



Mentoring



Session Time: One, 50-minute session

DESIRED RESULTS

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

The aviation industry provides a multitude of pathways to pursue a career as a pilot.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. How can I learn more about a career in aviation?
2. Who will be able to help me gain experience in the aviation career I am interested in?

LEARNING GOALS

Students Will Know

- Strategies for finding a mentor
- Appropriate ways to interact with a mentor

Students Will Be Able To

- *Identify* potential sources of mentoring in their area. (DOK-L2)
- *Design* a plan to find a mentor. (DOK-L4)

ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

Warm-up

Students will respond to the following scenario: *Your first day of work in a new job is tomorrow. How should you plan to act and behave?*

Formative Assessment

Working in pairs, students will update their resumes and complete an activity in which they:

- Find three local businesses in an aviation-related career field
- List one point of contact for each business
- Describe each business's purpose and focus

Summative Assessment

Students will draft a one-minute elevator speech (taught in grade 9, unit 10) for a job they would be interested in doing in the future. Students will then contact a local business to inquire about the possibility of a mentorship.

LESSON PREPARATION

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

- [Mentoring Presentation](#)
- [Mentoring Student Activity 1](#)
- [Mentoring Student Activity 2](#)
- [Mentoring Student Activity 3](#)
- [Mentoring Teacher Notes 1](#)

LESSON SUMMARY

The lesson will begin with a warm-up exercise in which students imagine they will be starting a new job and consider appropriate behaviors for their first day. This will help get them thinking about ways to prepare for a career in aviation, which segues into the lesson's topic of mentoring.

In the next part of the lesson, students will define the terms *mentor* and *mentee* and consider the benefits of having a good mentor. Students will learn that mentoring is a “two-way relationship” and consider the kinds of behaviors and attitudes that mentors and mentees should bring to their relationship. Students will also learn about the two main kinds of mentors and common sources of potential mentors. Finally, students will learn tips for contacting and meeting with potential mentors.

Students will then extend their learning by researching three local businesses that might provide mentoring opportunities; students will also update their resume. For the summative assessment, students will draft a one-minute elevator speech for a career they are interested in pursuing; students can use this speech to contact one of the businesses they researched and inquire about possible mentoring opportunities.

BACKGROUND

Mentors are people who share their knowledge and wisdom in a field with younger or less experienced mentees. A mentor's main objectives are to pass along skills and information, help their mentees avoid pitfalls, and provide ongoing guidance for achieving specific goals and objectives. Numerous high-achievers across a wide range of professions and industries have cited the importance of mentors in their personal development. Many have stated that they would not have been able to reach their goals had it not been for their mentors.

One of the most important steps that young people can take toward reaching their future goals is to identify one or more mentors, listen carefully to their advice and guidance, and apply what they learn to their personal and professional lives. Locating appropriate mentors can often be a daunting challenge, so applying a systematic approach to finding and fostering mentorships is an important first step.

Mentorships often grow into long friendships, enduring well into the adult years of the mentee. It is not unusual for mentors and mentees to remain in close contact for decades, with the mentee benefitting from the knowledge gained and the mentor gaining personal satisfaction in seeing their mentee grow and develop. The relationship truly is one of mutual benefits.

MISCONCEPTIONS

A common misconception is that successful people will lack the time or interest to help a younger person get started. The thinking is that successful people are so busy in their profession that they simply lack time to share what they know with others. In many cases, nothing could be further from the truth.

Many successful people take a special interest in helping young people, guiding and steering them through challenging parts of their personal and professional development. Rather than seeing it as an imposition, these mentors see the opportunity to help others as an important part of their own responsibility to their profession and to society in general.

DIFFERENTIATION

To support student collaboration and motivation in the **EXPLORE** section, place students into small groups and assign them the task of brainstorming either duties of a mentor or mentee. Then pair up a mentor and mentee group to share their duties list before discussing as a whole class.

To support student motivation in the **EXPLORE** section, supplement the material with a guest speaker from a local airport, aviation club, or pilot organization. This will give students the opportunity to practice interacting with a mentor and exhibit the traits of a good mentee.

LEARNING PLAN

ENGAGE

Teacher Materials: [Mentoring Presentation](#), [Mentoring Teacher Notes 1](#)

Student Material: [Mentoring Student Activity 1](#)

Slides 1-3: Introduce the topic and learning objectives of the lesson.

Slide 4: Conduct the **Warm-Up**.

Warm-Up

Instruct students to complete **Mentoring Student Activity 1**, in which they imagine they are beginning a new job. (Sample responses can be found in **Mentoring Teacher Notes 1**.) Students may complete the warm-up individually or in pairs; afterward, discuss students' responses as a class.

EXPLORE

Teacher Material: [Mentoring Presentation](#)

Slide 5: Mentors are people, usually adults, who have experience in a given field and who are willing to share their knowledge and wisdom to help others get started in, or advance, their careers. Mentors give freely of their time to help others learn the skills and etiquette needed to succeed in the workplace. Good mentors can help you understand how to:

- Discover opportunities in your chosen field
- Communicate in the workplace
- Dress appropriately
- Avoid common pitfalls when beginning a job or career
- Develop the skills needed to succeed and advance in a career

Slide 6: Mentors can benefit you in many ways. Finding a good mentor is one of the most important things you can do to further your career goals.

One of the first things a good mentor will do is help you identify areas of special interest and careers you have both the interest and aptitude to pursue. A mentor will help you explore opportunities and find ways to capitalize on your strengths as well as improve on your weaknesses.

One of the most challenging questions people have when they are just starting out is *What do I really want to do?* A good mentor will help you narrow down your career choices and focus on opportunities that best match your skills and abilities. Your mentor will help guide you around problems and dead-ends and give you the benefit of their knowledge and experience so that you don't make the same mistakes they made or have seen others make.

The advice and counsel you get from a good mentor will help you progress faster, finding the best path to your goal while minimizing wasted time and effort. Because they are already successful in their field and know other successful people, mentors can introduce you to other professionals who may be able to further mentor you in other areas of your career.

Slide 7: You can find a mentor in many different places. When looking for a mentor in the aviation field, for example, help can be as close as your local airport. Your local airport manager is likely very familiar with the local aviation business community and can be a valuable resource in locating a mentor who best suits your needs.

Local flying clubs and flight schools often have pilots and business leaders who make themselves available to young people. They provide leadership and guidance and help young people explore the hundreds of possible careers in aviation and space.

More specifically, the Civil Air Patrol offers a cadet program for young people between the ages of 12 and 19; cadets have access to pilots and other aviation professionals who serve as mentors, providing valuable information and guidance. For women, the local Ninety-Nines Chapter can be a great source of mentors. For racial minorities, specialized groups such as the Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals provide a similar function.

Slide 8: Mentoring is a two-way relationship. The mentor provides guidance, and the mentee maintains an open mind and learns as much as possible.

Both the mentor and mentee benefit from and have responsibilities in the relationship. The mentee benefits from the mentor's accumulated knowledge, experience, and wisdom. The mentor is also a source of honest feedback to the mentee, noting when the mentee is going off target and advising how best to proceed toward a goal.

The mentor benefits too. Mentors gain personal satisfaction from knowing they are helping a young person achieve a goal. Mentors appreciate the opportunity to share their experience and guide people around problems, including potential pitfalls that can sidetrack a career or slow personal growth. As employees in their professions, many mentors also feel a responsibility to mentor the next generation of leaders.

EXPLAIN

Teacher Material: [Mentoring Presentation](#)

Slide 9: Begin by asking students what a good mentor brings to the mentor-mentee relationship. Discuss their responses, then click to reveal the rest of the slide. Then ask students what a good mentee brings to the relationship. Discuss their responses.

Slide 10: Mentors play an important role in developing their relationship with a mentee. For example, a good mentor will listen actively to the mentee in an effort to discover the mentee's strengths and weaknesses and to learn about the mentee's goals and objectives. The mentor should support the mentee with advice and guidance and, while providing constructive criticism, accentuate the mentee's positive traits and achievements. The mentor should emphasize the importance of constant learning and self-critique, and model how education is a continual process rather than a system from which to graduate.

Many of the best lessons that a mentor can provide concern their own mistakes in their profession. Mistakes can be valuable learning tools; personal stories about pitfalls and errors often stick the most in a listener's memory. Rather than presenting mistakes as failures, a mentor should present them as object lessons, explaining how they overcame and grew from their mistakes.

While not being overly critical, a good mentor must provide honest feedback, giving praise where due but also providing a gentle nudge toward improvement where needed.

Slide 11: To get the most out of their relationship with a mentor, mentees should understand that they have certain responsibilities. Mentees should listen actively and be open to accepting advice and guidance. The mentors are sharing their successes and failures, and being able to learn from these is a tremendous opportunity.

Being a mentee is an active process. Not only should the mentee listen and learn, they should also ask questions and probe deeper into issues as they come up. Being an active participant also motivates the mentor, helping them to focus their advice on the topics most useful to the mentee.

Mentees should be open to criticism and advice, and avoid being defensive or taking offense. We often misjudge ourselves and our abilities, so getting outside advice can be invaluable in making the kinds of improvements needed to achieve our goals.

Mentees should also demonstrate a sincere desire to learn. Mentors will respond most favorably if they feel the mentee is truly committed to the relationship and finds the mentor's advice useful. Being an active participant will produce better results than will listening passively.

Mentees should also apply what they're learning from the mentor in their school or work life. Learning happens when we change our behavior as a result of our experience. Mentees should show their mentors that they have truly learned by making positive changes in how they dress, speak, and relate to others, especially in the workplace.

Slide 12: There are different types of mentorships. Some may be school-based: the school may have a relationship with a local company or organization that provides mentors to students. Students may meet with mentors once or twice a month, either at school or at the place of business. Businesses may even provide mentors to help with school projects, further extending the learning that takes place in the classroom.

In other mentorships, the mentee finds the mentor on their own, and meets according to a mutually agreeable schedule. These types of mentorships tend to be less formal; often, they offer more flexibility than do programs provided through a school.

Slide 13: Finding a good aviation mentor can be challenging, but it is well worth the effort. If your school has a pre-existing relationship with a local company or group, contact them to determine if what they have to offer meets your needs. If so, sign up to participate. It's also a good idea to talk to adults at your school. Maybe one of your teachers or a guidance counselor has a contact at a local aviation company or can steer you toward someone else who can help. Sometimes companies reach out to schools to inform them of mentorship opportunities; make sure you are on the list of students who receive this information.

On the other hand, if your school does not have a pre-existing mentorship program and none of the adults you talk to has any advice, it will be left to you to find your own mentor. Your local airport is a great place to start. Flight schools, flying clubs, airport management, mechanic and avionics shops, and fixed-base operators are other useful places to look for mentors. Before you contact an organization, take time to review its website to determine whether you would truly be interested in forming a relationship.

Those interested in a military mentorship should contact the public affairs office of the relevant military branch. Local recruiters will be able to assist with this process.

Regardless of the type of mentorship you're interested in, preliminary research is the best way to get started finding a mentor. Even if the companies or organizations you contact do not have a formal mentorship program, many times they can refer you to people within their organization who may serve as mentors informally, or to outside contacts they may have.

Slide 14: Once you have identified several organizations as possible sources of mentors in your local area, do a little research about the organizations so you can ask intelligent questions when you contact them. If you're uncomfortable calling the organization directly, send an email of introduction. Explain that you're a high school student hoping to learn more about their industry and, if possible, to find a mentor. You can also drop by their office or shop and ask to speak to a manager.

Many companies, especially smaller firms, will most likely not have a formal mentorship program, but they may have people within their organizations who would be glad to serve as mentors. Explain that you would like to interview somebody, at their convenience, who could talk to you about what they do and how they got started in the industry. Your enthusiasm and sincerity could be major factors in the response you get when looking for a mentor.

EXTEND

Teacher Material: [Mentoring Presentation](#)

Student Material: [Mentoring Student Activity 2](#)

Slide 15: Students will complete the **Formative Assessment**.

Formative Assessment

Distribute **Mentoring Student Activity 2**. Working in groups of two, students will go on a “business quest” by finding three businesses in a potential career field that are local to where they live. Students will list the three business, provide contact information for an individual at each business, and describe each business’s purpose and focus.

Students will then revisit their resumes from the previous semester and revise them to add any recent accomplishments or new skills.

[DOK-L3; *revise*]



Teaching Tips

If there are no aviation-related businesses in your area, encourage students to think differently about the types of businesses and organizations that may be able to help them find mentors who have skills that are relevant to aviation fields. For example, a student who is interested in a career in airport management might seek help from the local town or city government that manages other types of publicly owned resources. Students interested in aviation maintenance careers might want to talk to businesses that deal with other types of transportation maintenance. Students might also think about contacting businesses that use aviation to help them accomplish their corporate goals. For example, companies like Caterpillar, Walmart, Home Depot, John Deere, and many others have aviation departments.

Slide 16: When meeting a potential mentor for the first time, keep the following tips in mind:

- Dress nicely and wear clean clothes. It’s not necessary to have fancy clothes, but wrinkled or shabby clothing gives a bad impression, so take the time to wash and iron shirts, pants, or skirts before you go. Your appearance will be a significant part of your first impression, so make it a good one.
- Bring a clean, up-to-date copy of your resume.
- Do not use slang or offensive language. Words that are commonly used at school may be totally unacceptable in the workplace. If you’re not sure about a particular word or phrase, err on the side of caution and avoid it.

- Always call adults by their formal title, and never use their first name unless they explicitly say otherwise. Such informality can be perceived as disrespectful. If you're not sure how someone would prefer to be called, ask.
- Be respectful of the mentor's time. Plan to be five to ten minutes early. This communicates to an adult that you're taking their time seriously and are eager to talk to them. If unforeseen circumstances will cause you to be late, call ahead and explain this to the person you're meeting with. Also be prepared to end the meeting on schedule.
- Be sure to listen very carefully when meeting with an adult who may become your future mentor. Don't be afraid to ask questions about their profession, but spend most of your time listening. Share your concerns, state your goals, and ask for their input. Then listen and take notes.

Slide 17: Asking questions and listening to the responses is one of the best ways to learn from a mentor. Working individually, ask students to come up with three questions they would like to ask a mentor. Then invite students to share one of their questions. Discuss the appropriateness and value of the different questions students propose.

Appropriate questions might include things like: How long have you been working in this field? How did you get started? What kind of educational path did you pursue/would you recommend? What makes this work rewarding? What are the challenges of your role?

Inappropriate questions include things like: How old are you? How much money do you make?

EVALUATE

Teacher Material: [Mentoring Presentation](#)

Student Materials: [Mentoring Student Activity 2](#), [Mentoring Student Activity 3](#)

Slide 18: Students will complete the **Summative Assessment**.

Summative Assessment

Distribute **Mentoring Student Activity 3**. Working individually, students will use what they have learned to create a one-minute "elevator speech" or brief description of what they are interested in doing as a job in the future. Students will then reach out to one of the businesses identified in **Mentoring Student Activity 2** and inquire about the possibility of a mentorship.

[DOK-L3; *strategic thinking*]

Summative Assessment Scoring Rubric

- Follows assignment instructions
- Student work shows:
 - Understanding of the components and purpose of an elevator speech
 - Ability to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate tone and language
 - Awareness of the purpose and focus of the speech's audience
- Demonstrates in-depth thinking including synthesis of lesson objectives

Points	Performance Levels
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9-10	Produces an elevator speech of appropriate length, tone, and content that effectively describes the student's interest in a future career.
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7-8	Produces an elevator speech that is close to the appropriate length, uses appropriate tone and content, and provides a reasonably effective description of the student's interest in a future career.
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5-6	Produces an elevator speech that is significantly too long or too short, uses inappropriate tone or content, or does not effectively describe the student's interest in a future career.
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0-4	Produces an elevator speech that is significantly too long or too short, contains inappropriate information, uses inappropriate tone or language, does not explain student's interest in a future career, and does not communicate effectively to the audience.
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STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

- **RST.9-10.2** - Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; trace the text's explanation or depiction of a complex process, phenomenon, or concept; provide an accurate summary of the text.
- **WHST.9-10.2** - Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.
- **WHST.9-10.4** - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **WHST.9-10.6** - Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
- **WHST.9-10.8** - Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- **WHST.9-10.9** - Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

REFERENCES