

# Get Students on the Path to Success After High School!

## COLLEGE & CAREER PREP ACTIVITIES

Use these activities to help middle and high school students prepare and plan for their next steps after graduation. The future is wide open... are your students ready?

### 1 Map out an interest flowchart



Talk about the importance of both academic and extracurricular activities. Encourage students to talk about the new skills they are developing from their classwork, athletics, clubs, and part-time or volunteer jobs.

1. Have students create a flowchart that shows how their current interests may intersect with possible jobs and careers.
2. Encourage them to include interests they haven't fully explored yet, too.

### 2 Brainstorm jobs



Have students **create a list of all the jobs** that sound interesting. Then have them:

1. Research the salary, qualifications, benefits, and responsibilities of each.
2. Create a pro and con list for each.

3. Assign necessary skills to each job.
4. Have students write a short essay describing why the skills they have or would like to develop will match one of the jobs.

### 3 Develop a career portfolio & cover letter



Direct students to create a portfolio that showcases experience, skills, community involvement, grades, and goals.

1. Have **students practice writing a cover letter** and submit it for feedback.

2. Rather than giving students a format, have them research tips and styles for a cover letter and portfolio and encourage them to create something unique that reflects their talents and personality.

### 4 Encourage real-world experience



Whether students seek an internship, a part-time weekend job, or a mentor experience, it will help them gain a deeper understanding of what a profession is really like and what will be required of them.

1. Ask students who have had these experiences already to share them with the class.
2. Then, assign students a research project to find part-time jobs, internships, job

shadowing, volunteer opportunities, or extended learning programs in their communities.

3. Ask students to develop a list of questions to ask throughout their experience including what they like and dislike about their job.
4. Have them report back on their experience at the end of the school year in an essay, presentation, or final project.

## 5 Practice interview techniques



Practice makes perfect!

1. Have students research interview questions for their preferred job and write out their responses.

2. Next, have students practice interviewing each other one-on-one or in small groups. Then, extend it to a classroom presentation.
3. Allow students to weigh in and give feedback to both the interviewer and interviewee.

## 6 Visit recruiters or college campuses



Assign and help arrange in-person or virtual visits.

1. If students are opting for a vocational path, have them meet with a recruiter or hiring manager to get a better understanding of what qualifications are needed and their recommendations for a training path.

2. If students are planning to go to college, encourage them to visit college campuses to preview the experience and talk with current students.

## 7 Create a plan of action



Assign students a project to develop a path to their future.

1. Have students create a visual representation of their journey starting today and ending at their desired future.
2. If higher education is part of their journey, make sure they include college admission requirements, courses, and deadlines, including financial aid.

3. If students are considering a vocational path, direct them to research the market and consider a training program or apprenticeship and path that will ensure they have the experience and skills needed.

## 8 Measure and build essential skills



Whatever career students choose to pursue, they'll need critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills to be successful.

1. Assess students' current abilities with these essential skills using CAE's performance-based College and Career Readiness Assessment (CCRA+).

2. Provide instruction and supports to help students develop and practice their skills.
3. Reassess at the end of the school year and provide micro-credentials to students for the skills they are most proficient in.

Visit [www.cae.org](http://www.cae.org) to learn more about how CCRA+ can help your students build a strong foundation for college and career success.

