**Reaching for the Stars: Careers-focused Lesson for Primary Children (KS1)**

*Warren Hudson, Primary School Teacher at London-based, School Beyond Limitations, shares his careers lesson plan alongside some practical tips for delivery…*

Interactive career-focused lessons are crucial for young children as they help to broaden their understanding of the working world and the diverse opportunities available to them in the future. For schools, introducing engaging lessons which encourage children to think about careers from an early age will also nurture natural curiosity, critical thinking as well as help develop essential soft skills such as teamwork, problem-solving and communication. It is important that young children are able to envisage the various pathways that they can pursue based on their own personal interests and individual strengths. Early exposure to the range of careers available today can also combat biases and promote inclusivity.

I recently ran a career focused lesson plan delivered across three days for our KS1 primary school children, but this could easily be adapted for KS2 too. In these lessons, as well as journaling, I used a combination of meditation, mindfulness, breathing work, exercise, organisation skills, visualisation, music and art appreciation to help them to think about their career in a more mindful way and to give them more clarity on what that could look like.

Lesson Plan Example:

1. **Journaling:** Begin with a journaling exercise by first asking your pupils to reflect on their dream job and to write down or draw what that might look like. The intention here is to allow them to focus on their unique passions alone, while encouraging them to think about questions such as, why is this my dream job? How important are qualifications to me, and how important is my future? These ideas can be discussed and shared in the classroom or in smaller groups.
2. **Meditation:** Ask your pupils to close their eyes, breathe and visualise their dream career. What does this look like in your mind’s eye? Can you use your imagination to think about what kind of future you might have ahead of you in this career? You can also use music and dance movements here to inspire pupils and help them to relax. For this exercise the pupils focused on their own feelings of happiness and achievement and what it would feel like to achieve their dream career, which in turn inspired them to believe that their dreams are achievable.
3. **Scavenger Hunt:** In order to add a physical element to career building and to promote fun engagement, ask your pupils to spend some time at home that evening searching for objects that link to their dream job and also to the school subjects that will support the various stages on their career ladder. They can then bring these into school the next day if feasible or take photos or write notes about these objects to share and discuss with the class. Consider questions such as what have we learned about our dream careers?
4. **Research:** Compile a number of slides for your class related to various dream jobs whether a firefighter, builder, estate agent, nurse or pilot etc. to provide examples of differing careers and make sure you avoid gender stereotypes. Watch the slideshow with your pupils and look at and discuss some of the skills that might be needed to achieve these jobs. Then ask your pupils to consider their own dream job again, what skills and school subjects could be of benefit for their chosen career? What qualifications or experience might be required? Is a university degree necessary to pursue this career? Pupils can then be asked to create a short presentation of their own highlighting the skills they need to progress their career or alternatively, they can draw a spider diagram and fill in the blank spaces with the skills needed.
5. **A Day in the Life:** Write a personal diary entry from your own perspective as a teacher, called ‘a day in the life of a teacher’ and share this will your class the next day so that they can relate to what a career in teaching might look like. This creative activity will inspire pupils to transform their earlier visions into stronger manifestations. Ask them to write their own ‘day in the life’ creative stories to allow them to imagine and visualise what a day might look like in their dream career, who might they meet? How might they feel? What tasks might they engage in? What might their future look like? Such activities will bring their futures to life and reinforce the message in their minds that they are already embarking on a journey towards a desirable career. Give pupils the opportunity to share their stories afterwards if they wish to.

**Tips for delivering this lesson plan:**

* Focus on the creative aspects and the personal interests of each child because this will inspire enthusiasm and allows the students to bring their futures to life through their wonderful compilations and handwritten work.
* At the end of each session, focus on some self-reflection as a class – ask pupils what did you learn, how motivated were you and what is the most important thing you learned today? Ask them to write this down.
* Make time to discuss findings around skills and subjects to help children to make the work they are doing in school relatable to their dream job.
* As an additional creative activity, you might also like to ask your pupils to create a ‘Strength Chain’ – essentially a paper chain where character traits, social skills, logic, language, study and personal talents are written onto strips of coloured paper – the children help to write these and then select the traits they believe most apply to them to make their individual paper chain.

ENDS

**About the Author**

Warren Hudson is a Primary Teacher at School Beyond Limitations. He has been a teacher for over 25 years, with more than 10 years in primary school settings. He has also been a Mathletics Co-ordinator for over five years. He is dedicated to finding new ways to explore primary school subjects to keep pupils inspired.

**About School Beyond Limitations (SBL)**[**www.school-beyond-limitations.com**](http://www.school-beyond-limitations.com/)

School Beyond Limitations (SBL) is an international online school head-quartered in the UK (London) providing primary, secondary and sixth form education for students aged 4 to 19 years. Disrupting the boundaries of traditional education, its students receive a meaningful, personalised learning experience delivered in a unique collaborative, mixed-age environment. Lessons are designed to empower students, unlocking their full potential while bringing their own unique essence to life. Established in 2019, SBL students learn in small groups of eight and are inspired by curiosity-led, project-based learning including entrepreneurial and financial education. All students are involved in the design of their own learning and educational pathway, whether that means working towards IGSCEs and A-Levels or taking an alternative route. The school also runs three in-person school residentials per year for experiential learning and delivers personalised one-to-one mentoring for students, as well as a bridging year for post-sixth form adults needing support with their future.