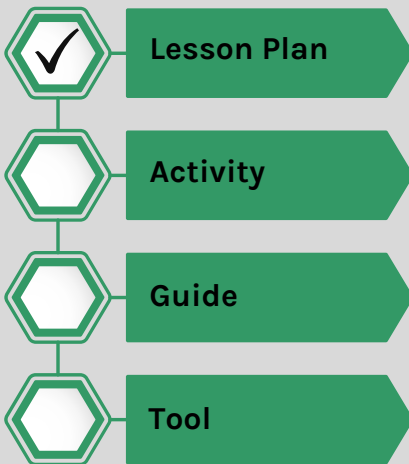




Career Quest: Roadmap to Workforce Readiness LifeSmarts Curriculum (25GA4HLP57)

Resource Type:



Authors:

Jakyn Tyson,* Valerie Bennett, Billie Ann King, Ashley Carroll, Brittani Lee, Abbie Salmon, Jackie Nunn

Intended Audience:

6th - 12th Grades, In-School, Classroom, Day Camp, After-School Practice

Published: June 2025

Set for review: July 2028

Description:

This engaging lesson equips youth with essential workforce readiness skills through interactive activities focused on identifying strengths, learning about resumes, and practicing interviews to boost confidence and prepare for career opportunities. This lesson can be delivered as a standalone lesson or as part of LifeSmarts competition practice.

Copyright:

As a land grant institution, the University of Georgia strives to make its research discoveries and work available for public benefit. All publications are copyrighted by UGA Extension. In the spirit of academic integrity, we ask that you cite the original authorship for these materials if you choose to use, alter, or adapt them using the citation below. Thank you for understanding this important component to Extension and 4-H scholarship.

Suggested Citation:

Tyson, J., Bennett, V., King, B., Carroll, A. Lee, B., Nunn, J., & Salmon, A. (2025) Career Quest: Roadmap to Workforce Readiness. Georgia 4-H Lesson Plan. (25GA4HLP57).



Career Quest: Roadmap to Workforce Readiness	
Lead Authors:	Jakyn Tyson, Valerie Bennett and Billie Ann King
Contributing Authors/Editors:	Ashley Carroll, Brittani Lee, Abbie Salmon and Jackie Nunn
Contact Information:	jakynjen@uga.edu , vibennett@uga.edu ; bbirchal@uga.edu ; ashleyc@uga.edu
Intended Audience/Settings:	In-School, Classroom, Day Camp, After-School Practice
Grade Levels:	6 th - 12 th
Subject:	Workforce Readiness
Description:	This engaging lesson equips youth with essential workforce readiness skills through interactive activities focused on identifying strengths, learning about resumes, and practicing interviews to boost confidence and prepare for career opportunities. This lesson can be delivered as a standalone lesson or as part of LifeSmarts competition practice.
Standards:	<p>CTAE - Georgia Standards of Excellence: Career Cluster: Workforce Ready, Advanced Career Competencies</p> <p>SP-ACC-1: Demonstrate employability skills required by business and industry.</p> <p>SP-ACC-2: Define and demonstrate specific skills, techniques, and practices associated with work, employment, and careers.</p> <p>SP-ACC-3: Understand and apply basic critical thinking skills in relation to employment and workforce problem solving strategies.</p> <p>SP-ACC-4: Compare and contrast various types of communication used in work situations and between workers.</p> <p>SP-ACC-5: Explain the process, requirements and purpose for providing appropriate customer service techniques in various work settings.</p> <p>SP-ACC-6: Utilize and practice self-determination and self-advocacy skills as they relate to employment, work-related situations, and building personal development qualities.</p>

	SP-ACC-7: Compare and contrast skills and techniques to apply personal and workplace safety.
Objectives:	The learner will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify personal strengths and skills - Explain the purpose of a resume - Describe strategies for making a strong first impression in a job interview - Demonstrate understanding of appropriate and inappropriate interview attire - Apply active listening, collaboration, and critical thinking skills in group settings - Reflect on how individual strengths and communication skills can contribute to interview success and workforce readiness.
Vocabulary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resume – a structured summary of an individual's education, work experience, and skills, typically used to apply for jobs ● Interview – A formal conversation where someone is asked questions to determine if they are a good fit for a job, school, or opportunity. ● Body Language – The way people use their posture, facial expressions, and movements to communicate without speaking. ● Professional Dress – Clothing that is appropriate for a job or formal event, showing that you are serious and respectful. ● Career Readiness – Being prepared with the knowledge, skills, and behavior needed to succeed in a job or career.
Estimated Time to Prepare the Lesson:	15 minutes
Estimated Time for Lesson Delivery:	45-60 Minutes
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Slide Presentation Template: https://www.canva.com/design/DAGosmHTqd0/rkFA1v3P6RxCitGn8Fndw/view?utm_content=DAGosmHTqd0&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink&mode=preview ● One per student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengths Scavenger Hunt Activity Sheet ● Per team (plan for 8 teams): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SpeedSmarts: Fact or Faction Worksheet ○ Voting Cards (17 per team) ○ Dry erase board or laminated sheet ○ Dry erase marker ○ Clorox or baby wipe ○ Paper Towel ● One set per room: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interview Showdown Scoresheet (for adult) ○ Challenge Questions Document

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Signs for teams to take photos (optional) 																
Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One per student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pens/Pencils ● One set per team (plan for 8 teams): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dry erase board or laminated sheet ○ Dry erase marker ○ Clorox or baby wipe ○ Paper Towel ● One per room <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Timer ○ Laptop, projector and presentation slides ○ Signs for teams to take photos (optional lesson extender) ○ Quizbowl Buzzers (optional) 																
Lesson Overview:	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Content</th> <th>Estimated Time</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Introduction & Interest approach</td> <td>10 minutes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Topic 1: Resumes</td> <td>2 minutes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Topic 2: Interview basics</td> <td>5 minutes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Optional Activity 1: SpeedSmarts</td> <td>6 minutes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Activity 2: Interview showdown</td> <td>20-22 minutes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wrap Up</td> <td>2-4 minutes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Optional Activity 3: Challenge Questions</td> <td>15 minutes</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Content	Estimated Time	Introduction & Interest approach	10 minutes	Topic 1: Resumes	2 minutes	Topic 2: Interview basics	5 minutes	Optional Activity 1: SpeedSmarts	6 minutes	Activity 2: Interview showdown	20-22 minutes	Wrap Up	2-4 minutes	Optional Activity 3: Challenge Questions	15 minutes
Content	Estimated Time																
Introduction & Interest approach	10 minutes																
Topic 1: Resumes	2 minutes																
Topic 2: Interview basics	5 minutes																
Optional Activity 1: SpeedSmarts	6 minutes																
Activity 2: Interview showdown	20-22 minutes																
Wrap Up	2-4 minutes																
Optional Activity 3: Challenge Questions	15 minutes																
Preparation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make copies of materials for students and teams ● Place pens/pencils and markers around the room ● Set up projector and PowerPoint presentation 																
Lesson Procedure:																	
<p>Interest approach: Strengths Scavenger Hunt</p> <p><u>Say:</u> Welcome, everyone! My name is _____, and I am going to be leading your lesson today. This lesson, "Career Quest," is focused on workforce readiness, and you will have the opportunity to explore a few of the most important steps on the quest to landing your big job. When you guys think about the process of getting to your career, what are some of the first steps? (Allow students to respond. They may say things like, looking for a job, getting an education, creating a resume, applying, interviewing, etc.) These are all great answers! The first step is really figuring out what you want to do, what you like and what skills you have, so our first activity is an icebreaker to get you up and moving around the room to think about that!</p> <p>Using the Strengths Scavenger Hunt Activity Sheet, I'd like you to spend the next 60 seconds reading over each of the prompts in the clouds and initialing inside all the ones that sound like you! (Give the students one minute.)</p> <p>Now that you have marked all the clouds that describe you, I'm going to give you 5 minutes to walk around the room and find others to initial clouds that have prompts that describe them. Try to get at least 10 others to initial your paper, by walking around the room. Bonus points if you can have every cloud initialed in the 5 minutes.</p>																	

Do: Pass out the Strengths Scavenger Hunt Activity sheet and pens/pencils if you have not already. Walk around the room to make sure students are on task and answer any questions they may have. Give a time check when students have about one minute left.

Say: Great job, everyone! Now that you have reviewed the skills and traits around the room, I'd like you to take about two minutes to answer the questions at the bottom of the sheet with those at your table.

Would anyone like to share with the group what they have written or drawn?

Do: Allow 2 minutes for groups to answer questions. Walk around the room to make sure students are on task.

Say: Would anyone like to share what they wrote down for the first question? (Allow 1-2 students to quickly share and thank them for sharing.) Would anyone like to share what they wrote down for the second question? (Allow 1-2 students to quickly share and thank them for sharing.) That's right! Some of these skills and traits are things we take for granted every day, but actually, they are good to include on a resume. These are skills like technology, conflict management, problem-solving, public speaking, leadership and time management. Some of the other traits, such as being a good listener, being sociable, being creative and thinking before you speak, might even help you out in a job interview!

Topic 1: Resumes

Say: First impressions are important! With most jobs, you usually have two chances for a first impression, your resume, which is a summary of your education, work experience, and skills, and if you're lucky, a job interview! Resumes have different requirements depending on the job you're applying for, but some general tips for having a good first impression of your resume are:

- Follow the guidelines included in the job posting
- List your name and contact information
- Education and work experience
- Relevant Skills and Achievements
- Formatting, grammar and punctuation matter!

Topic 2: Interviews

Say: A strong resume can land you an interview, but the work isn't done there! Some experts say that a decision to hire or not to hire a candidate is made in the first three minutes, and that the balance of the time is spent justifying the decision. Coming into a job interview unprepared is like going on a road trip without GPS or Google Maps – you might make some interesting turns, but you probably won't end up where you want to be. Not being prepared will make you look like you're NOT the right fit for the position, and it can make you come across as careless because you didn't bother doing the basic preparation beforehand.

1. Make a Great First Impression

Say: Let's start with the first few seconds of any interview. Whether it's in person or online, you want to come across as confident, prepared, and respectful. That means greeting the interviewer with a smile, a firm handshake, and direct eye contact. If it's virtual, be proactive and introduce yourself warmly—don't wait for them to lead. Being on time is a sign of respect. Arrive about 15 minutes early for in-person interviews, or log in a few minutes before for online

ones. This gives you time to collect yourself, breathe, and prepare mentally. When participating in an online interview, you will also want to make sure you have limited your background noise, make sure your background is clean and tidy, and test your microphone and camera.

2. Dress to Impress

Say: Let's talk about dressing for success. When you show up for an interview, your outfit speaks before you do.

- DO Dress Professionally-- Aim for business attire such as a suit, blazer, dress shirt, or slacks, especially for corporate or traditional settings. When in doubt, dress one level above the company's everyday dress code.
- DON'T Dress Too Casually-- Avoid jeans, t-shirts, hoodies, or athletic wear—even if the workplace has a relaxed dress code.
- DO Focus on Fit and Comfort -- Wear clothes that fit well—not too tight or too loose. Choose breathable, comfortable fabrics that allow you to move and sit with ease.
- DON'T Choose Uncomfortable Clothing or wear anything that restricts movement, pinches, or makes you fidget—it can hurt your confidence and focus.
- DO Choose Neutral, Classic Colors -- Opt for neutral shades like black, navy, gray, or white. A small pop of color is fine but keep it simple and professional.
- DON'T Wear Overly Trendy or Flashy Outfits -- Steer clear of loud prints, neon colors, excessive accessories, or anything that could distract the interviewer.
- DO Groom Appropriately -- Maintain clean and neat hair, and minimal, natural-looking makeup and nails.
- DON'T Overdo Perfume, Aftershave, or Accessories - Avoid any scent or look that could overwhelm or distract your interviewer.

3. Use Positive Body Language

Say: Now, even if you say all the right things, your body language can completely change the way you're perceived. Who can tell me what body language is? (Allow someone to answer.) That's right! Body language is the way we use our posture, facial expressions, and movements to communicate without speaking. Interviewers are not just listening to what you say—they're watching how you carry yourself. Your goal is to appear calm, confident, and engaged.

- **Engage with Confidence**
 - Maintain eye contact (aim for 80%, naturally).
 - Sit up straight, feet flat on the floor; keep arms relaxed and uncrossed.
 - Smile when appropriate to show you're approachable and engaged.
- **Avoid Nervous Habits**
 - Common ones:
 - Fidgeting
 - Tapping your feet
 - Playing with hair
 - Clicking pens
 - Biting nails
 - Take deep breaths to stay grounded and present

4. Be Present, Professional and Clear

Say: Professionalism goes beyond attire—it's also how you listen, speak, and carry yourself in conversation. Stay focused and respectful throughout the interview. Show genuine engagement by making eye contact, nodding, and responding thoughtfully. Avoid interrupting and acknowledge what the interviewer says to demonstrate active listening.

When it's your turn to speak, communicate clearly and confidently. Think before you answer. Speak at a steady pace, and keep responses focused—offering just enough detail to highlight your strengths without rambling. Avoid one-word answers like yes or no, and use relevant examples when needed. Strong, respectful communication shows both confidence and competence.

The most important thing is to BE HONEST when answering interview questions. It's not just about giving the interviewer the answer they want to hear – it's also about making sure you are the right fit for the job and the job is a right fit for you!

Activity 1: SpeedSmarts Fact or Fiction

Say: Now that you all know the basics of making first impressions through resumes and interviews, let's put your knowledge to the test with a SpeedSmarts game called "Fact or Fiction." You will work in teams of 4-5 to answer 12 questions about resumes and interviews. Answers will either be fact or fiction. Are there any questions?

Do: Once groups of 4-5 students have been established, make sure each group has the SpeedSmarts: Fact or Fiction Worksheet and a pen/pencil. Set a timer for 5 minutes and allow teams to answer each question. While teams are working, walk around the room to make sure they understand the instructions and are on task. Give a 1-minute warning. Once time is up (or once all teams have finished), call time and go over the answers with the group. Have them keep score of the number of questions answered correctly.

Activity 2: Interview Showdown

Say: Great job on that knowledge activity...Now, let's put your interview skills to the test and see who will come out on top for the ultimate challenge of charm, confidence, and career readiness – the Interview Showdown! Today, you're not just here to play—you're here to impress! Whether you're aiming for your first job, a scholarship interview, or college admissions, the skills you practice today will help you shine when it really counts.

In this game show, you'll face real-world questions, quick-thinking challenges, and maybe even a few curveballs. You'll work in teams, score points, and learn what it takes to make a great first impression. So put on your best professional attitude, get those smiles ready, and prepare to show us what you've got!

Do: Pass out one dry erase board/sheet to each group along with a dry erase marker and wipe to erase.

Say: In this game, I'm going to ask you a series of generic interview questions that are commonly used. You will have 45 seconds to work with your group to craft the best answer to that question. Once you have your answer, write it down on your dry erase board/sheet. When I notify you that the 45 seconds is up, you must drop your marker and not change your answer. We will allow each group to show and present their answer to the question to the group.

Once all teams have revealed their answers, you will work with your group to secretly vote on which team has the best answer using the voting card. After voting, I'll ask one member of your group to bring your vote up to me. You aren't able to vote for your own team. The team with the

most votes at the end of the game wins! Now that you know the rules, take a minute to pick your team names!

Do: Give teams about 60 seconds to come up with team names and record them on your scoresheet. Make sure teams are clear on instructions. Once they are clear, you can begin calling out each interview question. Keep an eye on time. If time is running short, you don't have to ask every question. Leave about five minutes at the end of the session for a wrap up and (if it is the second group another five minutes at the end for youth to complete the evaluation.)

Repeat this process for each question:

- Call out interview question
- Give teams about 45 seconds to think about and write down their answers
- Call time (markers down)
- Allow each group to present their answers
 - It's a great idea to provide feedback and point out the strong points in good answers after all teams have presented to reinforce the learning experience. Make sure you do this in a constructive way to not single anyone/team out.
 - In addition to providing good answers for the questions, it's important to remind youth to BE HONEST when answering interview questions. It's not just about giving the interviewer the answer they want to hear - it's also about making sure you are the right fit for the job!
- Have teams secretly vote (using voting cards) on the best team's answer
- One team member brings their voting card up to you
- Clear dry erase boards/sheets
- Repeat the process. Make sure to keep a tally of votes/scores during the time teams are answering questions for time.

Interview questions and pointers you may want to cover after answers are presented:

1. If you had to describe yourself using only three words, what would they be and why?
 - Give three positive qualities or descriptors of yourself and give a concise reason for each word.
2. Why did you apply for this job?
 - Share why you applied. This is an opportunity to share what you know/researched about the company.
3. If you made a mistake on the job, what would you do?
 - Own up to your mistake, apologize and learn from the mistakes so they do not happen again.
4. What is your biggest weakness?
 - Take what you think is a fault you have and change it to be a strength. Example: I prefer to work alone but that is because I tend to have high expectations, and I find that working alone allows me to focus and complete the task to my standard.
5. What makes you stand out compared to other candidates applying for this job?
 - This is when you state your qualities that you think over qualify you for the job. Point out experiences or skills you have on your resume/portfolio.
6. How do you handle constructive criticism?
 - Try to see constructive criticism as a way to get better. Instead of getting defensive, listen carefully and try to understand what you can improve. You might ask questions to make sure you understand the feedback clearly and then focus on applying it.
7. What is your greatest strength?
 - This is when you want to be sure not to sound cocky or arrogant but rather confident. Ex response: I find that my greatest strength is the ability to communicate with diverse groups and audiences. My experience with [club/organization] has given me the skills to communicate with people and youth of all ages and diverse backgrounds. This is a skill that I

will be able to utilize in this field as we work in teams, teach audiences, and communicate with such large diverse groups.

8. How do you deal with conflict?
 - Give an example of a time where you successfully worked through a situation. Be careful not to use too much negativity about the other person/people.
9. Do you prefer to work in a group or independently? Explain your answer.
 - Answer honestly and tell which you prefer but include how you can do both.
10. How do you stay motivated?
 - Answer honestly.
11. How do you stay organized?
 - Explain how you manage your time and any organizational system you use.
12. What does integrity mean to you?
 - Answer honestly.
13. What questions do you have for me?
 - This is where you can ask anything you want to know about the day-to-day duties, work environment, salary, benefits, etc. that are a factor in whether the position is a good fit for you.

The next few questions are designed to be more about interview skills.

14. The interviewer just asked you a question that you don't know the answer to. How do you respond?
 - If you're unsure how to answer, take a moment, acknowledge it honestly, and share how you would approach finding the solution.
15. Name 2 things you SHOULD NOT bring to an interview.
16. What time should you arrive to an interview?
17. Name one "DO" and one "DON'T" for how you dress for an interview.

Do: After the final question is asked, (remember to leave five to ten minutes for wrap up and evaluation for second group), you can count up the final votes and announce the winning team. The winning team can come up and claim their prize. As time allows, you can also let teams take fun team photos with the signs included in the room.

Say: Each team did a great job working through your job interview! I'm happy to announce that today's winner who is "getting the job offer" is... (announce winning team and lead applause. If time allows, hand out "awards" to individuals and/or teams using the signs. Allow students to take photos with the awards/signs. Emphasize that there were no "losers" because they can all learn from the experience and make their best better!)

Wrap Up

Say: You all did an awesome job today exploring what it takes to stand out in the job search process! From identifying your strengths to learning how to make a great first impression, dress professionally, and communicate clearly in an interview, you've taken important steps toward being workforce ready.

(If time remains, you can ask some short reflection questions:

- What were some of the biggest takeaways for you guys today?
- Was there anything that surprised you about job interviews?
- How else can you use the information learned today besides in a job interview?)

Remember, landing your dream job isn't just about having the right qualifications—it's about knowing how to present yourself, being prepared, and staying true to who you are. The skills we covered today—like body language, active listening, and thoughtful communication—will help

you succeed not just in interviews, but in life. As you continue your career journey, don't forget: be confident, be professional, and always be yourself. You've got what it takes!

Activity 3: Challenge questions

Note: This trivia-type activity can be facilitated in teams of 4-5 students or individually. If you have buzzers, you may allow students/teams to use them to buzz in and answer questions. If you do not have buzzers, you can include the questions in a Quizzizz or Kahoot-type trivia game or have students raise their hands to answer. Each question is worth 10 points.

Say: Let's put your knowledge of today's lesson to the test with a set of challenge questions. I will read a series of questions related to today's topic. If you think you know the answer, you may buzz in (or raise your hand). Once I acknowledge you by calling your name, you may give your answer. If you are correct, you will earn 10 points. If you are incorrect someone from another team may buzz in. Here we go:

Do: Follow along in the script from the Challenge Questions document.

Nice job everyone! Let's check the scores...

References/Credit:

Career Sidekick. (n.d.). *200+ job interview questions list (PDF practice cheat sheet included)*.
<https://careersidekick.com/top-interview-questions/>

The Muse Editors. (n.d.). *10 common job interview questions and how to answer them*. The Muse. <https://www.themuse.com/advice/interview-questions-and-answers>

Indeed Editorial Team. (n.d.). *Top 20 interview questions (with sample answers)*. Indeed. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/top-interview-questions-and-answers>