

Reading and Writing Workshop

Unit 1: Foundations of Career Readiness

Readings for the Workshop

Below are three strong readings that fit Unit 1's focus on workplace habits, career readiness, and employability. These are accessible online (some are PDFs).

1. College and Career Readiness (2020) – Public domain pdf from the U.S. Dept. of Education.
URL: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED609093.pdf> (ERIC)
2. The Changing Landscape of Workforce Readiness (2023) – Report on reading/math demands of workforce materials.
URL: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Changing-Landscape-Workforce-Readiness.pdf> (Illinois State Board of Education)
3. The Fifth Basic Skill: Employability – ERIC Digest No. 104 (1990) – Compact readable piece about employability skills.
URL: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED325659.pdf> (ERIC)

Note: Because the first two are more extensive, you may assign extracts or guided pages to keep time manageable.

Workshop Structure

Duration: 2 class periods (or one long block)

Group size: 3-4 students per group

Focus: Reading → Discussion → Writing → Reflection → Portfolio link

Day 1: Reading & Group Discussion

A. Warm-up (10 minutes)

- Individually: On index card, write: “*One job-ready habit I already use and one I want to improve*”.
- Share quickly in pairs.

B. Group Reading Assignment (30 minutes)

- Assign each group a *different* reading from the three above.
- Provide each group with guided questions:
 1. What are the key skills or habits emphasized in your reading?
 2. What surprised you or challenged your thinking?
 3. How do these skills/habits connect to your current goals or future pathway?
 4. Identify one quote or idea worth sharing with the full class.

- Students read (or skip to relevant sections) and answer the questions.

C. Group Share-Out (10 minutes)

- Each group presents:
 - The key skills/habits from their reading
 - Their chosen quote/idea
 - One connection to student life/career readiness
- Teacher records on class chart: “Top Skills Employers Want” (derived from readings).

D. Individual Quick Write (5 minutes)

- Prompt: “*After reading and group discussion, one work habit I will add to my portfolio evidence is ___ because ___.*”
 - Students write and then archive in their portfolio under “Employability Evidence”.
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Day 2: Writing, Reflection & Portfolio Connection

A. Review & Link (10 minutes)

- Review the class chart of “Top Skills Employers Want.”
- Ask: which of these skills do you already demonstrate? which do you need to develop?

B. Individual Writing Task (20 minutes)

- Prompt: *Choose one of the key skills/habits from our chart. Write a short essay (approx. 300-400 words) that includes:
 1. A definition of the skill/habit.
 2. Why it matters for career readiness (use reading or group ideas).
 3. A personal example (past, present or future) of how you’d demonstrate or improve it.
 4. How you will track or show evidence of this in your portfolio this semester.*
- Students write this draft in class (paper or digital).

C. Peer Review in Groups (10 minutes)

- In their groups, students swap essays with a partner. They use a simple “two stars and a wish” checklist:
 - Two strengths of the essay
 - One suggestion for improvement (clarity, example, portfolio link)
- Students revise as time allows.

D. Portfolio Artifact Creation (10 minutes)

- Students save final version as: YYYYMMDD_WorkHabitEssay_v1 in their portfolio folder/section “Employability Evidence”.
- They also write a reflection (3-4 sentences) answering: *How will I measure this habit? What checkpoint will I use by end of semester?*

E. Whole-class Closing (5 minutes)

- Ask: *Which habit are you committing to this semester?* Quick round-robin answers.
 - Teacher reminds: This essay and habit tracker become part of the Unit 1 portfolio and will be reviewed at the checkpoint.
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Materials & Prep

- Printed index cards or digital alternative.
 - Copies or links to the three readings. Possibly pre-highlighted sections for time efficiency.
 - Chart paper/whiteboard to record “Top Skills Employers Want”.
 - Student workbooks or digital folders ready to receive their artifact.
 - Assessment checklist for the writing task (teacher edition).
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Connection to Portfolio

- The essay becomes **Employability Evidence** in the portfolio.
 - Students include their selected habit in their SMART goals page or goals revision.
 - The class chart of desired skills can be referenced in their personal profile/vision and in reflections.
 - Proof of peer review and revision process can be included in “Evidence” section.
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Assessment & Reflection

- **Formative:** group discussions, peer review feedback.
- **Summative:** essay artifact + reflection + inclusion in portfolio.
- Teacher checks for: clear link to career readiness, personal example, measurable tracking plan, connection to readings.
- For deeper reflection: At the unit-end reflection, ask: *How did this habit development go? What evidence did I collect? What will I adjust for next unit?*