

F2: Preparing for High School and Beyond

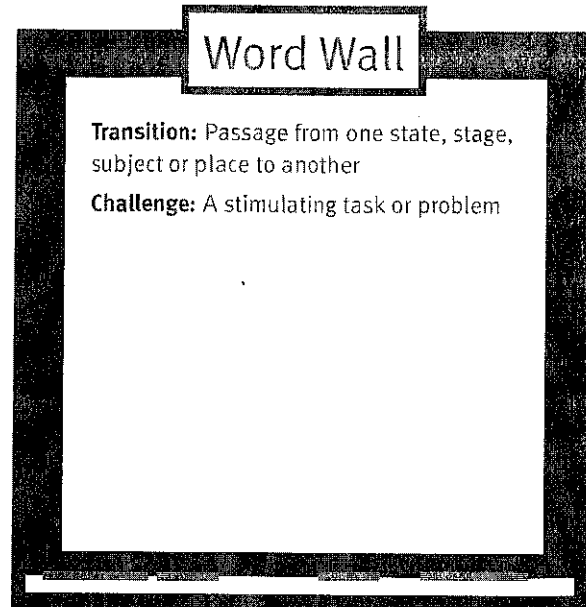


This lesson may be extended over several days.

Introduction

Students are more likely to transition successfully to the next level of their education if they have a strong belief in themselves and have as much information as possible about what to expect.

Transitions are always challenging and sometimes intimidating for students because they grow accustomed to a group of friends, teachers, school rules and school culture. Going from one academic institution to another changes all of the norms they are accustomed to and may raise new challenges.



Learning Goals

- Students will learn about the experiences a copilot had that required them to transition (to a new school, country, job, etc.).
- Students will explore the personal, academic and social differences between elementary school and middle school, middle school and high school, and high school and college.
- Students will explore their positive and negative feelings about making these transitions.
- Students will discuss whom to turn to for support and advice.

Materials Needed

- Preview Activity Handout: *Transitions Are a Part of Life*
- Lesson Handouts: *Transitioning into Middle School* (Grades 4-5), *Transitioning into High School* (Grades 6-8), *I Can Overcome Any Challenge* (Grades 4-5; 6-8), and *Making Successful Transitions* (Grades 4-5; 6-8)
- Reflection Activity Handout: *Navigating My Transitions with a Copilot*

Preview Activity

This activity should be given 1-2 days prior to the in-class lesson. Explain to students that they will start a new lesson that requires them to gather information from their home or community and bring it to the classroom. (See handout.)

1. Distribute *Transitions Are a Part of Life* and explain instructions to students.
2. As you begin the in-class lesson, have students share (as individuals or within small groups) what they discussed and learned in the Preview Activity.
3. You may wish to add value by collecting ideas generated from the Preview Activity and distributing them to students as a resource.

Activities

PART 1: PREPARING FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND BEYOND (10 MINUTES)

1. Discuss and review the Preview Activity.

PART 2: TRANSITIONING (30 MINUTES)

1. Break students into small groups and have them fill out the *Transitioning into High School* handout by brainstorming ways their lives may change. (Use the *Transitioning into Middle School* handout for elementary school students.)
2. Have students share some of the changes they feel they will experience. Make sure to share your own experiences to help them with this exercise.

PART 3: I CAN OVERCOME ANY CHALLENGE (30 MINUTES)

1. Break students into small groups and have them fill out the appropriate grade-level version of the *I Can Overcome Any Challenge* handout. Students will write down some of the new experiences and challenges they may face and how they might deal with them. Give them the appropriate version of *Making Successful Transitions* to use as a reference for ways to deal with these challenges.
2. Have students report back and discuss coping skills and solutions to these challenges.

Reflection Activity

1. Thank students for their participation in the lesson and talk about how important it is for them to share their discoveries with significant people in their lives.
2. Explain to students that this activity will allow them to share the information they explored at school with their copilot. In addition, the assignment will allow them to reflect on the topic a bit further.
3. Distribute *Navigating My Transitions with a Copilot* and explain instructions to students. (See handout.)

References and Resources

- Suskind, Ron. *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League*. New York: Broadway Books, 1998.
- Soto, Gary. *Jesse*. Orlando: Harcourt Children's Books, 1994.

Curriculum Standards

- Standards for the English/Language Arts: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12
- National Standards for Social Studies Teachers:
 - Culture
 - Time, Continuity and Change
 - People, Places and Environments
 - Individual Development and Identity
 - Individuals, Groups and Institutions

See Appendix 3 for complete curriculum standards descriptions.