouraged to present a hands-on activity to demonstrate a part of his/her job for the children. One speaker actually brought a redbud tree and the children planted the tree on housing property. The care of the tree was the responsibility of the club members.

Along with learning about careers each week, the children also operate an on-site craft enterprise business. The children in Career Club make crafts to sell to housing residents at Christmas. Upon entering the classroom each week, the children go to different “craft companies” to complete assigned tasks. A supervisor is appointed to supervise the making of each craft. The participants have learned that in order for their company to be productive, they must work as a team and communicate within each team member. They have also learned that they are responsible for their work area and must keep that work area neat and clean. As the craft sale approaches, the children advertise and organize for the sale. The money earned for the craft sale will be used to reward the work of club members.

The children are very enthusiastic about participation in the club. In fact, one mother spoke of her son, who has attended every club session since its beginning, who finally is looking forward to going to school since he now sees the importance of staying in school and has learned that he must have an education in order to achieve success in the workforce of the 21st century. The club has reached the goal of informing children about careers and also helping them understand some of the concepts of the world of work.

Kids Architecture

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ABSTRACT

The Kid Architecture program was developed 14 years ago to introduce young people to the design of the built environment. The one-week camps are structured for three different learning levels; grades four through six, middle school, and high school. The program has been conducted in various locations nationwide including the Smithsonian, addressing the gifted, at risk, inner city and disabled children. The camps have received national and regional awards for the broad breadth of hands-on activities and implementation of technology. The ten objectives for Kid Architecture endeavor to develop an understanding of the following: why buildings look the way they do; why buildings stand up; what architects and designers do; design drawing as a problem-solving tool/method; the use of the design process as employed by architects; how a building is designed, constructed, used and reused; construction materials used in buildings; how and why people "define" space; the use of computer graphics, animation and CAD; and participation in the design of the built environment.

The philosophic foundations that Kid Architecture is built upon is the assumption that those who are exposed early to architectural design will have a different conceptual base from which to formulate more complex and differential ideas about the built environment. Architecture Camps' personnel believe this cognitive skill is as basic to a young person in the modern world as knowing left from right or discriminating the letters "b" and "d." Future advances in the conceptualization of buildings, cities and personal living spaces will be made by people who are deeply aware of the built environment.

Kid Architecture has been awarded the following: Citation of Honor from AIA Illinois, an Award of Distinction from the Urban Network, Chapter and Region Educational Awards from the Construction Specification Institute.