



DISCUSSION GUIDE

GRADE: 7

MONTH: NOVEMBER

THEME: PLANNING FOR
NEXT YEAR

PATERSON PATHWAYS:

CLEAR, CAREFUL, AND CREATIVE PLANNING FOR LIFE BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

USING THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE:

Paterson Pathways is a life skills and planning curriculum for students in grades 6 through 8. This discussion guide is part of the Paterson Pathways series. It has been adapted to be taught in a weekly “advisory” class period.

This *Grade 7 November* packet includes:

- A **weekly Discussion Guide**,
- Ready-to-copy **student Reflection(s)**
- A **Resource Guide** with background information for advisors.

DISCUSSION GOALS:

Help students reflect on their academic plan.

Help students revise their plans as needed.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

What are my academic goals?

How am I doing with my academic plan?

WEEK 1:

REVIEW ACADEMIC GOALS

At last month's advisory session, students were asked to think about how they could build on their strengths and address their weaknesses to improve academically.

- Ask students to bring their completed *ACADEMIC GOALS* reflection to the discussion.
- Discuss what they've proposed to do and why.
- Ask how many have already taken steps to improve their academic performance.
- Discuss what you, the advisor, and your group (as a group) can do to help each student succeed in school.

One of the most important things about setting goals is having the opportunity to revisit them regularly to see if you are making progress. That is the task for this discussion. Students will compare their academic plans for the year with how they are actually doing.

This is a good opportunity to flag students who need extra help or who are falling behind in classes. And combining students' Academic Inventories – their own analysis of their strengths and weaknesses – with their latest grades and assessments offers a way to help students deepen their understanding of their own academic strengths and help them become better at self-assessment and more engaged in their own academic progress.

Let students know that **next week will be a “work sample roundup,”** and that they should bring work from first marking period to add to their portfolios.

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

Student portfolios. Students will need access to their portfolios at each advisory session.

ACADEMIC GOALS reflection from October students should bring their completed academic improvement plans.

First marking period progress reports/report cards. Students should bring a copy of their grades up to this point in the school year.

**STUDENT
PRODUCTS:**

Your students will be expected to create one product from this lesson:

Updated portfolio. Each student should update his or her portfolio by adding an *ACADEMIC GOALS* reflection in the *LEARNER* section.



WEEK 2:

WORK SAMPLE ROUNDUP

Make today's lesson a "work sample roundup" from the first marking period. Ask students to organize the samples of work from each of their classes to add to their portfolios today. Ask students to make sure they check each item on their checklists as it is added. Ask them to think about why they are adding each item: Is it good work? Does it show improvement? Does it show a new skill? What makes it worth saving?

If you have time, you might want to discuss or review students' choices of work to be saved.

Then ask them to review their portfolio checklists and see if they have anything else that should be added. Have they done any work for any of their classes over the last month that they'd like to add?

You might want to remind students to use their checklists (which should be kept with their portfolios) to keep track of items they're adding to their portfolios. Make sure students remember how to add items to their portfolios and that they are keeping their portfolio checklist handouts up-to-date.

Since students should be accustomed to keeping portfolios by now, you might want to use this opportunity to check in with them or follow up on their academic improvement plans.

Let students know to bring their progress report/report card to the next meeting.

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

Student portfolios. Students will need access to their portfolios at each advisory session.

ACADEMIC GOALS reflection from October.

Students should bring work samples to this session.

**STUDENT
PRODUCTS:**

Your students will be expected to create several products from this lesson:

Updated portfolio. Each student should update his or her portfolio by inserting work samples that they collected from the first marking period into their portfolios in the **LEARNER** section and checking off these items on their **PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST**.



WEEK 3:**CAREER EXPLORATION GOAL**

Discuss future dreams and goals. What do your students want to do when they grow up? What are their goals for ten years from now? Lead a discussion on this topic. Some of your students may have very clear ideas; others may not have any ideas. You may want to have students talk in small groups, or you may want to direct the discussion by asking students about their interests and how those interests might translate to future goals. Build on the career cluster interest survey students did during 6th grade. What did they learn about themselves?

Have students develop Career Goals. Distribute a copy of the *CAREER EXPLORATION GOAL* reflection to each student. Help students answer the questions and then ask each student to complete the goal statement by indicating a career pathway they would like to explore this year. Remind them that these goals should be based on their dreams for the future

This discussion continues toward the annual goal-setting process by helping students develop a career exploration goal for the year. By setting goals, students can learn to hold themselves accountable and can celebrate tangible accomplishments.

Students will have the opportunity to reflect on the career exploration activities they accomplished in 6th grade and to explore their interests and aptitudes. As in 6th grade, career exploration in 7th grade is focused around the theme, “Who am I?”

**MATERIALS
NEEDED:**

Student portfolios. Students will need access to their portfolios at each advisory session.

CAREER GOAL reflection

First marking period progress reports/report cards.

**STUDENT
PRODUCTS:**

Your students will be expected to create one product from this lesson:

CAREER GOAL reflection. Students will reflect on what they know about their interests to date and develop at least one career exploration goal for the school year. Students’ goals should be SMART, that is, specific, measurable, achievable, rewarding, and time-oriented





REFLECTION

CAREER EXPLORATION GOAL

NOVEMBER - 7TH GRADE

Name: _____

WHAT ARE YOU INTERESTED IN DOING?

What activities do you participate in at school? Why? What do these activities say about you and who you are? What do you want to do when you grow up?

Look at the chart below. Which of the Career Pathways sounds the most interesting to you? Circle the pathway that you think is the most interesting.

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| Do you like expressing yourself creatively or performing? | Do you like organizing things or persuading people? | Do you like working on a team to solve problems? | Do you like helping other people? | Do you like working outdoors or solving problems? |
| PATHWAY: Arts, Media, Communications & Design | PATHWAY: Business, Management & Finance | PATHWAY: Engineering, Science & Technology | PATHWAY: Education, Social & Health Services | PATHWAY: Agriculture, Science & Natural Resources |

Based on that information, how can you learn more about careers this year? Do you want to...

- Learn what kinds of jobs or careers are in the pathway you selected?
- Find out how much education you'll need for different careers?
- Learn what you should do to prepare for high school?

What do you want to do? Please write at least one goal below for your career exploration this year.

CAREER GOAL:

Based on my interests I think I might like the career pathway: _____.

Here is what I would like to learn about this pathway during 7th grade _____.

_____.





RESOURCE GUIDE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR LEAD ADVISORS AND INTERESTED TEACHERS ON:

GRADE 7 – NOVEMBER PLANNING FOR NEXT YEAR

USING THIS RESOURCE GUIDE:

Each Paterson Pathways discussion guide includes a *Resource Guide* for advisors. The *Resource Guide* has been prepared as a handy reference to give you more information on the following topics:

- **Essential Questions.** Each Paterson Pathways discussion guide is built around a theme, and each theme includes two Essential Questions. Focusing on these Essential Questions will help your students retain information from this discussion.
- **New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.** Each Paterson Pathways discussion guide has been adapted to NJCCCS from the relevant grade's Grade Level Expectations.
- **ASCA Standards.** Each Paterson Pathways discussion guide is based on American School Counselor Association (ASCA) standards.
- **Community-building Opportunities.** The *Resource Guide* suggests several community-building opportunities related to each discussion.. You and your students can pursue them if you wish.
- **Additional Activities.** The *Resource Guide* also suggests supplemental activities for your group if you have more time, or if you want to devote more attention to a particular theme.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

Each Paterson Pathways discussion guide is built around a theme. Each theme repeats each year to help organize the curriculum and, through this annual repetition, to help students retain key points about the lessons they are learning.

Each month's theme includes several "Essential Questions." These questions inform the content of the discussion guide and the student assignments, building on the theme to help students remember the key points from the lesson. These essential questions will also be used later in the year to help students organize their presentations for their student-led conferences.

This month's theme is **Planning for Next Year**. The Essential Questions are:

- What are my academic goals?
- How am I doing with my academic plan?

Over the course of the year, your students will have a number of opportunities to think about their goals and dreams for the future and to learn what they will need to do to achieve those dreams. This month's discussion focuses on a tangible step your students can take to move toward their long-term goals.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES:

Part of the aim of the Paterson Pathways curriculum is to help students grow into a larger role in their community. Each discussion guide in the Paterson Pathways curriculum highlights opportunities to help students think about or actually take on a larger role in either the school community or the larger community in which they live.

This guide has a somewhat introspective focus because it is about students' individual dreams for the future and then about their academic plans to realize those dreams. By considering their dreams for the future – and then thinking carefully about what it will take each year to move toward those dreams – your students will have greater incentive to make good use of their time in middle and high school.

Although this discussion guide is based around an individual activity, there are many ways your group can help support your students.

- **Shared dreams.** Do your students have any goals or dreams in common? Can you think up any "advisory group goals" (such as all committing to register for at least one honors course)?



- **Common support.** One of the findings of districts that have implemented Paterson Pathways is that the support provided by the advisory group structure actually results in students doing better academically and registering for more challenging courses. How can the members of your group support each other in this way?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

If you have accomplished all the activities outlined in this discussion guide and want additional activities for your students, you may wish to:

- **Ask students to discuss their academic improvement plans for next year with their families.** This will hopefully be just the beginning of ongoing discussions students will have with their parents and families about their long-term goals.

PREPARING FOR NEXT MONTH:

Next month's Paterson Pathways session is focused on helping students explore career possibilities and assess their interests. Here's how you can plan ahead for next month:

- **Investigate your school's access to career planning resources.** Your school likely has access to an array of career planning and interest assessment resources. Investigate your school's resources (or ask your lead advisor or school guidance counselor to brief you) so that you can help your students use them. If your school does not have career planning resources available, you might want to turn to the free resources at www.careervoyages.gov.
- **Obtain copies of *CAREER CLUSTERS INTEREST SURVEY* and *CAREERS INTEREST REFLECTION* for each student.**
- **Invite one or two community members to discuss their careers with your students (*OPTIONAL*).** *If you wish*, ask interested community members (perhaps parents or HSC members) to discuss their career choices – and educational needs – with your students.

N.J.C.C.C.S LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY

LISTENING

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 3.4.7.A1 | Listen actively for a variety of purposes such as enjoyment and obtaining information. |
| 3.4.7.A2 | Listen attentively to a variety of speakers. |
| 3.4.7.B2 | Demonstrate competence in active listening by interpreting and applying received information to new situations and in solving problems. |



WRITING

- 3.2.7.A2 Generate ideas for writing through reading and making connections across the curriculum and with current events.
- 3.2.7.B2 Write a range of grade appropriate essays across curricula (persuasive, personal, descriptive, issue-based)
- 3.2.7.D1 Write for different purposes (e.g., to express ideas inform, entertain, respond to literature, persuade, question, reflect, clarify, share) and a variety of audiences(e.g., self, peers, community)
- 3.2.7.D2 Gather, select and organize information appropriate to a topic, task and audience.

**CAREER EDUCATION AND CONSUMER, FAMILY AND LIFE SKILLS
(grades 5-8)**

- 9.2.8.C1 Demonstrate respect and flexibility in interpersonal and group situations.

**ASCA
STANDARDS:**

The Paterson Pathways curriculum is based on the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model, to provide teachers and students with a clear way to integrate school counseling and academic achievement. This discussion guide focuses on the following ASCA Standards:

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

- A:A1 Improve academic self-concept (Display a positive interest in learning).
- A:A2 Acquire skills for improving learning (Demonstrate how effort and persistence positively affect learning).
- A:A3 Achieve school success (Demonstrate dependability, productivity, and initiative).

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- C:B2 Identify career goals (Demonstrate awareness of the education and training needed to achieve career goals)

