



JA Elementary School Programs JA Our Nation® Helpful Hints

Preparation Checklist:

- Thoroughly read your Guide for Volunteers and Teachers. Spend time planning your sessions and think about relevant stories you can share with students.
- Separate and organize all materials for your sessions into five separate folders, one for each session.
- Visit the online training resources for additional tips: <https://www.jaum.org/volunteer/training-materials/>
- Obtain a class roster to complete table tents and certificates in advance; consider using the [Customizable Program Certificates](#) to complete in preparation for Session 5.
- If you plan to bring something to hand out to the students, have the item “pre-approved” by the teacher. Most schools are peanut-free and may have other food restrictions as well.

Session 1: JA Our Nation: Free to Choose Your Work or Business

Helpful Hints

- You are not required to complete the pre-and post-test as indicated in the Volunteer Guidebook unless your teacher would like to collect the information for his/her purposes. JAUM does not collect this information unless we notify you differently.
- Bring pictures for examples of successful people.
- Consider bringing an example of your company’s logo to highlight the importance of branding. You may also want to bring in logos from other nationally/locally recognized businesses that the students would relate to.
- Emphasize to students during the activity they are not really selling their items, this is just a game.
- During the activity give the students an extra sticky note to write the item down they would buy.

Personal Stories

- Talk about how your company started and the things your company does that fosters competition to get customers in your business.

Potential Challenge

- With all the students up and moving around the room they can get pretty loud. Consider telling the students they are secret shoppers and they do not want anyone else to know what item they are buying.

Session 2: JA Our Nation: Innovation Nation

Helpful Hints

- Separate all of the innovation cards before you get to class.
- Write on the board the 3 things the students should be doing in their groups with their innovation cards (define the problem, brainstorm a solution, and formulate an idea to develop).

Personal Stories

- Tell the students about a time you were able to use innovative thinking at work and enhance a product or service.

Potential Challenge

- You may need to pick and choose the innovations you talk about to ensure you have enough time to do the activity.
- Some groups will be done with their innovation before the rest. Have them begin thinking of other products they use on a regular basis and how they could be changed.

Session 3: JA Our Nation: Career Quest

Helpful Hints

- Turn “name as many video game systems as you can” into a game. Break students into groups and give them 60 seconds to write down as many video game systems as they can think of. See which group thought of the most and list them on the board. Add any additional ones from other teams.
- During the activity, instead of placing the career cluster trading cards around the room and having the students move from card to card, have the students sit in groups and then pass the cards.

Personal Stories

- Talk about the specific skills people possess and how that propels your company forward. If someone has a very unique skill or idea, how can this help your company overall? For instance, employees who are exceptional at designing websites could increase your company’s visibility; people who have excellent communication skills are great with dealing with customers; etc.

Potential Challenge

- The students may not be able to get through all of the career cluster trading cards. Instead of focusing on them looking at every single career cluster trading card, have them get through as many as times allows.

Session 4: JA Our Nation: Get and Keep the Job

Helpful Hints

- Bring an example of your resume (with personal info deleted, like home address) to share with the students. Discuss how you chose to include the skills you listed.
- Many students will not know what volunteer experience is. Talk about JA being a volunteer experience, along with other places you may volunteer and the importance of this.

Personal Stories

- Tell a story about a time where soft skills came into play while you were at work and the importance of them.

Potential Challenge

- Before students begin playing the game, be sure to emphasize that the students need to write down their work-readiness skill on the inside of their flier while they are keeping track of their points.

Session 5: JA Our Nation: Global Connections

Helpful Hints

- Keep one of the mystery puzzle card sheets whole to show students an example of what it will look like once they have completed the activity.
- If you have enough puzzle cards, keep one for yourself and do not tell the students until the end to demonstrate the impact it has on a product if one country decides not to do their job.

Personal Stories

- Explain how the internet presents opportunities *and* challenges for your company.
- Talk about people around the world that you interact with and why that is beneficial to your company.
- Talk about the importance of team work; if one country decided not to fulfill their commitment the product wouldn't be complete.

Potential Challenges

- Some groups will be done quicker than other groups. Once they have completed their puzzle have them begin talking about their product.

Graduation

- Make this time special. Call the students up one-at-a-time to receive their certificates and have other students provide applause. Teach them to shake your hand properly (no 'limp fish' or 'super squeezers') and to shake with the right hand while accepting the certificate with the left.
- If you brought in an edible treat, ask the teacher if they can eat it right away. Also, allow time for them to finish the snack during the JA session time.