

Are You Cool or a Fool if You Decide to Finish School?

Goal: To powerfully demonstrate the importance of a diploma in the new millennium.

Materials: Marker board, markers, pens, one altered copy for each student of "The Top 10 Ways to Tell if You Really Need a Diploma" handout (alter by removing the title, scoring section and final sentence); one unaltered copy for each student of "The Top 10 Ways to Tell if You Really Need a Diploma" handout; and one copy for each student of the "Q and A" handout.

1. ▲ **Distribute** the pens and the altered copies of "The Top 10 Ways to Tell if You Really Need a Diploma" handout— without revealing the name of the handout, or that you have altered it. **Inform** the students they are about to take a quiz surveying their preferences, then **ask** the class members to circle which of each pair of items on the handout best reflects their opinion. Once all the students have completed the forms, **review** the completed handouts with the class. **Ask** the class if anyone knows the best way to obtain the items shown in the left column, that were the favored choices by all/many students. **Assist** the participants to identify that the best and fastest way to ensure obtaining the items on the left side of the handout, is to complete school. **Distribute** the unaltered copies of "The Top 10 Ways to Tell if You Really Need a Diploma" handout, and **assist** the students to determine if they have selected any

choices that would indicate the need for a diploma.

2. ▲ **Ask** the students to name all the alternative places besides school where, for free, and close to home, people can gain the skills and information that will be needed prior to adulthood. **Assist** the students to discover that there are few/no free, local entities besides schools, that will provide this essential life training in time for adulthood, and that missing school may leave you with few choices for catching up later.

3. ▲ **Distribute** the "Q and A" handout. **Ask** the students to "figure out" the handout as it is read to them, then **read** it aloud. **Allow** students to explain to peers their guesses on what the Q and A is about. (The answers all relate to: "Will I really ever really need a diploma?") **Discuss** with the class how a diploma is like "a driver's license on the big road to forever."

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Anyone who wants to have access to some of the best things in life during the new millennium, such as jobs and money, and also be able to understand the world, will need an education.**

- **There are few free, local alternatives to school to give you the education you'll need in adulthood. If you forego school now, it can be tough to catch up later.**

- **Your diploma may be like a driver's license on the big road to forever.**

The Top 10 Ways to Tell if You REALLY Need a Diploma

1. When I'm an adult, I want to find everyday tasks and chores to be...

Do-able

Impossible

2. As an adult, I want to be able to get...

The Best Jobs

The Worst Jobs

3. For the rest of my life, I would rather...

Give Orders

Take Orders

4. When I'm an adult, I want to...

Comprehend

Be Confused

5. In my life, I want to earn...

More Money Than Others

Less Money Than Others

6. When I talk, I want to...

Know That I Make Sense

Worry I Don't Know What I'm Talking About

7. As changes happen in the world, I want to be...

Able to Keep Up

Left Behind

8. If I only get one chance at life, I want to...

Do It Right the First Time

Look Back with Regret

9. As an adult, I'd prefer to always be...

Ready for Whatever Happens

Unprepared for Whatever Happens

10. Throughout my life, I'd prefer to:

Be Able to Get the Things I Want

Do Without the Things I Want

SCORE: If you selected any items from the column on the left side of the page, then you may want to finish your education...so are you cool or a fool if you decide to finish school?

Work For Your Diploma Now...and Your Diploma Works for You Forever

Free Electricity!!— and Other Things That Will Never Happen

Goal: To show students that it is more likely they will need education, than not, despite their hopes that they can avoid needing one.

Materials: Marker board, markers.

1. ▲ **Ask** the students to name situations that will never ever happen, such as the electric company gives away free electricity to everyone, all people are given a million dollars every birthday, and grocery stores all decide to make paying optional. **List** the students' answers on the board. **Ask** the class members to determine if they will ever likely need skills and education to function if they are correct that it is unlikely that they will ever get free food, free electricity, free money, etc.

2. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be investigating whether it's getting easier or harder to even pay for the essentials people need to survive. **Ask** the students to guess the 1975 prices of the following items; relatively recent (2006) prices are shown first, the 1975 prices are second.

- 1 first-class stamp...recently \$.39...was \$.10
- 1 pound of pork...recently \$2.99/lb...was \$.29
- Small car...recently \$15,000...was \$3,200
- Box of cereal...recently \$2.99...was \$.39
- Bottle of 100 aspirin...recently \$5.00...was \$.70
- Instant coffee...recently \$6.99...was \$2.79
- Two light bulbs...recently \$2.40...was \$.43

Discuss with the students how even a modest 4% inflation rate can erode purchasing power. (If prices have risen significantly since these 2006 numbers, **include** those numbers in the discussion, and **share** that observation.) **Assist** the students to understand that they will need a good job to continue to be able to obtain essential and desired items as even modest inflation takes its toll, and **note** that periods of high inflation can be devastating with items rising rapidly in cost.

3. ▲ **Inform** the students that in the new millennium, education won't be important just to

get a job and afford purchases, but it will also be necessary in order to be able to function. **Ask** the students to figure out the following e-mails they might receive in just one day's mail:

● "As your ISP, I must inform you that your account is due within 5 days or we'll have to terminate you." (Translation: Your internet service provider is about to shut off your access to the internet unless you pay ASAP for your connection.)

● "Restrict net use to business...Signed, the MIS" (Translation: The information system manager at your work, reviewed your internet use, and wants you to only use the net for business purposes.)

● "Mom, please do a back-up on all that work I did last night...Signed, Your Son" (Translation: Your son wants you to make another copy of the new data he just stored in his computer.)

● "🙂" (Translation: It's a smile, turn the page sideways to see it; it's a common computer pleasantry.)

● "Received your query asking if we use cookies at our site. Yes, we do...Signed, The Webmaster." (Translation: The web site manager acknowledged that her site does take private data from you when you visit, possibly without your knowledge.)

Discuss with the class how education may be essential to be able to just complete everyday tasks like reading the mail.

4. ▲ **Review** the major points of this lesson:

● It is unlikely that the world will ever provide free money, food and electricity, so most people will need the education and skills to pay for both essential and discretionary purchases.

● Even during times of low inflation, price increases add up to decrease your purchasing power, meaning that you are likely to need a job that offers a good income.

● In the new millennium, your education won't just be needed to find a good job; you'll need your education just to be able to read your mail.

Lesson 9

Will Yesterday's Skills Work Tomorrow?

Goal: To show students the rapid pace of change that they will need to manage in the new millennium.

Materials: Marker board, markers.

1. ▲ **Ask** the students to name a dozen people from the past, such as Abraham Lincoln and Florence Nightingale. **List** their answers in a single column on the board. Next, **ask** the students to list some of the things that were invented or came into common use recently or during their life spans. **Elicit** answers such as e-mail, the fax machine and cellular phone. **List** the students' answers in a second column on the board that is adjacent to the first column. **Ask** the class members to direct you to draw a line from one of the people from the past to a recent invention, then **ask** the students to speculate on how that person from the past would have reacted to that invention. For example, how prepared would Lincoln have been to send a fax? **Continue** to link the items on the two lists, **allowing** the students to highlight the silliness of people from the past using modern conveniences. After all the items on the two lists have been considered, **discuss** with the students, how people in the present who lack modern skills, may be as ill-prepared as people from the past to use modern inventions.

2. ▲ **Ask** the students to list additional modern inventions, and **write** their responses on the board. **Ask** the class members to identify how many of these items were available 5 years ago, 10 years ago, 20 years ago, and so on. **Assist** the students to see that the pace of change is accelerating.

3. ▲ **Ask** the students if they have ever encountered people who wouldn't even try new inventions, such as Grandma, who is so afraid of the computer that she still uses a typewriter. **Allow** the students to share anecdotes, and **discuss** how hard change can be especially if you lack basic skills. **Assist** the students to realize that the greater their education and skills, the more they can keep up with the fast pace of change and not be left behind. **Discuss** what can happen to people who rejected past inventions such as those shown below, and **emphasize** that being left behind in the new millennium will be even more obvious and difficult than for those who were left behind in times past:

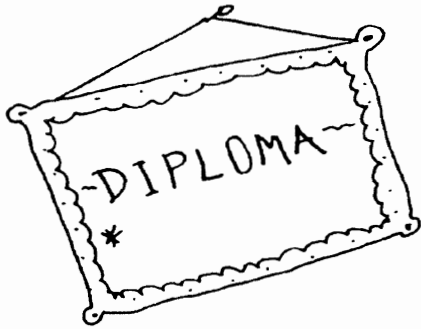
- "The gas-powered buggy will never happen."
- "Only birds will ever fly!"
- "Nobody's voice could ever pass through the air!"
- "No way a little box on my belt could page me!"
- "Nothing will ever replace 8-track tapes!"
- "An ice box is the ultimate kitchen convenience."

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **The pace of change is so fast that people who lived in the past, would be unprepared to take advantage of new inventions. People in the present who lack modern skills, may be equally unprepared to use modern inventions.**

- **The pace of change is getting faster.**

- **Some people have a hard time accepting change, but people with good education and skills, may be much better prepared to adapt. People who are left behind in the new millennium may face much more serious and difficult hurdles, compared to who fell behind in the past.**



Q

A: Yup, that's what the diplomas look like.

A: Oh, sorry, I didn't know that you can't. A high school diploma.

A: Yeah, me too. I have a cousin who gets by without one, but that's fading fast.

A: In the new century, most jobs will require it.

A: Yeah, even fast food places...

A: Some McDonald's already do. Ohio, I think.

A: Yeah, it is hard to stick with school when you're dealing with stuff like you are.

A: Only if you'll never need to make change, buy something on contract, pay taxes, get a job...

A: About \$339,000 less in your lifetime than a grad, and that gap will probably get even worse in this century.

A: No way. It's like a driver's license on the big road to forever.

Lesson 10

It Can Be Hard to Replace a Missing Education

Goal: To show students that it can be difficult to replace a missing education.

Materials: Marker board, markers.

1. ▲ **Ask** the students if they have ever wished that wishing it, could make things happen. **Give** the following example: A person says "I want a phone," and suddenly hears a ring from their new phone. **Ask** the students to suggest, draw on the board, or creatively demonstrate the things they wish they could make instantly happen. **Discuss** if instant results will likely ever be common. **Assist** the students to realize that instant results are not common, and **relate** to the fact that there is no such thing as an "instant diploma" and there probably never will.

2. ▲ **Ask** the students to list all the quick ways that exist to replace a missing diploma, and **assist** the class to realize that there will be no instant solutions to a missing diploma. **Ask** the class members to determine whether getting a diploma later in life is likely to be easier or harder, and **aid** the students to recognize that it is often harder to get a diploma later in life due to conflicts with work, child care, transportation, money, etc.

3. ▲ **Ask** the students to name things they have

lost. **Encourage** the class members to reminisce about how much they miss their lost things, their struggle to replace the lost items, and how they have had to attempt to learn to live without it. **Assist** the students to note that lost things are hard to replace and are often forever or long-missed. **Assist** the students to apply these observations to a missing diploma. **Note** to the class that people often can't control losing possessions, but often have complete control over losing a diploma.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Instant results are rare in the real world. There is no such thing as an instant diploma, and there probably never will.**

- **There are no quick ways to replace a missing diploma, and most people find that it gets harder to finish school as an adult, due to competing demands of child care, work, money, family, transportation, etc.**

- **Things we have lost, sometimes stay with us, meaning that the item is conspicuous by its absence. Some lost things are hard to replace, and forever or long-missed. You sometimes can't control losing possessions. You can control whether you lose your diploma.**