



Awareness Activities

Awareness activities introduce K-12 students to various postsecondary pathways through hands-on activities and simulations. Choose activities that fit your students, resources, time and staff. Recognize that you can use multiple activities at once, or use different activities at different times.

Awareness Activity	Description	Ideas for implementation and variations
College Zone (K-8)	Your program can “adopt” a college for the year. Decorate your program space or display college banners, posters, mascots and objects when possible. Once a week or month, have students learn a new theme or topic related to the college. Ideas include famous alumni, sports teams, academic areas, extracurricular activities, student life, special events, songs/chants, campus map.	Change It Up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each grade or program group can adopt a different college. • Each week or month could feature a different college.
College Visit (K-12)	Go on a field trip to a local college or university. Arrange for meetings with college professors or college students who will talk with your students. Include fun activities such as “a day in the life” of a college student, a scavenger hunt or a behind-the-scenes tour to interesting places on campus.	Change It Up: Go on a virtual field trip and follow up with a virtual Q&A session with a college student or professor through Skype, Google Hangout or Facetime.
Read Alouds (K-5)	Do a read aloud of a book that will help students imagine the college life and ask questions related to college. Follow up the reading with discussion and comprehension activities that connect the book to students’ expectations, dreams and goals.	Sample Books: <i>Mahalia Mouse Goes to College</i> by John Lithgow (K-3) <i>Judy Moody Goes to College</i> by Megan McDonald (3-5)
College Collage (3-8)	Have students look through various college brochures to explore schools and learn about their features and resources. As they select and cut out pictures for their collage, they can make choices about what they would like in their future college.	
Alphabet Book: A to Z With Careers (K-3)	Students make a class alphabet book about careers. Help students brainstorm a list of careers from A-Z. Students can be assigned specific careers to define and/or illustrate.	Change It Up: Each student can make his or her own mini alphabet book about careers.





Awareness Activities

Awareness Activity	Description	Ideas for implementation and variations
Career Bingo (K-8)	Create bingo sheets that represent career fields or clusters (e.g., Agriculture, Health, Education, Science, Math, Business). Each card should have various jobs in that field/cluster written or illustrated in the squares. Distribute beans/coins/markers for students to place on the card when certain careers are called out. The first student to complete a row wins!	Change It Up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each student can create their own bingo sheets. • Have the winner define the jobs in the winning row.
Careers in the Community (K-5)	Each week or month, students read a book about a different job in the community. Students can discuss skills, challenges, education and experiences related to each job. Follow up art activities include creating a bulletin board display or making bookmarks.	
Career Day (3-12)	Invite guest speakers or a panel of people representing a variety of careers or one specific career field to visit your program. Have students prepare questions in advance to ask after presentation(s).	Change It Up: Arrange for Career Day to happen on-site at a local business or nonprofit organization so students may also tour the work facilities.
Career Road Map (3-12)	Students will create a life map of career goals and dreams. Students can write or draw different points in their future journey. Consider using a career pathways resource to help students be more aware of the steps related to each career field.	Change It Up: Students interview a staff member, volunteer, family member or community member, then map the person's career path.
Career Stations (K-5)	Create activity stations where students can explore a variety of careers. Each station can feature a job and/or career field, and offer a hands-on skills activity related to that job.	Business example: Run a mock grocery store using toy money and items with price tags
Career Town (K-5)	Students can explore careers and related topics using an online interactive platform: http://www.vacareerview.org/k5/play-it/career-town/main.cfm	
Career Jeopardy (K-12)	Create categories and clues for various jobs, roles and tasks, and have teams guess the correct answers. Use the Minot CTE Career Jeopardy website to play this game online and to find questions related to the 16 career clusters: http://pages.minot.k12.nd.us/votech/File/Jeopardy.htm	





Comprehension Activities

Comprehension activities are interactive and meaningful ways for students to engage in the text with one another. Activities can be tailored to target a specific comprehension skill and/or type of text. Students may work in as individuals, pairs, small groups or as a whole group.

➤ **Picture Walk (K-3)**

Purpose: Prepare students to engage with and fully comprehend the text they are about to read.

Directions: Preview the book by looking at the title and cover of the book and examining the pictures. Ask students to discuss what they see and make predictions about the book such as characters, setting, plot, and ending. Highlight and define new or difficult vocabulary words in context.

➤ **KWL Chart (grades 3-12)**

Purpose: Help students actively understand, engage with, and integrate knowledge from texts.

Directions: Give a brief synopsis of the text student are about to read. Draw three columns on a sheet of chart paper and label each one with a K, W, and L.

1. Before reading the text, have students to fill in the K column with what they know about the subject of the text, and what they want to know or learn in the W column, e.g. questions, predictions, etc.
2. After reading, have students fill out the L column with what they learned as a result of reading the text.

➤ **Graffiti Walls (grades K-12)**

Purpose: Engage with a text as a group using an age-appropriate, poster-size graphic organizer.

Directions: Print out or draw a graphic organizer on a sheet of chart paper. (Access 58 PDFs of graphic organizers for comprehension: (http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/graphic_organizers.htm)). Hang the graphic organizer on the wall and have students work in small groups to summarize or analyze the text using the “graffiti wall.”

Examples:

- Story Board (K-5): Students illustrate major events in a story.
- Compare and Contrast Venn Diagram (grades 6-12) - Students analyze what is different and what is the same between two texts.

➤ **It Says-I Say: Post It Note Text Rendering (grades K-12)**

Purpose: Engage with a text while making inferences and connections.

Directions: Students use post-it notes to place a check (✓) next to the statements with which they agree; an exclamation point (!) next to statements that appear to state a main idea or key point; and a question mark (?) next to statements that confuse them. On each post-it note, students write out their own thoughts/notes (“I say”) to promote student-text interaction.





Comprehension Activities

➤ **Summary Ball (K-12)**

Purpose: Summarize text using an interactive whole group activity.

Directions:

1. Write the questions Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How on an inflated beach ball, using a permanent marker.
2. After reading a narrative, have students toss around the ball in a small group. Ask each student who catches the ball to look to see which word is closest to his or her right thumb, and to answer a question with regard to the text just read.
3. Record the students' responses on chart paper to provide a group summary

Source: http://reading.ecb.org/teacher/pdfs/lessons/sum_lp_SummaryBall.pdf

➤ **Rate this Book! (grades K-12)**

Purpose: Summarize stories or books read in a creative way.

Directions: Create a movie review or illustrated poster to summarize and evaluate the text considering characters, plot, style and ending.

➤ **Question of the Day Reading Response Journal (grades K-12)**

Purpose: Record reading summaries that can be shared with other readers.

Directions: As a story is being read (individually or as a read-aloud), have students discuss and write down important issues, themes and ideas in their Reading Response Journals. Younger students may draw their answers or write simple phrases.

Sample Question of the Day:

- What was important in the chapter? How do you know?
- What is something new you learned? Explain.
- What connection(s) did you make? Explain.

Source: http://reading.ecb.org/teacher/pdfs/lessons/sum_lp_ReadingResponse.pdf





Comprehension Activities

➤ Paper Bag Reports (grades 3-8)

Purpose: Show understanding of characters, setting, conflict and resolution by choosing symbols that represent significant events or characters in the book.

Directions:

1. On the front of a lunch bag, students draw a scene from a book that they have read. They also include the title of the book, the author's name and their name.
2. On the back of the lunch bag, students write the names of the main characters and summarize the conflict and resolution.
3. Inside the lunch bag, students place objects that represent significant events in the book. Students would create objects using art materials or draw them. Students could also put in objects that represent aspects of the character's personality.
4. Students share their Paper Bag Reports with classmates.

Source: http://reading.ecb.org/teacher/pdfs/lessons/sum_lp_PaperBag.pdf

➤ Exit Slip or Ticket (grades 3-12)

Purpose: Check for comprehension at the end of reading time.

Directions: Place one of the following statements/questions on the board/chart paper. Students must respond to it on a slip of paper or index card in order to move from reading time to their next activity.

- I would like to learn more about...
- The most important thing I learned is...
- One question I had...

➤ What's Your Opinion? (grades 3-12)

Purpose: Ask students to consider new information to confirm or revise their opinions in a specific area.

Directions:

1. Write eight-to-ten statements related to the text that students can agree and disagree with.
2. Before reading, have students decide whether or not they agree or disagree with each statement.
3. Read the text silently or together.
4. After reading, have students confirm or revise their opinion as a result of reading the text.

Adapted from fcr.org





Comprehension Activities

➤ **GIST Statement (grades 3-12)**

Purpose: Summarize text for a concise main idea or key point

Directions: Students come up with a 10 word GIST statement (a concise text summary describing the main idea or answering questions such as who, what, when, where, why, and how) of an article or text they have just finished reading. It may help to use Twitter as an example of a communication venue where writing must be concise and to the point (140 characters or less). Have students share out their GIST statements.

➤ **Double Entry Journal (grades 6-12)**

Purpose: Engage with a text while making inferences, reflections and connections.

Directions: Students fold a piece of paper in half. Ask students to actively search for potential reflections as they read. In the left column, students write meaningful, interesting or confusing phrases/sentences from the text they noticed. In the right column, students react to the text by writing personal responses including comments, questions, or connections.

➤ **Question Cards: (grades 6-12)**

Purpose: Discuss text and check understanding by using question cards.

Directions: Prepare a set of question cards for each student or for each group of students. Question cards can be general comprehension questions that can be used for any text or customized for a particular text. Students may also generate their own set of question cards and exchange them with another group.

Sample Questions:

- What do you think is going to happen next?
- Discuss any words you may not have known.
- Based upon what you have read, what are you curious or interested in knowing more about?
- How does what you read relate to your own life?
- Summarize what you have read in 20 words or less.

Directions:

1. Place question cards face down in a stack. Provide each student with a copy of the text.
2. Taking turns, students select six cards from the stack and place face down in a row.
3. Student one reads the first paragraph aloud and selects a random card to read the question.
4. Student one answers the question. Discusses answer with partner. Students take turns.
5. Continue the activity until all the questions cards are face up, the questions are answered, and the text is read. Use questions twice, if necessary.

Adapted from fcr.org





Assess College and Career Readiness in Your Program

Use the checklist to assess program components in college and career readiness that are strong, OK or need work. Involve staff and stakeholders in this process, and ask what they see as goals and challenges. Once you have finished, select the top three in the “needs work” category to focus on, identify action steps and set a timeline for improvement.

Program components	Strong	OK	Needs work
Vision, goals and objectives for college and career readiness are clearly stated.			
Goals and objectives reflect alignment of all stakeholders' expectations.			
Stakeholders' support of the development and implementation of goals and objectives.			
Program culture promotes and emphasizes that <i>all</i> students can succeed.			
Program includes engaging, grade-level-appropriate activities, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness (K-12; hallmark of elementary) • Exploration (K-12; hallmark of middle school) Preparation (6-12; hallmark of high school)			
Academic enrichment activities align with college and career readiness standards.			
21st century and employability skills are incorporated (e.g., creativity, critical thinking, self-direction, leadership, productivity, accountability, communication, collaboration).			
Real-life learning experiences are offered.			
Program partners with families in their children's education, with opportunities to build their college and career readiness knowledge.			
Partnerships with community-based organizations, businesses and government provide internships, work-based learning experiences, and other needed supports.			
Partnerships with schools, nearby colleges, universities and technical schools encourage postsecondary preparation, investigation, visitation and entry.			
Program regularly assesses student and family needs around college and career readiness.			
Program has established method for obtaining feedback from students, families and partners.			
Program conducts systematic evaluation of all components, including college and-career readiness activities.			
Staff training supports innovative instructional approaches that combine academic and technical learning.			



Assess College and Career Readiness in Your Program

Top three components that need improvement:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Actions to make improvements, with deadlines for making them happen:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

