

**WOW! Theme 4**

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**Family Connections Letter**

Theme:



WOW! Goals:



Self

Vision

Objectives:

- To help children identify and feel good about past accomplishments
- To help children think about what they want to accomplish in the future
- To help children identify concrete actions they can take now to accomplish future goals

Workforce

Preparation Skills:

Resources – Organizational skills

- Information – Acquiring and using information
- Basic skills – Communication (writing)

**ACTIVITY:**

# Welcome to My Life

**Materials:**

- “Big Ideas Mini-Poster”
- Hole punch
- Index cards (two colors; enough for each child to have several of each color)
- 4-foot lengths of yarn (one per participant)
- Scissors
- Pencils, crayons or markers
- Children’s individual portfolios

**Time:**

45–60 minutes

**Procedure:**

**Before the meeting:**

Punch holes in the top of the index cards. Prepare enough cards so that each child will have several cards of each color. (They’ll use one color to represent past accomplishments and another color to represent the future on a timeline.)

**During the meeting:**

**1.** Ask the children if they know what a timeline is. Tell them that a timeline is a way to organize events by when the events happened in the past or will happen in the future. Give each child a piece of yarn. Tell them that the yarn represents their lives and that they’re going to make a timeline of things that have happened in their lives. Ask them to think about important events in their lives and things they’ve already learned to do. For example, they may list going to school, the birth of a brother or sister, moving, a special vacation or learning to play soccer. Their responses will vary depending on the children’s age and experience.

**Helper’s Note:** Remind the children that they should share only what they feel comfortable sharing. Younger children will probably make timelines that don’t include as many items, will have different events that represent milestones for them and will have different ideas about the future.

**2.** Ask the children to write or illustrate each of their accomplishments on an index card, using one color card for all the past items. Attach each card to the timeline by threading the yarn through the hole in the top of the index card.

**3.** Now ask the children to think about things they might want to do or be in the future, and events or milestones they hope will occur in their lives. For example, they may list playing for a school team, going to college, having a family or traveling. Have them write or illustrate each of these future accomplishments on an different color index card.

4. Explain to the children that each of these events or accomplishments in the future represents a goal. They'll need to think of something that will help them reach their goal. On the back of each card, have them write at least one thing they'll have to do to reach that goal. For example, they may list studying hard, practicing and saving money. Help them be as specific as possible. It may be easier to accomplish a goal when they break it into several small steps, so it doesn't seem overwhelming. Give examples such as "reading one book a week" instead of "studying hard."

5. Display the timelines around the room or share them with the group in some way.

## Talking It Over:

After completing the activity have the children get in a circle and ask them the following questions to complete the experiential learning cycle. You can use the "Big Ideas Mini-Poster" to help them do this.

- What types of past experiences did you include on your timeline?
- What are some goals you have for the future?
- What can you do now that will help you reach these goals?
- A timeline can help you see where you've been and where you want to be in the future. How can you use this awareness of yourself to help you when you think about what you want to do in the future?
- A timeline is a tool that can help you organize information. There are many ways that you can make a timeline (it doesn't have to be yarn and index cards). Think about other ways to use a timeline. *You can use a timeline whenever you plan a project. Look at the activities "Inquiring Minds Want to Know" and "Work in Our School" in the Work in My Community theme. Each uses a timeline to plan the steps in setting up an interview with a worker.*

## How to Simplify:

- Staple the cards to a ribbon to make it easier for the children to set up their timelines.
- Offer to help write words on cards for any children who may need help.
- Children can draw pictures instead of writing, cut pictures out of magazines or use rubber stamps and ink pads.
- Make a general group timeline with events that might be common to all children.

## How to Extend:

- Children may want to follow up by reading books about people's lives (biographies or autobiographies), including information on what the people did to get where they wanted to go in life and what it took to get there and any challenges they had. Examples include *AFRO-BETS Kids: I'm Gonna Be*, by Wade Hudson (Orange, NJ: Just Us Books, 1992), *Pathblazers: Eight People Who Made a Difference*, by M.K. Fullen (Seattle, WA: Open Hand Publishing, 1992), *Amazing Kids!* by Paula N. Kessler (New York: Random House, 1995), *Great Books for Girls*, by Kathleen Odean (New York: Ballantine, 1997). Also check the biography section of bookstores or the local library.
- Create a "calendar" that records the shared history of the group. For example, you could note important events or milestones such as "We took a field trip to the radio station," "We took a tour of the school" and "Mrs. Reynolds, an author, visited our class."

### Vocabulary Words:

Refer to the definitions in the *WOW! Helper's Guide*.

- Accomplishment
- Goal
- Timeline



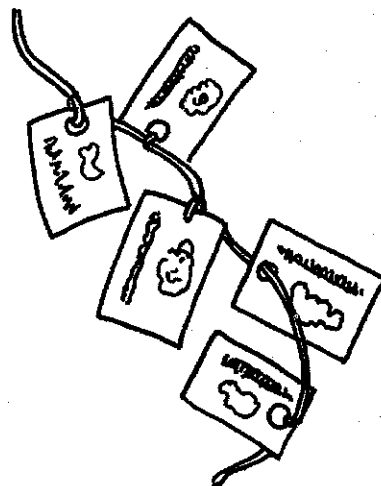
### For the Portfolio:

The following are examples of children's work from this activity. Use these when you complete the "Portfolio - Putting It All Together" activity later in this theme.

- Timeline
- Other samples from extension activities

## Making Connections

This activity is open-ended enough to allow for variations based on the children's culture and experiences. For example, children at the Michigan Indian Youth Retreat included items such as "I was a dancer at the Junior Pow-Wow" and "I was given my Indian name" on their timelines.



Theme:



WOW! Goals:



Skills



Vision

Objectives:

- To help children understand that time is a resource
- To help children identify how they use their time now
- To help children think about how they'll use time in the future

Workforce

Preparation Skills:

- Resources – Organizing time
- Basic skills – Mathematics
- Thinking skills – Creativity
- Personal qualities – Self-management

**ACTIVITY:**

# Rock Around the Clock

**Materials:**

- "Big Ideas Mini-Poster"
- Giant clock (made from large sheet of cardboard, construction paper, fastener)
- Masking tape
- Tapes or CDs ("Rock Around the Clock") and cassette player for playing music
- Markers
- Crayons, pencils or markers
- Newsprint or other large paper
- Children's individual portfolios

**Time:**

1 hour

**Procedure:**

**Before the meeting:**

Make a giant clock with a sheet of cardboard, construction paper hands and a fastener in the middle. Place the clock where everyone will be able to see it.

**During the meeting:**

1. Gather the children together and ask them to form a large circle. Tell them they're going to play a game. When the music (use "Rock Around the Clock" or another fast-moving song) starts everyone should dance around the circle. When the music stops they must freeze in place. Then the leader calls out a time of day and everyone acts out what he or she does at that time. For example, at 7 a.m. they might be brushing their teeth, eating breakfast or sleeping. Ask them to notice whether everybody is doing the same or different things. (Instead of having a leader call out the time, you could also have members take turns spinning the hands of the giant clock.) Continue to play through several rounds, using a different time of day each time the music stops.

2. Ask the children to think about all the things they do in a day, including the things they acted out during the game. Have them identify broad categories such as sleeping, eating, school and hobbies. Have the children make a graph or chart representing what they do in a 24-hour period. Ask them to figure out how they spend their time. They can make symbols to represent different activities and decide that each symbol will represent an hour. For example, they could use a pencil to represent time spent in school. If they are in school for six hours each day, they would draw six pencils in a row on their charts.

**Helper's Note:** It's helpful to prepare your own graph or chart ahead of time to use as an example.

Name: Evalina Gomez

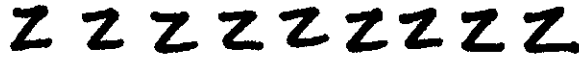
Activity:

Time: (hours)

Going to School



Sleeping



Eating



Watching TV



Playing Outside



Doing Homework



Reading Books



Other- walking the dog



3. Divide the children into groups of three or four and have them tape the graphs or charts to the wall. Have the children share their information with their small group. Ask them to consider ways in which their days are similar and different. Are there special activities that don't occur on a daily basis such as their 4-H meetings, sports activities or lessons? Are they surprised about how many hours they spend in different activities? Is this the way they want to spend their time? Discuss their responses. Compare similarities and differences.

### Talking It Over:

After completing the activity have the children get in a circle and ask them the following questions to complete the experiential learning cycle. You can use the "Big Ideas Mini-Poster" to help them do this.

- What are some patterns you noticed from looking at your chart and at other people's charts? What are some activities all of us share? What are some of the differences in our activities?
- What do you think about how you spend your time, now that you see your day charted out? If you don't like how you're spending your time, how can you change it?
- How do you think you'll spend your time when you're older (for example, when you're in high school or when you're a working adult)? How will this be similar to or different from the way you spend your time now?

### How to Simplify:

- Have the children make paper plate clocks instead of charts. Use a paper plate, two construction paper clock hands and a fastener. Demonstrate how to fasten the hands of the clock. Have the children draw pictures of themselves on the clock doing activities at different times of the day.

- Have the children draw a picture of themselves doing an activity during a particular time of day instead of charting their whole day.

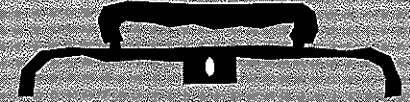
## How to Extend:

- When the charts are done, have the children figure out how many hours they may spend in a week (or other time period) on various activities. Have them add activities that they do weekly, but not daily.
- Have the children compare their charts with the activities of another member of their family (such as an older brother or sister, a parent or grandparent). How were the charts similar or different? Have them report the similarities and differences back to the group.
- Have the children close their eyes and tell them to imagine themselves in the future. Ask them to share what they think their families and their jobs may be like. What will be their place in the community? What will their personal lives, such as their hobbies and interests, be like? How they will spend their leisure time? Provide materials for the children to make a puzzle to represent their lives in the future. Display a piece of poster board with lines representing four puzzle pieces. Have the children label each piece with one of the following words: family, work, community and personal. Encourage them to find magazine pictures or to draw something that represents these roles.
- Have the children read a book about young people in other parts of the world. Have them compare their activities to the activities of the children in the other group. Examples include *All in a Day*, by Mitsumasa Anno (New York: Philomel, 1982), *Children Just Like Me*, by B. Kindersley and A. Kindersley (New York: Dorling Kindersley, 1995) and *This Is the Way We Go to School: A Book About Children Around the World*, by Edith Baer (New York: Scholastic, 1990).
- Divide the group into four-person teams and have each group choose a different country to investigate. Ask them to find out all they can about how children in that country spend their days. Give the groups time to prepare an oral presentation. Provide poster board, writing materials, and books and reference materials about children and jobs in the countries your group is investigating. Each group may choose to illustrate different aspects of children's lives in the country they chose. Have each group present their information. Discuss the similarities and differences between the children in the group and the children in the various countries investigated. How does their day compare to that of children in other countries?

### Vocabulary Words:

Refer to the definitions in the *WOW! Helper's Guide*.

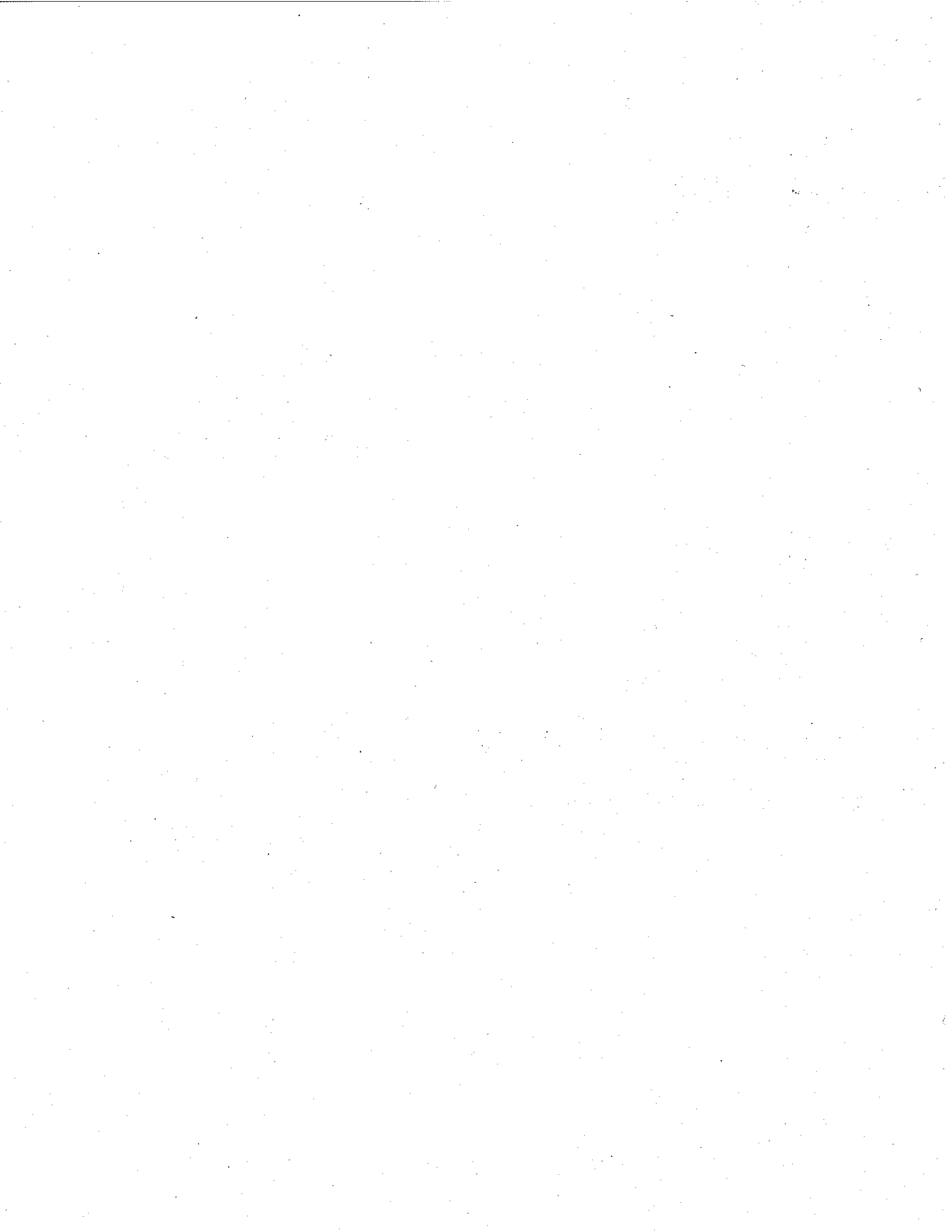
- **Difference**
- **Similarity**
- **Time management**



### For the Portfolio:

The following are examples of children's work from this activity. Use these when you complete the "Portfolio - Putting It All Together" activity later in this theme.

- **Time chart**
- **Other samples from extension activities**



Theme:



WOW! Goals:



Self Skills

Objectives:

- To help children use creativity and problem-solving skills
- To help children identify some of the ways jobs have changed over time
- To help children understand that current jobs may be different in the future

Workforce

Preparation Skills:

- Resources – Organizing and planning
- Interpersonal skills – Teamwork
- Information – Organizing and presenting information
- Technology – Using science to solve practical problems
- Basic skills – Communication
- Thinking skills – Problem-solving and creativity

**ACTIVITY:**

# Future Work - Just Invent It!

**Materials:**

- "Big Ideas Mini-Poster"
- Newsprint or other large paper (at least one sheet per group, plus one)
- Masking tape
- Markers
- Building materials such as boxes, toilet paper tubes, Styrofoam trays, glue, tape, construction paper, pipe cleaners, index cards, craft sticks
- Markers (one per group)
- Camera (optional)
- Children's individual portfolios

**Time:**

1 hour

**Procedure:**

**Before the meeting:**

Gather building materials for inventions. Divide the materials equally so that each group will have the same supplies to work with for making inventions.

**During the meeting:**

1. Tell the children they're going to have a chance to be inventors. Ask them to define what they think an inventor is. What does an inventor do? What skills does someone need to be an inventor? Write this information on newsprint and display it where everyone can see it.

## Inventors & Inventing

As you talk about the invention process with your group, keep the following in mind:

### Everyone is an inventor!

Whether we are scientists, engineers, writers, painters, computer programmers, assembly line workers, homemakers, carpenters, teachers or students, we are inventors each time we combine familiar objects in unfamiliar ways or improve or adapt an existing tool.

### Inventions come in many different forms.

Inventions can be products or objects that someone has created. They can also be new processes or ways of doing things (as simple as inventing a new way to cook vegetables). Inventions can also be new ideas or ways of looking at things. Children are inventors whenever they create a new jump rope rhyme, drawing, modeling clay sculpture or action hero.



## Vocabulary Words:

Refer to the definitions in the *WOW! Helper's Guide*.

- Future
- Invent
- Inventor
- Technology



## For the Portfolio:

The following are examples of children's work from this activity. Use these when you complete the "Portfolio - Putting It All Together" activity later in this theme.

- Include a drawing or take a picture of the invention and add a caption describing it
- Other examples from extension activities

## Inventors & Inventing Continued

### We can learn to be more inventive.

We can teach children and ourselves to be creative, curious and persistent problem-solvers. We can adopt a "let's try it and see" attitude and remind children that we only "fail" when we don't learn from our experiences. We can encourage brainstorming and help children learn how to explore different alternatives before choosing a single course of action. And, we can remember that humor and creativity often go hand-in-hand.

Adapted with permission from *Outer Space: Discovering the Inventor in Me* (4-H 1490), published by 4-H Youth Programs, Michigan State University Extension, 1991.

2. Ask them to think of an invention that would make a job easier or improve on an existing product. Have the group work in pairs or small groups to use the available materials to create an invention. Distribute the building materials you've gathered. Ask the teams to name their inventions and to write the name on a sheet of newsprint. Next have the teams write captions that describe their inventions. Have them think of how they'll persuade people to buy their inventions. Two of the marketing issues they'll need to grapple with are "Who would want to buy our invention?" and "What need would our invention meet for people?"
3. Give the teams time to work. You may need to do a little coaching and encouraging if the teams seem stuck. When the teams have completed their inventions, have them demonstrate their inventions and tell what they're designed to do. Have the teams share the information on their posters with the whole group.

**Helper's Note:** Remember to photograph the kids working and with their finished products.

## Talking It Over:

After completing the activity have the children get in a circle and ask them the following questions to complete the experiential learning cycle. You can use the "Big Ideas Mini-Poster" to help them do this.

- How did you go about thinking of an idea for your invention? Was it easy or hard?
- What was it like to work with others to design an invention? How did you work together?
- Can you think of jobs where people have to work together? *Many jobs require people to work together in a variety of ways. For example, sports teams, orchestras and bands, and product design teams for everything from cars to cereals.*
- What inventions do you think you'll see in the future?
- How do you see your life changing as a result of new inventions?
- What new jobs do you think might be created as a result of these new inventions? Will these inventions eliminate the need for certain kinds of jobs? *When new inventions are created, they may decrease or eliminate the need for certain products (for example, the number of telegraph operators dropped sharply when the telephone was invented). The new products may involve an improvement (for example, pushbutton phones improved on dial phones) or new technologies (cellular phones). Some*

jobs may be eliminated, but others may be created. Often, the new jobs require workers with new skills.

- How can you prepare for a future career? Can you invent a career of the future? Explain that people can create their own businesses to produce new products or offer new services.

## How to Simplify:

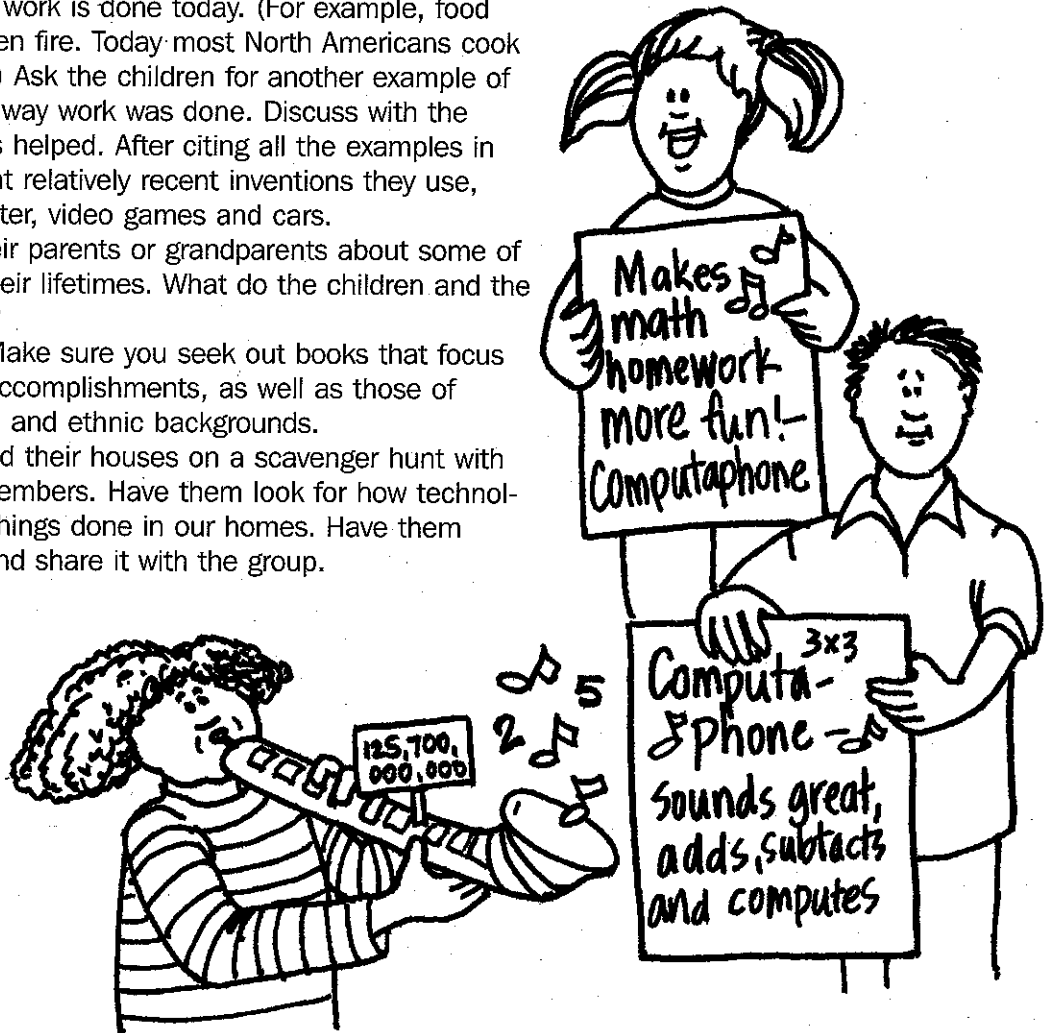
Help the children write down their ideas.

## How to Extend:

- Ask the children to think of jobs the same way that you've just talked about inventions. Focus on how jobs have changed or been created as new developments occur. Ask them to think of a current job they know about. Have them imagine what that job might be like in the future. Ask them to write about or draw a picture of that job in the future.
- Have a senior citizen speak to the group about the changes and inventions he or she has seen in one lifetime.
- Invite a businessperson to speak to the group. He or she can explain how to start a business and talk about the products or services his or her business provides.
- Read the book *Ox-Cart Man*, by Donald Hall (New York: Viking Press, 1979). This story is about a family who lived in the United States in the 1800s. Identify ways in which work changed over the years for the family in this story. Have the children compare the way work was done in the 1800s with the way the same work is done today. (For example, food used to be cooked over an open fire. Today most North Americans cook food on gas or electric stoves.) Ask the children for another example of an invention that changed the way work was done. Discuss with the children how this invention has helped. After citing all the examples in the book, ask the children what relatively recent inventions they use, such as the telephone, computer, video games and cars.
- Have the children interview their parents or grandparents about some of the changes they've seen in their lifetimes. What do the children and the adults think of those changes?
- Read books about inventors. Make sure you seek out books that focus on both men's and women's accomplishments, as well as those of individuals of a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- Suggest that children go around their houses on a scavenger hunt with their parents or other family members. Have them look for how technology has changed how we get things done in our homes. Have them make a list of what they find and share it with the group.

## Making Connections

It's amazing to see what different things children create when given the same materials. For example, one group of children at a "Just Invent It" workshop developed "Air Travel Ball" using a paper towel tube, pipe cleaners, craft sticks and tape. Their marketing strategy was to promote this game as "a way to amuse children when traveling on long trips." Other teams in the same workshop created a special telescope and a brighter candle. Creative thinking knows no bounds; the sky's the limit!





Theme:



WOW! Objectives:



Awareness Self



Vision

Workforce

Preparation Skills:

- Information – Acquiring and using information
- Basic skills – Communication (speaking and writing)
- Personal qualities – Self-management, respect for others

## ACTIVITY:

# Speech! Speech!

## Materials:

- "Big Ideas Mini-Poster"
- Paper
- Pencils
- Newsprint or other large paper
- Markers
- Reference books about jobs
- Poster board (optional)
- Video camera (optional)
- Microphone (optional)
- Children's individual portfolios

## Time:

This activity can take place in three parts: One session to introduce the activity, one session for research and to prepare the speech, and one session to present information.

## Procedure:

1. At the first meeting, have the group brainstorm a list of careers. Then have them discuss what they want to be when they grow up. Explain that they're going to write and present a speech about what it would be like to work in the career they've chosen.
  2. Next have the group brainstorm a list of the information the speeches should contain. Some examples include:
    - The name of the job or career in which they're interested
    - The type of education and training required to do the job
    - The types of knowledge and skills needed for the job
    - Someone they know who has this career.
  3. Have the children think about interesting ways to present and organize the information, such as making posters to illustrate the career, showing tools used by a person who does the type of work they're interested in or samples of products from the job.
- Helper's Note:** If you know what careers the children are interested in, you may wish to have related career books and World Wide Web sites available for their use at the meeting. (Make sure any Web sites are appropriate for this age group.) You may have an idea of the group's interests from previous WOW! activities. You also may have gathered information from guest speakers and job site visits that can be used in this activity.
4. Have the children complete a "Ready, Set, Know!" worksheet (like the sample on the next page) to help guide their search for information on careers. This worksheet focuses the children's information gathering. First, the children can think about and list what they already know about a career. Next, they can think about what they would like to find out about the career. These points can be worded as statements or questions. Finally, they can think of ways to find out what they want to know.

## Ready, Set, Know!

**Career I'm interested in:** Librarian

What do I know about this career?	What do I want to find out about this career?	How can I find this information?
You put books on the shelves.	How long do you have to go to school?	Visit the library.
You help people find information.	What's the best part of the job?	Talk to my mom's friend.
You have to use computers.	Do you have to read books every day?	Find a book.

### Vocabulary Words:

Refer to the definitions in the *WOW! Helper's Guide*.

- Career
- Presentation
- Research
- Skill



### For the Portfolio:

The following are examples of children's work from this activity. Use these when you complete the "Portfolio - Putting It All Together" activity later in this theme.

- "Ready, Set, Know!" worksheet
- Copy of written speech or videotape
- Photo of child presenting speech

**5.** Have the children think about what would make their presentations interesting. Ask them to consider what would capture people's attention, the important points to make and how they'll conclude their presentations. Write their ideas on a sheet of newsprint and post the list where everyone can see it.

**6.** Give the children time to work on their speeches. You may want to have them practice their presentations in two- or three-person teams. If time and resources permit, you may want to videotape the presentations. Then the presenters could review their speeches to see what they would want to do differently another time. Have them practice using a microphone if they'll be using one in their final presentations.

**7.** Finally, have each child formally present his or her speech. You may want to allow time after each presentation for a question-and-answer period. Provide space to set up any visuals the children may have. If the speeches will be given to a large group, consider using a microphone.

## Talking It Over:

After completing the activity have the children get in a circle and ask them the following questions to complete the experiential learning cycle. You can use the "Big Ideas Mini-Poster" to help them do this.

- What new understanding did you gain about your career interest?
- What did you find interesting about the other children's presentations?
- Did you find out anything that surprised you? Did the research you did change your opinion about your career choice?
- How did your expectations about education and training required for the career compare to what is actually required?
- What did you learn about information sources? Were some sources more helpful than others?
- What other sources might you tap into the next time you do a similar project?
- How would you change your presentation if you were to do it again?

## How to Simplify:

At the top of a piece of construction paper write "What I Want to Be When I Grow Up." Encourage the children to draw themselves in the career they chose. Have them describe their career choice, along with what it will take to prepare for the career. They can use props such as tools and clothing.

## How to Extend:

- In addition to the research suggested in the body of the activity, have the children interview a person involved in the career in which they are interested (see also the "Inquiring Minds Want to Know" activity in the *Work in My Community* theme).
- Arrange to have the group present their speeches at a family night or parents' program. Invite parents and other family members to attend.

## What Makes a Good Speech?

### Keeping the following points in mind will help you write good presentations:

- Choose a topic.
- Consider your audience.
- Develop an outline.
- Develop the introduction, the body and the conclusion.
  - Write down certain points you don't want to forget.
  - Use the introduction to grab the audience's attention. Choose a quote, a joke or story, a challenging question or something surprising to get the audience interested.
  - Present your material in an organized, logical order.
  - Use personal examples to help make your points.
  - End by summarizing the important points.
- Develop notes to follow during your presentation.

### How you deliver your message is as important as the content. Here are some basic points to remember in delivering verbal presentations.

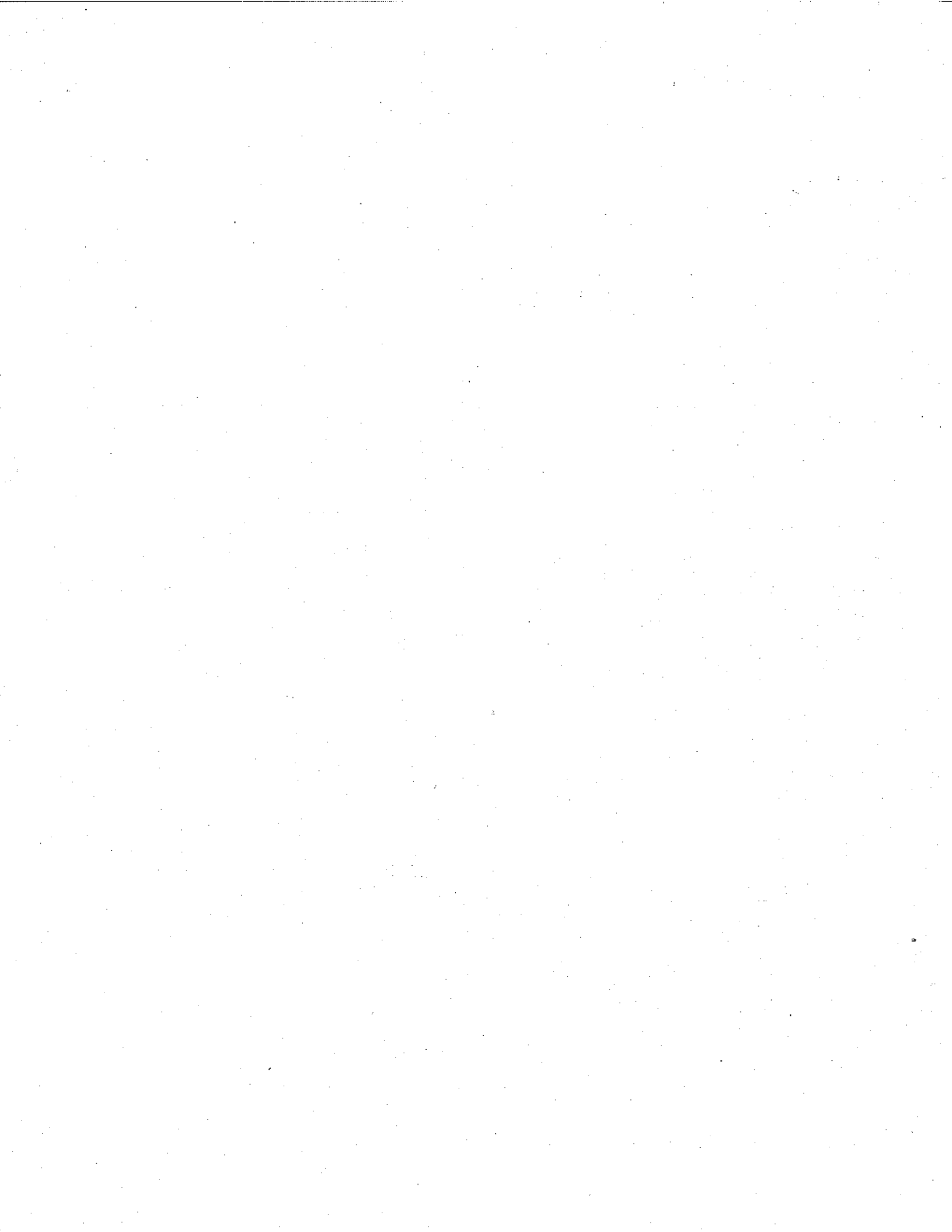
- Use your voice.
  - Speak up, but don't shout.
  - Try to sound natural. Use a conversational tone with familiar words.
  - Speak slowly and clearly, pronouncing all your words carefully.
- Make and maintain eye contact with the audience.
  - Keeping eye contact with the audience helps them pay attention to what you say.
  - Move your eyes around from person to person. Try not to stare.
  - Look at the expressions on the audience members' faces to see if they are "with" you.
- Wiggles and giggles distract; watch those body movements!
  - Use natural gestures and those that match what you have to say.
  - Too many gestures or unusual movements and facial expressions may take away from what you have to say.
  - Smile!

## Making Connections

"What do you suppose the following people and places have in common: The Great Wall of China, Mars, the depths of the ocean, President Thomas Jefferson, Martin Luther King and the Wright Brothers? These are place I've gone or people I've met through books. I enjoy them so much that I have decided to make a career of writing books." – *Opening lines of a speech by a student at Allen Street Elementary School.*

Besides developing catchy beginnings and effective endings, this activity helps children look to the future. It also provides an excellent way to involve youth volunteers in community service. For example, a college student who volunteered at Allen Street Elementary School in Lansing, Michigan, coordinated a "What I Want to Be" speech program for the 4th and 5th grade students. Over several weeks, she helped the students research and write their speeches. The students made their speeches, using a microphone, to a supportive audience of parents and friends in the school auditorium. The students benefitted from the volunteer's attention and she sharpened her own skills by organizing the event. Everybody who participated had something to be proud of!

"Maybe in the next 20 years you'll pick up a newspaper and the headline will read, 'New Dinosaur Discovered by Dr. Kenneth Johnson.'" – *Closing lines of a speech by a student at Allen Street Elementary School.*



Theme:



WOW! Goals:



Self



Vision

Objectives:

- To help children use writing skills to share their thoughts
- To help children think about themselves in the future by considering career possibilities

Workforce

Preparation Skills

- Resources – Organizational skills
- Basic skills – Communication (writing)

**ACTIVITY:**

# Extra! Extra!

# Read All About Me!

**Materials:**

- "Big Ideas Mini-Poster"
- Local newspapers
- Newsprint or other large paper
- Markers
- Pencils
- Computer with word-processing program (optional)
- Children's individual portfolios

**Time:**

30–45 minutes or more

**Procedure:**

**Before the meeting:**

Look through local newspapers and select those that feature career accomplishments of local citizens.

**During the meeting:**

1. Display the local newspapers you found that have articles about local citizens' careers. Read one or two articles aloud to the group. Ask the children to think about what careers they would like to have when they grow up or about a career they've talked about during other WOW! activities. Have the children discuss what they might do in that career. What might people read about them in their careers in the future?
2. Explain to the children that they're going to write articles for a future issue of their local newspaper detailing their career accomplishments. They'll be writing as if these accomplishments were already fact.
3. Have them look at local newspapers to see how newspaper articles are written. Ask them to write a headline and an accompanying story. Help them revise and rewrite as needed. Have them write their articles in large print on a sheet of newsprint or on a computer, if possible.
4. When they're done writing, have the children read or share their newspaper articles with the group.

**Talking It Over:**

After completing the activity have the children get in a circle and ask them the following questions to complete the experiential learning cycle. You can use the "Big Ideas Mini-Poster" to help them do this.

- How did it feel to look at yourself in a future career?
- What types of things do you hope to accomplish?
- What things could you do now to help you achieve these goals?
- Think about the articles we read about other people's career accomplishments. Do you think it's important to have long-term goals?



## How to Simplify:

Have the children dictate their articles to a helper. They can illustrate their articles and they or a helper can write captions detailing their career accomplishments.

## How to Extend:

- Use the children's articles to develop a "special edition" of your local newspaper. Have each child contribute two stories. One story should be about what the child is doing now; for example, in third grade, plays soccer, likes to ride bike. The second story should cover his or her future career accomplishments.
- Have the children interview an adult who has a career in which they're interested. Have them write an article about this person.
- Have a local news reporter attend the meeting as a guest speaker. Arrange to have the reporter help children write their newspaper articles. Try to arrange to have the articles (or excerpts from them) published.
- Explore the world of online publishing. For example, the Children's Literature Web Guide (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/>) provides a comprehensive listing of children's literature and access to sites where kids can publish their works online. Also check out Cyberkids (<http://www.cyberkids.com>) and Cyberteens (<http://www.cyberteens.com>), two online commercial magazines that publish original electronic stories and art by kids.
- Have the children interview each other on videotape, imagining that they have just been named "Man of the Year" or "Woman of the Year."

## Seven Significant Steps in the Writing Process

- 1. Find Ideas** – First, decide what to write about.
- 2. Plan** – Decide *how* you want to write or communicate your idea. Do you want to entertain, inform, enlighten, interest, excite, encourage or motivate your audience?
- 3. Research** – Search out and collect the information you'll need. It's easy when you're the subject!
- 4. Organize** – Develop an outline, even if it's only in your head. Decide what important points you want to communicate.
- 5. Write a draft** – A draft is a practice version of your work. Combine the information you've collected in steps 1 through 4.
- 6. Revise** – Put your work aside for awhile and look at it again later. Have someone else read what you've written to see if they understand it. Look for mistakes in grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- 7. Publish** – Put your work in its final form and share it with others.

### Vocabulary Words:

Refer to the definitions in the *WOW! Helper's Guide*.

- Career
- Future



### For the Portfolio:

The following is an example of children's work from this activity. Use it when you complete the "Portfolio – Putting It All Together" activity later in this theme.

- Copy of child's newspaper article (can include early drafts and completed story for comparison)

## Making Connections

Activities in WOW! can be adapted to a variety of settings. For example, 4-H'ers at a career conference in Illinois used "Extra! Extra! Read All About Me!" as an activity at the beginning of their weekend conference. They added headlines to their stories and posted them on the wall where others could read them throughout the conference. This was one of many activities during the weekend conference that helped these young people imagine themselves in the future.

Theme:



WOW! Goals:



Self Skills Vision

Objectives:

- To help children review previous activities
- To help children identify and understand what they've learned
- To help children reflect on their accomplishments
- To help children organize information
- To help children write action steps for the future

Workforce

Preparation Skills:

- Resources – Establishing goals, organizing and presenting information, identifying skills, interests, experiences and knowledge
- Basic skills – Reading, writing, speaking and listening
- Thinking skills – Creativity, decision-making and learning how to learn
- Personal qualities – Self-management and responsibility

**ACTIVITY:**

# Portfolio - Putting It All Together

**Materials:**

- "Big Ideas Mini-Poster"
- Children's individual portfolios
- Index cards or paper
- Pencils
- Paper towel tubes
- Crayons
- Markers

**Time:**

20–40 minutes

**Procedure:**

1. In the *Work in My Future* theme, children begin to explore career options and what they can do now to prepare for the future. Using the mini-poster, review the "Big Ideas" related to this theme. This activity gives children a chance to reflect on what they've accomplished during this theme and any new discoveries they may have made about themselves and their interests. Have the children look through their portfolios to review the projects they did for this theme.
2. Ask the children to look at each item in their portfolio and think about the activities. Give them enough time to look through their portfolios. Tell them they'll have a chance to share their portfolios with others in the group.
3. Review the process for compiling the portfolio:
  - **Collecting** samples of your work that show what you did or what you learned.
  - **Reflecting** on these items. Talk to someone or write your thoughts about what you have learned or done.
  - **Selecting** samples that best represent your work or are the most meaningful to you. Explain why you chose these items.
4. Prompt them to think by asking them questions such as:
  - What did you like about that activity?
  - What would you do differently next time?
  - What did you learn during that project?
  - What else would you like to know?
  - What jobs interest you so far?
  - Are there any jobs that you thought you would like but that you've changed your mind about? In what way?
  - How have your views about different jobs changed since we began this theme?
  - Do you see any new future career possibilities for yourself?

Have the children write their responses to one or more of these questions on an index card or sheet of paper that they can put in their portfolios.

5. In a group discussion, have the children share what each envisions for the future. Encourage them to consider what it will take to get there, such as education, training and skills. Tell them they're going to make a time capsule. The capsule will contain their goal and the steps they'll have to take to reach it. Encourage the children to use the materials in their portfolios as a guide when writing the action steps.

6. After the children have written their goal and the action steps, have them roll the piece of paper up into a scroll and put it in a paper towel tube. Provide crayons and markers for the children to use to decorate their time capsules. Set a date for the children to look in their time capsules to review their action steps and determine whether they're "on target." Reviews can be scheduled in one week, one month, six months, one year or whatever amount of time you wish.

7. If you did "Goal Setting – Ready, Set, Know!" as an opening activity, follow up by having the children complete the "Putting It All Together" chart, either individually or as a group. Use the following as a guide.

Putting It All Together		
What Did We Learn?	How Did We Learn It?	What Do We Still Need or Want to Know?

8. Ask each child to share his or her portfolio with the group.

## Talking It Over:

After completing the activity have the children get in a circle and ask them the following questions to complete the experiential learning cycle. You can use the "Big Ideas Mini-Poster" to help them do this.

- What are some ways in which you can update your time capsules?
- How might your goals change in the future?
- If your goals change, how will you develop new action steps?

## How to Simplify:

- Have younger children set short-term goals such as "do homework, clean room, read one library book a week." Set up review dates in one week, one month, three months, six months.
- Have each child tell about one activity he or she found interesting during the theme.
- Limit the number of questions asked.
- Have younger children dictate responses or draw pictures instead of writing responses.

## How to Extend:

- Encourage the children to write goals for a year. Review the goals in six months and one year.
- Encourage the children to share their portfolios with family members.

### Vocabulary Words:

Refer to the definitions in the *WOW! Helper's Guide*.

- Future
- Goal
- Portfolio



### For the Portfolio:

The following examples of children's work from this activity can go in the portfolio:

- Time capsule
- Reflection cards

## Theme 4: Work in My Future – Family Connections Letter



### Dear Parent:

Your child is taking part in several **WOW! (Wild Over Work)** activities that are designed to help children learn more about the skills they'll need to succeed in the world of today and in the work world of the future. **WOW!** activities help build children's awareness of career options and the skills they need to explore these possibilities.

We're currently involved in activities related to the theme of "Work in My Future," where children begin to explore career options and what they can do now to prepare for the future. Some of the big ideas that we're exploring include:

- **Work changes over time.**
- **Setting goals helps get things done.**
- **We can take action to reach goals.**
- **The skills we learn now help to prepare us for future roles.**

In each activity, children will make or do something related to the theme. Ask your child to tell you about the **WOW!** activities or show you something he or she made. Children may keep a portfolio of their work to show what they've done over time. There are many ways you can help your child "extend" what he or she learned in the **WOW!** "Work in My Future" activities. Here are a few ideas for you to consider:

- Don't underestimate the impact you have as a role model. Talk with your child about some of the things you were interested in when you were younger. Tell him or her how you got interested in the kind of work you do today. Talk about the steps you had to take to get where you are now. Even if he or she is interested in a different type of job, your child can learn from your example.
- Other people can be role models, too. Who do you admire and why? What kinds of qualities do you think are important? Who does your child admire? Role models can be well-known or just "ordinary, everyday" people. Talk about these

people and qualities with your child. Read stories about people who have set goals and achieved them, such as *Pathblazers: Eight People Who Made a Difference*, by M.K. Fullen (Seattle, WA: Open Hand Publishing, 1992) and *Amazing Kids!* by Paula N. Kessler (New York: Random House, 1995). What qualities helped the individuals in these stories to succeed?

- The school-age years are the time to explore many different interests. Encourage your child to talk about what he or she wants to be and do. Realize that children may express many ideas before they finally decide which career choice they want to pursue. You may discourage your child if you say, "You don't want to do that!" Instead, ask your child what interests him or her about that type of work.
- School-age children need to develop a sense of competence, of being good at something. Encourage your child to try out a variety of activities to see what interests him or her. Help your child to deal positively with successes and failures as he or she explores different areas. Children with an optimistic viewpoint think that their successes are due to ability. When your child experiences a setback, help him or her to see the connection between effort and success and to think about what he or she could do differently. Children who are persistent and enthusiastic about learning will be able to face new challenges with confidence. Let your child know he or she can count on you no matter if he or she succeeds or fails.
- Help your child connect the past and the future. Talk about changes you've seen in your lifetime. Many children are amazed to find out what life was like before television and computers! You can conduct a scavenger hunt around your home, look at old photographs or talk to grandparents and other relatives. Think with your child about the impact technology has on our lives and what we do at work, and even on what types of jobs we do.

