

THE SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

TRADE LINK: UNDERSTANDING OF SKILLS FOR SUCCESS AS THE FOUNDATION OF ALL THE ACTIVITIES

RATIONALE:

To introduce students to the concepts of Skills for Success (SfS), to give them an opportunity to learn about the levels of Skills for Success and how they see them in the context of their own lives.

METHOD:

At the end of this lesson, students will:

- Know and explain the 9 Skills for Success;
- Understand and identify the complexity levels of Skills for Success;
- Identify the key Skills for Success found in different courses;
- Illustrate one Skill for Success and the levels found in it to a small group of peers (and/or the whole class).

MATERIALS:

- PPT of the 9 Skills for Success icons with no words, PPT of the 9 Skills for Success icons with words.
- Deck of cards

GETTING STARTED: (TEACHER INFORMATION)

The original literacy skills – the three R's (reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic) – allow an individual to survive. These are still largely considered to be the minimum skills required for individuals to secure employment that provides food, shelter and the basic necessities.

For the workforce of today and tomorrow, more skills are required on top of those original three. While proficiency in prose literacy (the reading part of the '3 R's') learned in school is a highly desirable skill for becoming an educated, informed individual, having that skill does not necessarily mean that the person can read and understand a blueprint, data sheet or technical instruction manual at work. It takes more to be successful in the workplace and in society overall.

Skills for Success are the foundational skills you use to carry out your work tasks and they're the building blocks you use to learn new ones. The importance of – and need for – employees to have appropriate levels of workplace Skills for Success is clear and strong.

All nine Skills for Success are used in different combinations, in different applications, in every occupation.

Workplace Skills for Success are described and categorized according to the tasks performed in a specific occupation or workplace process. They are measured according to levels of complexity on a scale of 1 to 5, with Level 1 being "basic tasks" and Level 5 being "advanced tasks." A complexity level is often assigned to each task performed by a worker in a specific job.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

Duration: 30-60 minute lesson
Grade: Elementary School, Grades 8-10
Group size: individual
Setting: Classroom



For example, a bricklayer and a travel agent both need the workplace Skills for Success of writing to effectively do their jobs. The specific form and complexity of writing, however, is different for each of these occupations. The "levels" scale takes into account the length and purpose of writing, as well as the style, structure and content of what is being written, preparation time, familiarity of content, degree of professional risk and narrowness of subject range.

ACTIVITY:

1. In small groups, students will be shown a PowerPoint slide of icons of the 9 Skills for Success and work together to figure out the names of the Skills for Success based on the visual. Give students between 2-4 minutes to figure out the SfS.
2. Continuing in small groups, have students define each of the SfS once they know the names of them. The definitions can be presented to other groups to see if everyone has a similar understanding of what the 9 Skills for Success are.
3. Understanding Complexity Activity'
 - Step 1: Shuffle the cards in the deck
 - Step 2: Find the ace Ask: how long did it take you to find the card? Was this task easy or difficult? This is an example of a Level 1 task – to find the card, you had to 'locate' it.
 - Step 3: Put the ace back in the deck and shuffle the cards.
 - Step 4: Find all the aces in the deck Ask: How long did it take you to find the cards? Was this task easy or difficult? This is an example of a Level 2 task. To find the cards, you had to 'locate' the first ace, then cycle through the deck to find the next one and so on. This task likely took you a bit longer than the previous task so was just a little more difficult.
 - Step 5: Put the aces back into the deck and shuffle the cards.
 - Step 6: Find all the diamonds and put them in order from lowest to highest. Ask: How long did it take you to find the cards? How did you know what order to put them in? Was this task easy or difficult? This is an example of a Level 3 task – you had to cycle through the cards, then put them in order and decide if aces were high or low. This likely took you longer than the other tasks and you had to have some background information (numerical order).
 - Step 7: Put all the cards back in the deck and shuffle again.
 - Step 8: Think of 3 different card games. Show the winning hand for each card game. Ask: How long did it take you to find the cards? Was this task easy or difficult? This is an example of a Level 4 task – you had to cycle through to locate all the cards, then you had to rely on previous knowledge of card games and integrate this information to show what the top hands look like.

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(CONTINUED)

Step 9: Put the cards back into the deck and shuffle one last time.

Step 10: Create a completely original card game that no one has ever played before. It must be completely original!

Ask: Is this task easy or difficult? How long would it take you to complete this task?

This is an example of a Level 5 task – you have to locate, cycle, integrate, rely on previous knowledge and know, based on all of these, generate a completely new game.

4. In 4 -6 small groups, give each group a subject area (Math, Science, Geography, Social Studies, Learning Basketball, English, Cooking class). Ask students to give examples of the 9 Skills for Success in each of the subject areas, ask them to take one of the Skills for Success and describe the levels that would be found in that Skills for Success.
5. Students can present to the class – an example of Communication.

BRANCHING OUT:

1. Have students do the card game activity in pairs or in a triad. Have students invent another example of showing the levels of Skills for Success. Have students give examples of how many Skills for Success they have used so far in the last hour/day/week. Although we don't name the Skills for Success all the time, they will be aware of what Skills for Success at work look like in their lives.
2. Have students self-evaluate – they can describe the Skills for Success they are using in their own life and how often they use Levels 3 and 4. What would they need to do to be more proficient at those higher levels? This activity can be part of a social studies activity or a math activity.

INFORMATION BITE:

16.6% of Canadians were at Level 1: location – this means they are able to locate a single piece of information but they may struggle with more difficult tasks such as reading instructions on a form or a bottle of medicine.

25.6% of Canadians were at Level 2: Cycling. This means they may be able to locate and cycle to find multiple pieces of information but may struggle when asked to integrate information. They may have a challenge at work if something requires several steps in order to be solved.

35.1% of Canadians were at Level 3. This is the level most often required for success in work, learning and life. Individuals who are able to integrate information tend to be able to solve problems and learn new skills on their own.

22.7% of Canadians were at Levels 4 & 5. These levels are often combined. That is because they both require previous knowledge and an ability to generate new ideas or concepts. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a Level 4 and 5 task.

(Results from the International Adult Literacy Survey IALS data collected from 1994-98 from 23 participating countries).

