



Teacher Work Sample

Financial Services I: 10th – 12th Grades

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Contextual Factors

Barren County is located in South Central Kentucky, and is home to 38,033 residents (2000 Census). The population is primarily Caucasian (94.8%), with 3.9% being African-American, and 1.2% Hispanic (2005 Census estimate). Of the persons 25 years and older, 69.5% are high school graduates, with 11.1% of these individuals holding Bachelor's degrees or higher. The median household income in 2003 was \$32,837, and 15.3% of the residents are reported to be living below the poverty level.

Barren County High School is situated in the county seat of Glasgow, where music, history, art, and cultural activities flourish. The school has an enrollment of 1,343 students with the following ethnic percentages: 98% Caucasian, 1% African-American, and 1% other nationalities. One hundred and forty-seven students are enrolled in the ECE program and 38% of the student body receives free or reduced lunch. There is a teacher to student ratio of 17:1, and a student to computer ratio of 6:1. Barren County's graduation rate (82.3%) exceeds that of the state percentage of 81.8%. Of those graduating high school, 45.6% transition to college, 6% attend technical school, and 35.9% enter the workforce.

The students at Barren County High School benefit from a rigorous and relevant Tech Prep program, made successful by a visionary staff of teachers and administrators, and additional monetary funding through TEDS/Carl Perkins grants. Through a multitude of hands-on training experiences, Barren County's Tech Prep curriculum gives students the opportunity to take classes centered on their pre-college or technical area of study, while learning business practices and technical skills needed to be successful in the working world. In addition, the school has partnered with several colleges to offer students credits toward their post-secondary education

through a “dual college credit program.” Two hundred students currently participate in this program.

Students at Barren County High are able to apply their skills in real life situations by participating in COOP job placements, managing *Trojan Crossroads* - an in-school store, and operating Trojan Trust - the in-house bank supported by a community branch of BB&T. They also design and publish many flyers, brochures and other advertisements which are utilized throughout the district. Many students at Barren County High also benefit from involvement in co-curriculum organizations, including FBLA, where students have held offices at the state level and placed during competitions nationally.

The Financial Services I class consists of 12 Caucasian students: two sophomores, seven juniors and three seniors. There are only two male students in the class. Generally, the students are quiet and even-tempered, with the exception of one female who often seeks opportunities to verbally express her negative viewpoints regarding life, school and society. They often appear unmotivated and uninterested. Although none of the students possess IEP's, I have observed one female student who requires written/visual illustrations to help her understand complex ideas.

Currently, 33% of the students have an A average in the class, 50% have a B average, and 17% have a C average. A verbal evaluation revealed that five of the students are visual learners, four prefer instruction with kinesthetic opportunities, and the remaining five benefit from an auditory-based instructional method. As my sample will later reveal, all of these learning methods will be integrated into the plan for instruction.

While 100% of the students in this class plan to attend a college after high school, most appear firmly rooted in their rural communities. Some have never left the state or flown on an airplane. Their families are farmers, manufacturing workers or retail employees in the local area.

Considering these factors, I will plan a variety of lessons that challenge the students to “think outside the box,” requiring them to research and evaluate a broader range of career fields to aid them in planning for future career goals.

Instruction for this class takes place in a lab where 30 computers line three of the four walls (Appendix A). Every Windows XP workstation contains Microsoft Office, is networked and internet ready, and equipped with a CDROM drive. There are two network printers available for use, one laser and one color laser. In addition, three tables are arranged in the middle of the room to allow for table-work. The instructor’s workstation is connected to an overhead projector which will be beneficial in both instruction and modeling of student work. Having immediate access to this technology will ensure endless possibilities in the classroom.

Learning Goals

All of the students in this class have completed classes in keyboarding and are experienced in the Microsoft Word application. This unit will utilize their current knowledge of these areas, while requiring them to expand upon their skills to produce professional business documents.

During the career preparation unit, students will apply goals that relate to real-life applications. Accordingly, the unit will serve a twofold purpose: 1. it will prepare students for an “employment” position in the school-based bank, *Trojan Trust*; and 2. it will teach students how to prepare the necessary career documents required to effectively seek employment in a competitive job market.

The following table outlines the three primary goals associated with the career preparation unit for Financial Services I. The corresponding learning types and levels, as defined by Bloom’s Taxonomy, are outlined, as well.

Table 1.

Goal#	Learning Goal Defined	Type	Level
1	Examine career choices through the use of technology	Cognitive	Comprehension Evaluation
2	Create professional electronic products (resume, cover letter, thank you letter & envelope) for employment and post-secondary opportunities	Cognitive	Synthesis
3	Demonstrate verbal and non-verbal communication techniques in an employment interview	Affective	Responding

Goal 1 is clearly aligned with Kentucky’s Learning Goals and Academic Expectations **AE 2.36**: “*Students use strategies for choosing and preparing for a career,*” and remains compliant with the practical living standard **PL-HS-4.1.5**: “*Students will analyze and evaluate a variety of resources...that could be used to determine advantages and disadvantages...of various occupations.*” Goal 1 is appropriate for this unit, because it exposes students to various internet resources, enabling them to become actively engaged in seeking out facets of the career field in which they are interested. This goal is *cognitive*; it requires students to *comprehend* the information that is presented, and then further *evaluate* the facts, to see if their defined living standards correspond with their career field choice, higher educational goals, compensation, benefits, etc.

Goal 2 prepares students to work in the school bank through career preparation activities where they develop a resume, and compose a cover letter, a thank you letter, and produce an envelope. These activities require students to apply their new knowledge to produce a real-world product (*cognitive: synthesis*) which will be necessary for employment. This goal also requires students to apply their knowledge across various content areas - particularly in language arts,

where it is appropriately aligned with Kentucky Academic Expectation **AE 1.11**, “*Students write using appropriate forms, conventions, and styles to communicate ideas and information to different audiences for different purposes.*” This goal also addresses **AE 2.38**, “*Students demonstrate skills such as interviewing, writing resumes, and completing applications that are needed to be accepted into college or other postsecondary training or to get a job.*”

Because communication encompasses all areas of the curriculum, **Goal 3** integrates this content by teaching students how to use and recognize verbal and non-verbal communication cues as it relates to the interview process. Students will actively apply their new knowledge as they are interviewed - prior to employment at Trojan Trust - by an employee from the sponsoring bank, BB&T (*affective: responding*). Bank employees will offer an assessment of the students’ interview skills by completing an interview rubric for each interviewee (Appendix B). These essential skills are supported through Kentucky Academic Expectation **AE 1.12**: “*Students speak using appropriate forms, conventions, and styles to communicate ideas and information to different audiences for different purposes.*” Goal 3 is also reinforced nationally, through the National Business Education Association Standard, **Communication IV:4**, where students “*participate in a variety of interview rehearsals, both as an interviewer and an interviewee.*”

In addition, **Goals 1, 2 and 3** are all appropriately aligned with **PL-HS-4.3.3**, “*Students will explain and apply skills that are used to seek, obtain, and change jobs/careers and post-secondary opportunities: conduct a job search, writing letters, networking, completing an application, securing a letter of reference, preparing a resume, applying interview techniques...*”

This is the culminating standard that embraces the career portfolio in its entirety. As we are aware, seeking a job is only part of the post-high school experience. Preparing for college, choosing a career, or seeking to change careers as one matures, requires much planning and

preparation. This unit will provide students with the tools they need to put their best foot forward. All three of these goals and their corresponding state and national standards are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2.
SUMMARY: Goal/Standard Alignment

Learning Goal		Connection/Standard	
1	Examine Career Choices	AE 2.36	Students use strategies for choosing and preparing for a career.
		PL-HS-4.1.5	Students will analyze and evaluate a variety of resources (e.g., Internet, print materials, guest speakers, mentors) that could be used to determine advantages and disadvantages (e.g., preparation, salary, benefits, demands of job, location, work environment) of various occupations.
2	Create Professional Documents	AE 1.11	Students write using appropriate forms, conventions, and styles to communicate ideas and information to different audiences for different purposes.
		AE 2.38	Students demonstrate skills such as interviewing, writing resumes, and completing applications that are needed to be accepted into college or other postsecondary training or to get a job.
3	Demonstrate Verbal/Non-Verbal Communication Techniques	AE 1.12	Students speak using appropriate forms, conventions and styles to communicate ideas and information to different audiences for different purposes.
		NBEA Communication IV:4	Participate in a variety of interview rehearsals, both as an interviewer and as an interviewee.
1, 2, 3	→	PL-HS-4.3.3	<p>Students will explain and apply skills that are used to seek, obtain, and change jobs/careers and postsecondary opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conducting a job search • writing letters • networking • completing an application • securing a letter of reference • preparing a résumé • applying interview techniques (e.g., learn about employer/job, questions to ask, materials to take, answers to questions you may be asked, verbal and nonverbal communication) • using proper procedures when changing jobs (e.g., give advance notice, write a letter of resignation)

Assessment Plan

Summary of Pre and Post-Assessment: Both the pre and post-assessments (*Appendix B*) will be identical in format and composition. The assessment is designed to subjectively measure student's knowledge of the career portfolio. The outcome of the pre-assessment will help determine the process for additional instructional planning and/or modifications.

The pre and post-assessment document contains 26 items consisting of ten true/false, five matching, and nine multiple choice questions. In addition, there are two open-response questions, which will be evaluated, but will not be included in the summary data. Learning goals 1-3 are appropriately aligned with the content of the assessment and these alignments are outlined in the *Assessment Plan (Table 3)* that follows. Additional test taking time will be granted to those students in need.

Formative: Students will be assessed formally throughout this unit as they complete each piece of their career portfolio. The first assessment will be based up completion of the personal career interest survey and an online career research session. Students who have no desired career direction will benefit from one-on-one discussions regarding career direction. A PowerPoint presentation will be developed by each student and they will present their findings to the class. This presentation will be graded based upon a presentation rubric.

The largest portion of formative assessments will be based upon the students' performance-based pieces (resume, cover letter, thank you letter and envelope). Rubrics will guide the students in developing each portfolio element, and will be used to score student work upon completion. The students will also be assessed formally (*Rubric, Appendix B*) by a BB&T employee after they complete a job interview. Informal assessment will take place throughout

the unit for daily participation, group participation, teamwork skills, and printed “rough draft” production pieces. Interpersonal growth should be exhibited throughout the learning process.

Summative: The subjective post-assessment will be identical to the pre-assessment. Through this method, learning outcome results can be evaluated through one-to-one comparisons, which will indicate exact areas where student strengths and weaknesses are evident. Students must achieve an 80% or higher on the post assessment for the unit to be considered a success.

Table 3.

Career Unit: Assessment Plan

Learning Goal	Assessment Type	Assessment Format	Adaptations
GOAL 1: Examine career choices through the use of technology	Pre-Assessment Questions 2, 4, 6, 7, 17, 19, 26	T/F, Multiple Choice, Matching, and Open Response	Additional time will be given to those who need it.
	Formative	Verbal Questioning Class Cooperation/Participation Career Research Packet (<i>Interest Inventory, Career Field Worksheet</i>)	One-on-one instruction will be provided to those who have no identification with career direction
	Summative/Post-Assessment Questions 2, 4, 6, 7, 17, 19, 26	PowerPoint Presentation - Rubric T/F, Multiple Choice, Matching, and Open Response	Additional time will be given to those who need it.
GOAL 2: Create professional electronic products (resume, cover letter, thank you letter & envelope) for employment and post-secondary opportunities	Pre-Assessment Questions 1, 3, 5, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 23, 24, 25	T/F, Multiple Choice, Matching, and Open Response	Additional time will be given to those who need it.
	Formative	Rough Drafts Class Cooperation/Participation	Extra time provided for those students who type at a slower speed
	Summative	Production Pieces (<i>resume, cover letter, thank you letter, and envelope</i>) - Rubrics	Extra time provided for those students who type at a slower speed
	Post-Assessment Questions 1, 3, 5, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 23, 24, 25	T/F, Multiple Choice, Matching, and Open Response	Additional time will be given to those who need it.
GOAL 3: Demonstrate verbal and non-verbal communication techniques in an employment interview	Pre-Assessment Questions 8, 9, 10, 14, 18, 20, 21, 22	T/F, Multiple Choice, Matching, and Open Response	Additional time will be given to those who need it.
	Formative	Mock Interviews w/peers - Participation	
	Summative	Formal Interview w/BB&T employee - Rubric	FRC to help w/interview appropriate attire
	Post-Assessment Questions 8, 9, 10, 14, 18, 20, 21, 22	T/F, Multiple Choice, Matching, and Open Response	Additional time will be given to those who need it.

Design for Instruction

Results of Pre-Assessment:

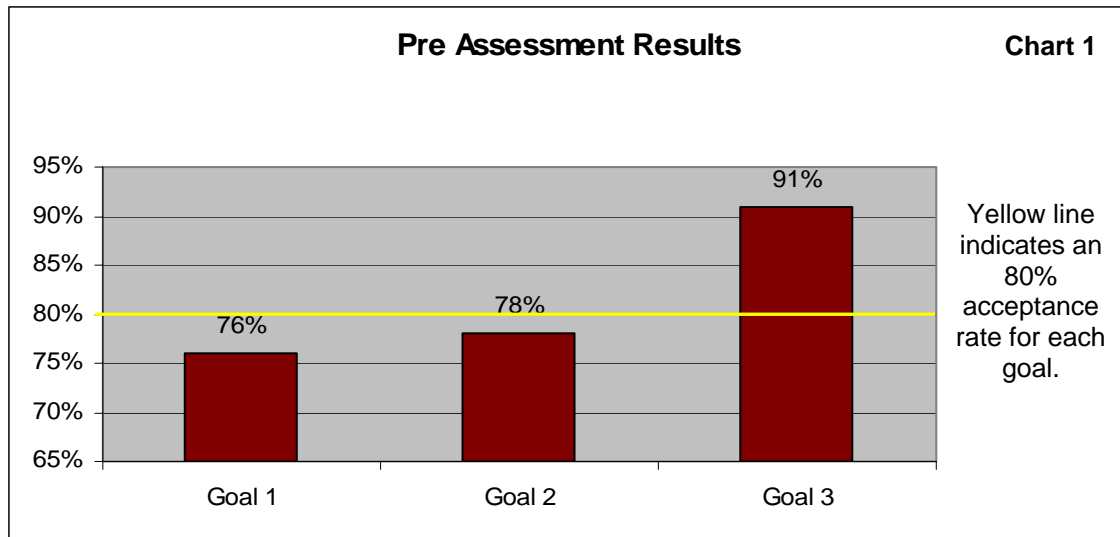
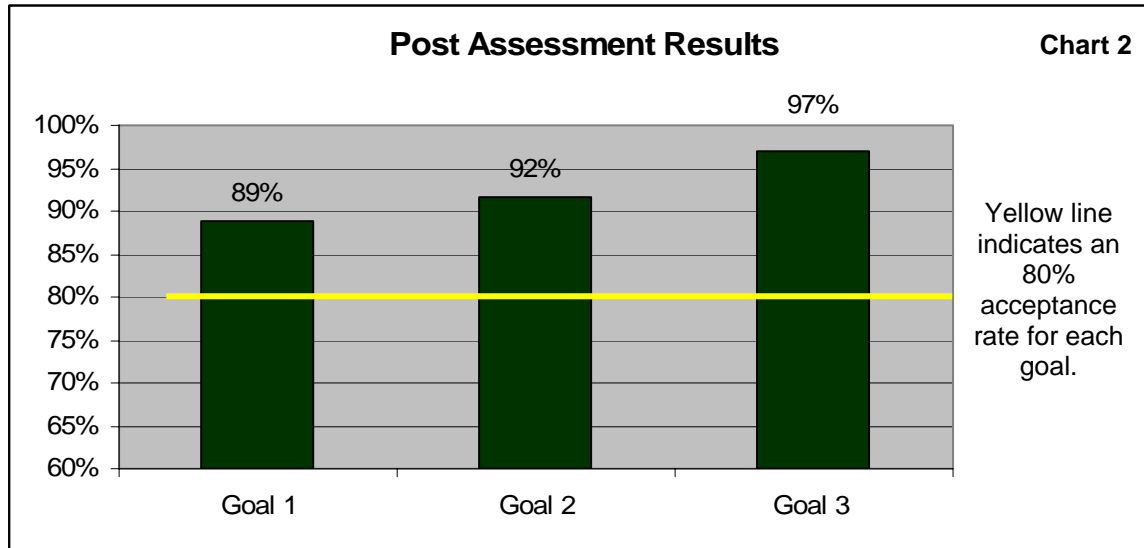


Chart 1, above, reveals the cumulative results from the pre-assessment. It concludes that students did not meet the 80% acceptance rate for two of the three goals. Those being Goals 1 and 2, where there was a difference of in student achievement of two percent. The data also reveals that 100% of the students missed *at least* one question on the exam related to Goal 2 (*Table 4, Appendix A*). As a result, the greatest amount of instruction will be devoted to these two goal areas. The students' achievement for Goal 3 was 91%, 11% above the 80% acceptance rate. A strong understanding of the content area is recognized for this instructional goal. As a result, a lesser amount of instructional time will be devoted to this goal.

Results of Post-Assessment:

Achievement gains were made by the students for all three learning goals (*Chart 2*). The post-test results revealed that the students showed the greatest improvement for Goal 2, which increased by 14% over the pre-test results. This increase was probably due to the fact that the greatest amount of instructional time was spent on this goal and students had more production

activities to complete for this goal than any other. The amount of time devoted to hands-on learning most likely contributed to this increase in achievement. There was an overall increase in test results for Goals 1 and 3 by 13% and 6%, respectively.



Unit Overview: This unit will prepare the Financial Services I students with the real-life skills necessary to obtain an employment position within the school bank, Trojan Trust. Upon completion of this unit, the students will have also learned a variety of strategies and completed the appropriate documents necessary to obtain employment for present and post-secondary opportunities. The primary goals for this unit are summarized as follows: Goal 1 -Examine various careers, Goal 2 -Create employment documents, and Goal 3 -Participate in an employment interview. An overview of this unit and the daily activities schedules are further presented in Table 6.

Table 6.

Career Unit Overview: Daily Activities Schedule

Day	Goal(s) Addressed	Essential Question	Activities
Day 1	1	“How do we decide upon a career path?”	Pre-Assessment Exam Unit Introduction Personality Assessment: Paper Exam Internet Research Activity: Career of Choice
Day 2	1, 2	“What is a career portfolio?”	Students create mini PowerPoint presentations Discussion: Career portfolio components Handout: <i>Resume Action Words</i> Discussion of Formatting Techniques: Resume Students <i>begin</i> drafting resume
Day 3	2	“What business ethics are involved in writing a resume and cover letter?”	PowerPoint presentations Students <i>continue</i> drafting resume Business Letter Examples/Handouts Formatting Techniques: Cover Letter Students <i>begin</i> drafting cover letter
Day 4	2, 3	“How can you best prepare for questions that might be asked in an interview?”	PowerPoint presentations Students <i>continue</i> drafting cover letter Handouts: <i>Ace the Interview, Interview Guidelines</i> Role Play: Mock Interview Questions Interview Question Assignment Resume Draft:: DUE
Day 5	2, 3	“Does it really make a difference how you dress for an interview?”	Dress Rehearsal - What to wear to an interview Handout: <i>What Should I Wear to the Interview?</i> Cover Letter Draft: DUE Interview Questions: DUE
Day 6	2	“How do ethics apply when completing a job application?”	Students complete an application for BB&T bank interview FINAL DRAFTS due for resumes and/or cover letters
Day 7	3	“What is your greatest weakness?”	Interviews (conducted by BB&T staff)
Day 8	2	“Why is it important to send a thank you letter to the person who interviewed you?”	Students compose thank you letter to interviewer Students complete envelopes to mail thank you letter Students use postage machine to apply postage to their envelopes.
Day 9	1, 2, 3	“What are your greatest leadership qualities? How can you put those qualities to work in your new position?”	Discussions regarding interviews Students positions announced for Trojan Trust employment Post-Assessment Review
Day 10	1, 2, 3	“Where can you improve, personally, so that you are better prepared for your next job search or career path?”	Post-Assessment

Activities: In keeping with the school's administration requests, daily *essential questions* will guide the day-to-day activities for this unit, while promoting the students' critical thinking skills for real-life situations. Students will be participatory in their learning experience through self-analysis, internet-based research, computer production assignments, group activities, role play, and active communication.

While of all of the activities in this unit are pertinent to planning for and obtaining employment, I consider the following three activities to hold the most importance: 1) *Students use PowerPoint to share their choice career with the class;* 2) *Students compose a resume;* 3) *Students participate in mock and real-life interview processes.*

Teaching students avenues for career exploration and discovery is crucial, as it takes them beyond what might be their pre-perspective of a career where they *just get a job*. I have chosen to have students research a career field and then in this activity, they will share their findings with the class through a PowerPoint presentation. I chose this activity for several reasons. First, it will require the students to *organize the information* that they obtained through research. Second, they will *utilize a presentation program* to display the information. And third, students will *apply verbal and non-verbal communication skills* as they discuss elements of their career field during the presentation. This activity applies to Goal 1, and students will be assessed using a rubric (*Appendix B*).

Students will also construct a resume using Microsoft Word. The resume is considered to be the most critical component of the career portfolio, as it is required for attainment of most all professional positions. This activity is directly aligned with Goal 2. Students will be formatively assessed as they submit rough drafts, and summatively assessed through a rubric (*Appendix B*) on the final resume draft.

Finally, students will take turns role playing as interviewer and interviewee to practice questions that might be presented in an interview. Between questions, student discussions will take place regarding variations to the question responses. This practice will better prepare students for their actual interview with the BB&T employee as they prepare to be hired into a position for the school bank. This activity is aligned with Goal 3 and students will be informally assessed based upon their participation during the interviewing and among peer discussion. In addition, when students are interviewed by BB&T management staff, they will be formally assessed by the interviewer using a rubric (*Appendix B*).

Instructional Decision Making

Modification 1: As students began composing their resumes, I realized that some students had a wealth of information to include, whereas others had very little to none. One particular student, a female, came to me early in the assignment. She has always been very quiet and timid in class. She does not socialize with peers in the room and has remained primarily to herself during most of the semester. I recently discovered that this student resides in a local home for girls through a foster care program, which might explain her timid behavior.

This student seemed quite overwhelmed regarding the resume project and appeared hopeless in getting started. I assured her that together, we would discuss the wonderful things that she had accomplished thus far in her life and organize them in such a way that they would be suitable for her resume. I began asking her some key questions about working, volunteering, school classes, grades, etc. in an effort to gain any information that might be appropriate for the assignment. It turned out that she had good grades, was enrolled in some classes that were beneficial to the banking job she wanted to obtain. In addition, she had in fact, held a job at a local fast food restaurant for a period of time. With this information on paper, I asked her to take

the notes we had just compiled and use them with the action verb list that I had supplied the class with earlier. We talked about her resume headings and decided upon the ones that would be best suited for the information we had gathered. The first draft was somewhat acceptable, but it needed organizing. So she printed and we polished. She printed again and we polished. The process proved to be successful and her sense of accomplishment could not be ignored; it was written in her smile when she handed in the final resume copy. I feel that this one-on-one coaching process was not only a rewarding experience for the student; it was a wonderful experience for me, as well.

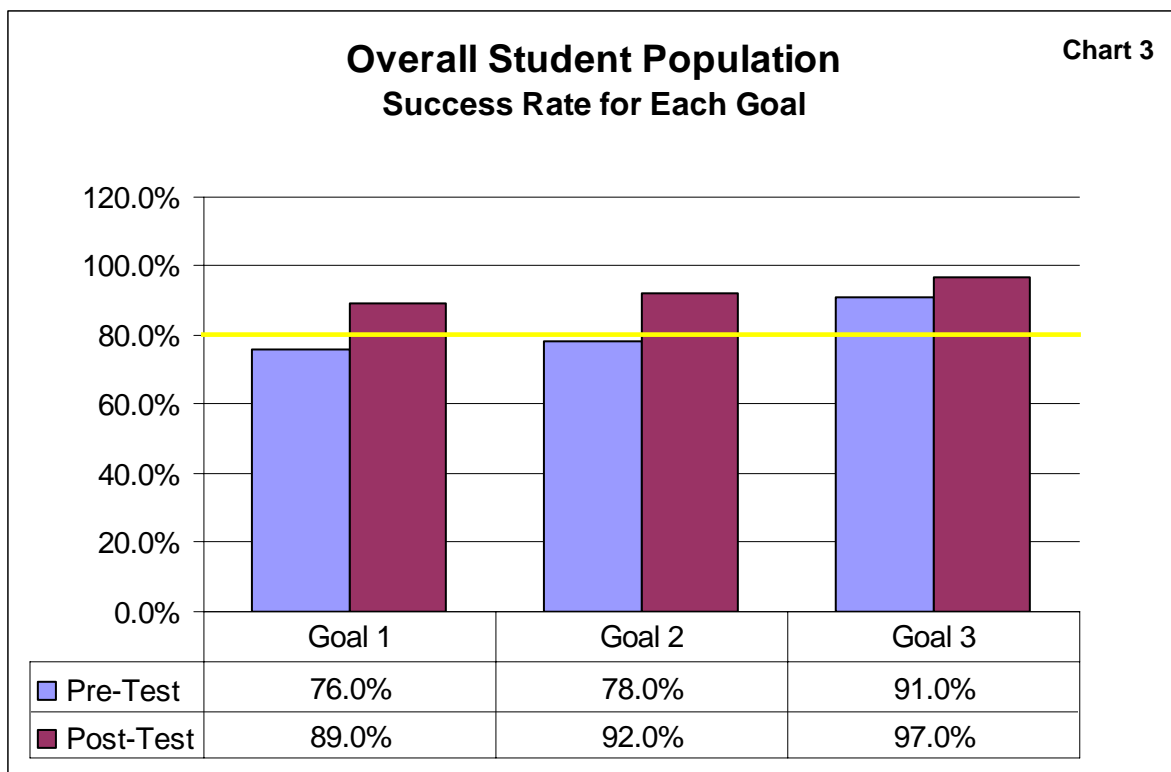
Modification 2: One of the male students in the class was out due to illness for four consecutive days. During this time, we covered many aspects of the career portfolio, both in lecture and in allotted class work production time. While I knew that the student possessed the motivation to catch up on what he missed, time was not on our side, as interviews were scheduled and the documents had to be completed and ready for the reviewer by the interview date.

Upon the student's return, I spoke with him one-on-one to talk about a "make up plan." I gave him all the resource materials that he missed while absent and reviewed the notes from our daily lessons with him. We decided that the only way for him to completely get all of his documents composed, edited, and finalized by the approaching deadline, was to either come into the classroom before or after school, or work on them at home (he has a computer at home). He came into the classroom over the next two mornings and worked until time to go to his first class. I was able to proofread his documents on screen which made the editing process flow much faster. The result of this accommodation, coupled with his willingness to achieve, resulted

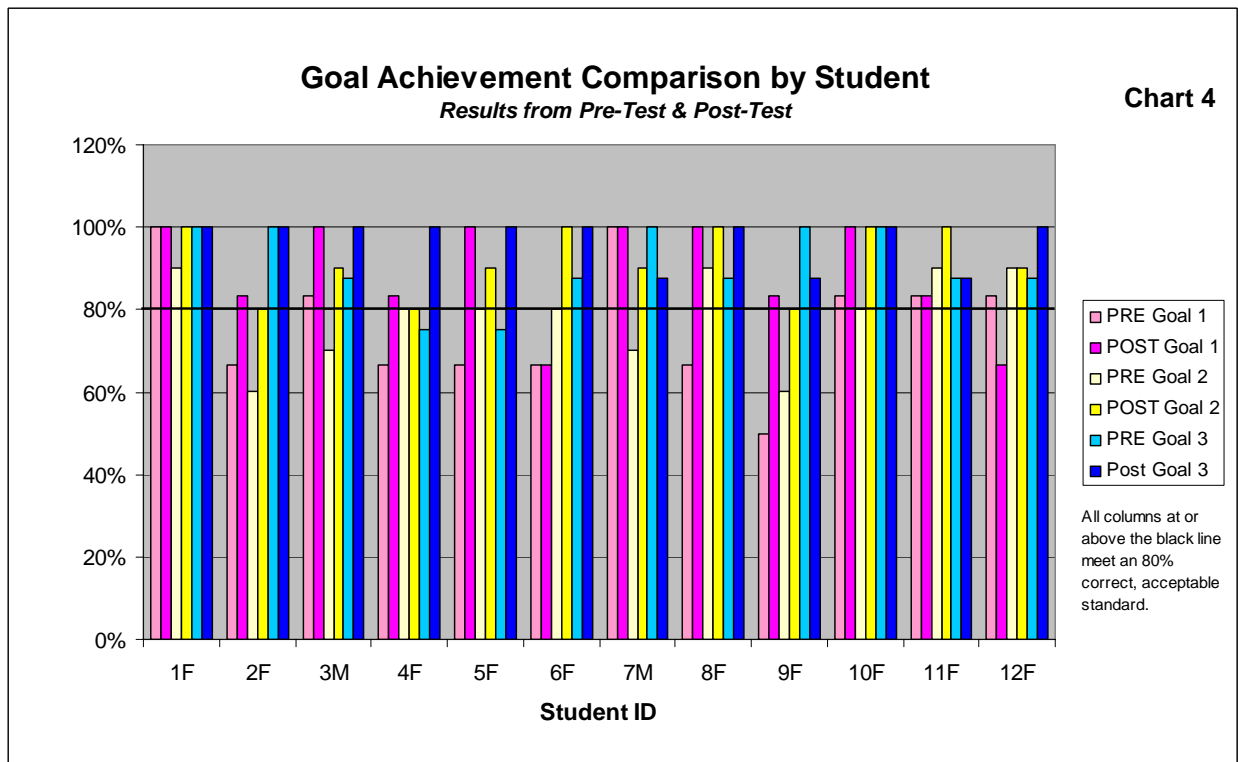
in the production of a lovely resume. In addition, his positive effort earned him the position Loan Officer in our school bank.

Analysis of Student Learning

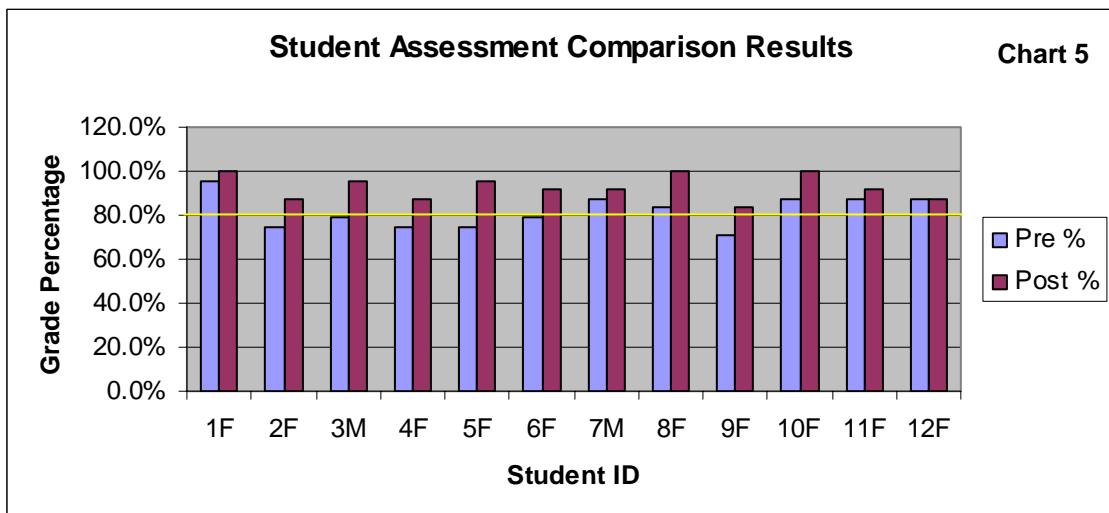
The students in this class increased their overall exam scores by an average of 11% over their pre-assessment results. The greatest increase was made for Goal 2, whereas the least amount of improvement was recognized for Goal 3 (which was already at a 91% achievement level). *Chart 3* further reveals the average increase in test achievement for each goal: Goal 1 - 13%, Goal 2 - 14%, and Goal 3 - 6%.



Tables 4 and 5 (*Appendix B*) give detailed data regarding individual student achievement data for the pre assessment and the post assessment, respectively. The following chart, Chart 4, provides a graphical representation of individual student achievement for each of the three goals.

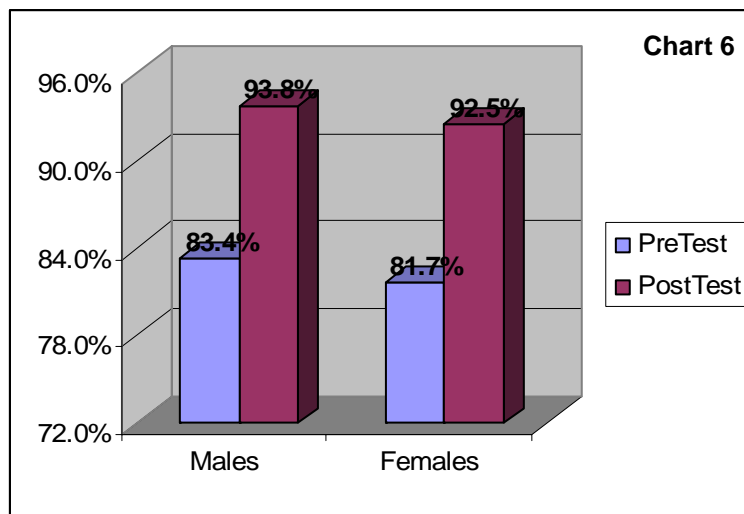


The following graph summarizes the results of the pre and post assessment results by individual student.



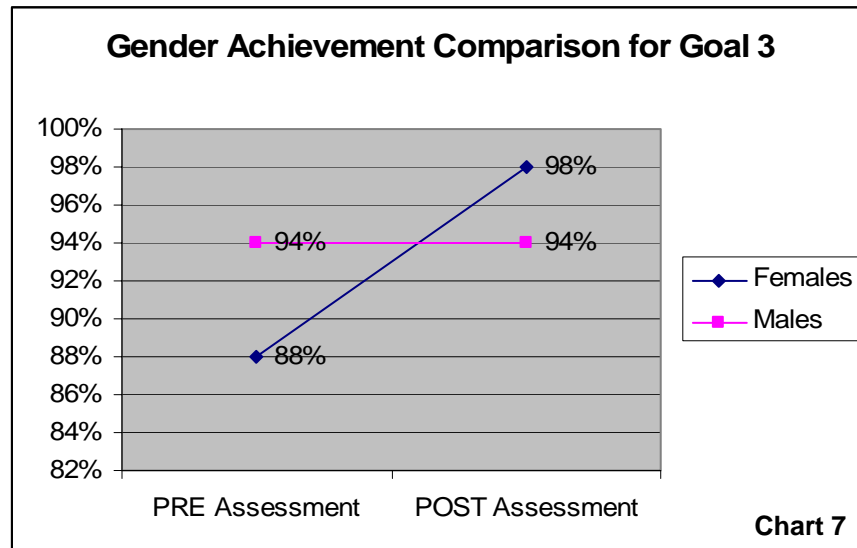
Further, *Chart 5* reveals that 50% of the class did not meet the 80% achievement goal for the pre-assessment. However, 100% of the students surpassed this goal on the post-assessment.

In *Chart 6* below, the male student results were compared with those of the female students and the data for the two subgroups proved to be very similar for gender based achievement. This comparison also revealed that the male students achieved higher on both the pre and post assessments by 1.7% and 1.3%, respectively. However, the female students had the greatest increase in their achievement by 10.8% (difference in pre and post assessment results), whereas the male students increased their achievement by 10.4%. Although the achievement difference was minimal at only .4%, the outcome average was most likely affected by the larger ratio of females to males (12:2) in the data set.



Goal 3 was chosen for analysis with a subgroup because it challenged the students to move out of their comfort zone during the activities. One of the most important activities for this goal was for the students participate in a real-life interview conducted by a BB&T bank employee. While some of the students appeared confident and up to the challenge, others were very nervous from the anticipation. The evaluation results for learning Goal 3, revealed that the

males did not increase their performance from the original rate of 94% (*Chart 7*). However, the females showed a 10% increase in their performance between the pre and post assessments, respectively.



The males in this class are confident young men. One is very bright, but talkative and boisterous. At times he appears overly confident – and his confidence is something that he is not afraid to boast about to others. In fact, after his interview, he decided to wear his dress shoes with a pair of rugged shorts. This was much to the dismay of the class, and he did not back down on his decision! The other male student is very military-like in his poise and walk, and he usually does not speak to others unless spoken to. He is also a very bright student, and his confidence is evident in his actions, not his words. The confidence displayed by both of these young men poised them appropriately in the interview setting; confident in, confident out. As a result, this factor probably contributed to the lack of increased achievement for Goal 3 on the assessments.

The females in the class vary greatly in their demeanor. Several are strictly business, two are chronic complainers with motivation issues, another almost refuses to speak, and few others

are friendly, but extremely shy. I noticed that Goal 3 seemed to be a great challenge for a few of the females, but they came back from their interviews seemingly reassured and possessed an increased confidence level regarding their achievement.

Two students, both female, were selected based upon their varied levels of performance, to be further evaluated for this sample. Their achievement averages for the pre-assessment, formative assessments, and post-assessments revealed that Student 1F achieved the highest in these areas and Student 9F progressed least toward all three of the learning goals in her work demonstration (*Appendix C*).

Both of these students are seniors and they both play on the girl's basketball team. Student 1F has a very energetic and outgoing personality. She is very neat, and keeps her work completely organized. She is very determined, and in fact, she earned a full scholarship for college to continue her education. In contrast, Student 9F is very reserved and quiet and has only spoken a few words in class during the entire semester. She is friendly and pleasant, but even though I have made it a point to try and motivate her, she prefers to remain almost silent for much of the class period. She, too, plans to continue her education through college.

Student 1F has an advantage over Student 9F. Student 1F has taken a Co-Op class where they also completed a career unit. This student achieved an average of 100% for two of the three of the goals on the pre assessment and 100% for three out of three goals on the post assessment. This student also scored very high on her production assignments (*Appendix C*).

Student 9F attained the 80% acceptable rate on the pre assessment for one of the three learning goals. However, the post assessment results for this student revealed that she exceeded the acceptable rate for all three of the learning goals, with an average score for each at 84%. I would equate her marginal score attainment for the learning goals to her lack of *quality* participation during discussions and group activities. She performed at an acceptable level, but *high* achievement does not appear to be her priority in the classroom setting. Despite the marginal achievement rate on her post assessment, this student performed well on her formative assessments in the form of production assignments (*Appendix C*).

Both of these students are fine young women who are capable of achieving great things in the future. Their overall success during this unit, in preparing a career portfolio, proved that they are now equipped with the tools necessary to choose a career field, prepare the necessary documents for obtaining employment, and participate in a successful interview with a perspective employer.

Reflection and Self-Evaluation

This unit proved to be a valuable learning experience for both the students and for me. The students gained valuable knowledge useful in career preparation, as they created documents that necessary for successful employment and participated in a real-life interviewing experience with an area business person. The culminating result of their efforts earned them a position in the school bank, Trojan Trust.

Personally, this experience was valuable for me because I planned and presented an entire unit, and then evaluated the overall success of the students through the compilation of actual numerical data. While I realized during the onset of the lesson that skill levels and abilities

would be varied for each goal, the pre- and post-assessments offered numerical data proof of the overall achievement variances. In addition, this unit allowed me to employ a variety of projects and teaching strategies including student self-analysis, one-on-one mentoring, student group activities, and collaboration with professionals in the banking sector in an effort to bring real-world experiences into the classroom.

The pre and post assessments revealed improvement by the students for all three of the learning goals, and the greatest success was achieved by the students for learning goal three, where students *demonstrated verbal and non-verbal communication techniques in an employment interview*. I believe this success was achieved because multiple teaching strategies were used to prepare students. We analyzed questions that could be asked by the interviewer and possible questions that the interviewee might ask. The students also wrote their own possible answers to these questions. In addition, they participated in mock interviews where the students took on management and then employee roles. In addition, I believe that the success was due to the confidence displayed by the majority of the students in the class. There are a few who are introverted, but in general, their confidence levels before and after the interviews were amazing to observe.

Learning Goal 1, where students examined career choices through the use of technology, proved to be least successful for the students. Activities for this learning goal required students to take a personal interest survey and then research possible career choices. Because this was the first activity for the unit and several students were out due to illness, I recall that the students in class were not very enthusiastic about getting started. One student, in particular, was very unhappy that his interest survey did not reveal anything about his current preferred career goals. His disappointment was expressed aloud and I'm afraid that it hindered the others outlook, as well. In

addition, I believe that my teaching method was not solid and I was not strong in my strategies for this goal. I knew that this unit was critical for my teacher work sample and I could only think about writing the paper at the end! If I teach this lesson again, I would use a different personal interest survey. The one that I used was somewhat confusing, and again, the outcomes really did not match what the students *really* want to do post college. I would also wait to start the lesson when almost all of the students are present. The student absences made it hard for everyone to be “on the same page” as we started the unit.

In retrospect, this was a good unit. However, I believe that there are two areas where I can improve before I teach this unit again. First, I see a need to expand the time frame for this unit. I’ve noticed that I try to cram too many assignments into time frames that are not feasible at times. The students were able to finish their portfolios in time for the interviews, but they were really rushed. Good time management is a critical factor in planning and delivering lessons and ten days for this unit was truly not enough time. Through student teaching, I have already begun to have a better sense of how much time to allow for successful student completion. In addition, I will better utilize my personal planner to keep me on track.

The second area where I can improve my performance is in making suggestions on student work. It is imperative that I utilize a form of questioning, rather than outwardly helping the student by offering words, phrases, etc. to include in a document. To improve in this area, I will begin practicing this technique as I grade student papers for all subjects. Even on test papers, if the answer is not exactly right, I will write critical questions on the paper to get the student thinking about how they could have better responded to the question at hand.