

Career Readiness Education Framework

A Guide for Educators: Designing Meaningful Career Learning with Students

Overview

This guide supports you in bringing career learning to life using the [Career Readiness Education Framework](#)—a practical, research-informed model that helps students explore, experience, and reflect on the world of work while building the mindsets, knowledge, skills, and social capital to thrive.

The Framework offers **strategies**, **activity examples**, and **reflection tools** to help you plan, implement, and assess impactful learning experiences across the Framework’s three categories — *Expose*, *Explore*, and *Practice*. It can be used to co-design activities with students and collaborate with local companies (see [Guide for Corporate Volunteers](#)), families, and communities, ensuring that career education remains relevant, inclusive, and responsive to context.

If you have questions/thoughts/ideas, reach out to **Tarek Chehidi** (tarek.chehidi@teachforall.org).

Understanding the Career Readiness Framework

The **Career Readiness Education Framework** organizes learning experiences into three interconnected pathways that help students move from awareness to action:

PATHWAY	Who	Purpose	Example Focus	Example Activities
EXPOSE	K-12 learners	Introduce students to new careers, industries, and possibilities	Awareness, curiosity, breaking stereotypes	Career talks, industry showcases, workplace visits
EXPLORE	K-12 learners	Help students connect their strengths, interests, and learning to future paths	Reflection, decision-making, relevance	Reflection and self-assessment activities, small group dialogues, career connection mapping
PRACTICE	K-12 learners	Offer hands-on experiences to apply skills and test ideas in real contexts	Work readiness, collaboration, and leadership	Internships or volunteering, job shadowing, student-led projects or community challenges

Reflection and refinement are woven throughout each stage — helping students (and educators) learn, grow, and continuously improve.

Schools can assess current career education programs and initiatives against the framework (Expose, Explore, Practice) to identify gaps, improve effectiveness, and ensure alignment with international best practices. See Teach For All’s [Learning and Insights Hub](#) for resources on developing activities aligned with the framework.

Designing *Expose, Explore, and Practice* Activities

When designing a career learning activity, consider which **Framework category it fits** (Expose, Explore, or Practice), what you want students to **learn, feel, or do**, and how students and partners will co-create and reflect together. Every experience you lead can help students:

- See new possibilities for themselves and their communities
- Build skills and mindsets to thrive in a changing world
- Understand that learning is a lifelong journey
- Grow as leaders who contribute to a more inclusive and equitable future

Design Principles

- Keep experiences interactive and student-centered
 - **Connect early:** Share your classroom goals and student interests.
 - **Explore ideas:** Brainstorm with partners and students.
 - **Co-design:** Plan objectives and flow collaboratively.
 - **Deliver together:** Facilitate joint sessions.
 - **Reflect and adapt:** Gather feedback and refine.
- Ground them in local realities and aspirations
- Integrate reflection before, during, and after
- Encourage students to articulate insights, not just observe

Tips for a Successful Session

- **Be authentic:** Share real experiences — including challenges and learning moments.
- **Invite student voice:** Encourage curiosity and active questioning.
- **Make it relevant:** Connect examples to your community, local industries, or national trends.
- **Balance inspiration and reflection:** Help students turn what they learn into personal insight.
- **Keep it simple:** A well-facilitated conversation can be as powerful as a large-scale event.

End every activity with three questions:

1. What inspired or surprised you today?
2. What did you learn about yourself?
3. What will you explore next?

Quick Checklist

Before the session

- ☐ Understand student interests and needs
- ☐ Align with curriculum goals and Framework category
- ☐ Co-design with partners and/or students
- ☐ Prepare reflection tools and feedback forms

During the session

- ☐ Facilitate discussions and interaction
- ☐ Keep students engaged and active
- ☐ Capture quotes, questions, and observations

After the session

- ☐ Reflect and debrief with students and partners
- ☐ Note successes and areas for growth
- ☐ Plan next steps or follow-up experiences

Partnering with Corporate and Community Partners

Career learning is more than exposure — it's about building agency, confidence, and purpose. By **co-creating experiences with partners and involving students in every step**, you help students gain insight into how learning connects to real work, innovation, and impact. This prepares young people to lead their own futures — and thrive as active contributors to their communities.

Steps for meaningful collaboration:

1. **Start with shared goals.** Identify what you and your partner want students to learn. Align objectives with the phase of the framework (Expose, Explore, or Practice).
2. **Co-design the experience.** Plan together. Discuss what partners can contribute — stories, demonstrations, feedback — and what students will do before, during, and after the activity.
3. **Leverage expertise and relevance.** Encourage partners to share real stories, challenges, and examples that resonate with your students' context.
4. **Prepare everyone for success.** Brief your partners on your students' background, interests, and learning goals. Prepare your students on what to expect and how to engage thoughtfully.
5. **Reflect and strengthen.** After each activity, debrief together. Collect feedback from students and partners to refine future experiences.

Measuring and Reflecting on Impact

Assessing what students gain helps you improve and celebrate progress. Define what success means for your session and collect evidence to track growth.

Possible indicators:

- Increased awareness of career options
- Stronger confidence and self-knowledge
- Clearer understanding of pathways and next steps
- Growth in communication, collaboration, or problem-solving

Evidence sources:

- Quick feedback forms or polls
- Student reflection cards or journals
- Partner feedback
- Observation and discussion notes

Reflection matters as much as measurement — it helps everyone learn, refine, and amplify what works.

Engaging Students as Co-Designers

*Students are more invested when they have a voice in shaping their learning. Involving them in design and implementation builds **ownership, leadership, and agency**. Invite students to:*

- **Select focus areas** — What topics, industries, or issues matter most to them?
- **Shape the format** — Would they prefer talks, projects, simulations, or site visits?
- **Lead or co-facilitate** — Let them host guests, moderate panels, or guide reflections.
- **Capture learning** — Encourage journals, videos, or creative outputs to document growth.

Students are not just participants in career learning — they are partners in building the bridge between classroom and career.

Share Your Story

Your experience can inspire others across the network. Share how you and your students brought the Career Readiness Education Framework to life — what you learned, what surprised you, and what impact you saw. Write a short reflection or blog, present during a local or regional event, contribute to the Future of Work Initiative Learning & Insights Hub.