Freshman Seminar

Lessons & Objectives

Talent Development
SECONDARY
a program of Johns Hopkins University
School of Education
Unit 1: Orientation

Lesson 1: Getting to Know You
Explain the necessity of rules; reflect on their personal traits; attitudes and preferences; identify important people and places within the school

Lesson 2: Getting to Know Freshman Seminar
Analyze and discuss the goals of the Freshman Seminar course; articulate the relationship between having a goal/goals and achieving success; establish short-, medium- and long-term goals

Lesson 3: Brainstorming and Goal Setting
Demonstrate an understanding of “brainstorming” by identifying the components of the skill and implementing the skill in a variety of activities; develop a first-semester goal

Lesson 4: Working Together
Identify qualities of a successful team; identify stages of team development; identify team structures that exist in society; explain how people can succeed when working together

Lesson 5: Working Together and Building Consensus
Compare and contrast individual and team responsibilities; demonstrate an understanding of building consensus by participating in team-building activities

Unit 2: Study Skills

Lesson 1: Active Listening
Understand the difference between good listening and poor listening; use active listening skills during classroom activities; use active listening skills in their daily interpersonal contacts

Lesson 2: Cornell Notetaking, Part 1
Use the Cornell notetaking method to record information; use the Cornell notetaking method to reduce information into key ideas and key words

Lesson 3: Cornell Notetaking, Part 2
Use standard shortened forms of words to speed notetaking; devise a personal shorthand and keys for meaning reminders; practice taking notes from oral presentations; incorporate active listening while taking Cornell notes; use a rubric to compare notes to Cornell notetaking standards

Lesson 4: Memory Principles and Key Words
Become familiar with eight memory principles; learn the importance of key words; identify key words in a variety of contexts; read a story or textbook chapter; practice remembering and retelling a story/reading selection

Lesson 5: Mnemonic Devices
Consider the techniques for having a powerful memory; organize material as a method of remembering; practice and create acronyms; prepare catch-words and phrases; practice visualizing information

Lesson 6: Graphic Organizers, Part 1
Compare and contrast the Cornell method and graphic organizers/mind maps; practice taking notes on a graphic organizer
Lesson 7: Graphic Organizers, Part 2
Using Graphic Organizers to Write Essays; review the structure of paragraphs and essays; create a graphic organizer/mind map to write an essay; write an essay from a graphic organizer/mind map

Lesson 8: Graphic Organizers, Part 3
Using Multiple Kinds of Graphic Organizers; become acquainted with several kinds of graphic organizers; become experts on one type of graphic organizer; practice using graphic organizers

Lesson 9: The Classic Method of Notetaking
Practice the classic method of notetaking; review the organization of paragraphs and essays; evaluate study habits through a classic outline

Lesson 10: Giving Presentations and Public Speaking
Become familiar with basic qualities of presentations and public speaking; practice giving an impromptu speech; identify elements used in impromptu speeches; give constructive feedback

Take notes using the three methods of notetaking; identify their preferred method of notetaking; use notes to prepare a newscast; present newscasts to classmates; practice public speaking using notes; evaluate notetaking skills & peers' public speaking

Lesson 13: Notetaking Review
Review the three methods of notetaking; read and take notes on an article; consider and discuss the issue of teen homelessness

Lesson 14: Previewing and SQ3R
Recognize their strengths and weaknesses as readers; recall the steps for SQ3R; apply the SQ3R steps to strengthen reading skills

Lesson 15: Staying on Task, Staying Focused
Recognize how distractions can pull them off task; discover ways to focus on tasks; practice staying on task

Lesson 16 & 17: Time Management
Students evaluate how they use their time; apply time management tips to life situations; use notetaking to learn time management techniques; prioritize how to use their time; practice short- and long-term planning; practice planning their schedules

Lesson 18: Study Space
Identify important aspects of a good study space; evaluate their current study spaces; design an ideal study space

Lesson 19: Test Preparation: Review Sheets and Anticipating Questions
Consider methods of test review; practice making review sheets; write objective tests using review sheets; work collaboratively in groups of three

Lesson 20: Test Preparation: Combating Test Anxiety
Consider reasons for poor test performance; reflect on past and future test-taking; illustrate the symptoms of and strategies for stopping test anxiety; practice visualizing test-taking success

Lesson 21: Taking Objective Tests
Evaluate and consider approaches to taking objective tests; consider what types of objective questions challenge them; learn strategies for answering different kinds of objective test questions; practice taking student-composed tests or, alternatively, use a test from a common textbook or standardized test

Lesson 22: Taking Essay Tests
Learn strategies for taking essay tests; read and discuss an article about teenagers and work; take notes and plan an essay on an article

What Teachers Say About Freshman Seminar

Freshman Seminar works best for students when all the skills can be front-loaded first semester so that students have an arsenal of academic and social skills at their disposal for use in their second-semester classes.
Unit 3: Careers

Lesson 1: Introduction to Careers
The difference between a job and a career; examine why it is important to begin exploring career options now; identify the different reasons people work

Lesson 2: Taking the Holland Inventory
Become familiar with the six Holland codes; take the Holland Career Inventory to determine students’ Holland career code; use students’ Holland codes to begin exploring careers

Lesson 3 & 4: Exploring the Holland Codes
Practice notetaking skills to record information about the Holland codes; recognize how the codes relate to data, people, things, and ideas; gather information about their own two-letter Holland code and present that information to the class; begin to link the Holland career codes to the career academies in their school

Lesson 5: Investigating Careers
Consider the characteristics of a “dream job”; become familiar with different types of career exploration materials; determine the characteristics and qualifications of specific jobs; develop questions to be used to interview a person

Lesson 6: Connections, Part 1: Education, Career and Lifestyle
Explore the meaning of “lifestyle” and determine which lifestyle considerations are most important to students; understand the connection between lifestyle and career; complete a monthly budget based on where they think they will be in 15 years; consider lifestyles that sacrifice money in order to gain other values and rewards

Lesson 7: Connections, Part 2: Dream Jobs & Reality
Discuss exceptions to the rule that more education leads to greater income; understand the various opportunities in glamorous industries of sports, music and TV/film; align their Holland codes with possible careers in these industries; distinguish career goals in terms of job description and industry

Lesson 8 & 9: Writing a Resume
Determine skills and work habits that employers do and don’t want in their employees; become familiar with a resume, including its purpose, form and importance; write a resume; use peer editing to edit their resumes

Lesson 10: The Job Application
Learn how employers use job applications; how applications can be used to screen applicants; compare an applications completed accurately and not accurately; complete a sample application

Lesson 11 - 13: The Job Interview
Identify seven interview tips; create possible interview questions; how to answer tough interview questions; participate practice interviews; review the interview checklist; prepare for a real job interview

Unit 4: Post-Secondary Decisions

Lesson 1: Graduation, Then What?
Identify post-secondary decisions that high school students should make; work cooperatively in a brainstorming activity; reflect on a reading selection by answering questions

Lesson 2: Your Lifestyle and Your Career
Identify lifestyle choices and career goals; name factors that contribute to college costs; work in groups to learn and share information concerning post-secondary education options
Lesson 3: The Tests You’ll Need
Differentiate between the PSAT, SAT, and ACT, and the purpose of each; define vocabulary related to preparing for college; take a sample PSAT Critical Reading Test; identify their areas of weakness in the PSAT Critical Reading Test

Lesson 4: Different Kinds of Colleges
Identify the differences between a community college, a liberal arts college, and a university; identify the differences between a public and private college or university; name different college degrees/certificates/licenses, and explain their differences

Lesson 5: Choosing a Major, Part 1
Explain the importance of educational experiences related to career preparation; identify college majors and careers that match personal interests and abilities; read, take notes, and present information about career areas

Lesson 6: Choosing a Major, Part 2
Identify character traits based on reading; work in groups to share insights; use information to “counsel” another student

Lesson 7: College Costs
Determine college costs in various situations; Compare costs for in-state and out-of-state students

Lesson 8: What Are My Choices?
Answer unit review questions individually or in teams; complete a unit assessment

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Unit 5: Human Relations

Lesson 1: The Dynamics of Conflict
Define conflict; examine the positive and negative aspects of conflict; distinguish the four different types of conflict; discuss the causes of conflict

Lesson 2: The Conflict Loop
Use techniques to voice differing opinions in ways that do not challenge or threaten others; identify the major elements of the conflict loop; differentiate between positive and negative conflict loops; break a negative conflict loop

Lesson 3: Approaches to Conflict
Identify the three general approaches to conflict (avoidance, confrontation, problem solving); examine students’ use of avoidance and confrontation; develop an awareness of individual styles in conflict situations

Lesson 4: Problem Solving
Reasons why compromising is an important social skill; problem solving as a “win-win” process for resolving conflicts; compare avoidance and confrontation to problem solving

Lesson 5: A Process for Problem Solving
Identify the visual and aural elements of the social skill Remaining Calm Under Pressure; understand the steps of the problem-solving process

Lesson 6: Understanding Our Emotions
Identify emotions through verbal and non-verbal clues; recognize ways in which emotions impact and manage conflict

Lesson 7: What Makes Us Angry
Identify things that make us angry; recognize students’ “triggers” and how these thoughts influence feelings; learn about responses to anger and the consequences of behavior

Lesson 7: Strategies for Controlling Anger
Create a set of alternate positive self-talk statements to reduce anger in specific situations; practice relaxation through counting and breathing
Lesson 8: Active Listening and I-Messages
Students will determine how effective they are as listeners; identify responses that are helpful and not helpful; explain the meaning of I-messages; practice listening skills; facilitate I-messages and responses that improve communication skills

Lesson 9: Coping With Being Left Out
Identify situations when it is okay to be left out; appropriate coping behaviors to feeling left out

Lesson 10: Resisting Peer Pressure
Examine the positive and negative aspects of peer pressure; identify the consequences of resisting peer pressure; learn and model strategies for staying out of trouble with peers

Lesson 11: Dealing with Disrespect
Learn skills to react in a positive manner to people who disagree with them and disrespect them, while maintaining an acceptable level of self-respect; analyze situations in which disrespectful behavior and situations that could lead to fighting can be dealt with in a non-violent manner

Lesson 12: Dealing with Authority
Understand and explain the differences between discipline and punishment; share situations that have involved discipline and punishment; respond to a situation in which an employee is treated (punished) unfairly

Unit 6: Technology

Lesson 1: Introduction to MS Word™
Improve keyboard skills through online practice; identify the parts of a computer as they learn its operation; create and save a file in MS Word™

Lesson 2: Editing Documents in MS Word™
Improve their keyboarding skills through online practice; format a document, enter, copy, and edit text; complete a crossword puzzle of computer-related terms

Lesson 3: Laying Out Documents in MS Word™
Format page margins, orientation, and paper size; Use the “Find and Replace” function to replace text; use the thesaurus function to substitute words

Lesson 4: Formatting Documents in MS Word™
Create, format, and edit a new document; establish margins, type contents; change font size, and alignment; spell and grammar check a document; apply page borders

Lesson 5: More Formatting in MS Word™
Change and remove previous formatting; insert a header and footer into a document; adjust line and paragraph spacing; Create columns; insert and position WordArt

Lesson 6: Working with Tables in MS Word™
Insert a table into a document; enter, edit data in a table; insert rows in a table; merge and split cells; resize columns, use Auto Fit, and reposition the table

Lesson 7: Using a Web Browser
View and understand a web page; understand the vocabulary necessary to use the Internet; navigate using the web browser; complete an Internet hunt to find information

Lesson 8: Using the Internet for Research
Evaluate various Internet search and meta-search engines; become familiar with web query language; learn search tips to perform web queries
Lesson 9: Evaluating Websites
Brainstorm the usefulness and reliability of websites; complete a rubric evaluating one of their favorite web sites

Lesson 10 & 11: Copyright Issues
Students learn about citation, public domain, fair use, copyright friendly, royalty free and plagiarism; determine when citation is necessary or unnecessary; determine plagiarism by examining various situations; examine personal and public consequences of plagiarism and reflect on any person experiences with plagiarism

Lesson 12: Introduction to MS PowerPoint™
Examine PowerPoint™ templates and slide formatting; create and add slides; Add text to slides and edit text attributes; learn slide navigation, check spelling, and view slide show

Lesson 13: Getting Comfortable with MS PowerPoint™
Insert clip art and pictures; add shapes and color; apply themes and background styles; add transitions, slide animations, sounds, video, and sort and reorder slides; rehearse presentation timings and add notes

Lesson 14, 15, & 16: PowerPoint™ Group Presentation
Work groups to accomplish a goal; perform Internet research; design a layout for a group presentation; find and save appropriate graphics; set up a presentation; enter research information; review, edit, and rehearse their presentations; classroom presentations

Lesson 17: Spreadsheet Basics & Introduction to MS Excel™
Understand what a spreadsheet and spreadsheet program are and how they are used; create, format, and edit a basic spreadsheet

Lesson 18: What’s My Grade?
Create a sample Excel™ workbook; use and understand Excel™ formulas; create their own gradebook

Lesson 19: My New Car
Construct Excel™ calculation formulas; use ExcelTM’s formula operators; use ExcelTM’s AVERAGE and PMT formula function; copy and paste cells and use the “fill” options; perform web research to choose cars based on specific search criteria; make a car-buying decision based on several factors

Lesson 20: Using Charts & Graphs in Excel™
Format cells and tabs with color; create several kinds of charts and graphs; print Excel™ worksheets

Unit 7: Portfolio
A 7- or 13-lesson process in which students collect and create a portfolio of work from all their classes and present their work to their parents, or a staff member.

What Students Say About Freshman Seminar

Freshman Seminar teaches me about everything, and some things that I didn’t know that will come in handy.

Freshman Seminar taught about life and was very real.