

Lesson 2.21: The 16 Career Clusters and My Top Three

Unit: Unit 2, Me, My Goals, My Money (Individual Growth and Life Readiness) **Topic:** 2.5 Work and Careers **Grade:** 6 to 8 (written at grade 7; see Differentiation for the grade 6 support and grade 8 stretch) **Days:** 1 class period of 40 minutes (10 minutes of it is the ClassroomStreet trading window that continues from Topic 2.4) **Room:** Either (classroom or FACS lab; wall space for 16 posters; devices for the trading window)

Standards

- NYS module line: NYS IGLR 5. Career Pathways a) Explore various careers within the 16 national career clusters
- CTE theme line: CTE CCO 2. Career Clusters c) Examine the 16 national career clusters and their use in guiding initial career planning
- CTE theme line: CTE CCO 2. Career Clusters d) Identify clusters for further investigation based on personal interests
- NYS FACS Learning Standard 3 (Intermediate), Key Idea: Students will understand and be able to manage personal resources of talent, time, energy, and money and make effective decisions in order to balance their obligations to work, family, and self.; Performance Indicator: Students identify their own abilities and interests as possible guides to career choice.
- CDOS Standard 1 Career Development: Students will be knowledgeable about the world of work, explore career options, and relate personal skills, aptitudes, and abilities to future career decisions.
- National FCS 3.0: 1.2.1 Examine possible careers to find what each one requires and offers in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and openings.

Enduring understanding and essential question

Big idea: There are thousands of jobs, but only 16 groups of them. You do not have to pick a job at thirteen. You have to know which three groups are worth a closer look. **Essential question:** If your interests point to a cluster you have never heard of, should you trust the interests or the list?

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. (Low) Given the 16 national career clusters by name, place a named job in the correct cluster for at least eight clusters on the cluster walk.
2. (Mid) Using their Lesson 2.2 interest quiz result (their two letters), match their interest letters to the clusters that fit them and mark each cluster Yes, Maybe, or No with a reason.

3. (High) Choose their top three clusters, justify each choice in one sentence that names an interest or a strength from Topic 2.1, and identify which of the three (if any) are FACS-related clusters.

Vocabulary

Tier 2 (general academic): cluster, match, justify, investigate Tier 3 (FACS): career cluster, pathway, interest inventory, FACS-related cluster. See the unit vocabulary list for Turkish, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Materials and setup

- Sixteen cluster posters, one per cluster, each with the cluster name, a number 1 to 16, three jobs, and the interest letters that often fit: Handout 02.21 - Career Cluster Walk Posters and Match Sheet.md (print the poster section on card stock; tape the posters around the room in number order before class)
- The match sheet from the same file, one per student
- Each student's Lesson 2.2 interest quiz result (the two letters on Handout 02.02 - Interest Quiz.md in the FACS folder)
- Each student's Investor Journal (Handout 02.14 - Investor Journal.md), open to the Round 2 lines
- Devices for the trading window; today's Round 2 dispatch loaded (windows 48 to 54)
- Slides: Slides 02.21 - The 16 Career Clusters and My Top Three
- Timer, and the reset cue ready; the walk gets loud
- Setup notes: put the eight FACS-related posters (Hospitality and Tourism; Human Services; Education and Training; Health Science; Business Management and Administration; Marketing; Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; Arts, A/V Technology and Communications) on a different color card stock so students see the pattern without being told. Space the posters so four students can stand at each one. Write the do now on the board.

Pre-assessment

The do now (three real jobs they have seen this week) and the Lesson 2.2 quiz results. Before class, skim the FACS folders: most students have S (social) or R (realistic) as one of their two letters. That tells you which posters will crowd first (Health Science, Human Services, Architecture and Construction) and which will sit empty (Government and Public Administration, Finance). Send the "needs more" students from yesterday's exit card to their evidence row for one minute during the do now.

Do now and hook (Time: 3 min)

On the board: "Write three jobs you saw a real person doing this week. Not on TV or a screen. (The bus driver counts. So does the person who made your sandwich.)"

Debrief: collect ten jobs on the board fast. Then the hook: “Every job on this board fits in one of sixteen boxes. So does every job in this country. Your interest quiz from Lesson 2.2 already points at three of the boxes. Let’s see if it was right.”

Procedure

Step	Teacher will	Students will	Time
1. ClassroomStreet trading window (Round 2, windows 48 to 54)	Open the window block and post the dispatch. Keep the room in trading mode; the posters wait. Close at 10 minutes with the reset cue.	Log in, read the dispatch, trade or hold, and write the Round 2, Day 2 line in the Investor Journal.	10 min
2. Direct instruction: what a cluster is and why 16	One slide: a cluster is a group of jobs that share skills, knowledge, and a work setting. Show the 16 names on one slide. Sort three of the do now jobs into clusters with the class (the bus driver is Transportation, Distribution and Logistics; the sandwich maker is Hospitality and Tourism; the school nurse is Health Science). Point out the eight posters on the different color: those eight are where a FACS class leads directly. Explain the poster line “interest letters that often fit” and how to read it against their own two letters.	Take out the Lesson 2.2 quiz sheet. Copy the two letters onto the top of the match sheet. Sort the three jobs with the class.	5 min
3. Learning activity: the cluster walk	Start the timer. Groups of four start	At each poster: read the name and the	10 min

	at different posters and rotate on the cue every 35 seconds (16 posters in about 10 minutes). Circulate with the clipboard checklist. Answer “which cluster is X” with “read the three jobs and decide.”	three jobs; compare the interest letters on the poster to their own two letters; mark Yes, Maybe, or No on the match sheet and write a two-word reason (“likes people,” “hates blood,” “R matches”).	
4. Choose the top three	Stop the walk. Give the task: “From your Yes column, pick three. For each, one sentence that names an interest or strength from Topic 2.1 (your values list, your strengths, or your quiz letters). Then circle any of your three that are FACS-related.”	Choose three, write three sentences, circle. A student with fewer than three Yes marks promotes a Maybe and says why.	5 min
5. Pair share	Pair students. Each reads the top three and one reason. The listener names one job they saw on a poster that fits the partner’s number one.	Read, listen, suggest a job. Write the partner’s suggested job under number one.	3 min

Questions to ask

Monitor understanding:

- A veterinarian works with animals. Which cluster? (Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, not Health Science.) Why does that make sense?
- A chef and a hotel manager are in the same cluster. What do they share?
- Your two letters are S and A. Which three posters should you look at hardest?

Deepen learning:

- Your quiz says one thing and your gut says another. Which do you trust? What would you do to find out?
- Why are eight of the sixteen clusters connected to what we do in this room? What does that say about FACS?
- Someone who never took this class picks a career at 18. What do they not know that you now know?

Check for understanding

Clipboard checklist during Step 3: at two posters per student, a yes or no on “reads all three jobs before marking,” “the reason names an interest or a letter,” and “marks No for real reasons (not because the poster is far away).” A student with three yeses is ready for Step 4. A student marking every poster Yes gets one question: “Which of these would you not want to do on a Monday morning?”

Closure (Time: 4 min)

Exit card, three lines: my top three clusters; one job from a poster I did not know existed; one cluster my quiz pointed to that I marked No, and why. Three students read the second line aloud. Sort into “got it” (three clusters with reasons) and “needs more” (three clusters, no reasons, or fewer than three). The “needs more” students start the career research card tomorrow with a conference at the desk.

Differentiation and supports

- ELL: every poster has one picture per job (described in the handout so Sal can add an image or draw an icon); the cluster names are printed in Turkish, Portuguese, and Spanish on the match sheet (see Vocabulary 02.md, marked [check with a native speaker]); the Yes, Maybe, No columns use a check, a question mark, and an X as well as the words; sentence starter for Step 4: “I chose ___ because I like ___.”
- IEP and 504 (general): the walk can be done seated with the 16 posters as a packet; a student who tires can mark eight clusters and skip the rest with no penalty; extended time by finishing the top three as tomorrow’s do now; a partner may read the poster aloud.
- Grade 6 support: mark only the eight FACS-related posters plus any four others the student chooses; the top three sentences use the sentence starter.
- Grade 8 stretch: for each of the top three, name one job from the poster and one job not on the poster that belongs in the cluster; write two sentences on which cluster the student’s quiz got wrong and why the quiz might have missed it.
- UDL checkpoint used: multiple means of engagement (a physical walk with a timer, and choice of the top three) and multiple means of representation (the cluster as a name, three jobs, a color, and interest letters).
- No-device alternative for the trading window: the paper window from Lesson 2.20 (Handout 02.19 - Paper Ledger.md and the price table). No-wall-space alternative for the walk: the posters become a 16-card deck at each table and groups pass the cards on the cue.

Assessment

Objective	Standards met	Learning task	Assessment (formative or summative; tool)
1. Place jobs in the correct cluster	IGLR 5. a); CCO 2. c)	Sort in Step 2; cluster walk, Step 3	Formative; clipboard checklist; summative on Unit 2 Test items 19 and 20
2. Match interest letters to clusters with a reason	IGLR 5. a); CCO 2. d); Std 3 PI E; CDOS 1	Match sheet, Step 3	Formative; match sheet collected and scored complete, partial, or missing for daily work (complete means 12 or more clusters marked with a reason)
3. Choose and justify the top three; identify FACS-related clusters	CCO 2. d); Std 3 PI E; National FCS 1.2.1	Top three, Step 4; pair share, Step 5	Formative; exit card; the top three carries into the career research card (Lesson 2.22), which is the topic's formal check

Homework

None. Optional: ask an adult at home which cluster their job is in. Most people have never heard of the clusters; the student explains them. Bring the cluster number.

Connections

Inside the building: the guidance counselor, who uses the same 16 clusters on the state's career planning tools in high school; FACS gives guidance students who already have a top three, and guidance gives FACS the school's career resource for tomorrow's research card. Community: the school's career day, if it has one; a parent volunteer from a cluster nobody picked.

Sources

- NYS Middle Level CTE FACS Content Module 01, Individual Growth and Life Readiness (nycetecenter.org, June 2018), line 5. a). Copy in 02 Standards/NYS Module PDFs/.
- NYS Middle Level CTE Theme Module 01, Career and Community Opportunities, lines 2. c) and 2. d). Same folder.

- NYS Learning Standards for Health, Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences (1996), Standard 3, Intermediate, FACS strand, and NYS CDOS Standard 1, Intermediate. Wording per 02 Standards/STANDARDS SOURCES - web research.md.
- National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education 3.0 (LEAD FCS Education, 2018), competency 1.2.1.
- The 16 national career clusters by their public names, as used in the National Career Clusters Framework (Advance CTE, careertech.org) that the NYS module refers to.
[Sal: Advance CTE published a revised framework in 2024 with a different set of clusters; the NYS module text still says 16, so this lesson uses the 16 to match the standard. Check the state's current guidance once a year.]
- Sal's own materials: the Brentwood packet "Career Clusters Unlocked: Explore 16 Career Super-Groups" (Unit 2 Career Exploration, April 2026). The 16-cluster table with example jobs and the Yes, Maybe, No column are its Activity 1, rebuilt as a wall walk. The scramble puzzle is dropped.

Teacher notes

- If the trading window runs long, shorten the walk to 12 posters (skip 7, 12, 13, and 16, which are the ones students mark No most) and say so before the timer starts. Never cut Step 4; the top three is what tomorrow needs.
- Common mistake: students put doctor, nurse, and veterinarian together. Use the veterinarian question in Step 3 to show that the cluster is about the work setting and the knowledge, not the white coat.
- The walk gets loud. Use the reset cue at the halfway point once, on purpose, so it stays a working sound and not a hallway sound.
- The eight FACS-related posters on a different color do the teaching. Wait for a student to notice and ask; do not announce it.
- Lesson 2.2 gives each student two letters, not three (the lesson's note says two is enough at this age). The poster line "interest letters that often fit" uses the same six letters (R, I, A, S, E, C). *[Sal: if Lesson 2.2 ends up using a different inventory, change the letters on the posters, not the lesson.]*