

# Relationship Skills Handout 4a: Educator Vignettes

## **Directions**

Read the vignettes and use what you have learned so far to brainstorm answers to the questions that follow. If completing this activity in a group, discuss your answers*.*

## **Vignette: Mr. Acosta**

Mr. Acosta teaches eleventh-grade mathematics. He is interested in helping his students understand how mathematics is applied in the “real world” and encouraging more of his students to pursue degrees and work in STEM fields. Mr. Acosta has set up a series of business and career resources for his classes. At least once a month during the fall semester, Mr. Acosta invites individuals who use math in their daily work at local businesses, colleges, and companies to come speak to his classes. One week before each talk, Mr. Acosta presents some of the fundamental math skills or types of problems that the speaker may use in their line of work. Students are given time to prepare questions for the speakers in advance of the event. At the beginning of the spring semester, students pick which mathematics-related career path highlighted during the fall was most interesting to them. Each student is then grouped with the other students who chose the same career interest, and the group is paired with a community mentor from that field. Once a month, students check in with their chosen mentor to talk about resources available for their own future studies or job searches, to share tips, and to build connections with their peers and the community mentor. The project culminates in a job-shadowing visit for all of the students to their mentor’s place of employment at the end of the school year.  
  
How might this teacher build readiness and effectively introduce this activity and, following the activity, help students process what they learned?  
  
  
How might this teacher encourage active participation by all students?  
How might this teacher ensure that this activity is responsive to the cultures of his students?How might this teacher build students’ understanding of why they are engaging in this activity?

## **Vignette: Ms. Lyons**

Ms. Lyons teaches first grade at a small elementary school where there is no in-school kindergarten. All her students arrive in first grade as newcomers to the school, and her students often come from at least four different local kindergarten programs. Ms. Lyons focuses her first week of school every year on friendship and building a classroom culture of kindness and respect. In a large group circle, students first introduce themselves to the rest of the class. After the full-group introductions, students are paired up in twos to “interview” each other more deeply using a set of discussion and listening guidelines that Ms. Lyons will use throughout the school year. After the interviews, students share at least one interesting thing they learned about their partner and one thing they liked about how their interviewer spoke or listened to them.

How might this teacher build readiness and effectively introduce this activity and, following the activity, help students process what they learned?

How might this teacher encourage active participation by all students?

How might this teacher ensure that this activity is responsive to the cultures of her students?

How might this teacher build students’ understanding of why they are engaging in this activity?

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