

Transitions Supports Community Participation

How does community participation lead to a job?

Throughout *The Transitions Curriculum*, lessons are provided to encourage community participation. This is built into all lessons in "Connecting Activities" with activities to connect the student to home and family, the high school campus, the community, businesses and potential employers.

Additionally, the Curriculum provides a large number of lessons that guide the student to directly access, interact and participate with the community. The "Preparation Unit" which serves as an introduction to each Volume, includes a lesson on Volunteering. In this lesson, students learn about volunteering, participate in and complete a report about a volunteer experience and gain valuable experience and connections to potential future employers.

STEP 7: Connecting Activity

Students interview an adult on campus by asking the questions on the **Career Survey** form. Complete the form and report information to the class. Use class time for the interview, if needed, so that everyone has an opportunity to complete the assignment.

Students use the Internet to find and bring links to five websites that have information about careers in which they are interested.

7 Learn the Benefits of Volunteering

TRANSITION OBJECTIVE

Students will learn the importance and benefits of volunteering in the community and will begin planning their own volunteer experiences.

RELEVANCE TO SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION

The service project gives students an opportunity to volunteer in their community, providing a valuable service to the community and to those in need. It also gives students an opportunity to build job skills. Contributing in this way will encourage students to develop a commitment to make a difference.

INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE

- ❑ **STEP 1: Update Journal**
When I help someone do something, I feel . . .

- ❑ **STEP 2: Convene Roundtable**
"I feel needed by others when I _____."

- ❑ **STEP 3: Advance Organizer**
"Today we are going to learn about volunteering here at school or in the community and begin to plan a volunteer activity."

- ❑ **STEP 4: Activity - 20 Minutes**
Ask students if they know what it means to be a volunteer. Describe volunteers who are called school safety patrols. These volunteers help students cross streets near schools. Ask for other examples of other volunteers and have a short discussion. Next, read or have students take turns reading the story, **Why Volunteer?**
After hearing the story **Why Volunteer?** about a character named Cathy, ask the following questions: How did her volunteer work affect the people Cathy was helping? How did the volunteer work affect Cathy? Is volunteer work important? Why? Is it important for you? Why?

- ❑ **STEP 5: Activity - 25 Minutes**
Explain that the class will complete a service project. The service project students will

complete is a 15-hour volunteer assignment. Students will choose an assignment and keep a log of their experiences. Throughout the semester, students will report on their volunteer experiences. At the end of the semester, students will give a class report describing their volunteer experiences.

Go over each part of the **Making a Better World** worksheet as you explain the assignment. Assure the students that they will receive whatever help they need to make this a successful experience. Call potential volunteer sites (non-profit) for information about volunteering.



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LESSON 7 Learn the Benefits of Volunteering

PREPARATION UNIT



- ❑ **STEP 6: Evaluate Outcomes**
One example of a volunteer project is "_____."

- ❑ **STEP 7: Connecting Activity**
Students will take the **Making a Better World** worksheet and **Permission Letter** home to read with their parents and return it to school, signed. Invite a person from a volunteer center in your city to speak to the class.

KEY WORDS

volunteer	benefit	opportunity	giving
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MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

- Student Handouts: **Why Volunteer?**, page 8; **Making a Better World**, page 9; **Permission Letter**, Appendix A, page A4.
- Go over the service project with your administrator for permission and support.
- Complete the **Permission Letter** and get administrative support.
- Prepare to discuss the volunteer service project for each student.

SCANS FOUNDATION SKILLS

- Basic Academic Skills: Reading, Listening
- Thinking Skills: Decision Making
- Personal Qualities: Responsibility, Sociability

NOTES

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Scope & Sequence

How is the Core Curriculum infused into *The Transitions Curriculum*?

The Transitions Curriculum responds to the current school reform movement, which emphasizes integration of core subjects throughout every aspect of the school curriculum. Core academic content is infused into lessons through real-world relevant activities. Attention must be placed on infusing additional core curricular content into *The Transitions Curriculum* lessons and activities as much as possible.

It is also important to help students understand the relationship between the core academic skills they are learning and their application to real life through contextual learning. We want students to know that they are learning core academic skills. Their belief in the usefulness and relevance of the curriculum will keep them in school, which is exactly where they need to be.

How are the SCANS Foundation Skills infused into the Curriculum?

As mentioned earlier, the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) defined the skills a young person must know in order "to hold a decent job and earn a decent living." This report, "What Work Requires of Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000," reflects the business community's desire for education to focus on skills necessary for success in the world of work. One section of the report describes three foundation skills and five competencies needed for a productive, full and satisfying life. According to the SCANS report, all eight of these skills and competencies must be an integral part of every young person's school life.



A *Scope and Sequence* matrix is located at the beginning of each unit. Twelve matrices have been developed for *The Transitions Curriculum*, with a separate matrix for each of the four units in *Personal Management*, *Career Management* and *Life Management*. The matrices provide a graphic display of the specific SCANS foundation skills that are included in each *Transitions Curriculum* lesson, according to the content and activities of the lesson.

Natural overlap occurs between the SCANS foundation skills and core subjects in the lessons and on the matrix because employers, as well as educators, are concerned about the academic, thinking and personal qualities of youth. This overlap serves to emphasize the importance of equipping students with the strongest foundation possible before they leave school. SCANS foundation skills are clustered into three areas: basic skills, thinking skills and personal qualities. Each area contains a set of specific skills as defined below:

Basic Academic Skills: Reads, writes, performs mathematical operations, listens and speaks

- Reading—locates, understands and interprets written information in prose and in documents, such as manuals, graphs and schedules
- Writing—communicates thoughts, ideas, information and messages in writing; and creates documents, such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs and flow charts
- Arithmetic/Mathematics—performs basic computations and approaches to practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques
- Listening—receives, attends to, interprets and responds to verbal messages and other cues
- Speaking—organizes ideas and communicates orally

Thinking Skills: Thinks creatively, makes decisions, solves problems, visualizes, knows how to learn and reason

- Creative Thinking—generates new ideas
- Decision Making—specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks and evaluates and chooses best alternative
- Problem Solving—recognizes problems and devises and implements plan of action
- Visualizing—organizes and processes symbols, pictures, graphs, objects and other information
- Knowing How to Learn—uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills
- Reasoning—discovers a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or more objects and applies it in solving a problem

Personal Qualities: Displays responsibility, self-esteem, integrity, sociability, self-management and honesty

- Responsibility—exerts a high level of effort and perseveres toward goal attainment
- Self-Esteem—believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view of self
- Sociability—demonstrates understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy and politeness in group settings
- Self-Management—assesses self-accurately, sets personal goals, monitors progress and exhibits self-control
- Integrity/Honesty—can be trusted, understands the impact of violating societal values and beliefs, chooses ethical courses of action

SCANS Competencies have been identified as critical for success in the workplace of today. The five competencies are not identified specifically in the SCANS foundation skills section of the lessons or on the *Scope & Sequence* matrices. However, these SCANS Workplace competencies are infused into activities throughout the entire *Transitions Curriculum*. Any opportunity to further strengthen these competencies will be beneficial to the students.

The SCANS Competencies are:

- Identifying, organizing, planning and allocating resources
- Working with others
- Acquiring and using information
- Understanding systems and complex interrelationships
- Working with a variety of technology

How are Critical and Higher Order Thinking Skills incorporated into Transitions?

Benjamin Bloom's six-level system continues to be a very helpful framework for structuring goals, questions and activities and differentiating instructional expectations within the classroom. According to Bloom's hierarchy, students approach new learning at the lower levels of the system, knowledge and comprehension. Once the informational base is founded, the student can be challenged to move to the higher levels of application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Although all teachers do teach thinking skills, a large part of classroom instruction and testing is geared to the lower levels of Bloom's system. Learning facts and memorizing information is a start, but are not enough. Our task is to equip our students for a world changing so rapidly that we cannot even imagine what they will need to know.

The teachers can use Bloom's framework to challenge students and thus increase the relevance, generalizability and retention of the instructional content. "Develop Thinking Skills through Effective Questioning" (Figure 1) and "Bloom's Levels in the Cognitive Domain" (Figure 2) are guides that may help utilize higher-order thinking skills in the classroom.

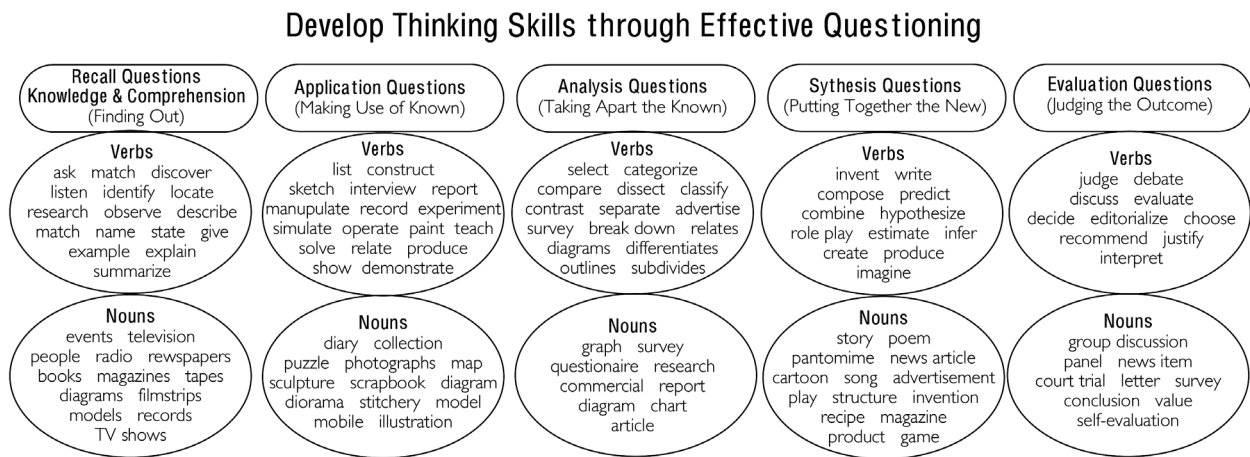


Figure 1

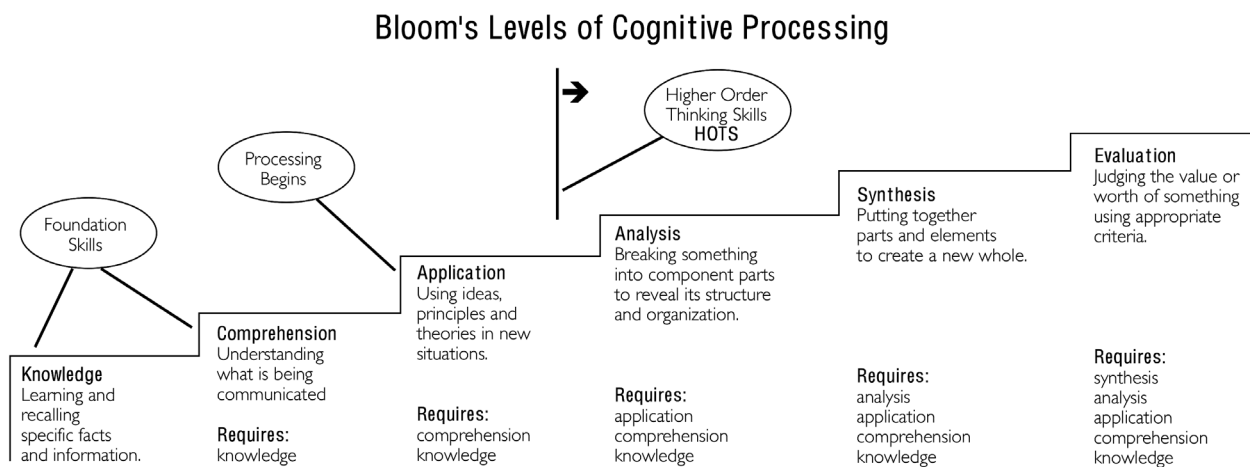


Figure 2