WORKING HANDS WORKING MINDS

A Vocational Education Curriculum Developed by YouthBuild USA

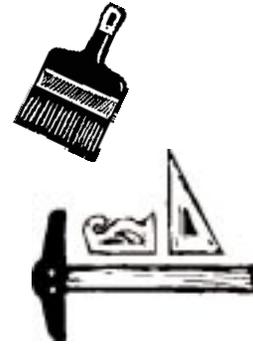## UNIT 1

Teamwork and Leadership in Construction

by Anne Meisenzahl and David Greene
Edited by Keisha Edwards

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Acknowledgements

Special Thanks

YouthBuild USA is proud to present this fine curriculum for use by YouthBuild programs. Anne Meisenzahl and David Greene, the primary authors of this curriculum, deserve enormous respect and gratitude for their creative and persistent work. They were both teachers in the first two YouthBuild programs in New York City during the mid-1980s. Anne taught at Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association in the South Bronx, and David Green taught at Youth Action Program in East Harlem. As teachers they discovered there was no appropriate vocational education curriculum in existence and they embarked on what turned out to be a 16-year trek to produce something truly useful for future YouthBuild teachers. Their incredible determination to find the time, the funds, and the expert consultation to give this gift to their fellow teachers, and to their students, is the highest form of dedication to a vision and to service. We thank them.

Dorothy Stoneman
President, YouthBuild USA

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What is YouthBuild and Who Participates?

YouthBuild is a highly successful and well-respected program for out-of-school young adults that places equal emphasis on community development, job training, career development, and education. The program is nationally recognized for its ability to enable young adults to create success for themselves while making a significant contribution to society. As of June 2000, there are approximately 145 YouthBuild programs operating in 43 states.

Started in 1978 as the Youth Action Program with support from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), YouthBuild provides young adults an immediately productive role in their community. As they engage in the development and renovation of low-income housing, they contribute to their communities, they learn about the responsibilities of work, they learn academic skills required for a high school diploma or a GED, they acquire job skills in the construction trades, and they learn skills of leadership and social action.

Is YouthBuild an alternative school? A charter school? An employability program for out-of-school youth? A social movement? A chance for "at-risk" young adults to learn the skills required for success? A state-of-the-art example of contextual learning? The essence of school-to-work? It's all of the above, and more — everyone who has experienced YouthBuild will add to the above description. Every YouthBuild program creates its own flavor and personality. With support and technical assistance from the national YouthBuild USA staff, young adults across the country are using the construction of low-income housing as the context through which they learn the skills to be productive, independent, contributing, and satisfied members of their communities.

The HUD legislation defines YouthBuild students as follows:
- Participants must be between 16 and 24 years old.
- At least 75 percent must have dropped out of high school.
- At least 75 percent must be low income or from a low-income family.
- One hundred percent (100 percent) must have "educational needs."

The Working Hands, Working Minds Curriculum: What It Is and Isn't

Working Hands, Working Minds is an integrated construction curriculum. It was designed for academic instructors and construction trainers to use collaboratively.

In all YouthBuild programs, learning is an active process that involves interpreting new information, connecting it in some way to one's prior knowledge, and applying it appropriately. Traditional instruction focuses on discrete skills and isolated facts; it makes minimal connection to anything beyond the classroom or text. It does not advance authentic learning. Integrated and interdisciplinary curriculum, on the other hand, reflects real learning in the real world.

The YouthBuild Integrated Construction Curriculum, *Working Hands, Working Minds*, motivates students by engaging them in real-world problems and projects. Using the teacher as their guide, students investigate authentic community problems. They decide how they are going to proceed and what strategies to use. They develop the skills they need to take responsibility for their own learning. Students also share their individual talents and expertise as they work on projects as collaborative team members. They learn by talking over ideas with others, explaining their answers, and listening to other viewpoints.

In *Working Hands, Working Minds*, students explore topics and themes that are relevant and rich in possibilities. They are involved in activities that are practical and have clear value in a particular field. Instead of students showing what they know by taking a test that targets their weaknesses, they demonstrate their understanding in the context of meaningful activities that support their strengths and abilities.

Working Hands, Working Minds consists of the following five units:
1. Health and Safety
2. Housing and Community
3. Construction-Related Math and Measurement
4. Tools, Trades, and Technology in Construction
5. Teamwork and Leadership in Construction

It would be reasonable to ask why these five units were chosen to be the first phase of *Working Hands, Working Minds*. In many training programs, the two components — academics and construction — are separate and distinct from one another. *Working Hands, Working Minds* closes that gap. This curriculum is designed to help YouthBuild instructors and trainers integrate academics, construction, and leadership development. It fosters reading, writing, and mathematics learning through the context of construction; skill training is directly

> "Because our students come to us with little or no experience with regular work, citizenship, or stable family life, we start with the experience of work, from which we draw out the academic lessons."
>
> JOHN BRISCOE
> VISIONS YOUTHWORKS, PA

linked to community responsibility and social analysis.

Each of the five units is an introduction, and only an introduction, to the topic. Each unit presents what we believe to be the essential ingredients of the topics, those ingredients that are essential to a YouthBuild student's learning. In the future, we plan to produce an intermediate and an advanced version of every one of these units for those young adults who have an extended YouthBuild experience, at this time, however, it is important for the users of the curriculum to realize that these lessons represent a critical foundation and, we hope, a springboard for other related learning experiences.

We encourage program staff to use the curriculum as a recipe. Although *Working Hands, Working Minds* was developed by many people, it does not represent rigid operating instructions. Usually the first time you cook a recipe, you follow the directions. But the next time you cook the recipe, you might add one thing and take out another. Just as a good recipe is a guide for you to create the dish you want to serve your diners, this is a flexible curriculum with many opportunities to give it your own flavor and personality.

It is critical to remember that learning happens everywhere at YouthBuild — at the construction sites in the community, in the academic and vocational classrooms, during community meetings, and while doing community service. All of YouthBuild is education. Therefore, this curriculum is a vehicle for program staff to integrate what they teach, why they teach it, and how they teach it.

These five units of *Working Hands, Working Minds* do not teach the technical vocational skills of the construction trades, such as framing, masonry, finish carpentry, plumbing, etc. Rather, these units teach a set of transferable skills that are critical for and applicable in any of the construction trades. In fact, many of the skills taught in these units, such as teamwork, basic writing and communication, critical thinking, and problem solving, are transferable to careers in nearly any occupational area.

Working Hands, Working Minds: Blueprint for Success

Working Hands, Working Minds is a curriculum that reflects current research and practice related to contextual teaching and learning. What is contextual learning? In a contextual learning environment, textbooks, lectures, and traditional tests are no longer the primary teaching tools. Rather, they are supplemental to a learning process in which students apply and experience what is being taught by addressing real problems and needs associated with their roles and responsibilities as family members, citizens, students, and workers. In a YouthBuild program, students are at the center of their learning, and construction of low-income housing is the context.

According to current research there are six key elements of contextual learning (Owens, Tom; Dunham, Dan and Wang, Changhua, "Toward a Theory of Contextual Teaching and Learning," *Washington State Preservice Teacher Education Consortium for Contextual Teaching and Learning,* 1999)[1]:

1. Meaningful learning
2. Application of knowledge
3. Higher order thinking
4. Standards-based
5. Cultures-focused
6. Authentic assessment

Related to those elements of contextual learning, the *Working Hands, Working Minds* blueprint has been drawn to:

- Engage youth in real conversation about issues relevant to their lives.
- Help youth articulate their dreams, goals, experiences, skills, and talents.
- Encourage youth to plan and participate in change in their own lives and their communities.
- Challenge youth to step out of their comfort zone and put themselves in the driver's seat of their own learning.
- Push youth to think critically about program standards and employability standards as they assess their own strengths and weaknesses.
- Engage youth in hands-on activities with a meaningful balance of theory and practice in a safe environment.
- Engage youth in meaningful reflection about each lesson, thus teaching that reflection is a valuable process in our lives.

[1] Reprinted with permission from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

- Instruct youth in the development of portfolios so they can document and articulate their knowledge and skills.
- Help youth make connections between the classroom, the worksite, and life beyond YouthBuild.
- Immerse youth in culturally relevant perspectives.

Just as the occupants of a building do not need to think about the architectural blueprints every day, YouthBuild staff do not need to recite these principles of contextual learning; however, in a program that operates without them, learning will not be meaningful.

Described below are some examples of how these principles play out in *Working Hands, Working Minds.*

Teaching from Real Life Experiences

Skills introduced in *Working Hands, Working Minds* are taught in the context of low-income housing construction. The skills are introduced in reference to real community and social problems that need to be solved, in conjunction with real tasks that need to be accomplished. For example, when students build a porch on a low-income apartment unit, the curriculum addresses the reading, writing, and math skills needed to accomplish that task. In a lesson that teaches about first aid and how to respond to emergencies, related reading, writing, and communication skills are emphasized. Specific academic skills are identified in the GED description later in this section.

As young people work in and contribute to their communities, they assume ownership and they invest into the community. Their work is real, their work is urgent, and their work is valued. It is through these real life experiences that YouthBuild young adults flourish and create their own success.

Fostering Teamwork

Teamwork skills are among the most critical for success in any job in any career; construction sites are a perfect context for teaching these skills. Teamwork and cooperation are embedded throughout the curriculum. Students working together in teams learn a fundamental lesson: we are stronger when we help each other and share our skills than if we ignore or compete against one another. As students learn group skills necessary for work, their communication skills are enhanced and they develop confidence in solving problems. They learn to trust each other and respect differences. They participate actively and learn to work both cooperatively and independently.
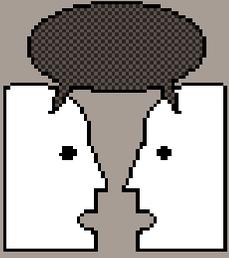
We are stronger when we help each other and share our skills than if we ignore or compete against one another.

In this curriculum, many activities involve the use of small groups and team-work. The following questions should be taken into consideration regarding the use of small groups:

• What are the reading and verbal abilities of students in the groups?
• How are students' maturity levels similar and/or different regarding team-work skills? How will you structure the activities to increase the skill levels of all the students?
• Will anyone feel left out or left behind? How will students be able to assist one another?
• How many students are in the class and how will small groups be structured?
• What are the group management issues?
• What skills do the instructors have?
• Will staff training be available, if needed?

Encouraging Problem Solving and Critical Thinking

Problem posing and problem solving are key components of *Working Hands, Working Minds.* All lessons incorporate opportunities for generating questions, solving problems, and reflecting on the process. Students are given opportunities to use their own experiences as a source of information on how to complete tasks and reach goals. The lessons in the curriculum are designed to facilitate critical analysis and reflection by creating opportunities for students to act on and experiment with the problems and solutions they have posed. The curriculum makes explicit the connection between these problems, community development, and the literacy skills needed to support reflection and action.

Developing Skills of Social Analysis

In *Working Hands, Working Minds,* the social realities of housing, community, and urban development are addressed through the construction and renovation of low-income housing. Students have opportunities to research and appraise related social issues and to develop strategies for creating change. By participating in the process of renovating buildings or constructing new homes, students are making important social contributions. In this curriculum, through research, reading, writing, and math activities, students become more conscious of their socially useful role.

The Importance of the General Equivalency Diploma (GED)

Obtaining either a high school diploma or a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) is an important goal for YouthBuild students. The GED examination certifies that a learner performs academically at a level that is equivalent to a high school education.

Although for many years the GED has been nationally recognized as an equivalent to the high school diploma, some people believe it does not represent equal rigor and preparation for postsecondary courses. Most of the studies comparing the outcomes of GED and high school graduates indicate that, although getting a GED does not offer the same set of comprehensive experiences that a high school education/diploma would provide, it does allow individuals to enter the job market and postsecondary education at similar rates. In other words, the GED definitely provides an avenue for young people to pursue job opportunities and postsecondary education.

YouthBuild students who are close to graduating from high school and lack only a few high school credits are encouraged to obtain their diploma either through partnership with the local school system or through the YouthBuild program itself. However, for many YouthBuild students, the GED provides the most efficient and reasonable pathway to high school competition. The GED is recognized by employers and postsecondary institutions as proof that the individual has achieved a level of competency that will benefit them on the job and in future educational endeavors.

The major academic and GED skills emphasized in the first five units of *Working Hands, Working Minds* include:

Reading and Writing

- Recognize and infer cause and effect
- Predict outcomes
- Apply information to new situations
- Recognize, recall, summarize, and express main ideas
- Recall detail
- Recognize sequence
- Organize ideas
- Write an essay
- Use the library, encyclopedia, table of contents, and index of a book
- Read and write poetry

Math

- Define standard units of measurement
- Convert length and time measurements

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- Solve measurement problems
- Add, subtract, multiply, and divide numbers using inches, feet, and yards
- Use fractions and percentages to solve problems
- Use standard measurement tools, such as ruler, tape measure or yardstick
- Estimate and draft a budget
- Solve area problems using square foot and perimeter
- Explore angles and triangles as used in construction

The New GED Test to be used in 2002, will provide students with calculators during part of the Math Section of the Test. Students will be expected to be able to use these calculators effectively to answer questions. We recommend that staff access training and learning materials to facilitate the development of this new skill requirement for the General Equivalency Diploma.

These skills are interspersed throughout many of the lessons in all of the units. Students have multiple opportunities to practice using the skills both in the classroom and on the construction sites. As the students learn these skills in the context of doing construction, they understand that the skills are transferable to many other areas of their lives.

Employability and Career Development

YouthBuild helps young adults acquire the skills required to succeed in any job, in any industry, in any community. In 1991 the U.S. Department of Labor's Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) gathered information from business owners, public employees, union officials, and workers in all types of jobs from entry level to top management. The conclusions were unanimous:

> "New workers must be creative and responsible problem solvers and have the skills and attitudes on which employers can build. Traditional jobs are changing and new jobs are created every day. High paying but unskilled jobs are disappearing. Employers and employees share the belief that all workplaces must 'work smarter.'"

> (From *What Work Requires of Schools, A SCANS Report for AMERICA 2000,* 1991)

Most youth employment programs, as well as nearly every state education agency, have adopted the SCANS competencies as those skills that all people need to become productive, independent, contributing, and satisfied members of society. *Working Hands, Working Minds* consciously and directly addresses the following SCANS competencies and foundation skills:

- **Identify, organize, plan, and allocate resources:** time, money, material and facilities, and human resources
- **Work with others:** teamwork, teach others, serve clients and customers, leadership, and work with diversity
- **Acquire and use information:** find and assess information, organize and communicate information, and use computers to process information
- **Understand complex inter-relationships:** understand, improve and design systems, correct performance
- **Work with a variety of technologies:** apply technology to a task, maintain and troubleshoot equipment
- **Basic skills:** reading, writing, math, listening, speaking
- **Thinking skills:** creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, knowing how to learn, reasoning
- **Personal qualities:** responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity/honesty

As YouthBuild students successfully complete the *Working Hands, Working Minds* lessons, they demonstrate increasingly high levels of achievement of the SCANS competencies that are critical to construction or any other industry they may choose to pursue. Through the learning activities and portfolio entries, YouthBuild students have many opportunities to document their skills for use on a resume, letter of application, or job interview.

In order to help students prepare for the realities of the world of work, many lessons involve visiting local workplaces, gathering information about career opportunities, and interviewing workers. Not only do these activities acquaint students with the literacy skills needed to do particular jobs, but they also learn about the physical environment, teamwork, and communication skills required by different jobs.

Working Hands, Working Minds is about career exploration. By researching the types of jobs available in the construction trades, students gain a broader understanding of the options available to them, and develop a realistic sense of what skills and training they will need for jobs that interest them.

Assessment

YouthBuild thrives in the new era of educational assessment. The traditional paper-and-pencil testing mode of assessment is losing prominence. A few notes about the "old methods" will add to our understanding of the new. It used to be that achievement tests were used to sort and separate learners into those who went on to college and those who didn't. Traditionally, teachers

photo:YouthBuild Holyoke

Teamwork and Leadership

taught and students were tested to determine if they learned what they were supposed to; this created a wall between teachers and students. The '70s brought statewide testing, the '80s and '90s brought national standards and centralized assessments.

The more realistic theory of assessment is that testing alone is insufficient. Assessment must be used to inform the instructional process and the learning process, and the teacher and the student should use assessment information equally. Here are a few assumptions about authentic assessment:

- Meaningful learning and meaningful assessment go hand-in-hand; one won't happen without the other.
- Good assessment comes from a clear vision of expected outcomes; the standards and criteria for excellence are clear and understood by both the learner and the instructor.
- Good assessment actively involves the learner; there is a conscious emphasis on reflection and ownership of learning.
- Assessment has many purposes, strategies, and products; it is multidimensional, much more than a test-at-the-end strategy.
- Assessment should not be a time-eater; it should save time. It should make the job of teaching easier and more effective.
- There is ongoing positive interaction between all learners, including the instructor.

The assessment process in *Working Hands, Working Minds* is as authentic as possible. It is based on the "use it or lose it" theory of knowledge. Every lesson in all five units ends with Creative Extensions and Project-Based Learning Activities so that students can demonstrate their understanding of what they have learned. Both of these components of the lessons are structured opportunities for students to apply what they have learned. Embedded in the lessons are numerous opportunities for both individual and group reflection.

The final lesson in each unit is a formal assessment of learning that measures young peoples' ability to apply and personalize the information they have acquired. Assessment activities in each unit might include writing a response to a question such as, "How have your attitudes, beliefs, and ideas changed as a result of this unit?" Or students might complete a safety self-assessment and compare it to one completed by their construction trainer.

Throughout each unit, students collect work products/samples to put in a portfolio. As the culmination of the student's work in the unit, the portfolio serves the following purposes:

- It is a student-centered assessment tool. Students make judgments about the quality of their work and learning and what needs to be improved.

- It enables teachers to review collected work and make judgments about students' growth over time.
- It has the potential to boost students' self-confidence about their skills because it offers a concrete illustration of these skills.
- It is a potential tool to help students "show what they know" to a prospective employer, internship host, or educational institution.

Although different YouthBuild programs make different uses of portfolios, in its simplest form a portfolio serves as an assessment tool for instructors, a self-assessment tool for students, and the raw material to use for a career presentation portfolio.

Working Hands, Working Minds: The Foundation

First, a note about learning readiness. Learning readiness is defined as the ability of a learner to engage in the instructional program with effective learning and study skill habits. YouthBuild students must be able to take notes, do homework, take examinations, read and digest material, write effective prose, problem solve, and think critically — all habits that are conducive to life-long learning. In addition, YouthBuild students need to learn how to ask questions, think about their learning, and assess how they are doing with the material that is presented to them. Study groups are often used to support effective learning and study habits.

Working Hands, Working Minds was conceived as a way to introduce individuals to the world of construction and its relationships to academic achievement, e.g., reading, writing, and mathematics. It provides classroom teachers, counselors, and construction managers with a set of lessons to integrate academics with construction skills. Because *Working Hands, Working Minds* requires YouthBuild students to learn and practice effective study skills, learning readiness is an important consideration when delivering the curriculum.

Learning readiness is a key to successfully completing the GED program, learning construction skills, and being prepared to enter the job market or post secondary education. *Working Hands, Working Minds* was designed to take this into consideration in both content and process.

Working Hands, Working Minds was designed to be easy to use, easy to adapt, and easy to integrate with other program curricula. Therefore, each unit has a similar format and each lesson has the same design. Described below is the structure of the units and the lessons in each unit.

Each unit has an overview, which includes:

- A brief *summary* of each lesson.
- A *competency checklist* that outlines the skills (both academic and construction) students should be able to perform upon successful completion of the lessons in the unit.
- A *portfolio assessment checklist* that outlines the materials students could include in their portfolios.

Each lesson in each unit uses the following format:

- **Aim:** The purpose of the lesson and what students will do/learn.
- **Key Terms and Concepts:** A list of vocabulary words that can be introduced in relation to specific lessons.
- **Time:** Approximately how long the lesson should take.
- **Things to Consider:** What an instructor might need to do or think about before starting to teach the lesson, such as how to present a sensitive topic, finding a guest speaker, arranging for access to computers for Internet research, or preparing for career interviews.
- **Materials, Tools and Resources:** A list of all the handouts and any materials that are needed to teach the lesson, such as flipchart paper, student journals, or newspapers.
- **Steps for Activities:** A lightly scripted step-by-step guide for the instructor.
- **Wrap-Up:** Reflection on the lesson, thinking about how to apply what was learned both to the YouthBuild program and to one's personal life.
- **Creative Extensions:** Suggestions about ways to adapt certain activities in the lesson; ideas for embellishing the lesson; simple applications or ways to practice what was learned in the classroom.
- **Project-Based Learning Activities:** Ideas for extending the lesson with a group or individual project that requires students to take leadership to plan, carry out their activities, and reflect on what they did and learned. Projects should all have a community component in which students connect with other people or organizations; some have career connections. These activities are ideas for program staff to start from, not fully scripted guides for each project idea.
- **Handouts:** All handouts required to complete the lesson are at the end of the lesson; others are in the supplemental Tools and Resources section at the end of the unit.

Following the lessons in each unit are two final sections:

- **Tools and Resources** section lists print, Internet, and video resources that might be helpful for enrichment activities or for the facilitator.

- **Supplemental Handouts** suggest optional activities, creative extensions, and project-based learning activities.

> "We do vocational education on the site two mornings a week. We are in a room in a garage that is set up like a classroom. It has a desk, tables and a blackboard…I also teach vocational education in the classroom two sessions a week. We have a good blackboard, textbooks, and a VCR. We combine reading and writing, vocabulary development, demonstration, and hands-on practice…I'm also planning to deal with the history of construction careers, barriers to employment for women, real estate, financing and community development, because these topics make construction come alive, students can see the relevance of it."

> **Rebecca Etchison, YouthBuild Dayton**

Making the Curriculum Work for Your Program

Working Hands, Working Minds is appropriate for any program that strives to teach construction skills in the context of community development and social action.

The curriculum is applicable to any performance-based and competency-based education programs. It can be integrated into programs that use Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Academic Development Plans (ADPs) in which students have individual plans geared to their particular learning needs. It can be used in conjunction with other curricula; it can supplement high school equivalency (GED) or high school diploma curricula. Programs can adapt the curriculum to meet their needs by selecting lessons relevant to their program's competencies.

Working Hands, Working Minds is designed to be used by a team of staff (teachers, counselors, construction managers, and other instructional staff) working together to coordinate the learning process. Programs should make their own decisions about which lessons will be taught, who will teach which lessons of each unit, and which lessons will be taught as a team. Instructors should meet regularly to plan and debrief.

Groups might consider the following questions as they plan the use of the curriculum:

- Where will instruction take place?
- Who will teach which lessons?
- How will the program maximize the integration of worksite and classroom instruction?
- When will instructional staff meet to plan, coordinate instruction, and debrief?

Teamwork and Leadership

• How much of the time will be spent team-teaching and how much will be separate?

Depending on the staffing structure and the skills and background of the staff, programs can use *Working Hands, Working Minds* in numerous ways, ranging from a traditional approach (in which components remain distinct) to a fully integrated approach. Three of these approaches are described below.

1. Separate but Equal Approach

In this traditional model, academic teachers, worksite instructors, and vocational instructors work and teach separately, but reinforce each other's separate domains and support each other's work. Instructors and teachers choose separate lessons from the curriculum to teach in their distinct components, but do not actually teach together. Because of the shared theme of the lessons, students may, on their own, make the intellectual connection between them, but the connection is not overtly emphasized by the instructors.

2. Content Exchange Approach

In this approach, academic teachers and vocational instructors meet initially to discuss how to divide the lessons and when lessons might best be taught in order to support each other's content area. They meet regularly to discuss how the curriculum can be expanded to demonstrate the interrelatedness of the content. For example, when students learn vocabulary, they use words related to construction; after learning how to frame a wall on the construction site, students might describe the process in a writing exercise in the classroom.

Vocational instructors might recommend creative extensions or project-based learning activities to be coordinated by the teacher; academic teachers might suggest materials and methods for teaching measurement skills on the worksite.

3. Team Teaching Approach

When "teaming," worksite instructors, academic teachers, and vocational instructors work together to choose lessons, develop additional instructional materials, present material, and assess student progress. In this highly cooperative approach, instructors demonstrate to students the way in which their respective fields are related. The academic teacher might go to the worksite to teach the math skills needed to measure the perimeter of a lot to determine board feet of fencing needed, or to teach the reading skills needed to understand the directions for operating a power tool. Likewise, worksite and vocational instructors might go into the classroom to teach proper names and operating instructions of tools to be used on the construction site. Academic and vocational teachers decide which lessons can be taught together and with which activities they can assist each other.

On a frequent basis, all of the instructional partners meet to assess the collaboration process and to discuss continuous improvement of the process.

Using the Key Terms and Concepts

At the beginning of each lesson you will find a list of vocabulary words from the lesson that may require clarification and dialogue. Listed here are a few ideas for teaching the key words and concepts.

- **Before each lesson, write the words on the board and ask students what they think the words mean.** Have a short group discussion to come to consensus on definition; if consensus is not reached, wait until the term or concept appears in the lesson and then revisit the discussion.
- **Before beginning the lesson, you could have students individually write down what they think the terms mean.** Then, at the end of the lesson, ask students to revisit their definitions and revise, as necessary. Give students a chance to compare their definitions and come to a common definition.
- **Students can compile glossaries of key terms** and continue to add words to it from each lesson. In addition to writing definitions, they could divide words into syllables to aid spelling, identify parts of speech, and use words in sentences.
- **Short quizzes** can be given at the end of a lesson so students can assess their own comprehension of the key terms and concepts.
- **A homework assignment** could be for students to teach one or more of the key terms or concepts to a family member or friend.
- **Using computers**, students can create YouthBuild dictionaries with definitions of the key terms and concepts.

The last lesson in each unit is a good time to briefly review the vocabulary from the unit and assess comprehension.

- **You could be traditional** and give a test.
- **You could be dramatic** and ask for a skit using some of the key terms.
- **You could be playful** and engage students in a charades or game activity.
- **You could be humorous** and let students draw cartoons with captions or write jokes using the vocabulary words.

Creative Extensions

Everyone teaches differently and all learners have their own unique interests and needs. We know that there is no "one right way" to teach, and the more teachers modify these lessons to make them their own, the more effective they will be. Therefore we have included two or three ideas for modifying or

enriching the lesson. These ideas are optional of course, and are meant to be short, creative, typically classroom-based extensions and modifications of the lesson. The overall purpose, however, is to offer students alternative strategies to learn and opportunities to apply what they learned in a wide variety of ways.

One simple example of a creative extension in the math unit is to have students write their own construction-related word problems using the skills they learned in the lesson. A more complex creative extension in the math unit has students explore how the architect Frank Lloyd Wright used angles and geometrical shapes to enhance the aesthetic beauty and functionality of his buildings. Many creative extensions are, in fact, applications of learning that can be used as an assessment of how well the students learned the subject matter.

While the overall purpose is application of knowledge gained, these creative extensions should also be motivating and personalized. For example, the one about Frank Lloyd Wright could be changed so that a student or group of students select their own architect to study. If you wanted to personalize or localize the project even further, you could focus on local architects.

The creative extensions are meant to be just that — creative activities that extend, embellish, or enrich the lesson.

Project-Based Learning

Every day more research appears on the rationale for, and the value of, project-based learning. It is a teaching and learning strategy that puts students "in the driver's seat of their own learning." YouthBuild is intrinsically conducive to project-based learning because of the very nature of the construction projects.

What is a project? Coupling the current research and practice on project-based learning with the YouthBuild philosophy, a good YouthBuild project is a cohesive set of learning activities with the following characteristics:

- A project is derived from an issue or idea that has authentic meaning for the student(s), the community, and the program.
- Rather than focusing on one subject area, projects are interdisciplinary and integrate a variety of content areas.
- A project takes more than a week to complete; it is a series of activities that hang together with a beginning, a middle, and an end.
- Students, teachers, and in many cases, community members, collaborate in the planning, execution, and assessment of the project.
- A project requires the use of both community and classroom resources.
- Projects require students to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and many of the GED skills and employability (SCANS) skills described earlier in this Guide for Facilitators.

- Projects encourage teamwork and leadership as students take on different roles and assist each other in the learning process.
- A project should ideally result in a product, presentation, portfolio, or demonstration of knowledge.
- Project-based learning demands that both students and teachers assume new roles.
- The teacher is the facilitator, not the leader.
- The teacher learns along with the students rather than being an expert.
- The teacher gives up some authority as the students demonstrate leadership.
- The teacher is a coach, cheerleader, and a model.
- The teacher must be patient, willing to let students make mistakes in a safe environment, and ready to support students through the bumps in the road.

One of the nicest pieces written recently on project-based learning is from a toolkit titled *Connected Learning Communities Toolkit for Reinventing High School* (Jobs for the Future) by Adria Steinberg of Jobs for the Future. Divided into six categories, the author identifies these criteria for designing projects:

Authenticity

- Project emanates from a problem or question that has meaning to the student.
- Problem or question is one that might actually be tackled by an adult at work or in the community.
- Students create or produce something that has personal and/or social value, beyond the school setting.

Academic Rigor

- Students acquire and apply knowledge central to one or more discipline or content area.
- Students use methods of inquiry central to one or more disciplines (e.g., to think like a scientist).
- Students develop higher-order thinking skills and habits of mind (e.g., searching for evidence, taking different perspectives).

Applied Learning

- Students solve a semi structured problem (e.g. designing a product, improving a system, or organizing an event) that is grounded in a context of life and work beyond the school walls.
- Students acquire and use competencies expected in high-performance work organizations (e.g., teamwork, problem solving).
- Work requires students to develop organizational and self-management skills.

Teamwork and Leadership

Active Exploration

- Students spend significant amounts of time doing field-based work.
- Students engage in real investigations using a variety of methods, media, and sources.
- Students communicate what they learn through presentations.

Adult Connections

- Students meet and observe adults with relevant expertise and experience.
- Students work closely with at least one adult.
- Adults collaborate on the design and assessment of student work.

Assessment

- Students reflect regularly on their learning, using clear project criteria that they have helped to set.
- Adults from outside the classroom help students develop a sense of the real-world standards for this type of work.
- There are opportunities for regular assessment of student work through a range of methods, including exhibitions and portfolios.

The project-based learning activities at the end of each lesson are merely ideas; doing a project in its ideal form is no simple matter. As you begin to build on some of the project ideas in the lessons, it is good to start small, make it doable, and build in success for the participants.

Time

The time indication for each lesson is an estimation, not a statement of fact. The time it takes to complete each lesson is dependent on the following factors: the intent of the facilitator, past experiences of the students, interest of the students, how verbal and conversational the students are, and how your program is structured.

"All students don't learn the same. Learning should be tailored around students so that it doesn't force them to learn in one way. Learning should not be limited to the classroom. The whole world is a classroom. Take them out in the world and teach them. Strategies? I use everything around me to make it work. Newspapers, videos, guest speakers, 'regular people', families, the elderly, the young, the entire community."

Robert Bell, YouthBuild Philadelphia

Tips for Instructors

"Facilitate" means "to make easier." Think about yourself as a facilitator — someone who helps people learn rather than someone who imposes learning upon them. Facilitating suggests the idea of a collaborative relationship between the instructor and students. A facilitator is a:

- Coach
- Listener
- Trainer
- Learner
- Manager of a group process

What follows are some good practices for facilitating, adapted from *Strengthening Mentoring Programs: The National Mentoring Center Training Curriculum* (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; Northwest Regional Education Laboratory, Public/Private Ventures, 2000)[2].

Before Each Lesson

Know the curriculum thoroughly

- As necessary, customize activities, handouts, and overheads so they best address characteristics of your program and your specific group of students.
- Think about how you will facilitate the session, and be prepared to make on-the-spot adjustments. If, for example, you find you need to spend more time on one activity, you might need to shorten another.

Make your learning environment conducive to group interaction.

- Avoid a traditional classroom set-up. Depending on the size of your group, have tables large enough for all the students to sit around, write and converse.
- If small groups are going to be meeting as part of the lesson, make sure the area is large enough so that small groups can meet without distracting each other.

Have everything ready.

- Copy handouts and prepare overheads.
- Gather any required materials and equipment: newsprint, markers, masking tape, an overhead projector (and extension cord, if necessary), and anything else you might need for the lesson.

[2] Reprinted with permission from the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory.

During Each Lesson

Create a comfortable learning environment.

- Create an atmosphere where participants are taken seriously and where they can also laugh. People are usually most open to new ideas when they are enjoying themselves and feel comfortable enough to risk making mistakes.

Pace the lesson appropriately.

- Encourage the exchange of ideas and information, while also keeping activities on track. Move things quickly enough to keep students from being bored, but slowly enough to make sure they absorb what is being discussed.
- Allow time throughout the session for students to ask questions and assist one another with seeking answers.

Model good listening, feedback, and problem-solving skills.

- Listen carefully and respectfully. Acknowledge what the young people say even if you don't agree. People need to feel they are being listened to and their ideas and concerns are recognized as worthy contributions.
- Respond by guiding, not judging. Repeat and address key points.
- Help students develop collaborative problem-solving skills. Involve them in answering other participants' question, and have them work together to arrive at solutions.

Think about how people learn best.

- Keep this point in mind: people remember about 20 percent of what they hear, 40 percent of what they hear and see, and 80 percent of what they discover for themselves.
- Use overheads and newsprint to help students see and remember. Newsprint is also a useful tool for group thinking and problem solving. Summarize major discussion points on newsprint. Post it on the walls around the room so you and your group can keep referring back to, and expanding upon, earlier ideas and contributions.
- Use the three effective strategies for facilitators — brainstorming, group work, and role plays — that are described below.
- Build in success. People learn best when they experience success frequently. Structure activities so students have a sense of accomplishment by the end.

Be yourself

- Know your limitations. If you don't know the answer to a question, that's okay. You don't need to know all the answers. Learning is a collaborative process and you are a partner with your students in that endeavor.
- Maintain your sense of humor.

After Each Lesson

Get feedback from students.

- Prepare an evaluation form that asks for feedback on both the process and the content of the lesson. Distribute it at the end of the session, and ask students to complete it before they leave.
- Use their comments and opinions to plan and tailor your next lessons.

Reflect on what worked well and what did not.

- Don't use the feedback forms to judge yourself. Instead, use the information to help you think through what went well from the students' point of view, what you need to modify about the content, and what facilitation skills you should work on.
- Along with students' feedback, give yourself feedback on the lesson. Think about the situations when students seemed involved, bored, stimulated, confused, angry, or amused. Based on your self-observations, make necessary adjustments in lesson content and your facilitation strategies.

Three Strategies for Effective Facilitation

While facilitating these lessons, you will want to take advantage of three important strategies: brainstorming, group work, and role plays.

1. Brainstorming

Brainstorming is an excellent way to generate ideas, and it is an effective technique for getting all students involved and contributing. This is especially true at the beginning of a lesson when you are trying to get everyone focused on the same subject.

When facilitating brainstorming activities, keep these points in mind:

- The purpose of brainstorming is to encourage all students to offer their thoughts and opinions in a nonjudgmental atmosphere.
- As students offer ideas, record them — all of them — on newsprint.
- Brainstorming is a free exchange of ideas on a topic; it is important to accept everyone's contribution.

2. Group Work

During many activities, organizing the whole group into small groups of four to six students will encourage participation, involvement, and collaborative problem solving.

photo: Martin Dixon

In some cases, assign, or have group members assign to themselves, these specific roles:

- *The leader* (like a facilitator) takes responsibility for helping the group complete its task. He or she helps group members work together and encourages everyone to participate in positive ways.
- *The recorder* writes down ideas from a brainstorming and anything else that needs to be recorded.
- *The reporter* presents the small group's ideas and conclusions back to the whole group. Sometimes you might want to combine the recorder and reporter roles.

Make sure that over the course of several sessions student roles vary and that everyone has an opportunity to be the "leader." Make sure participants understand that, whatever other roles they may have, everyone in the group works together to complete the group task. Everyone suggests ideas, gives opinions, agrees or disagrees with others, asks questions, and offers solutions.

3. Role plays

When preparing to facilitate role plays, keep these points in mind:

- Role plays are informal dramatizations through which students can try out ways they might handle a potential situation and increase their insight into someone else's feelings, values, or attitudes.
- If the lesson includes suggested scenarios and characterizations for the role plays, you should modify these, where possible, to reflect actual situations that have arisen or are likely to arise in your particular program.
- Always allow time after the role plays for students to discuss their own and others' "performances" and to talk about what they learned from the activity.
- Many people initially feel uncomfortable doing role plays. However, once they have some practice with them, they usually enjoy the experience and see that role plays can increase confidence, comfort, and self-esteem.

What If Life Happens?

Nothing in life goes perfectly all the time, and facilitating an integrated curriculum is no exception. Despite all your planning and skillful facilitation, things can (and sometimes will) become unexpectedly challenging. Below are suggestions for handling some of those awkward situations.

What if you notice that students' eyes are glazing over?

- Ask yourself if you're talking too much without giving the students a chance to contribute. Get the participants engaged by structuring it so they have to do the thinking.

- Do a reality check. Are you addressing the needs students have presented?
- Do another reality check. Do you all need a break? Perhaps you could pass out Hershey's Kisses!
- Inject some humor fast.

What if you don't have enough students for the small group work you have planned?

- Use pairs instead.
- Change the activity to a whole group activity, and seat the the group in a circle.

What if there's a heated discussion that is moving the group off track and taking up too much time?

- First let students know that you value their interest and enthusiasm.
- You can say, "Let's stay with this discussion for two more minutes." Then, after two minutes, sum up what's been said and move on.
- Refer back to the aim of the lesson and say "We need to move on so let's have two or three final comments on the topic."
- Let the students suggest an alternate time and process to pursue the discussion so you can move ahead with the lesson.

What if you realize you're going to run out of time before you've accomplished your goals?

- One option is to move quickly through the rest of the lesson. Cover everything, even though the coverage will not be as deep.
- Another option is to stop the activities a little earlier than planned and have a longer wrap-up session where you talk about the topics you didn't get to. Relate those topics to the lesson's goals.

Finally, be flexible, be creative, be honest, be a learner, be ready for anything, and, most important of all, have fun with *Working Hands, Working Minds.*

Overview of Teamwork and Leadership

Working cooperatively is essential to the building trades. In this unit, students get to know one another in order to build a sense of "team" and work together to create a product. They analyze the processes and qualities of good teamwork and leadership and look for examples of teamwork and leadership in their community.

- Lesson 1 — What Do We Stand For?

  Students define teamwork and leadership and discuss the role of each in YouthBuild. Students examine the variety of experiences they each bring to YouthBuild and create an inventory of the team's skills. They reflect on the ways they will have to work together and show teamwork and leadership at YouthBuild as well as in their lives.

- Lesson 2 — The Heart of Teamwork and Leadership

  Students discuss the attitudes that underlie effective teamwork and leadership and develop a statement that expresses their philosophy about teamwork and leadership at YouthBuild.

- Lesson 3 — Respecting Our Differences

  In this lesson, students explore how to get along with a diverse group of people and bridge differences at YouthBuild. They solve challenging scenarios that center around tolerance, respect, and diversity on the work site and in the classroom.

- Lesson 4 — Diversity in the Workplace

  Students learn why it is important to have a diverse workplace and reflect in their journals on how diverse populations can be encouraged to enter and stay in the construction trades.

- Lesson 5 — TEAM…What Does It Really Mean?

  Students participate in teambuilding activities and assess their teamwork and leadership skills. Based on their self-assessment, they set individual goals for teamwork and leadership.

- Lesson 6 — Effective Communication for Teamwork

  Students discuss and practice several of the core communication skills needed for effective teamwork. This lesson develops listening skills and underscores the importance of asking questions and following directions.

- Lesson 7 — Planning to Work As a Team

  This lesson prepares students for the experience of using materials and tools cooperatively. Students read and follow written instructions, divide tasks, and develop a workplan to build sawhorses. They analyze their planning process and identify a communication skill they will try to improve.

- Lesson 8 — Working As a Team

  Students work cooperatively in small groups to build sawhorses. They evaluate the process of working together and write reflectively about it.

- Lesson 9 — Societal Images of Leadership

  In this lesson, students explore the negative stereotypes that abound in society about youth and young adults as leaders. They define youth leadership and consider ways they can promote themselves as leaders.

- Lesson 10 — Portfolio Evaluation

  This lesson is designed to help both teachers and students assess the students' skills, attitudes, and beliefs about cooperative work and leadership. Students demonstrate their skills and attitudes by collecting material they have produced throughout the unit into individual portfolios. They write reflectively and then create a final product to present their work to the members of YouthBuild and their families.

Competency Checklist

Upon satisfactory completion of this unit, students will be able to:

☐ Share individual experiences related to construction.

☐ Define leadership and teamwork.

☐ Interview and introduce each other.

☐ Complete an inventory of the group's skills.

☐ Write a philosophy statement about leadership and teamwork.

☐ Design a bulletin board expressing their beliefs.

☐ Follow verbal directions.

☐ Read and follow written directions.

☐ Work cooperatively to develop a work plan.

☐ Work cooperatively to build sawhorses.

☐ Understand how to use the following tools correctly: a framing square, handsaw, tape measure, and hammer.

Teamwork and Leadership

☐ Practice measuring, sawing, and hammering.

☐ Evaluate the process of working together.

☐ Write reflectively about the process.

☐ Identify stereotypes about youth in our society.

☐ Read and comprehend the main points of an article.

☐ Define youth leadership and list ways to promote it.

Portfolio Assessment Checklist

Upon completion of the unit, students should have the following items in their portfolios:

☐ Copy of interview with personal experiences (Lesson 1)

☐ Copy of interview of fellow student (Lesson 1)

☐ A philosophy statement (Lesson 2)

☐ Photograph of bulletin board (Lesson 2)

☐ List of ways to promote tolerance for diversity (Lesson 3)

☐ Self-assessment and individual goals (Lesson 5)

☐ Journal entry on working in a team (Lesson 6)

☐ Cooperative planning worksheet for building sawhorses (Lesson 7)

☐ Evaluation worksheet for teamwork (Lesson 8)

☐ Journal entry reflecting on teamwork (Lesson 8)

LESSON

1

photo: Chris Cato

What Do We Stand For?

Aim

Students will examine their program's standards for leadership and teamwork and discuss their personal experiences with leadership and teamwork. In this lesson, students will:

• Define leadership and teamwork

• Discuss local YouthBuild's standards for student leadership and working together

• Interview each other about past and current teamwork and leadership experiences

• Complete a visual inventory of the team's skills

Things to Consider

While the terms leadership and teamwork are intimately connected, you will need to help students distinguish between the two. Students should be encouraged to think about the unique qualities of being a leader and a team player.

This lesson provides an opportunity to introduce or review your organization's expectations for student leadership and teamwork. If your organization has developed written program standards, make an overhead or copies of these to share with the students.

In this lesson, students interview one another about their leadership and teamwork experiences and skills. Students should keep copies of their own interview in their journals or notebooks. Information from the completed interviews could be used when filling out job applications, cover letters, or writing personal essays needed for college scholarships.

For a large group of 50 or more, consider breaking the group into smaller groups of 15 people with facilitators for brainstorming the leadership and teamwork definitions. You could come back to the large group for the discussion of YouthBuild expectations. Small groups would also be helpful for the "Class Body" exercise.

If need be, you could continue this lesson over two sessions. The lesson has a natural stopping place after the YouthBuild discussion and before the student interviews and "Class Body" exercise.

Materials, Tools, and Resources

- An overhead or copies of your program's standards for student leadership and teamwork (if available)

- Handout: Co-worker Interview

- Butcher paper

- Colored markers or crayons

- Copies of this lesson plan for any additional instructors who will be facilitating the "Class Body" exercise.

- Student journals

Time

1.5 hours
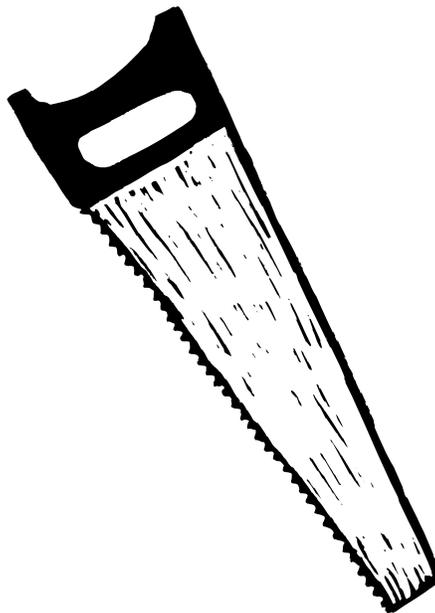
Key Terms

- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Interview
- Experience
- Standards

Steps for Activity
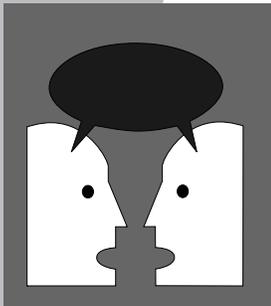
1. Explain that leadership and teamwork are core concepts at YouthBuild and that in order for students to be successful in those areas, they need to have a clear understanding of what teamwork and leadership mean to themselves and the group. Tell students that in this lesson they will define leadership and teamwork and review the YouthBuild standards for student leadership and working together. They will also have an opportunity to discuss their previous experiences with leadership and teamwork.

2. Ask the students the following questions and jot their answers on the chalkboard or flipchart paper:

- What are the qualities of a good leader?

- What are the functions of a leader — what does a leader do?

- What are the stresses connected to being a leader?

- What kind of support do leaders need from others?

- In your opinion, who in history or in your life has been a good leader?

3. As a group, have the class create a definition for leadership. Consider YouthBuild USA's definition: "Good leadership is taking responsibility to see that things go right for one's life, family, program, and community." Encourage students to identify specific leadership qualities in their own definition, such as responsibility, decision making, and looking out for the good of the whole. Write the class definition on the board.

4. Ask students how their definition applies to their own lives at the work-site. Why and where in construction is good leadership necessary?

5. Follow the same process for defining teamwork. What are the qualities of team players and what is the function of a team? Write the students' responses on the board and then ask students to create a definition for teamwork. The students' definition should include specific qualities such as subordinating personal glory to work for the group, cooperation, and "pulling your own weight."

6. Ask students how their definition of teamwork applies to their own lives at the worksite. Why and where in construction is good teamwork necessary?

7. Keep the student definitions on the board as you proceed with the discussion of the YouthBuild program. Tell students that now you want them to consider YouthBuild's expectations. Write the following on the chalkboard or flipchart:

Leadership and teamwork are core concepts at YouthBuild

WORKING HANDS, WORKING MINDS

<u>YouthBuild's expectations for…</u>

Student leadership   **Teamwork**

Ask for volunteers to share, from their experience at YouthBuild, expectations for student leadership and working together. To promote dialogue, ask the following questions:

- From your experience at YouthBuild so far, what does student leadership mean at YouthBuild?

- What does student leadership look like in the classroom? On the worksite? In the community?

- When you leave YouthBuild, what leadership qualities should you have? Are these the same qualities listed in your earlier definition? How will these qualities help you in other jobs?

- What are the expectations for team interactions?

- In general, how should we interact with and support one another at YouthBuild?

Record all responses on the chalkboard or flipchart paper.

Lead a discussion with students about how teamwork and leadership relate to each other at YouthBuild by asking the students to compare the lists they just made.

Ask students:

- How are teamwork and leadership connected? How are they different?

- How do the teamwork and leadership standards support one another?

- Is there any overlap in expectations?

If necessary, explain to students how the two skills are interrelated. In order for the team to be successful, individual members need to take leadership and responsibility, and everyone needs to communicate, problem-solve, and follow through for the team to be effective.

8. If your program has developed written standards for teamwork and student leadership, distribute copies to the students. Ask for volunteers to read the standards. Lead a discussion with the students about the standards by asking the following questions:

- How many of you have actually read the standards before today? Should we add anything to the list we created earlier? (Record any additions on flipchart or chalkboard.)

- Are these standards something we can all live with? Why or why not?

- Why is it important for the team to review these standards together?

- How are we doing at living up to these standards? As individuals? As a YouthBuild community? Is there room for improvement?

Teamwork and Leadership

Ask students to share why they feel teamwork and leadership are more critical at YouthBuild than in many other educational and work settings. Support the students' responses by affirming that the ability to work as a team and taking on leadership are extremely important for school, work, and life success.

Tell students that working together well and taking leadership in our community are skills that take time and effort to develop. In order to be successful at both it is helpful to explore the experiences we have had with teamwork and leadership – whether these experiences were negative or positive or whether students have had lots of experience or just a little.

9. Tell students that in order to explore the experiences they have had with teamwork and leadership, they will interview one another. Tell students that it is also designed to help them think about their philosophy or mind-set about teamwork and leadership. Pair up students who don't know each other well and distribute the "Co-worker Interview" handout. As students do the interview and record the information, circulate among them to assist if necessary. Allow 30 minutes or so for students to take turns interviewing one another.

(Optional: Before students begin the interview process, tell them they will be introducing their partner to the group after the interviews are done. When the interviews are completed, ask students to introduce each other to the large group, highlighting key information.)

10. When the interviews are complete, bring students back together as a large group to reflect on what they learned about each other and their collective experience. To promote reflection, ask questions like:

- What have been our experiences with working as a team?
- What have been our experiences with taking leadership?
- What were the key words we used to describe ourselves as team members and leaders?
- How do we currently practice teamwork at YouthBuild?
- How do we currently practice leadership at YouthBuild?
- What is the connection between our experiences and feelings and how we practice teamwork or leadership?

Record responses on chalkboard or flipchart paper.

11. Tell students that they are now going to create a "class body," which is a visual image of the collective strength of the YouthBuild team. To do the activity:

A. Lay a large sheet (about eight feet long) of butcher paper on the floor.

B. Ask a volunteer to lie down on the paper leaving about two feet of blank space under his or her feet. Using a black marker trace the body of the volunteer on the butcher paper. Draw a line across the paper under the feet. (It should look like the body is standing on the ground.)

C. Tape the outline to the wall.

D. Fill in the class body: This represents the group's collective talents and strengths. Ask students to review their answers to Question 3 from the "Co-worker Interview." Then have them write their three strengths or talents inside the outline of the body (be sure to provide a variety of colored markers). Students should write their strengths or talents in the part of the body that they associate or think this strength or talent comes from. For example, one student might decide that one of his or her strengths is creativity and that this comes from the heart; therefore he or she will write the word "creativity" near the heart of the class body. Another student might connect creativity to vision and therefore write it near the eyes.

E. Represent the influences others have had on the team. This shows the outside influences that impact the class. Have the students refer to Question 9 on their worksheets and then write the name of the person that they admire in the space around the outline of the body.

F. Build a foundation for the class body to stand on. This represents the foundation upon which the team will be built. Have students write their effective teamwork qualities and skills (Question 5) in one column and qualities or skills that allow the students to take leadership in their lives (Question 7) in another column beneath the line under the feet.

G. If the students wish to, have them embellish the class body with additional graphics or color.

After completing these steps, discuss the drawing with the group using prompts like:

- How do the qualities and skills that are listed under the body help to make a strong foundation for our team?

- What similarities or differences do you see in the teamwork and leadership skills listed? How will this impact our team?

- Who are the leaders who have influenced us as a group? Why? What type of leadership styles do these leaders use? What effect might this have on the type of team we will be?

- What strengths do we have as a group? What aspects of our team seem strong at this point? What aspects of our team do we need to build up?

- Where did people place their strengths or talents on the body? Were there differences in where certain strengths or talents were placed? Why do you think this is? What might this say about how we relate to our strengths or talents?

Wrap Up

1. When students have finished discussing the class body, tell students that together, they make a powerful team and can support one another to achieve the YouthBuild standards around teamwork and leadership. Ask the group to find a prominent place to display their class body.

2. To help students reflect on the lesson, ask questions like:

- Is everyone in the organization familiar with our standards for leadership and teamwork? If not, how can we help folks become more aware?

- Are we, as a group, "walking our talk?" That is, are all teachers and students doing our best to live up to the standards?

- How do you think the larger community would rate us on "walking our talk?"

- How do and can you show the YouthBuild community that you really live your philosophy? On the construction site? At school? At home? In the community?

- How can we support one another to take and practice leadership at YouthBuild? How can we support one another to be the best team players we can be?

Creative Extensions

- Have students create posters that reflect your program standards for student leadership and working together. Display them in prominent places around the school and construction site.

- Explore leaders who've experienced adversity. How has that adversity helped those leaders become the unique people they are? For instance, how might growing up in poverty impact how a politician might connect to "the people"? How might someone who is an ex-gang member or a recovering alcoholic lead a gang prevention program or recovery program differently than someone who has not had those experiences? Have students research leaders who have overcome hardship and become great leaders. Students might focus on the strengths and skills that overcoming hardship has provided them or on their leadership philosophy that come from this experience.

- How is your program held accountable for its leadership/teamwork standards? How does the program recognize and reinforce things that work? How are struggles or weaknesses discussed and addressed? To find out more about the ways things work and to get ideas for improvement, convene a panel of youth/adults to discuss issues and create an action plan.

- Interview community members (family members) about their leadership experiences. Students might talk with members of the community, religious leaders, business owners, family members, or friends to learn about how various individuals define and practice their leadership style. Here are some ideas:

    1. Have students talk with their mother or grandmother about how she manages the home. How are chores assigned, and how are decisions made? What type of things are delegated? What type of skills has she developed doing this job? What type of things does she struggle with? Does she see herself as a leader? Why or why not? What advice can she give? Students should interview their father or grandfather and ask the same questions. What similarities and differences are evident? Why might this be? What does this highlight about leadership styles? Are there gender/age/class/race differences in how these people approach leadership?

    2. Have students interview members of a local organization to learn about how different individuals see the organization's leadership and teamwork philosophies playing out. Are there differences in the perspectives of those at different "levels" in the organization? Are there different needs for teamwork? What parts of their job do they see as connected to their co-workers? How do they work to be a successful team?

Project-Based Learning Activities

- If you haven't already developed written standards for teamwork and leadership, now is the time! Bring students and staff together to talk about shared leadership, program communication, being allies to one another, and teamwork and leadership opportunities and expectations. To get started, have students survey local or national youth-serving organizations that focus on youth development. What standards have those organizations developed for working together and student leadership? How did they develop their standards? What can be learned from them?

- Organize focus groups at YouthBuild or in the community around the leadership/teamwork skills that young people need to be successful. Questions to ask: How can students be best prepared to be effective community members and leaders? What support and experiences do our youth need to be effective leaders? Is the community ready for young people to take on leadership roles? If not, how can we help the community become more receptive? What leadership roles are currently available? What new leadership roles can we create?

- Have students create a leadership inventory that they can give to family or community members that promotes awareness around the various ways individuals take leadership in their lives. What leadership skills are developed coaching a basketball team, leading a Sunday school class, arranging a carpool, or organizing a block party?

Handout 1

Co-worker Interview

Name of person doing the interview:

Date:

1. What is your name? _____

2. Why did you join YouthBuild? _____

    _____

    _____

3. Describe three strengths or talents you have:

    _____

    _____

    _____

4. Describe three experiences you have had working on a team:

    _____

    _____

    _____

5. List three qualities or skills that you possess that help you to be an effective
    team player:

    _____

    _____

    _____

6. Describe three times you have displayed leadership:

    _____

    _____

    _____

Handout 1, cont'd.

7. List three qualities or skills that you possess that help you to take leadership
   in your life:

   _____

   _____

   _____

8. What is the best team you have ever worked on and why?

   _____

   _____

   _____

9. Who is one person you admire for the leadership they take and why?

   _____

   _____

   _____

LESSON

2

The Heart of Teamwork and Leadership: Our Philosophies about Working Together

Aim

Students will discuss the positive attitudes that underlie effective teamwork and leadership and develop a statement that shares their philosophy, or mindset, about teamwork and leadership at YouthBuild. In this lesson, students will:

- Brainstorm a list of the various ways they will work together and demonstrate leadership at YouthBuild

- Read and discuss quotes about teamwork and leadership

- Formulate their own quote that succinctly shares their philosophy about teamwork and leadership

- Create a bulletin board or other display that showcases their quotes and YouthBuild's standards for student leadership and working together

Things to Consider

When discussing leadership development with YouthBuild students, it is important to approach the discussion from a "strengths" or resiliency perspective. Since YouthBuild students (particularly new ones) may not always see themselves as leaders, it is important to help students uncover the "non-traditional" ways they display leadership. Examples might include caring for younger siblings or family members, attending school without familial support, or finding legal, creative ways to make money in their spare time.

This lesson was designed to follow Lesson 1 of this unit. If you did not do Lesson 1, at the beginning of this lesson you will need to lead a discussion with students about your program standards for student leadership and teamwork. Either review your written standards with the students or have the group brainstorm the expectations. (See Lesson 1 for more in-depth instructions.)

For this lesson, you will need a room with tables and blackboard or flip chart. It works best with a group of 50 or less.

Time

1.5 hours

Key Terms

- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Philosophy

Materials, Tools, and Resources

- Blackboard or newsprint for brainstorming
- Handout: Quotations
- Space to display student quotes
- Colored or decorative paper, markers, and magazines to cut up
- Optional: A computer or word processor for students to design and print out their quotes
- Student journals

Steps for Activity

1. Tell students that in order to live teamwork and leadership at YouthBuild, it is helpful to develop, and share with the world, a positive philosophy about teamwork and leadership. Write the word PHILOSOPHY on the chalkboard or flipchart paper. As a group, define the word, and, if necessary, ask a volunteer to look the word up in the dictionary and read the definition out loud. Record all responses on the chalkboard or flipchart paper. Your definition may include:

• A way of thinking about something

• A mindset or belief

• A school of thought

Tell students that in this lesson they will be thinking deeply about what teamwork and leadership mean to them and formulating a statement that shares with the YouthBuild community their beliefs, or philosophy.

Lead a discussion about the importance of developing a personal philosophy around teamwork and leadership. To promote dialogue ask questions like:

• How does developing and sharing these personal statements help us to all be "on the same page" with teamwork and leadership?

• What does your mindset, or philosophy, about teamwork or leadership have to do with your actions?

• What other purposes might the statements serve? (e.g., they are celebrations of our diversity and our similarities; they are belief statements for which we can be held accountable; they are an inspiration for our team.)

2. Pass out the handout "Quotations." Depending on how much time you have, you might elect to use several or all of the quotes. Ask for volunteers to read each quote out loud. After each quote is read, let students share what meaning they think the quote has for teamwork and leadership at YouthBuild. Record all responses on the chalkboard or flipchart paper. These responses will be helpful to guide students as they develop their own quotes.

3. When you have finished sharing and discussing all the quotes, distribute the decorative paper and markers. Tell students that it is now their job to create a catchy quote or phrase to illustrate their philosophy or beliefs about the importance of teamwork or leadership at YouthBuild. Ask students to create their quotes on scratch paper first and then neatly transfer the quote to decorative paper. Students should also write their finished quotes in their journals.

To get students started, you might devise a quote to share your philosophy about teamwork and leadership. It also may be helpful for students to

What does your mindset, or philosophy, about teamwork or leadership have to do with your actions?

work in small groups during this activity. Circulate among students as they write their quotes and offer one-on-one assistance if necessary, along with praise and encouragement. Allow ample time for students to come up with and revise their quotes. When students have written and revised their quotes, ask each student to read his or her quote out loud.

4. Ask the students to work together as a team to create a display that showcases the quotes they created and YouthBuild 's standards for student leadership and teamwork. Have the students either draw pictures or cut images from the magazine to illustrate their quotes. Make sure the students find a prominent place at YouthBuild for their display! Take a photo of the bulletin board for the students' portfolios.

Wrap Up

When students have finished putting together their bulletin board or display, bring the large group back together. To help students reflect on this lesson, ask questions like:

- Was it difficult to come up with a quote? Why or why not?

- When you created your display, did all of you model your leadership and teamwork philosophies? What successes did you have? How can you improve on teamwork and leadership the next time you do a team project?

- What are the various ways you will benefit from working together in the classroom? At the construction site? In the community? How can you help one another live up to the philosophies you just wrote and displayed?

Creative Extensions

- Give students time to brainstorm the various ways they can help one another be successful leaders and team members at YouthBuild. Examples might include offering kind and supportive words, talking things out when a controversial issue arises, or encouraging each other to take advantage of leadership opportunities when they arise. Have the students create posters or a visual display of their ideas.

- Have students research or create 25 or so teamwork and leadership quotes that can be used to motivate the group. Students can then write or type the quotes onto pieces of paper or index cards and place them in a jar or box. Use the quotes as conversation starters or journal prompts during class or community meetings.

- Find proverbs from around the world about teamwork and leadership. Have the students locate and insert pins on a map in the country where the quote originated. Lead a discussion with the students about the similarities and differences in cultural ideas about teamwork and leadership.

- Ask students to research charismatic, effective, but "negative" leaders. Lead a discussion with students about what happens when leaders don't use their leadership for the good of the people. Ask students if there are people who use their leadership negatively. If so, what are ways to get those people to use their leadership in positive ways?

Project-Based Learning Activities

- A small team of students can "adopt" an elderly person in the community who may need help with small home repairs or other daily chores. The team can assess the person's needs and wants, plan activities, keep track of the activities, and assess the success of each activity. At the end of this project, the team can evaluate how well they functioned as a group, paying particular attention to the people who took leadership roles.

Handout 1

Quotation #1

"You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist."

Indira Gandhi

Quotation #2

"To disagree, one doesn't have to be disagreeable."

Barry Goldwater

Quotation #3

"Always do what you say you are going to do. It is the glue and fiber that binds successful relationships."

Jeffrey A. Timmons

Quotation #4

"A problem is a chance for you to do your best."

Duke Ellington

Quotation #5

"I never learned anything talking. I only learn things when I ask questions."

Lou Holtz

Quotation #6

"The Vietnamese are our brothers, the Russians are our brothers, the Chinese are our brothers; and one day we've got to sit down together at the table of brotherhood."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr

photo: Martin Dixon

Respecting Our Differences

Aim

In this lesson students will discuss how to get along with a diverse group of people, promote tolerance, and bridge differences at YouthBuild. In this lesson they will:

- Define tolerance, respect, and diversity and identify examples of these at YouthBuild

- Solve "challenge" scenarios that center around tolerance, respect, and diversity on the worksite and in the classroom

- Brainstorm ways to promote tolerance of all groups within the YouthBuild community

Things to Consider

Discussing issues of tolerance and diversity can be challenging, regardless of how much experience you and your students have with these issues. Talking about difference, oppression, and tolerance can bring up feelings like fear, anger, denial, or guilt. Before you do this lesson, read through it carefully. If you haven't already done so, you might think about the ways you can explore the biases you may hold about groups different from yourself. It might be informative to share with students your personal experience working through your biases and finding ways to be respectful and tolerant of others.

Since you are asking students to explore their values and share openly about experiences that may be sensitive to them, setting ground rules for discussion at the beginning of the lesson will help students feel safer and make discussion flow more openly.

Before you create your groups, think about your students. The scenarios are quite challenging. Will the teams be effective if you choose them randomly, or do you need to pre-select the teams?

For this lesson, you will need a room with tables and a blackboard or flip chart. It works best with a group of 50 or less.

Time

2 hours

Key Terms

- Tolerance/intolerance
- Respect
- Cooperation
- Communication

Materials, Tools, and Resources

- Chalkboard or flipchart paper for recording student responses
- Handouts: Challenge Scenarios 1–4
- Student journals

Steps for Activity

1. Tell students that in this lesson they will focus on respecting differences at YouthBuild, both on the construction site and in the classroom. Remind students of two things: 1) that leadership development and teamwork are core concepts at YouthBuild and 2) communicating effectively and getting along with those who have different beliefs and experiences are key elements of leadership and teamwork. Write the following words on the chalkboard or flipchart paper:

> Tolerance
>
> Diversity
>
> Respect

Ask the students to define each of the words and record all responses on the chalkboard or flipchart paper.

2. Lead a discussion with students about diversity at YouthBuild and the importance of respecting that diversity. To promote discussion, ask questions like:

- Is diversity a good thing or a bad or neutral thing? Explain your answer.

- Look around the room. What are our outward differences? What might be some of the differences we cannot see? How do our differences impact the ways we interact with one another?

- What type of conflict might differences create?

- How are we stronger as a team because of our differences?

- Is respect important to our success? Give examples.

- How do we show respect to one another in our community? How do you know when you are being respected?

- Can you give an example of a time when you were treated as different or as an outsider? How did that make you feel? Why might you have been treated as an outsider?

- Why is it important to be accepting of others at YouthBuild? How do you show acceptance of others?

- Besides YouthBuild, in what other situations will you be expected to be accepting of others who are different from yourself?

3. Help students come to consensus that tolerance and diversity are beneficial things. You might conclude the conversation by sharing with students the notion that we find comfort in those who hold similar values and ideas, but find growth when we open ourselves up to people who have had different experiences and hold different perspectives.

How are we stronger

as a team because

of our differences?

4. Write the following on the chalkboard or flipchart paper:

> INTOLERANCE
> Actions that promote…

First ask students to define intolerance and then have them brainstorm a list of labels or words and actions that show intolerance. Ask students to think about their own experiences with intolerance, either being on the receiving or giving end. Really push students to express themselves openly and not be worried whether or not their words offend. The point is to be open and honest about the issue so that everyone can learn and grow and consequently work better together.

Keep in mind that for this open discussion to be meaningful, a certain level of trust must be in the room and students need to feel safe expressing themselves. Before you start the brainstorm, you might tell students that some of the words that you are asking people to share are very ugly when said out loud and that students should realize that the person who speaks the word is not trying to be offensive or hurtful by saying the word. You might also begin the brainstorm by asking students to share words or labels that have been applied to them or ways people have shown intolerance of them.

Your list may include:

INTOLERANCE
Actions that promote…

- Name calling
- Labeling people
- Being cliquish
- Teasing because of difference
- Not listening to others' perspective
- Assuming a person feels a certain way or acts a certain way because he or she belongs to a group different than your own
- Thinking your way is the one and only right way
- Judging others
- Inappropriate humor

5. When your list is complete, explain to students that most of us have experience both being on the giving and receiving end of these actions. (You might choose to share an experience or two that you've had being on both the giving and receiving end of these actions.) Tell students that in order to prevent us from being intolerant it is important to explore and understand why we label and act in ways that separate and hurt. Lead a discussion with students about how these actions make people feel and the purpose they serve. To help promote dialogue, ask questions like:

Teamwork and Leadership

- What purpose does it serve to treat someone in a way that separates him or her from us?

- What feelings are usually behind labels or hurtful words and actions?

- Do you feel that Blacks, Latinos, Native Americans, Asians, immigrants, gay people, Jews, and women are discriminated against in our society? Why or why not? Is it easy for groups of people who are discriminated against, but different, to come together and fight oppression? Why or why not?

- How does fear, misinformation, or anger keep oppressed people apart? Can you share an example from your own life about a time when you were given misinformation about a person or group of people different from yourself? How did this misinformation lead you to feel about that person or group of people?

Tell students that being tolerant and respectful of others who are different takes awareness, education, and practice. That is, we need to be aware of the stereotypes we hold about those who are different from ourselves, we need to educate ourselves about other people's real feelings and experiences, and we need opportunities to practice talking and listening to and interacting with a diverse group of people.

Explain to students that the process of accepting others takes time and effort and it helps to practice in a safe environment, which is your classroom or worksite. Tell students that you have several challenge scenarios that center on exploring difference and promoting tolerance and teamwork at YouthBuild.

6. Divide students into three teams. Assign each group a challenge scenario and ask students to use the reflection questions at the bottom of the scenario to help them problem solve through the situation. To give students an idea of the type of problem solving you expect in the small group, model the sample challenge scenario as a large group.

Give students ample time to work through the challenge scenarios. (It might take up to 30 minutes, but let the students know when you want them to be done so that they can pace themselves.) Circulate among the groups and give feedback or suggest alternative ways students might think about or reconcile their challenge situation.

7. When students have completed the scenarios, bring everyone back together in the large group. If time permits, have each team role play their scenario and the way they chose to handle the situation for the large group. If time is limited, have a representative from each group share their challenge scenario and the way in which the group handled the situation. When each team has shared, help students to reflect on the activity by asking the following questions:

- How did you feel when you first read the scenario?

- Would it have been easier to work through your challenge scenario alone? Why or why not? What did working as a team bring to the discussion and problem solving?

- Was there a certain mindset or attitude that helped you to be a problem solver when working through your challenge scenario? If so, describe.

- Has anyone experienced a situation similar to his or her scenario? If you feel comfortable, describe the situation and how it was handled. Did you feel good about how it was handled? Did your experience make problem solving through your challenge scenario easier? Why or why not?

- Are there any situations related to tolerance that need to be addressed at YouthBuild? If so, describe. How can we solve the problem as a YouthBuild community?

Wrap Up

1. Put the following prompt on the chalkboard or flipchart paper:

- List as many different cultures or perspectives that you can think of that may exist at YouthBuild (Examples: Being African-American, gay, Jewish, homeless, etc.). Describe at least three ways to promote tolerance of all groups within the YouthBuild community.

Ask students to take 10 minutes to write their responses in their journals.

2. Ask each student to share his or her ideas for promoting tolerance at YouthBuild and record the responses on the chalkboard or flipchart paper. To help students reflect on the lesson, ask the following questions:

- Do we currently practice any of the strategies the group identified?

- How can we share these strategies with others in the YouthBuild community? How can we make sure everyone at YouthBuild is aware of the importance of respecting diversity and teaching tolerance?

- Do you feel better prepared to handle challenging situations that center on respecting diversity and being tolerant of those who are different?

- How can we move beyond tolerance and into celebrating differences?

- When are other times we will need to be tolerant of others' differences? Does the list we created for promoting tolerance at YouthBuild have meaning beyond YouthBuild?

- What is one thing you can do differently when you leave this room that will promote tolerance?

- Thank students for their hard work on such an important issue.

Creative Extensions

- Have students evaluate how they communicate differently in different situations. For instance, ask students to describe how they communicate in the classroom compared to on the construction site or with friends as opposed to family members. Have students discuss the similarities and differences they find in their communication style when they are with different groups of people. Help students to explore how they learned to change their style for different environments, then talk about what meaning this ability to communicate effectively in different groups has to do with tolerance and respecting difference. Encourage students to outline strategies for the successful transition between different "cultures."

- Have students research different cultures' communication styles. Then ask students to reflect on how these differences might impact the YouthBuild workplace and classroom interactions. How can students respect different communication styles and still communicate effectively? Have students brainstorm possibilities.

- Invite a conflict resolution expert to speak to your students. Have the students develop questions to ask the guest speaker. Here are some questions to get students started:

    What skills do you use in your work?

    What kinds of jobs seem to face the most conflict at work?

    What techniques have you found effective for resolving conflict in group settings?

    What is the most difficult type of conflict for you to work with and why?

    What tips can you give me to help improve my communication and conflict resolution skills?

- Have students create their own challenge scenarios based on their own experiences at YouthBuild and elsewhere. Encourage students to work from their own experiences as an "outsider" and to be creative and push others to explore issues of bias. You might choose to use the students' challenge scenarios the next time you teach this lesson.

- If there is an issue or issues that have been ongoing with the group that relate to the issues discussed in this lesson, have the students create an action plan for addressing the issue. Help students find creative, productive ways to deal with the issue. Students might: 1) call together a special meeting or bring up the issue at a community or policy meeting; 2) create a "task force" or special committee to research the issue and develop recommendations for addressing the issue (make sure the committee is made up of members who represent numerous perspectives and cultures); or 3) create new group guidelines for respecting difference.

Project-Based Learning Activities

- Have students look at non-verbal communication. How might non-verbal messages make someone feel like they are an "outsider" or "unwanted?" Have students survey the community to find out what types of body language might convey negative or unwelcome feelings or the different ways of non-verbally expressing sorrow or joy. The survey could also be used to explore how different cultures may interpret body language in different ways. Have the students find a creative way to present their findings to the community — possibly a primer for understanding different groups.

- Have students connect with various community groups to gain a deeper perspective of how tolerance and diversity issues impact different groups. For instance, students might interview members of a cultural group, a spokesperson for an association for the mentally retarded, PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), or NOW (National Organization of Women). Have students divide into teams and visit as many different groups as possible. Students should work as a team to design interview questions. Afterwards, have students present their information and develop an action plan for incorporating the information gathered into YouthBuild standards.

Teamwork and Leadership

Handout 1

Respecting Our Differences: Challenge Scenarios

Scenario #1 (Sample for the Group)

It is the first day of the new term and you arrive in class to see that there are two new students joining the group. You and the rest of the class have been working together for several months and have become good friends. As the two new students are introduced to the group you learn that they are brothers, ages 17 and 19 and have recently emigrated from Laos. The older brother speaks limited English, and the younger brother is missing his left arm from the elbow down due to a landmine explosion. During break you hear a couple students talking about the new students and saying things like:

"How is he going to be able to use the tools and do the work without an arm?"

"I don't want to have to pick up the slack because he can't do his job!"

"How are they even going to understand what's going on?"

"Did you see what they were eating for lunch, it smelled awful! How do those people eat that garbage?"

Knowing all of this, how can you work as a team to make YouthBuild a safe and welcoming place for these new students? In your discussion, consider things like:

- How can you help address the communication issues that may be present?

- How can you help make the new students feel like they are part of the team?

- How can you address stereotypes and bias that may be held about Laotian people and other recent immigrants? What are some of the stereotypes that you and others in the group may have?

- How can you make your site a welcoming and productive site for a person with a disability while addressing the concerns about work productivity?

Handout 2

Respecting Our Differences: Challenge Scenarios

Scenario #2

You have been at YouthBuild for awhile and are about halfway through your program. For the most part you enjoy it and you get along with everyone, with one exception. Jim, one of the students in the program, is bisexual and there have been many conflicts between Jim and other members of the class.

Several students have recently demanded that Jim be kicked out of YouthBuild because he just doesn't fit in with the team. Your teacher has brought the class together to discuss the issue. During the discussion Jim says that he feels that he is always being picked on or singled out. He says that he often hears other students laughing at him, talking about him, or calling him names. He does not feel like he is part of the team and he has no friends in the program. He says that he has tried to make friends but every time he does, students imply that he is trying to come on to them. Jim feels frustrated and wants to work it out so that he can stay in YouthBuild. Other students in the group make comments like:

"It's not our fault that Jim can't make friends and that nobody wants to hang out with him."

"I don't care what he is, but I just don't understand why he has to constantly bring up the sexuality thing. Why do those people have to flaunt it?"

"Why does Jim want to be here anyway? Why doesn't he just go get a job as a hair dresser?"

"I'm not going to work with him; I don't want him coming on to me."

"What about the way we feel? Why should we have to be around him if we don't agree with what he is?"

After hearing all of this, how can you work to address this issue and help make YouthBuild a safe and welcoming place for all students? In your discussion, consider things like:

- How can you help address the issues Jim raised about feeling isolated and alone? How can you help make Jim feel like he is part of the team?

- How can you address stereotypes and bias that may be held about sexual minorities? Think about your own feelings and beliefs as well as those that may be held by others in the group.

- What types of behaviors would constitute "flaunting" your sexuality if you are gay, lesbian, or bisexual? For instance, would talking about your sexuality or talking about a date or a crush be flaunting it? In what ways do heterosexual students "flaunt" their sexuality? For instance, flirting with classmates, talking about a date or crush, or making sexual comments. Are there different standards for different people? Why? Is this fair? How can you address this at your site?

Handout 2, cont'd.

• What about the concerns that Jim will make passes at teammates? How can you address this concern? How do you address this issue when heterosexual students make unwanted passes at other students? Do you have guidelines or philosophies around dating other students? Should the same guidelines apply to all students?

• How does a person's sexual orientation influence their work productivity at YouthBuild and at other jobs?

Handout 3

Respecting Our Differences: Challenge Scenarios

Scenario #3

It's the last day before winter break and you and a few classmates are standing around in the hall when Clara walks in. Clara is the only woman in your class.

She is very small and petite and has a soft voice. As she walks by one guy yells, "Hey Clara, what's a pretty thang like you doin' here? Why don't you give up this wild kick you're on and let us men do the dirty work."

Another student says, "Yeah, you should be getting your nails done, not using a nail gun. Jobs like these are for ugly girls, those manly girls. You look good. You could get yourself a husband and a couple babies, no problem."

You watch as Clara looks humiliated and walks off with her head down. When class starts, your instructor informs you that Clara will not be returning after winter break. You want to bring up the issue with the group and talk about how Clara has been treated, but you are not sure how to go about it.

Work with your group to brainstorm a strategy for addressing this issue.

- How can you bring up the issue with the group without shutting people down or making them feel attacked?

- How can you help make Clara and other women feel welcome and like they are part of the team?

- How can you address the stereotypes and biases that team members may have about women's roles, abilities, and presentation? Discuss things like: What are "appropriate" roles for women today? Does a person's size or appearance say anything about their ability to get a job done?

- Was what happened to Clara sexual harassment? How can you help to make sure everyone feels safe at your work site? Do you have policies or standards around sexual harassment? Could these help address this issue?

- How can the team approach Clara with this issue and "do right" by her?

- How do you think issues like this are handled by most construction companies?

Handout 4

Respecting Our Differences: Challenge Scenarios

Scenario #4

You are working on a big construction project and trying to meet deadlines. You and your teammates are under a lot of pressure to complete the job by the end of the week but there have been several delays. It is almost time to start work when you realize that one of your team members has not arrived. This teammate is responsible for a very important part of the work and without him, you will fall further behind. You feel very angry and frustrated that he has not arrived and then a teammate makes the comment, "It figures, I should have know that we couldn't count on Juan. He's just a loser anyway. He's always dirty and he smells bad, it's better that he's not even here."

Another student responds, "What's the matter with him anyway? Why doesn't he run a comb through that hair? I wouldn't even come out of my house looking like that."

Then, Juan arrives. He is wearing the same clothes that he had on yesterday and his eyes are puffy and swollen. He walks over to his work area and gets started without talking to anyone. One of the students says, "Like we wanted to talk to you anyway."

The instructor comes over and asks you all to be more considerate. She then explains that Juan's mother died a few months ago and he has been homeless since then.

How does knowing this influence how you view Juan? How can you work as a team to make YouthBuild a safe and welcoming place for Juan and other students in his situation? In your discussion, consider things like:

- How can you help make Juan feel like he is part of the team?

- How can you address stereotypes and bias that may be held within the group about homeless people?

- How might Juan's situation impact his dress or behavior? What can you do as a team to address this?

- Have you ever experienced homelessness? If so, what insight does your experience bring to the situation?

- How might Juan's perspective bring strengths to your team? How can you let Juan know that you value his participation and input?

LESSON

4

photo: YouthBuild Springfield

Diversity in
the Workplace

Aim

Students will learn why it is important to have a diverse workplace.
In this lesson they will:

- Consider arguments in support of diversity in the workplace

- Discuss the contributions minorities, women, and persons with
disabilities make to the workplace

- Consider barriers that minorities, women and persons with
disabilities face in the construction trades

- Identify strategies to encourage underrepresented groups to
explore careers in the construction trades

- Reflect in their journals on how diverse populations can be
encouraged to enter and stay in the construction trades

1–2 hours

Things to Consider

Lessons 3 and 4 introduce and reinforce the rationale for diversity in the workplace. Read over both lessons to orient yourself to the concepts, materials, and activities. In this lesson, in addition to guided discussion, students will be playing a game, Constructing Diversity. You will need to prepare the materials for the game ahead of time.
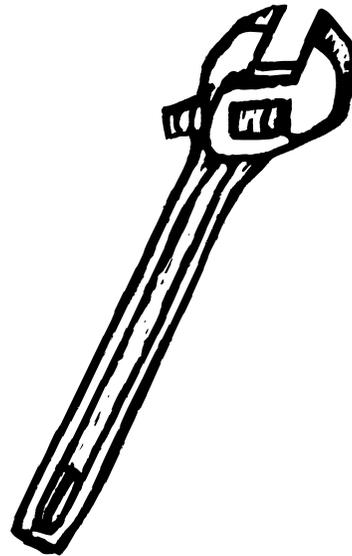
Materials, Tools, and Resources

- Handout: Arguments for Diversity
- Constructing Diversity Game: instructions and cards

Key Terms

- Diversity
- Discrimination
- Barrier
- Stereotype
- Myth

Steps for Activity

1. Tell students that in this lesson they will be exploring the most important part of tool use: the human behind the tool.

2. Divide students into four small groups. Write the following question on the board or flip-chart:

> "Why is it important to have a diverse workforce?"

Distribute "Arguments for Diversity" to the groups and assign one statement to each group. Each group should come up with as many reasons as they can find to support their statement and prepare to report back to the larger group.

3. In a class discussion, have students share their supporting arguments with the group. Ask students to consider the following:

- How might a person in a wheelchair bring unique talents or perspectives to the construction of a university?

- What might women contribute to the design of an office building that men might not consider or include?

- How might a Mexican-American foreman be an asset when working on a project in a community of color?

4. Tell students they will be playing a game called "Constructing Diversity." The goal of the game is to learn about how women, minorities, and disabled people fare in the labor market. Follow the game instructions and allow about 30 minutes for the activity.

After the game has been played, write the following four categories on the board or flip-chart: 1) Personal Barriers, 2) Educational/Training Barriers, 3) Discrimination Barriers, and 4) Stereotypes and Myths as Barriers. Ask students to list in each category the barriers women, minorities, and people with disabilities might face in the construction trades. Write student responses on the board. Below are several examples if the group needs help getting started.

Personal Barriers
- Fear of feeling isolated
- Lack of support or encouragement
- Lack of role models
- Lack of mentors
- Lack of job connections
- Fear of harassment

How are we stronger as a team because of our differences?

WORKING HANDS, WORKING MINDS

Education/Training Barriers

- Lack of exposure to tools
- Lack of experience in mathematics or computers
- Fewer opportunities to gain skills
- Limited outreach to underrepresented populations
- Lack of information about programs, unions, and other opportunities
- Lack of access to special programs or apprenticeships

Discrimination Barriers

- Selective or word-of-mouth hiring
- Lack of access to labor network
- Resentment about affirmative action laws
- Stereotypes and myths about ability to do the job

Stereotypes and Myths as Barriers

- Affirmative action means hiring unqualified or less qualified people
- These people take jobs away from more qualified white men
- Women who are strong are less feminine or lesbians
- Women are too weak to do the job
- Women have too many family commitments
- People of color aren't as good at math and computers
- Disabled people don't want to work

After students have finished brainstorming, ask them to reflect in their journals on the question:

"How can women, minorities, and people with disabilities be encouraged to explore construction-related trades?"

Here are some suggestions to get students started:

- Increase outreach to underrepresented groups (African-Americans, Latinos, Native-Americans, women, and people with disabilities) How could this be done?

- Improve career information and advising at schools and colleges. How could this be accomplished?

- Assemble a diverse committee to do hiring interviews. Why would this make a difference?

Wrap Up

Encourage students to reflect on the lesson and the importance of a diverse workforce by using prompts like:

· What does affirmative action mean and why does it exist?

· Is giving hiring preferences to qualified women and minorities similar to the preferences given to veterans, children of alumni, or athletic students in college admissions? How is it similar or different?

· Are there negative "side-effects" of affirmative action for people of color, women, and the disabled? For instance, how would it feel to have others assume that you only got your job because of your skin color, gender, or disability? Does this make affirmative action laws more or less necessary?

· How can men, white people, and people without disabilities become allies and support and encourage a diverse workforce?

Creative Extensions

• Create a "Survival Toolbox" for women and minorities on the construction site. Here are some ideas for what the students might include:

Lists of support organizations

Strategies for dealing with conflict

Success stories

Copies of company policies (sexual harassment, pregnancy, child care, discrimination)

Government and non-profit organizations that help women, minorities, and people with disabilities overcome employment barriers.

• Students can create a flyer about diversity to post at the worksite. Some places to start their research might include:

Minority business development agencies

Unions

AWSEM (Advocates for Women in Science, Engineering, and Mathematics)

Institute for Women and Technology

• Students might organize a mentoring program to help support underrepresented people who enter the field by connecting them up with peers who are already successfully working in the field.

Project-Based Learning Activities

- Students can work with a local high school, community center, or community college to create a club for women, minorities, or people with disabilities interested in pursuing non-traditional careers.

  Students could conduct a survey of local high school teachers in math, science, woodshop, computer science, and other related fields to explore what they are doing to encourage students from underrepresented populations to pursue non-traditional careers. Have students send copies of the completed survey results to the participating schools.

  Encourage students to become a force for change by:

  Creating a workshop or presentation highlighting the issues faced by women, minorities, and people with disabilities in the construction trades.

  Creating an outreach campaign that debunks the myths and stereotypes about women, minorities, and disabled people in non-traditional careers.

  Write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper.

Teamwork and Leadership

Handout 1

Arguments for Diversity

Group I

We need a diverse workforce to give everyone equal opportunities.

Group II

We need a diverse workforce because different experiences and perspectives encourage creativity and better work.

Group III

We need a diverse workforce because the "face" of America is changing and the industry must reach out to the available labor force.

Group IV

We need a diverse workforce to meet the needs of all kinds of communities and community members.

Handout 2

Constructing Diversity: The Game

1. Before class, copy the non-traditional careers game card sheets, cut up the cards and put them in a hat or box. The cards have the answers marked on them so don't let the students see them. You (the instructor) will act as game master.

2. Divide students into two groups.

3. Tell students that they will be working together as teams. Each team will try to answer questions about non-traditional careers. Explain that it is OK if they do not know the right answers; they should just work as a group to make their best guess. Learning will come from the process of playing the game.

4. Flip a coin to see which team will play first. This will be Team A.

5. Draw a card and read the question and answer choices aloud. Give Team A one minute to discuss the question and then decide if they will "keep" and answer the question or "pass" the question to the other team. If Team A answers correctly, they get one point and keep control of the game. If they choose to pass, Team B will have one minute to discuss the question and then give their answer.

   If Team B gives the correct answer, they "steal" the round. They do not receive a point, but they take control of the game and move on to the next question. If they give an incorrect answer, Team A gets a point and maintains control of the game.

6. At the end of the game, the team with the most points wins.

7. Encourage reflection about the information learned using questions like:

   • What answers surprised you? Why?

   • Did learning these facts change your ideas about non-traditional work?

   • Did any of the questions or answers make you feel sad or angry? Which ones and why?

   • Did any of the questions or answers make you feel happy or excited? Which ones and why?

Handout 3

Women ages 16 to 34 are what percent of electronic technicians? (a) 0% (b) 10% (c) 45%	Women employed in non-traditional jobs like construction earn higher wages than women employed in traditionally female occupations (like teaching). (a) True (b) False
Non-traditional employment for women is defined as occupations or fields of work where women comprise less than: (a) 50% of the individuals employed (b) 25% of the individuals employed (c) 75% of the individuals employed	The pay differential between men and women is partially linked to the different occupations in which women and men are employed. (a) True (b) False
Among contractors with the federal government, the proportion of women holding official and managerial positions increased from 18% in 1981 to what percent in 1991? (a) 25% (b) 40% (c) 50%	A major purpose of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was to increase the employment rate of people with disabilities by making it illegal to discriminate against individuals who have a disability. (a) True (b) False
In 1990, women were what percentage of engineers: (a) 8% (b) 25% (c) 90%	Less than 2% of construction workers are women. (a) True (b) False
African-American women earn how many cents for every white man's dollar? (a) 64 cents (b) 10 cents (c) 95 cents	African-American men earn how many cents for every white man's dollar? (a) 25 cents (b) 72 cents (c) 90 cents
70% of the 62 million working women in the United States earn less than: (a) $40,000 a year (b) $75,000 a year (c) $20,000 a year	Hispanic women earn 80 cents for every white man's dollar. (a) True (b) False

Handout 3, cont'd.

In 1995 the Labor Department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance awarded back pay and benefits worth about how much to known victims of discrimination by government contractors? (a) $3 thousand dollars (b) $40 million dollars (c) $0	Women make up less than 1% of the nation's carpenters, plumbers, auto mechanics and electricians. (a) True (b) False
Under existing law, federal contractors are required to establish goals and timetables to encourage minorities to compete for federal contracts. Although quotas are illegal, race, national origin, and gender may be considered, but relevant job or educational qualifications are not to be compromised. (a) True (b) False	Minorities own almost 9% of all businesses, and women own 34% of all businesses, but together they receive only 9% of the over $200 billion in federal contract awards. (a) True (b) False
On average, union women earn about the same amount as non-union women. (a) True (b) False	Union women earn 39% more than non-union women do. Latino workers who are part of a union earn 54% more than Latino workers who are not part of a union. (a) True (b) False
On average, women choosing non-traditional careers can expect to have incomes 20–30% higher than women who choose traditional careers. (a) True (b) False	Women are what percent of computer scientists in the United States? (a) 4% (b) 15% (c) 70%
All of the following careers are considered non-traditional jobs for women except which one: (a) Computer programming (b) Industrial engineering (c) Construction (d) Architecture (e) Teaching	A recent Harris Poll survey revealed that 78% of women feel that they are "not very well informed or not at all informed about engineering and engineers." (a) True (b) False
African-Americans are more than 30% of the engineers in the United States. (a) True (b) False	About 1 in 20 Americans have some kind of disability, and 1 in 40 have a severe disability. (a) True (b) False

Handout 4

Answers

Women ages 16 to 34 are what percent of electronic technicians? — **b**

Women employed in non-traditional jobs like construction earn higher wages than women employed in traditionally female occupations (like teaching). — **a**

Non-traditional employment for women is defined as occupations or fields of work where women comprise less than: — **b**

The pay differential between men and women is partially linked to the different occupations in which women and men are employed. — **a**

Among contractors with the federal government, the proportion of women holding official and managerial positions increased from 18% in 1981 to what percent in 1991? — **a**

A major purpose of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was to increase the employment rate of people with disabilities by making it illegal to discriminate against individuals who have a disability. — **a**

In 1990, women were what percentage of engineers: — **a**

Less than 2% of construction workers are women. — **a**

African-American women earn how many cents for every white man's dollar? — **a**

African-American men earn how many cents for every white man's dollar? — **b**

70% of the 62 million working women in the United States earn less than: — **c**

Hispanic women earn 80 cents for every white man's dollar. (Hispanic women only earn 54 cents for every white man's dollar.) — **b**

In 1995 the Labor Department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance awarded back pay and benefits worth about how much to known victims of discrimination by government contractors? — **b**

Women make up less than 1% of the nation's carpenters, plumbers, auto mechanics and electricians. — **a**

Under existing law, federal contractors are required to establish goals and timetables to encourage minorities to compete for federal contracts. Although quotas are illegal, race, national origin, and gender may be considered, but relevant job or educational qualifications are not to be compromised. Minorities own almost 9% of all businesses, and women own 34% of all businesses, but together they receive only 9% of the over $200 billion in federal contract awards. — **a**

Handout 4, cont'd.

On average, union women earn about the same amount as non-union women. — **a**

Latino workers who are part of a union earn 54% more than Latino workers who are not part of a union. — **a**

On average, women choosing non-traditional careers can expect to have incomes 20-30% higher than women who choose traditional careers. — **a**

Women are what percent of computer scientists in the United States? — **a**

All of the following careers are considered non-traditional jobs for women except which one: — **e**

A recent Harris Poll survey revealed that 78% of women feel that they are "not very well informed or not at all informed about engineering and engineers." — **a**

African-Americans are more than 30% of the engineers in the United States. (African-Americans are less than 3% of the engineers in the United States.) — **b**

About 1 in 20 Americans have some kind of disability, and 1 in 40 have a severe disability. (1 in 5 Americans have some kind of disability, and 1 in 10 have a severe disability.) — **b**

5

photo: Earl Dotter

TEAM…What Does It Really Mean?

Aim

Students will discuss why teamwork is important at YouthBuild and experience what it means to be a member of a team. In this lesson they will:

• Describe the characteristics of a good team

• Participate in two short teambuilding activities

• Use a self-assessment to reflect on their teamwork and leadership skills

• Brainstorm ways they can take on new leadership roles within YouthBuild

• Set individual goals around teamwork and leadership

Things to Consider

The teambuilding activity entitled "Getting Things Square" requires a group of at least 10 people. Eight or 12 will give you a square or you can use uneven numbers of people to make a rectangle instead. If you are short on students in your class, plan ahead by inviting other students and staff to participate in the activity. (Even if you have enough students, invite other students and staff to participate — it's a wonderful community building activity!)
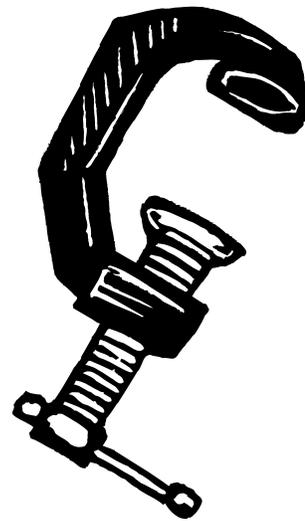
Materials, Tools, and Resources

- A room big enough for students to move about freely during the group activities

- Optional blindfolds for each of the students and staff

- Handout: Leadership and Teamwork Self-Assessment

- Handout: Scoring Sheet/Goal Setting

Key Terms

- Teamwork

- Leadership

- Self-assessment

Steps for Activity

1. Tell students that in this lesson they will participate in several activities that get them thinking about how they work as a team, their leadership style in a team situation, and how they can set goals to improve their teamwork and leadership skills. Put the following on the chalkboard or flipchart paper:

WHAT MAKES A GOOD TEAM…

Ask students to think about the experiences that they have had working on a team. These experiences might have taken place at home, on a sports team, at YouthBuild, at another school, or at work. Ask students to brainstorm a giant list of the characteristics of a good team.

Your list may include:

• Effective communication

• Cooperation

• Pulling his or her own weight

• Enthusiasm for the work

• Fun

2. Explain to students that they are now going to participate in two group activities that will help them think about their teamwork strengths and leadership styles. Tell students the first activity is entitled, "Getting Things Square." Directions for the activity:

a. Ask students to stand up and get in a straight line.

b. Have them grasp the hands of the person(s) standing next to them.

c. Either blindfold or ask them to close their eyes and keep their eyes closed during the entire activity.

d. Tell the students that they now have seven minutes to get themselves into a perfect square (or rectangle, depending on the number of students). The students can talk, but they cannot open their eyes or peek through their blindfolds. Inform them that you will let them know when they have one minute remaining.

e. While students are getting themselves square, observe how the group makes decisions on how to form a square, who is taking leadership, and how well the team members are communicating with one another.

f. When seven minutes have passed, tell them that their time is up, but you want their eyes to remain closed. Ask the group whether or not they think they're in a square. After team members respond, tell the group they can have one more minute to make sure they are square.

g. After the minute is up, either have students remove the blindfolds or ask them to open their eyes. Have the group celebrate their accomplishment by applauding their efforts.

WORKING HANDS, WORKING MINDS

h. To help students reflect on the activity, ask the following questions:

· What were the various roles on the team? What was your role? Did you feel comfortable or confident in your role? Is it a role you often find yourself in?

· Who took the initial leadership to direct the group and why did that person (or people) step up? Why did other group members follow that person/those people?

· If there was more than one leader, do you think it helped or hindered the process?

· How did it feel to be a "follower?" Were you an important part of the team? Why or why not?

· At the end of the seven minutes, did you feel comfortable that you were in a square? How did you know that you were really square? Did you feel you could rely on your team members to do what they were supposed to do?

· Did giving you a minute of reflection help you to feel more confident that you were a square?

· How was this team activity like other team situations you might find yourself in at YouthBuild?

· How do you think you did as a team? What could you do next time to improve yourselves as a team?

Share with the students any observations you have about their teamwork strengths and areas for improvement. For example, you may have taken note that the young men were the ones to take leadership, or if you have a group of youth and adults doing the activity, you may have taken note that the adults were the ones who took charge. To help the students reflect on these observations, ask them why they think those things may have occurred.

3. Tell students that they are going to participate in one more team activity before you give them time to think about the teamwork and leadership goals they would like to set for themselves while at YouthBuild.

· Divide the students into groups of 6 to 10 people and tell them that this activity is a friendly competition. Give each team 20 sheets of white copier paper and a role of masking tape. Here are the guidelines for the competition:

  Each team will build a tower using the paper and tape.

  The point of the activity is to see who can build the tallest tower, but there's one catch: no one can talk!

  Assign each group a space in the room where they can comfortably move about and build their tower and still observe one another.

  Tell students they have 10 minutes to build their towers and observe the other teams.

What were the various roles on the team? What was your role? Did you feel comfortable or confident in your role? Is it a role you often find yourself in?

Teamwork and Leadership

When the 10 minutes have elapsed, bring the teams back together to see which team has built the tallest tower. (You may choose to give prizes to the winning team or to several teams.)

To debrief, first invite each team to share their observations about the other teams' processes for building the tower. Then lead a discussion using questions such as the following:

- Were the processes used for building the towers similar or different? How would you describe the teamwork style of each group? Whose process worked best?

- Who took the initial leadership to direct the group and why did that person (or people) step up? Did the same people who took leadership in the "Getting Things Square" activity take leadership in this activity?

- Were there folks who wanted to share a good idea, but were unable to? Why might that have happened?

- How were you challenged by not being able to talk? How did each of you deal with this challenge?

- How is non-verbal communication similar to and different from verbal communication? Could you "read" your team members well? Why or why not?

- How would each of you rate your non-verbal communication skills?

- How do you all think you did as a team? What could you do next time to improve yourselves as a team?

4 Thank students for actively participating in each of the team activities. Ask students to return to their seats and pass out the "Leadership and Teamwork Self-Assessment" handout to each student. Remind students that this assessment is for them to set personal goals and measure their own growth, so they should assess themselves as honestly as possible.

Allow 20 minutes or so for students to complete the self-assessment and do goal setting. When students are at the goal-setting stage, pass out the handout, "Scoring Sheet." You may choose to spend a few minutes with each student to talk about his or her goals. When students have completed the activity convene the group and ask students why they think each question is an important element of being an effective leader or team member. Students should save these assessments in their journals or notebooks.

Wrap Up

1.   As a group, brainstorm the ways students can take on new leadership roles within YouthBuild. Record the students' responses on the chalkboard or flipchart paper.

2.   Have each student share one of their teamwork/leadership goals and the steps they need to take in order to achieve that goal. After everyone has shared a goal, lead a discussion with the group about how they can support one another to achieve their goals.

Creative Extensions

• Start a "Team Member of the Week" campaign. Each week, have YouthBuild students vote on an outstanding team member to highlight. Use a Polaroid camera to post the student's photo alone with a list of their outstanding qualities. If your budget allows, include a prize like a snack, added privilege, or special responsibility.

• Have students write acrostic poems about teamwork and leadership. Encourage them to put their poems on colorful paper and hang them around the site for inspiration. For an added flair, connect several poems with sticks and string and make teamwork mobiles. Example:

> **T**ake responsibility
>
> **E**ncourage each other
>
> **A**ctualize your dreams
>
> **M**ake things happen
>
> **W**ork creatively
>
> **O**pen up to new ideas
>
> **R**espect each other
>
> **K**eep it positive

• Create a team rap, cheer, or song that speaks to teamwork at YouthBuild. This can be a great way to build team spirit and to get energized at the beginning of meetings or class.

• Have students write letters to local TV and radio stations and newspapers asking them to highlight the many positive contributions that youth are making to your community.

Project-Based Learning Activities

Explore the internet for sites focused on youth or young adult leadership. Students can share their results in creative ways. Here are some ideas:

- Highlight the findings in a newsletter.

- Create posters highlighting the innovative work of young people around the country to hang around YouthBuild as inspiration.

- Compile stories about youth or young adult leadership into a 'zine or book.

Handout 1

Leadership and Teamwork Self-Assessment

Circle one response for each.

1. I enjoy working with others.
   Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

2. I set a good example in my family, with friends, and in the community.
   Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

3. I positively direct others and myself.
   Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

4. I take charge in crisis situations.
   Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

5. I am a good follower.
   Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

6. I take responsibility for my thoughts and actions.
   Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

7. I inspire others to be creative and productive.
   Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

8. I have a positive work attitude, even when I don't like the work that needs
   to be done.
   Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

9. I am good at planning and decision making.
   Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

10. I enjoy learning new things, and it's important for me to be intellectually challenged.
    Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

11. I am willing to try new ideas, even if it is stepping outside of my comfort zone.
    Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

12. It is important for me to reflect on my experiences and make improvements
    when necessary.
    Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

13. It's important for me to take good care of myself, both physically and emotionally.
    Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

14. I listen to others and communicate well.
    Never!   Almost Never   Sometimes   Usually   Always!

Teamwork and Leadership

Handout 2

Scoring Sheet: Leadership and Teamwork: Self-Assessment

If you scored 51 – 70 points:

You're a precious pearl! You're a great find — one in a million. You have great communication and leadership skills. You are cooperative, enthusiastic, and pull your own weight. You should feel confident in your ability to work as part of a team and get the job done.

If you scored 33 – 50 points:

What a Gem! You possess good skills and you take responsibility for yourself but you still need a little polishing to really shine. You've got many strong skills to build on; improve on your weak areas and you'll shimmer like a star.

If you scored 14 – 32 points:
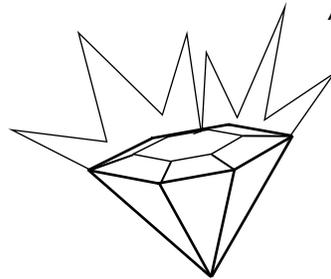
A Diamond in the Ruff! You've got all the raw materials, but you still need a little polishing. Remember to be positive, cooperative, and open to learning. With a little work on your communication and leadership skills, you're sure to shine.

Handout 2, cont'd.

Goal Setting

Being a good leader and team member are learned skills, so no matter where you scored, there's always room for improvement.

Use the following boxes to set two goals for improving your leadership and teamwork skills. Below each goal, write specific behaviors that would show you have achieved your goal.

For example, for the goal of learning to plan, a specific behavior that demonstrates that goal would be "making a list of tools needed before starting a job."

Goal #1: _____

Behaviors that will demonstrate the goal:

a.

b.

c.

Goal #2: _____

Behaviors that will demonstrate the goal:

a.

b.

c.

6

photo: Martin Dixon

Effective Communication for Teamwork: Listening, Following Directions, and Asking Questions

Aim

Students will discuss and practice several of the core communication skills needed for effective teamwork. In this lesson they will:

- Brainstorm a list of communication skills needed for effective teamwork and leadership

- Participate in several activities in which they must listen to and follow directions, ask questions to get information, and give directions

- Reflect on their communication skills in a writing assignment

Things to Consider

This activity develops listening skills and underscores the importance of asking questions and following directions. It is designed to demonstrate that listening and asking questions are interrelated, and so are listening and following directions. The skills the students practice in this lesson will help them see that when everyone follows directions from the right person and asks appropriate questions, things can go smoothly — even in close quarters or in busy, noisy conditions on a worksite.

You will need to cut apart the slips of paper for the "Twenty Questions" activity ahead of time. There are 24 words on the "Questions" sheet. If you have more students than this, you will need to run off more copies of the page. You also may want to lay out the "maze" for step two ahead of time.

This lesson works best with groups of 50 people or less. You will need a spacious room for the maze exercise. With larger groups, you may want to set up several mazes.

Materials, Tools, and Resources

- Slips of paper for "Twenty Questions"
- Masking tape or rope
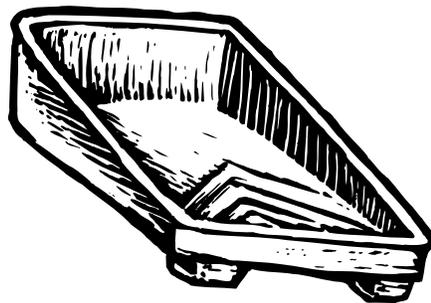- Empty soda cans or paper cups
- Blindfolds
- Student journals

Time

1.5 hours

Key Terms

- Communication
- Directions
- Consensus

Steps for Activity

1. Tell students that in this lesson, they will be discussing and practicing effective communication for team settings. Lead a discussion with students about the communication skills needed to be successful in a team situation (e.g., listening, reading body language, managing anger, speaking clearly, using a respectful tone, or paraphrasing for understanding). To promote dialogue, ask questions such as the following:

- How does communication in a group setting differ from one-on-one communication?

- Can anyone share a team situation that they have participated in during the last week? What communication skills did you use?

- Sometimes we don't always agree when working on a team. If the members of your team disagree about how to get the work done, how might you all resolve that situation?

- When working on a team why is it important to manage your anger? What is a team situation that might require good anger management?

- Can anyone define the consensus process or has anyone used a consensus model when working on a team? If so, how did that process work and how did it feel?

- What are some communication problems that might arise in a team situation? Who has experienced communication problems before and how did your team handle them?

2. Tell students that the first communication skills they are going to focus on are listening, following directions, and asking questions. Lead a discussion with the students about how those three skills are important on the construction site and in the classroom. To promote discussion ask questions such as the following:

- How do good listening skills help keep workers safe?

- Why is it important to follow directions? Can anyone share a time when you did not follow directions and you suffered negative consequences because of it?

- Besides work situations, what are other times when it is important to listen carefully or follow directions? What might happen in those situations if you didn't follow directions?

- What should you do if you don't understand the directions you are given?

- In a work or classroom setting, is it always easy to ask a question? What might get in the way of asking an important question? How can we make asking questions easier?

3. Divide the students into pairs. Tell them they will be playing "Twenty Questions" in order to help them practice asking questions and listening for information. Give each student one of the slips of paper you precut from the "Twenty Questions" handout.

Directions to play "Twenty Questions":

a. Partner #1 tries to determine the word that Partner #2 has on his or her piece of paper by asking questions.

b. All of the words on the slips of paper are people, places, or things. Each is general and nonspecific (for example, instead of "Arnold Schwartzenegger" write "Actor").

c. Partner #1 is only allowed to ask questions that can be answered with a "yes" or "no." (For example, partner #1 may say: "Is it a person?" but may not say, "Is it a person, place or thing?")

d. Tell students that they may not just guess the answer, but must ask questions that will solicit more information.

e. Tell students to keep playing until they have asked 20 questions or until they have figured it out correctly, whichever comes first.

f. After the first partner is done, switch so that everyone has a chance to play both roles.

You may want to do a few sample games with the whole class first, in order to discuss and model good information-gathering questions.

4. When all students have had an opportunity to play "Twenty Questions," debrief the activity by asking the following questions:

- How many questions did you have to ask before you guessed the person, place, or thing?

- As you had to ask more questions, did you find your questions becoming more focused?

- Is there an "art" to asking the right questions?

- Was listening important to this activity? If so, how?

- How might this process of asking questions and giving information be similar to a worksite or classroom situation?

5. Tell students that the next activity is designed to help them practice following directions in crowded, busy, or noisy conditions.

Using rope or masking tape, mark off a rectangle on the floor, approximately 10 ft. x 15 ft. In the roped-off area, have empty soda cans distributed randomly (paper cups can also be used, or anything that will tip over if hit by a toe, but cans are the most fun).

Have the group count off by twos. Ask Partner #1 to put on a blindfold. Tell Partner #2 to stand outside of the roped-off area, and without touching

When everyone follows directions from the right person and asks appropriate questions, things can go smoothly — even in close quarters or in busy, noisy conditions on a worksite.

Teamwork and Leadership

Partner #1, give verbal directions for walking through the maze without hitting any of the obstacles. Then have partners switch roles.

Have several pairs of students in the maze at the same time. The objective of the exercise is for students to practice following instructions and focusing on the task at hand, just as they might have to do on a noisy construction site. The activity is over when all students have been guided through the maze.

Wrap Up

1. To help students reflect on the lesson, ask the following questions:

- In the maze activity, was it difficult to focus on just one voice? Did you have difficulty trusting your partner?

- From both of these activities that we did in this lesson, what did you learn about working as a team?

- What is the connection between the team activities we did and the construction site? The classroom?

2. Write the following journal prompt on the chalkboard or flipchart paper:

Describe your past positive and negative experiences working on a team. Give examples. What can you learn from those experiences that would make the YouthBuild team stronger?

Ask students to take 10 minutes to respond to the questions in their journals.

Creative Extensions

- Play communication games. Have students research other activities and games that stretch their communication muscles. You might start off class each week with one of the games just to keep communication skills on the front burner.

- Have students research various communication styles: assertive, aggressive, or passive. Have students create skits that demonstrate each of the communication styles and then discuss which style is most effective. Students might also reflect on their own communication styles within this framework.

- Have students practice using "I" statements. Students might work in small groups to come up with examples of "I" statements and "You" statements and then discuss the effectiveness of each. For instance, "You are never on time and you don't even care," compared to "I feel frustrated when you are late because we are a team and it makes it hard for us to get our work done."

Project-Based Learning Activities

- Students could choose three communication skills to teach to younger students at a local school. They could use the maze exercise or find another activity to demonstrate their points.

- Students could create a youth guide for better communication at school, work, and home. This guide might include information about various communication styles, including cultural and gender issues, tips for improving communication, potential pitfalls to effective communication and advice on how to develop good communication in the many different roles in students' lives.

Activity Sheet

Twenty Questions

carpenter	hammer
school	pencil
teacher	paper
worksite	desk
car	money
store	television

Activity Sheet, cont'd.

screwdriver	wood
house	counselor
saw	cup
apple	doctor
computer	church
college	nail

photo: YouthBuild McLean County

Planning to
Work as a Team

Aim

Students will prepare for the experience of using materials and tools cooperatively, in the context of planning and building sawhorses. In this lesson, they will:

- Read and follow written instructions

- Work cooperatively to divide tasks

- Develop a work plan

- Identify and describe a communication skill they will improve

Things to Consider

Lessons 7 and 8 are necessarily interrelated and should be taught consecutively. Lesson 6 is designed to prepare students for the project. In Lesson 7, students plan the project, and in Lesson 8, they complete it and evaluate the process.

For the next two lessons, students will be working in groups of no more than five. Plan accordingly for supplies.

Lessons 7 and 8 can be done in a classroom or at the construction site. If your students have not had lessons in basic tool usage and safety, you will need to teach this before Lesson 8.

Materials, Tools, and Resources

- Chalkboard or flipchart
- Framing squares
- Pencils
- Hammers
- Handsaws
- Two 10′ lengths of 2" x 4" per group
- One 8′ length of 2" x 4" per group
- One sheet of 1′ x 4′ x 1/2" plywood per group
- 10d nails
- Tape measures
- Handout: Building a Sawhorse
- Handout: Cooperative Planning for Building Sawhorses
- Student journals

Time

1 hour
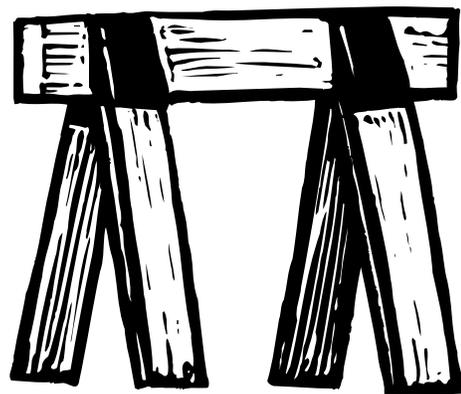
Key Terms

- Responsibility
- Respect
- Cooperative
- Planning

Steps for Activity

1. Tell the students that they are about to do a cooperative project that will involve thinking, planning, and working in a group to solve a problem. Tell them that much of construction work is cooperative and that they will be given many opportunities to work together in a team to become comfortable with this approach. Write the following words on the chalkboard or flipchart paper:

- Respect

- Responsibility

- Cooperatively

Ask the group to define each of the words and record responses.

Let the students know that in this activity, you expect them to respect each other, to take responsibility for the final outcome of the project, and to work together cooperatively. Ask the group to come up with concrete ways they can support one another to meet these expectations.

2. Lay out the materials and tools students will be using on the table in full view. Distribute the handout "Building a Sawhorse." Present the students with the following problem:

a) Each group will be given the following materials and tools:

- two 10′ lengths of 2" x 4"

- one 8′ length of 2" x 4"

- one sheet of 1′ x 4′ x 1/2" plywood

- 10d nails

- framing squares

- pencils

- hammers

- handsaws

- tape measures

b) You will be asked to build a sawhorse in your small group. You will be working as a team to complete the task. What do you need to do to make the project a success?

3. Lead a brief discussion with the students about successful project design and management. Tell students that they will be following directions together, deciding together how to use the materials and tools, then discussing the process of working cooperatively. Next, divide students into small groups of no more than five. (You might pre-select the groups based

on your knowledge of the students' skills and strengths, or you might allow students to select their own teams.) Distribute the handout, "Cooperative Planning for Building Sawhorses." Read and discuss it with the large group, then ask students to complete it together in their small groups.

Allow ample time for the students to develop their work plans. Circulate among the groups in order to guide the process, answering questions and helping students to resolve conflicts as they arise.

Wrap Up

Tell the students that they are about to do a cooperative project that will involve thinking, planning, and working in a group to solve a problem.

1. When all the groups have completed their work plans, bring the students back together in the large group to reflect on the planning process. To help promote reflection ask questions such as the following:

- Can anyone share examples of how respect, responsibility, or cooperation played out in your groups?

- Who's going to do what on the upcoming project? How did you decide who was going to do what?

- What communication skills did you use to get your work plans done?

- Did any conflicts arise? If so, how did your team resolve them?

- On a scale of 1–5 (1 being poor and 5 being excellent), how would you rate your team's teamwork? If you need to, how might you improve your team's ability to work well together?

- What type of communication or teamwork skills can you gain in the upcoming sawhorse project?

2. Write the following prompts on the chalkboard or flipchart paper:

- A communication skill I can practice or gain while working on the sawhorse project…

- Why that skill is important to this project and how I will use the skill in other areas of my life…

3. Ask the students to take five minutes to respond to the two prompts in their journal.

4. Collect the worksheets, and plan to review them with the students before they begin to build the sawhorses in the next lesson.

Teamwork and Leadership

Creative Extensions

- Invite a project manager from a construction company in the community to talk with students about the teamwork skills needed to work effectively on the construction site and to manage construction projects. This is a great way to connect students to people working in the field and to highlight the need for teamwork on the job site.

- Discuss conflict within team situations (accountability, follow through, etc.). Ask each student to give an example of a conflict that might occur (or has occurred) on the construction site or in the classroom. Ask them to write the conflict on a 3 x 5 note card. Collect the cards and choose a conflict at random. As a group brainstorm various solutions to each of the problems.

Project-Based Learning Activities

- Have students do a mock or real planning of a YouthBuild event. Examples might include a community celebration, fundraiser, or small community-service construction project. Students can brainstorm and define the event and then organize work teams and project managers.

- Students can plan and complete a project with a local school. Projects could include helping to build a school garden site, building a bookshelf or recycling bin for a classroom, or designing and building sets for a school play.

Handout 1

Building a Sawhorse: Directions*

Sawing the Parts

The next two pages show the nine steps to follow to saw the wooden parts necessary to build two sawhorses. There's a lot of sawing to be done, so you'll have to work hard and keep your patience.
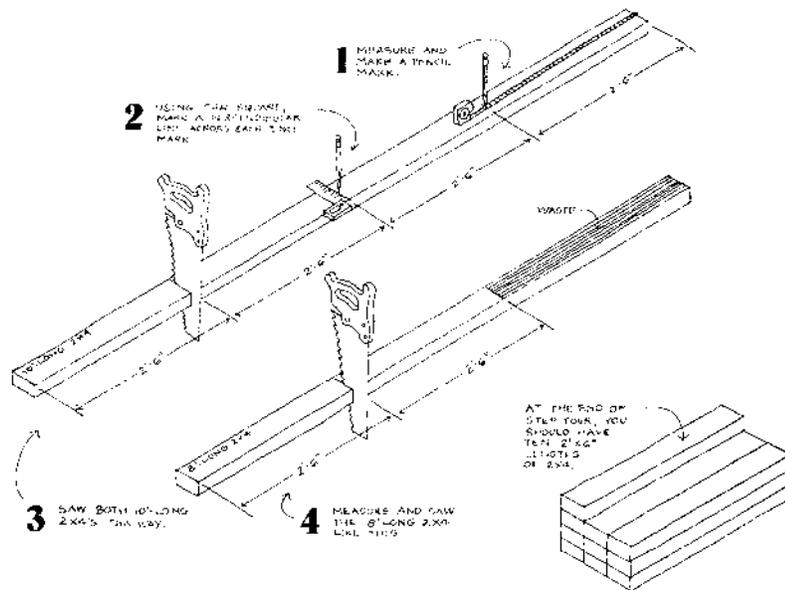
The hardest part in making the sawhorses is trimming the eight legs so they slope. If you keep the saw in a straight up-and-down position, as shown in step six, and carefully saw along the pencil line, your cuts should be perfect.
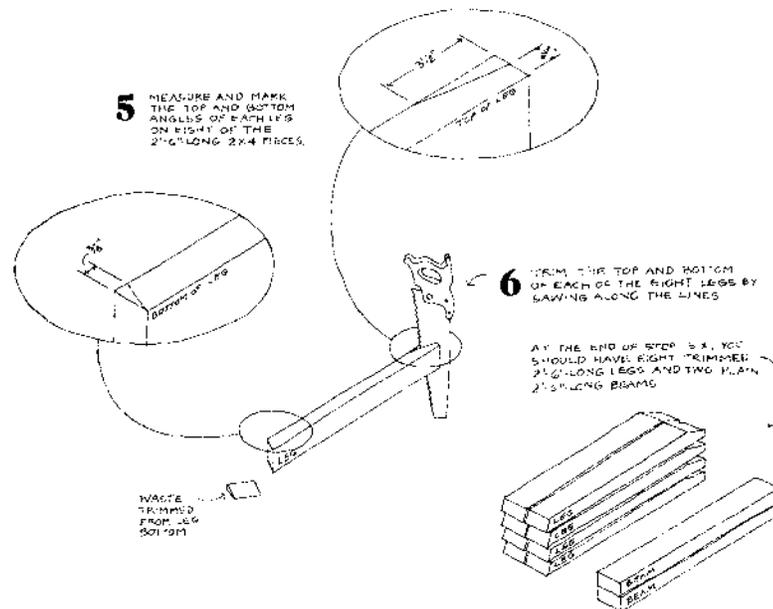
*From *Carpentry for Children* by Lester Walker, copyright ©1982 by Lester Walker. Reprinted by permission of The Overlook Press.

Handout 1, cont'd.

The strength of the sawhorse comes from the plywood end pieces. If you look at steps 10 and 11, you'll see how the end pieces are used to make the finished saw-horse strong. Below are instructions for laying out and sawing these end pieces from the pieces of 1'x4'x1/2' plywood.
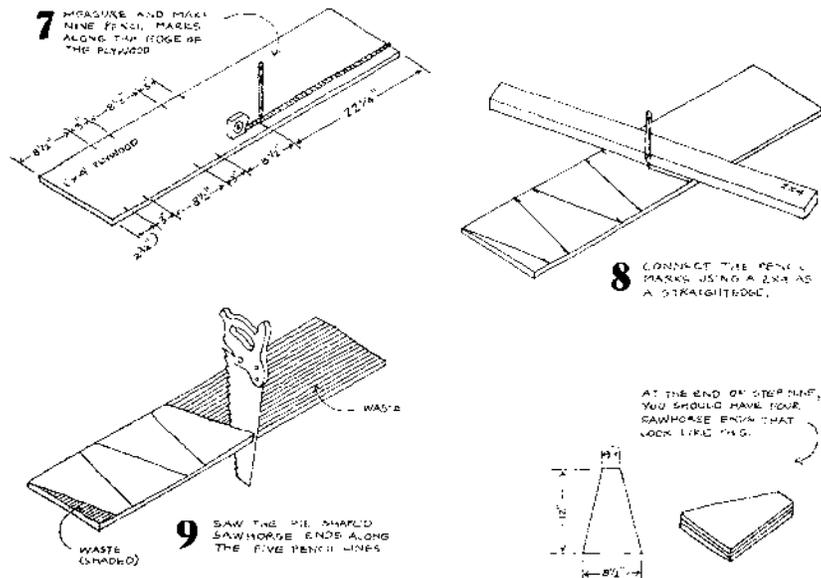
Assembling the parts

Below are the two steps to follow to make the sawhorses. Have someone hold the parts together on the workbench, as shown in the photograph on the opposite page, while you nail them together.
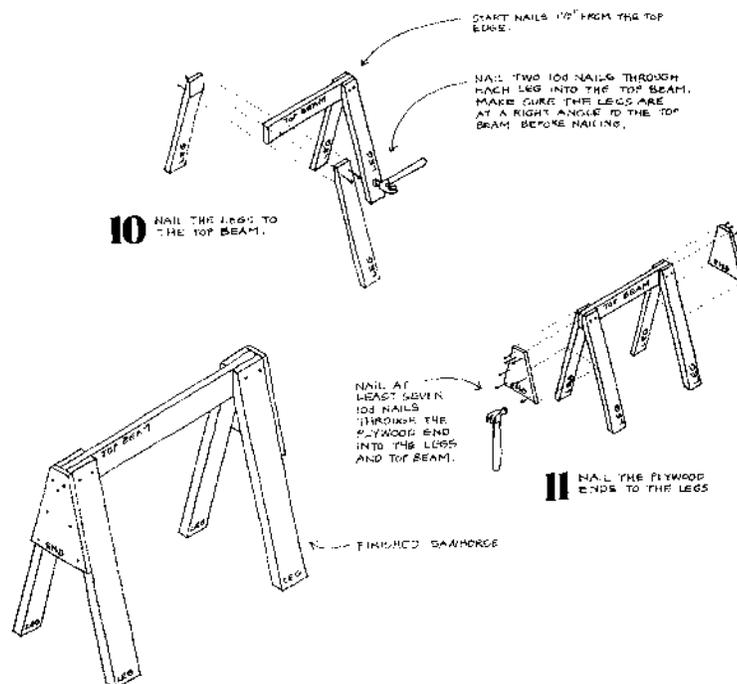
Handout 2

Cooperative Planning for Building Sawhorses

You will need to decide who will do the following tasks. (Some people may do more than one.)

Who will:

Write your plans on this sheet?

Read the directions aloud?

Measure?

Cut?

Hammer?

Check the work?

Be a spokesperson and describe the building process to the large group?

You will need to decide what steps you will do, in what order, to complete the task of building the sawhorse. Remember to include everything that must be done.

Step One: _____

_____

Step Two: _____

_____

Step Three: _____

_____

Step Four: _____

_____

Step Five: _____

_____

Step Six: _____

_____

Now, double-check your plans. Make sure you know exactly what to do!
Good luck!

8

Working as a Team

Aim

Students will use materials and tools cooperatively to build saw-horses. They work in small groups to follow directions and create a final product. In this lesson, they will:

- Read and follow written directions

- Work cooperatively to build sawhorses

- Evaluate the process of working together

- Write reflectively about the process

Things to Consider

Lessons 7 and 8 are necessarily interrelated and should be taught consecutively. Lesson 6 prepares students for the project. In Lesson 7, students plan the project, and in Lesson 8, they complete it and evaluate the process.

Plan to do this lesson with enough instructors so that each small group can have an observer/mentor. Go over the lesson with instructors so that the goals and process are clear to all.

This lesson provides an excellent opportunity for the teacher to observe the students in action. Watch and take note of students' facility with the various tools and students' ability to discuss, plan, work cooperatively, and display leadership.

Taking the time to thoroughly evaluate the cooperative learning process at this point in the curriculum will dramatically affect the students' willingness to work together in the future and will give instructors insight into students' attitudes and behaviors related to cooperative work.

Depending on your timeframe, you might choose to do the evaluation as a separate lesson. If you do this, make sure you don't wait too long before you have students reflect and evaluate. Students will gain more if the reflection and evaluation are done as soon as possible after the project, while their thoughts and feelings about the process are still fresh.

Materials, Tools, and Resources

- Framing squares
- Pencils
- Hammers
- Handsaws
- Two 10' lengths of 2" x 4" per group
- One 8' length of 2" x 4" per group
- One sheet of 1' x 4' x 1/2" plywood per group
- 10d nails
- Tape measures
- Completed handout: Cooperative Planning
- Handout: Building a Sawhorse

Needed for Reflection:
- Completed sawhorses
- Handout: Working Together: Evaluating the Process

Time

Allow approximately three hours of uninterrupted time to complete the cooperative building project, so that students can see the project through to completion. (Breaking the exercise up into shorter periods of time may be frustrating and confusing.)
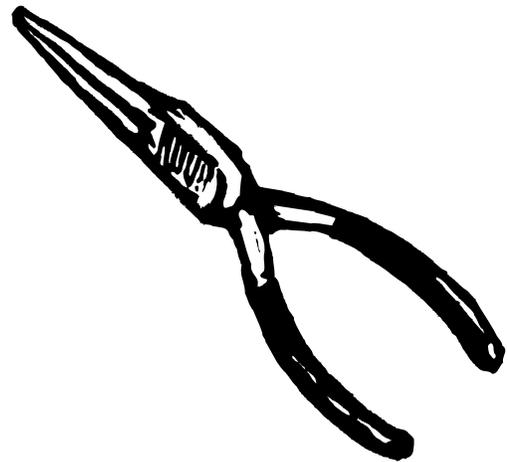
Key Terms

- Review
- Reflect
- Evaluation
- Accountability

Steps for Activity

1.   Ask students to divide into their small groups (the same teams that worked together on the cooperative work plans in Lesson 7). Tell them that they will be completing the project today, but that everyone will first take 15 minutes to review their plans to make sure everyone has been assigned to a task and that they have all of their materials ready.

Have each team meet with its observer/mentor and briefly outline for him or her what they have planned, who will do what, and what steps they will follow. Have the mentor make recommendations as necessary to prevent major mistakes and emphasize care in the use of the tools. However, ask mentors to allow for a small amount of error or lack of clarity in the students' process.

2.   Ask students to proceed with the project. Have the mentors work with their team during the course of the session, facilitating discussion and moderating disagreements as needed. Ask the mentors to make suggestions if students are stuck or unable to figure out how to resolve a technical problem. Remind students to pace themselves as they work so that they can complete the project within the allotted time period.

Wrap Up

What is reflection?

Why is reflection

important?

1. When students have completed the sawhorses, ask all students and observers/mentors to sit in a large circle. Lead a discussion with the students about the importance of reflection and evaluation. To promote discussion, ask questions such as the following:

- What is reflection?

- Can someone give an example of how he or she practices reflection?

- Why is reflection important?

- What is evaluation and how is it different from reflection?

- When are times in your life you've been evaluated?

- Are there challenges when evaluating something? What are those challenges?

- What are different ways you can evaluate a process?

- Why is evaluation important?

Ask for the spokesperson from each group to explain how the group decided to divide up the tasks. Ask the spokesperson to show the group's finished project and to briefly discuss the steps involved in its completion.

2. Distribute the handout "Working Together: Evaluating the Process." Ask for volunteers to read the reflection/evaluation questions out loud and then ask each student to complete their own evaluations.

3. Allow 20 minutes or so for students to complete the evaluation. When everyone is done, select several of the questions from the evaluation to discuss as a large group. Also, invite the observers/mentors to give constructive feedback to the group.

4. Ask the students to think about and share how they might use the reflection/evaluation process learned in this lesson in other areas of their lives.

Creative Extensions

• Read the following passage aloud (or type or photocopy it for a group reading) and discuss it as a group. Ask: What's the point? What does accountability mean? What examples can you cite of this sort of thing happening? What's wrong with this type of thinking?

> **Accountability**
>
> This is a story about people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it but Nobody realized that Everybody would not do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

• Ask students to define responsibility, cooperation, and teamwork. Have students make posters on which they write and illustrate the sentences they have written. Hang them around the classroom and worksite for inspiration.

• Have students evaluate their teamwork skills in other areas of their life. Are their strengths and weaknesses in these areas the same? Have students set goals for improvement.

• Have students create a "Bill of Rights" for team members.

• Invite a community member to the program to observe the team in action and give feedback.

• Have students participate in a number of activities to help build a feeling of "group." Students might:

> Plan and prepare a meal together, with small groups taking responsibility for particular tasks
>
> Have a bake sale in which small groups participate in baking, advertising or selling
>
> Build bookshelves or tables for the classroom or the worksite, working in the same teams, using the same process described in this unit, and then evaluating the process again

Project-Based Learning Activities

- Depending on the size of the class and how many sawhorses students made, there may be an opportunity to donate or sell extra sawhorses. Have students work in teams to research and plan a donation or sale to the community.

- Have students research, plan, and build other small construction projects that might be needed in the community: park benches, planters, a raised garden bed, or a wheel chair ramp. Don't forget the evaluation process!

Handout 1

Working Together: Evaluating the Process

Directions: Answer the following questions about your team project.

1. What are the advantages (or disadvantages) of planning in advance?

2. What strengths and weaknesses did you find in your group?

3. What building skills did you use?

4. What math skills did you use?

5. What communication skills did you use?

6. Name one thing that was easy in this project:

7. Name one thing that was really difficult:

Handout 1, cont'd.

8. Name one thing that was frustrating:

9. Name one thing that was really fun:

10. What problems did you encounter?

11. What did the group do to resolve conflicts or differences of opinion?

12. How might this experience relate to working on the worksite?

13. How might this experience relate to working in the classroom?

14. When might you encounter something similar on a job?

Societal Images of Leadership

Aim

In this lesson, students will explore the negative and limiting myths and stereotypes that abound in our society about youth and young adults as leaders (particularly those who are poor and minority). Students will define youth leadership and discuss how to develop leadership skills. In this lesson students will:

- Identify negative and limiting myths and stereotypes held about youth in our society

- Discuss how those images affect youth leadership development

- Brainstorms ways they can promote themselves as leaders and be allies to other youth who wish to develop their leadership skills

Things to Consider

For a thoughtful analysis of youth stereotypes, see the article "Understanding Adultism" by John Bell in the Tools and Resources section.

For this lesson, you might want to bring in historical photographs of young people taking action in their communities: sitting at lunch counters in the South during the Civil Rights Movement, marching against the Vietnam War in the 60s and 70s, etc.

You will need a room large enough to lay down one or more tarps, depending on the size of your group. The tarp exercise requires students to stand in the center of a tarp leaving one-quarter of the tarp free. You'll have to estimate, based on the size of your participants, how many people will fit on a tarp. A general guess would be approximately 15 people on one 9′ x 10′ tarp.
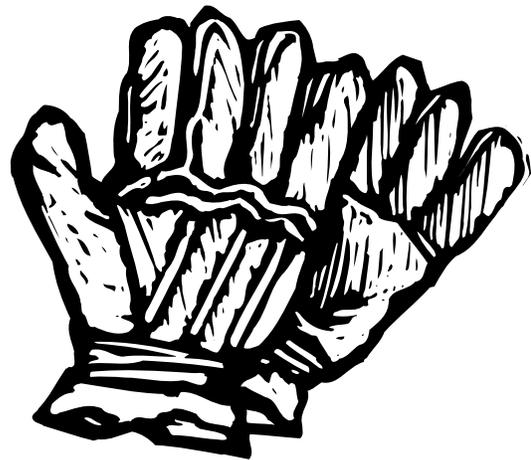
Materials, Tools, and Resources

- Blackboard or flipchart
- Handout: Young People's Contributions to Social Change
- 0ne or more large tarps
- Masking tape
- Pens
- Handout (optional): Leadership Role Play

Key Terms

- Stereotype

Steps for Activity

1. Tell students that in this lesson, they will examine myths and stereotypes about youth in our society and discuss ways they can become successful leaders in the face of such beliefs.

2. Begin by asking students three questions. Write the responses to the first two on the board or flipchart. For the third question, encourage everyone to listen carefully to the stories.

- What are the best things about being young?

- What is hard about being young?

- Have any of you ever been mistreated or disrespected because you were young? For example, have any of you ever had an adult punish you unfairly? Has anyone not believed you because you were young? Have you been followed in a store, harassed by police, or disrespected at school or at home?

3. After students have shared their stories, encourage analysis with questions such as:

- What is the main message of this kind of treatment?

- How does this message make you feel?

- What impact do these feelings have on behavior? For example, if you think an adult doesn't trust you, how does that affect how you behave around the adult?

- How do these feelings affect your relationship with other young people?

- Why does the adult world treat young people this way?

4. Continue the discussion by having a student define the word stereotype, using a dictionary if necessary. Ask students to summarize the stereotypes that our society holds about its youth. Write these responses on the board. More questions for discussion include:

- Are young people considered positive leaders? How do these stereo-types affect youth leadership? Do you ever feel helpless to change things or to make a difference around you?

- Are poor people considered leaders? Why or why not?

- What is your place in the world in terms of leadership? Can young people become leaders in a society that disrespects them? How?

5. Pass out the handout "Young People's Contributions to Social Change." Tell students that they will read this handout together in groups of three. Ask students to list the leadership skills they think were used by the young people mentioned in the handout. Students will need to read carefully and imagine what tasks were done by the youths and what skills those tasks required.

For example, the students in the 1950s who fought segregation agreed on a vision, made plans to fight the system, and then acted on their plans by marching, or sitting in segregated lunch counters. The young people in South Africa also had a vision, a direction they decided to take, and showed their direction through actions like refusing to serve in the South African army that enforced apartheid.

Give students one-half hour to read the handout and jot a list of the leadership skills and qualities shown.

6. Ask students to share their lists with the whole group. On the board, develop a description of leadership, such as:

- Anyone can lead, including young people
- Anyone who has the knowledge or information to point out a direction to take can lead
- Leaders have a vision
- Vision is not enough; you have to demonstrate through action how the vision can be achieved
- Leaders can listen well
- Leaders can speak clearly about what they believe and want
- Leaders can control themselves
- Leaders are respectful of others

7. To help students think about the changes they would like to see in their world, have them play **Change the World**.

You will need a tarp big enough for your group to stand on in the center with the edges free. For large groups, you will need to get more than one tarp. Have each student think about what they don't like in the world. This could be an organization, a practice, or an idea. Have them write this down on a piece of tape and stick it on one side of the tarp.

Next have them write down on another piece of tape something that reflects their ideal world, the way they wish the world was. Have them stick their vision on the other side of the tarp.

Place the tarp so that the vision side is facing the ground and have them stand on the side where they say the world is. Now challenge students to flip the tarp without getting off.

One way to flip the tarp is for the group to bunch on one end and to make a bow-like move with the tarp. There are other ways as well and they all make great metaphors for discussion.

8. After the tarp is flipped, ask students to make comparisons between this process and the achievements of the young people they read about. In what ways is flipping the tarp like the fight against segregation in the South? What skills were necessary to achieve both goals? What leadership and teamwork qualities emerged during the tarp exercise? And how can these be used to change our neighborhoods and cities?

Leaders can speak clearly about what they believe and want

Teamwork and Leadership

Wrap Up

For wrap up, ask students:

- What changes would you like to see in your world?
- What can students do to promote themselves as leaders to the world?
- How might adults act at first to young people in leadership roles? How can youth teach adults to respect their ideas?
- How can students be allies to other youth who wish to develop their leadership skills?

Creative Extensions

- Give students the handout "Leadership Role Play" and ask them to design short skits from the handout showing how a young person might take leadership in each situation. Students could act these out with props and scripts or make a recording of a scenario, complete with sound effects.

- Invite students to create cartoons that show young people defying myths and stereotypes about youth.

Project-Based Learning Activities

- Have students research young leaders around the country and develop a "role model" campaign. What are young people around the country doing to take the lead in important issues? Students can use the local library or the internet to find out and then develop a campaign to highlight the positive. This campaign can spotlight the many ways youth are impacting the world in positive ways and help to balance the many negative images of youth.

- Students could interview adults about their attitudes toward youth. What do adults say about young people in leadership? Under what circumstances will adults follow a young person's lead? (Many adults, for example, will ask a young person's advice about computers and how to use software. What does this tell students about leadership?) Students could write up the results of their interviews and publish them in a newsletter to other young people as a kind of anthropological study of adult attitudes. Understanding adults gives young people power.

- Launch a public relations campaign for YouthBuild! Have students make posters that highlight various YouthBuild students and the work they are doing at YouthBuild and in the community. Encourage students to be creative by including a photo and a catchy slogan like "Building a Better Community One Person at a Time" or "One More Young Person Working to Better our Community." Students can hang the posters around the community in supermarkets, community centers, schools, or other community centers.

Handout 1

"YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIAL CHANGE"

by John Bell

In the United States most young people feel hopeless or powerless about changing things. They look at racism, poverty, drugs, and violence and feel it is impossible to do much about them.

The current conditions and our lack of education about people's history make most young people unaware of the great positive contributions youth have made to changing "impossible" things, both in our own country and in other countries. Here are a few examples to inform and inspire young people, especially when discouragement chips away at their idealism and commitment.

photo: Lisa Kessler

- In the late 1950s and 1960s, people looked at racial segregation in the South and said it was impossible to change. But young people began to sit in at segregated lunch counters, ride segregated buses, enroll at segregated schools. They marched, suffered beatings from police, went to jail by the thousands, and sang "We Shall Overcome." They gave people courage and hope. They formed powerful organizations like SNCC (the Student NonViolent Coordinating Committee). They provided much of the leadership for the Civil Rights Movement. They challenged racism at the core. They helped change the face of this country.

- In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the United States was waging a brutal war against the people of Vietnam, in Southeast Asia. Most people here looked at the huge U.S. military establishment and the force of our government's commitment to the war and said it was impossible to do anything about it. But many young people believed it was an unjust and racist war. They began protest marches. They burned their draft cards. They went to jail for their beliefs. They stirred up a huge student movement. They caused the downfall of President Lyndon Johnson. They eventually helped bring about the end of the war in Vietnam.

- In the early 1960s in Cuba, shortly after the dictator Batista was thrown out, young people, ages 14–18, swarmed the countryside teaching reading and writing to the peasants, and practically wiped out illiteracy.

- In 1980-81, young people did the same thing in Nicaragua.

- In South Africa, young people were in the forefront of the movement against apartheid. During intense periods of struggle, over 10,000 young people under 18 years old were in jail. In the early 1990s, thousands of young white

Handout 1, cont'd.

men signed declarations saying they refused to serve in the South African army, which enforced apartheid. Many joined their black brothers in jail.

- In Israel, the vast majority of the Palestinians who were killed by the Israeli soldiers in the uprising, called the Intifadah, were young people. Youth played a key leadership role in the struggle to end Israeli rule and bring about a Palestinian state. Hundreds of young Israeli soldiers refused to serve in the "occupied territories," refusing to fight against the Palestinians.

- In Sweden there is a young people's organization 30–40,000 strong, which has been waging a different kind of struggle. For years they have fought to eliminate grading from the school system. So far, they have succeeded in getting rid of grades for every year up to 14 years old. They plan to continue until students are no longer categorized by grades at any level. (In Sweden it is also a crime to hit your child.)

- In West Germany, it has been the young people who have played a leading part in rolling back the threat of nuclear war. They organized huge peace marches and demonstrations from one end of the country to the other.

- In much of the change sweeping eastern Europe, young people have been out front in demanding an end to corruption, domination, and lack of freedom.

- In many industrialized nations like Japan, Canada, England, and Italy, young people have been active in the struggle to keep the world safe from nuclear war and to stop the damage being done to the environment.

- All over the developing world, in El Salvador, Guatemala, the Philippines, Chile, Eritrea, Korea, China, southern Africa, and more, young people are on the front lines in the fight to bring peace and justice to those countries.

Youth everywhere can be very proud of the great contributions young people have made to our world. Their leadership, courage, suffering, determination, and vision give hope to us all.

The single most important thing that young people can do to take on the "impossible" problems that we face is to develop good leaders at the fastest possible rate. Young people in this country — right now — can play a very important role in changing things. With the help of adult allies, they can begin by seeing themselves as leaders and potential leaders, by developing the faith that they can make a difference, by developing self-discipline, by learning whatever they have to learn to lead well, by getting organized with others, by developing a plan, and by taking action.

Many "impossible" problems await their leadership!

Handout 2

Leadership Role Play

Using what you know about leadership, imagine how a young person might demonstrate leadership in the following scenarios. Then plan a way to act this out.

Scenario 1

You are with a group of friends and family picnicking at the river when a small raft carrying a Mexican family floats by. One of the adults from your family makes a foul remark about the people in the raft. You watch how your sister and some of your friends recoil at the slur. How do you show leadership in this situation? What do you say or do?

Scenario 2

You are out on the school yard when a fight breaks out between two of your friends over an unpaid loan. The boy who wants his money back starts throwing punches. A crowd gathers to watch. How do you show leadership in this situation? What do you say or do?

Scenario 3

You work for a painting contractor part-time after school. She has one other employee, an adult who works for her full-time. One day she leaves you on the job site with the other employee to go buy more paint. While your boss is gone, the other employee stops sanding and sits down to take a break. The boss expects the wall to be prepped by the time she gets back. How do you show leadership in this situation? What do you say or do?

photo: Martin Dixon

Tools and Resources

Selected Readings

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> A practical curriculum which focuses on the history of labor and labor movements in the United States. A teacher's guide and student handbook deal with such topics as "Basic Understandings," "Changes in the Workplace: Scientific Management," "Defeats, Victories and Challenges," "Our Own Recent Past," and "Continuing Struggle."

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Steinberg, Adria and David Stephen, *CityWorks Draft Curriculum*, Rindge School of Technical Arts, 459 Broadway, Cambridge, MA, 02139, 1991.

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Websites with information and activities

Please note: the following website was available as of January 2001, but may no longer be operational.

www.du.edu/~citin/home.html

General Supplemental Material

Handout 1

Understanding Adultism:
A Key to Developing Positive Youth/Adult Relationships

by John Bell, Director of Training and Learning Center YouthBuild USA, 1995

Most of us are youth workers because we care about young people. Personally we want to both be effective and have good relationships with young people. We are satisfied when things go well. We feel bad when our relationships sour. Sometimes we scratch our heads in dismay when, despite our best efforts and concern, we find ourselves in conflict with young people we work with. We sense that some larger dynamics are at work that we can't quiet see. To be successful in our work with young people, we must understand a particular condition of youth: that young people are often mistreated and disrespected simply because they are young. The word adultism refers to behaviors and attitudes based on the assumption that adults are better than young people, and entitled to act upon young people without their agreement. This mistreatment is reinforced by social institutions, laws, customs, and attitudes.

If you think about it, you will realize that except for prisoners and a few other institutionalized groups, young people are more controlled than any other group in society. As children, most young people are told what to eat, what to wear, when to go to bed, when they can talk, that they will go to school, which friends are okay, and when they are to be in the house. Even as they grow older, the opinions of most young people are not valued; they are punished at the will or whim of adults; their emotions are considered "immature."

In addition, adults reserve the right to punish, threaten, hit, take away "privileges," and ostracize young people when such actions are deemed to be instrumental in controlling or disciplining them.

If this were a description of the way a group of adults was treated, we would all agree that their oppression was almost total. However, for the most part, the adult world considers this treatment of young people as acceptable because we were treated in much the same way, and internalized the idea that "that's the way you treat kids." For this reason, we need to hold adultism up to a strong light.

The Heart of It

The essence of adultism is disrespect of the young. Our society, for the most part, considers young people to be less important than and inferior to adults.

Teamwork and Leadership

It does not take young people seriously and does not include them as decision makers in the broader life of their communities.

Adults have enormous importance in the lives of almost every young person. This fact may make it difficult to understand what I am calling adultism.

Not everything the adult world does in relation to young people is adultist. It is certainly true that children and young people need love, guidance, rules, discipline, teaching, role modeling, nurturance, and protection. Childhood and adolescence are a steady series of developmental stages, each of which has a different set of needs, issues, and difficulties. For example, a three-year-old needs a different amount of sleep than a 15-year-old; or, what works to physically restrain a seven-year-old will not work with an 18-year-old; or, how you explain conception and birth to an inquisitive toddler will be quite different from how you explain these to a sexually active teenager.

Differing cultural, ethnic, gender, class, or religious approaches to these developmental stages can further complicate the identification of adultism. For example, what is considered "weak" in one gender, may be considered "strong" in another; or, belching may considered rude in one culture and an expression of appreciation in another; or, childhood sex play may be condoned in one culture and condemned in another.

The point is that no one act or policy or custom or belief is in itself necessarily adultist. Something can be labeled adultist if it involves a consistent pattern of disrespect and mistreatment that has any or all of the following affects on young people:

- an undermining of self-confidence and self-esteem

- an increasing sense of worthlessness

- an increasing feeling of powerlessness

- a consistent experience of not being taken seriously

- a diminishing ability to function well in the world

- a growing negative self-concept

- increasing destructive acting out

- increasing self-destructive acting "in" (i.e. getting sick frequently developing health conditions, attempting suicide, depression)

- feeling unloved or unwanted

Certainly these serious conditions do not entirely stem from adultism. Other factors like sexism, racism, poverty, physical or mental disability, and so on, may also contribute to these results. But systematic disrespect and mistreatment over years simply because of being young are major sources of trouble.

Evidence that Adultism Exists

Other "isms" like racism and sexism are well established and accepted as realities. They each have a huge body of literature and research documenting the effects and history of the oppression. There are novels, movies, media presentations, political organizations, and social movements devoted to illuminating and or eliminating the existence of the "ism."

The concept of adultism, the systematic mistreatment and disrespect of young people, is relatively new and has not been widely accepted as a reality. There is certainly much research and literature on children and youth, but very little that concludes that young people are an oppressed group in our society, with parallels to other such groups. Part of my effort in this article is to draw forth enough examples, primarily from the United States, to point to the reality of adultism. (Adultism may not be the most correct term. I have heard the word youthism used to mean the same thing.)

Common Statements

Consider how the following comments are essentially disrespectful. What are the assumptions behind each of them? Do you remember having heard any of these as a younger person?

- "You're so smart for 15!"

- "When are you going to grow up?"

- "Don't touch that, you'll break it!"

- "As long as you are in my house, you'll do it!"

- "You're being childish."

- "You're so stupid (or clumsy, inconsiderate, etc.)!"

- "Go to your room!"

- "Don't ever yell at your mother like that!" (yelling)

- "She doesn't understand anything." (about a baby)

- "You are too old for that!" or "You're not old enough!"

- "Oh, it's only puppy love."

- "What do you know? You haven't experienced anything!"

- "It's just a stage. You'll outgrow it."

Common Occurrences

Physical and Sexual Abuse

There are numerous examples of disrespect toward young people. Of course, there is the obvious oppressive treatment: physical and sexual abuse of young people. While our society has laws against and publicly abhors such abuse, unfortunately it is nonetheless extremely widespread.

Other Punishment and Threats

There is also a whole range of nonphysical punishments or threats: being routinely criticized, yelled at, invalidated, insulted, intimidated, or made to feel guilty with the effect of undermining a child's self-respect; or being arbitrarily or unfairly "grounded" or denied "privileges." If young people protest against their mistreatment, they are often subjected to more punishment.

Denied Control

Young people are denied control and often even denied influence over most of the decisions that affect their bodies, their space, and their possessions. For example, most adults seem to think they can pick up little children or kiss them or pull their cheeks or touch their hair without asking or without its being mutual. Adults can often be seen grabbing things out of children's hands without asking.

Verbal Interactions

Most young people know that in a disagreement with an adult, their word will not be taken over the adult's. Most adults talk down to children, as if children could not understand them. Adults often talk about a young person with the young person present as if he or she were not there. Many adults give young people orders to do things or lay down rules with no explanation. Adults, in general, do not really listen to young people, do not take the concerns of a young person as seriously as they would an adult's, and have a hard time hearing the thinking of young people as worthy of adult respect, let alone on a par with the quality of adult thinking. Yet young people are expected to listen to adults all the time.

Community Incidents

Adolescent young people are frequently followed by security guards in stores, passed over by clerks who serve adults in line behind them, chased from parks or gathering places for no good reason by police, assumed by passing adults to "be up to no good." The media often promote negative images and stereotypes of them, especially of urban youth and black youth.

School Examples

Schools subject students to incredible control through the use of hall passes, detention, suspension, expulsion, and other penalties. Any community certainly

needs rules to live by, but the rules in most school communities are imposed on young people and enforced by the adult staff.

Consider these examples:

- Teachers sometimes yell at students with impunity, but students are disciplined if they yell back at teachers.

- Young people are sometimes punished unfairly because adults feel frustrated.

- Students are forced to accept their "grades" that, over time, cause students to eventually internalize a lifelong view of themselves as "smart" or "average" or "dumb" with profound impact on many aspects of their lives. However, students do not get to officially "grade" teachers. If a student receives an "F", it is assumed that the student failed, not the teacher.

- Young people have no real power in the important decisions that affect their lives in school.

Societal Adultism

Laws. There is a different set of laws for young people. They do not have the same rights as adults. Of course, some laws specifically protect young people from mistreatment but other laws unduly restrict the life and freedom of young people. In divorce cases, for example, until a recent landmark custody case, young people were not even permitted to have a voice in deciding which parent, if either, they wished to live with.

Child Development Literature and Education. An institutional example of adultism can be found in the literature of child development, which is full of misinformation and unfounded claims about young people that severely underestimates what young people are capable of. For example, in one text-book used by many students of child development, the author states that the only reason an infant before six months of age cries is because of physical pain. According to the book, there is no emotional pain before six months because an infant's intelligence hasn't grown the capacity that allows for emotional responses. Many parents, including myself, in observing their own infants closely, know that this is not true. Yet, young child development professionals, often without children, are taught a distorted view of infant functioning as if it were gospel.

The Effect of Cultural Practices: An Interesting Example. Generations of young people in Western culture have grown up with their development limited by vast cultural biases that consistently underestimate human potential or mis-understand human development. For example, one researcher found that in certain Ugandan cultures, infants reach the milestones of sitting, walking, and

talking in half the time it takes for children in the United States. This seems to challenge accepted Western norms. Researchers hypothesized two reasons for such seemingly accelerated development:

- From the moment of birth until well into the toddler stage, infants spend most of their time strapped skin to skin next to their mothers. From this vantage point the infants intimately experience the rhythms of body movement and speech, the cues in the environment that their mothers paid attention to, and constant tactile closeness.

- When not being carried, infants and toddlers were given loving massages for long periods every day by their mothers and other women in the community.

Researchers concluded that the combinations of these two practices stimulate complex neurological, motor, and hormonal systems of the infants to speed sitting, walking, and talking compared to what is considered "normal" in the West. The mere existence of such huge differences in the rate of development raises large questions about our assumptions about what is normal.

The interesting back end of the Ugandan example is that at age five, after this extremely intimate early childhood experience, the children go through a rite of passage that includes being sent alone into the forest for several days, then being forced to leave their mother's home and sent to live with another relative. This shock appears to arrest the earlier rapid development, and maturation slows way down.

General Adult Attitudes

Many of us have heard older people say to us or other young people something like, "Growing up is giving up. You'd better get used to it." It is the accumulation of disappointments, losses, smashed dreams, unaccepted love, and other such painful experiences that lead adults to say things like that. This crippling attitude is gradually forced upon young people. It is like a contagion, a virus about aging.

Institutional Examples

Young people in this country are forced to go to school for 12 years, whether school is an effective learning environment for them or not. They are forced by law and by parents (with the exception of those who exercise the demanding option of home schooling). If their spirit, energy, or learning style does not dovetail with the prevailing teacher, school, or educational philosophy, they begin to "fail," have "special needs," are "tracked," and may eventually be labeled as a "dropout." Throughout the 12 years, students have no voice, no power, no decision-making avenues to make significant changes. A critique of our educational system is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say here

that while society's motivation of providing education for all its young people is laudable, the school system as an institution perpetuates adultism.

Another institutional example is the absence of socially responsible, productive, and connected roles for young people in most societies. Certainly in the United States, young people find few jobs, no real policy-making roles, no positions of political power, and no high expectations of young people's contributions to society.

On the other hand, the youth market is exploited for profit as the manufacturing and entertainment industries manipulate styles, fads, popularity, and all other aspects of mass culture.

A Mirror

A handy mirror for reflecting what may be adultist behavior is to ask oneself questions like the following:

- "Would I treat an adult this way?"

- "Would I talk to an adult in this tone of voice?"

- "Would I grab this out of an adult's hand?"

- "Would I make this decision for an adult?"

- "Would I have this expectation for an adult?"

- "Would I limit an adult's behavior this way?"

- "Would I listen to an adult friend's problem in this same way?"

Sometimes the answer may be "no" for good reason, depending on the circumstance. For example, I insist that my six-year-old son hold my hand when crossing the street, but not my 18-year-old daughter. However, many times there is no justifiable reason for treating a younger person differently except habit and attitude. If your "no" sounds a little hollow, it might be worth reexamining your reasons for doing it.

The Emotional Legacy

I hope this short list of examples begins to put our work with young people in a larger context. Most of the examples I used have been reported to me by young people. They consistently report that the main message they get from the adult world is that they are not as important as adults; they do not feel that they are taken seriously; and they have little or no power.

They say that the emotional legacy of years of this kind of treatment is a heavy load, which can include any or all of the following: anger, feelings of powerlessness, insecurity, depression, lack of self-confidence, lack of self-respect, hopelessness, and feeling unloved and unwanted.

What are some possible results of such feelings on their behavior, especially as they get into adolescence and early adulthood?

- Some act "out" by bullying, being prone to violence, rebelling against the "norm," leaving home early, and so on.

- Some act "in" by becoming self-destructive: suicide, alcohol and drug abuse, and depression.

- Some gain a sense of belonging or safety by joining a gang, a clique, a club or team.

- Some isolate themselves, being lonely, not asking for help, not having any close relationships, or not trusting.

Again, adultism is not the only source of such behaviors, but it surely plays a major role.

A Link to Other Forms of Oppression

There is another important reason for understanding and challenging adultism. The various ways we were disrespected and mistreated have, over time, robbed us of huge amounts of our human power, access to our feelings, confidence in our thinking and ability to act, and enjoyment of living. The pain we experience as young people helps condition us to play one of two roles as we get older: to accept further mistreatment as women, as people of color, as workers, etc., or to flip to the other side of the relationship and act in oppressive ways toward others who are in relatively less powerful positions than ours.

A simple illustration might help make this clear. Picture this: a sixth grader is humiliated by the teacher in front of the class for not doing the math problem at the board correctly. The recess bell rings. He is fuming. He feels disrespected. He goes outside and picks on someone to get his feelings out. Whom does he pick on?

Someone smaller and often someone younger. And so it goes: the sixth grader picks on the fifth grader. The fifth grader turns and knocks down the third grader. The third grader hits the first grader. The first grader goes home and picks on his little sister. The little sister turns and kicks the cat.

We can observe among a group of children the mistreatment being passed down among them. It is being passed down the line of physical power, bigger to smaller, and often older to younger.

The significance of this early experience becomes clearer when it is generalized to other forms of the abuse of power. Men, for example, who were routinely beaten as little boys, grow up to be wife beaters. This is a clinical

truism. Similarly, white people, disrespected as children, turn the same attitude, embellished with misinformation, on people of color.

This is one of the pervasive and lasting effects of the mistreatment of young people. Bullies have been bullied. Abusers have been abused. People who have been put down put others down. If a person had not been disrespected and mistreated over and over again as a child and young person, that person would not willingly accept being treated that way as he got older, nor would he willingly heap disrespect on others.

Adultism, racism, sexism, and other "isms" all reinforce each other. The particular ways young people are treated or mistreated are inseparable from their class, gender, or ethnic background. However, the phenomena of being disrespected simply because of being young holds true across diverse backgrounds.

Adultism is a pervasive and difficult form of mistreatment to identify, challenge, and eliminate precisely because every human being has experienced adultism, whatever the degree of severity or cultural variety, and because much adultism is considered natural and normal by most people.

Implications for Our Work with Young People

The set of behaviors, attitudes, policies, and practices that we have labeled adultism gets in the way of more effective youth-adult partnerships. It is useful to reflect on our interactions with young people for signs of unintended disrespect in tone, content, or unspoken assumptions. For those of us who work in youth programs, reexamine the program practices, policies, and power relationships with the lens of adultism, and make adjustments.

A few general guidelines might improve our relationships with young people:

- Listen attentively to young people. Listen when they talk about their thoughts, experiences, and feelings about being young.

- Ask questions. Ask what they think about everything.

- Lie back. Curb the inclination to take over. Support the initiatives of young people.

- Validate their thinking. Welcome their ideas.

- Be willing for them to make mistakes. Putting their ideas into practice will bring mixed results. They will learn. We need to learn to support the process of their taking leadership.

- Change the power relationships wherever appropriate. Consider when adults can refrain from using authority, from making the final decision, from being the "real power" behind youth leadership.

Teamwork and Leadership

- At the same time, do not thrust young people into decision-making and leadership positions without training, practice, and understanding of their responsibilities. Otherwise, we set them up for frustration, confusion, possible failure, and humiliation.

- Always respect all young people, no matter what their ages, and expect them to respect each other, at all ages. This is the starting point for reversing the internalized disrespect.

- Have high expectations of their potentials, and positively assess their current abilities. Never sell them short and always be prepared to lend a hand with a difficulty.

- Do not take out your anger about them on them. They get this from adults all the time. It only adds more hurt. We need to take care of our upsets about them some other way.

- Give young people accurate information about the way the world works, our experiences, relationships and sex, the contributions of young people to humankind, and other issues that interest them. Never lie to them.

- Be patient with ourselves when we unconsciously slip into our old adultist habits. It will take time to undo them. Always appreciate how well we are doing.

Good Policy

In our efforts to create solid relationships with young people, we inevitably come up against adultism: theirs, ours, or society's. Program staff in youth programs need to avoid two extremes.

One is the permissive attitude that says, "Anything the young people want is OK." The mistreatment of and disrespect for young people have left them, to varying degrees, with irrational feelings, misinformation, and tendencies to act out their hurts. Adult staff must not abdicate their responsibility to provide effective leadership and good policy.

The other extreme is that of the adult authority running the show. Adults, likewise, have their share of irrationality, which is often the legacy of the adultism visited upon them as youth. The young people need policies that protect them from adultist leadership.

A sound policy for behavior in our work together needs to include mutual expectations that apply to all people, regardless of age:

- To treat each other with nothing less than complete respect

- To think independently and not just react

- Act to improve the situation

- Be trustworthy, honest, and reliable in relations with each other

- To think about the wellbeing of the whole group

- Care about each other

- Struggle against everything which keeps us divided among ourselves

Envisioning a World Without Adultism: A Final Comment

It has been inspiring and sobering for me whenever I ask young people to imagine a world in which young people were completely respected and never suffered from mistreatment because they were young. Inspiring because they talk about how education would be more related to them as learners; how they would help hire teachers and develop curriculum; how they would use schools as community centers to provide services and opportunities for others; how they would treat their siblings and friends with much more care; how they would feel smart and effective; how they would feel part of their community; how they would help decide how things got done; how they would have numerous open and trusting relationships with adult family members and others; how they would feel confident and loved; how they would help end conflict between racial and cultural groups; how they would be leaders.

Sobering because present reality is so far from that. However, each of us, in our individual relationships with young people, and in our programs, can help create the conditions that help young people develop their vision, practice decision making, exercise judgment, and grow in leadership.

Teamwork and Leadership