

LEARNING EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

JA It's My Business!®

■ Entrepreneurship

JA *It's My Business!* provides middle school students an opportunity to learn how to turn an idea into a business. The learning experience introduces students to the process of design thinking as a problem-solving process and provides an authentic entrepreneurial experience for students with each session building toward a product-pitch competition. The learning experience consists of six 45-minute sessions led by a volunteer with Additional Opportunities and 15-minute extension activities offered throughout.



CURRICULUM OUTLINE

Session	Overview	Objectives	Activities
Entrepreneurs	Students observe the relationship between entrepreneurs, their businesses, and the products and services they offer. They are introduced to well-known entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs and examine the characteristics that they share. Finally, they take an entrepreneurial characteristics inventory to assess their own entrepreneurial abilities and interests.	Define entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the relationship between a business and its products and services.• Identify entrepreneurial characteristics and recognize them, in varying degrees, in themselves.	Warm-Up: Define key terms after watching a short video about a successful entrepreneur and his business. Activity: Play Entrepreneur Matchup to introduce entrepreneurs and the characteristics that helped them become successful. Discuss entrepreneurial characteristics. Complete the Entrepreneurial Characteristics Inventory. Activity: Introduce the Pitch Deck and explain the mock pitch competition that will take place in the final session. Wrap-Up: Review the session's key concepts and terms.

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Market and Need	Students identify markets and needs that entrepreneurial products and services answer. They study young entrepreneurs who have successfully identified a market and need and then create a new product or service to meet that need. Students work in teams to brainstorm current needs within different product or service categories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define market and need. • Explain the importance of identifying market and need when developing new product or service ideas. • Identify the principles of design thinking. 	<p>Warm-Up: Define key terms and watch a video about a young entrepreneur who developed a product for a specific market and need. Discuss examples of other young entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Activity: Introduce design thinking. Students first work independently, then in teams, to develop business ideas that meet a need and market. Teams begin to work on their pitch decks.</p> <p>Wrap-Up: Review the session's key concepts and terms.</p>
Innovative Ideas	Students learn about generating innovative ideas, while keeping in mind market and need. They examine cutting-edge innovative new products before brainstorming their own product or service ideas. Working in teams, students use graphic organizers to capture brainstormed ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain innovation and recognize it as a necessary entrepreneurial skill when starting a business. • Participate in creative idea generation, from brainstorming to defending and selecting an idea. 	<p>Warm-Up: Students watch a short video about a new product that meets a need and market. Define key terms.</p> <p>Activity: Play Real or Not? to learn about some innovative product ideas that exist or are in development.</p> <p>Activity: Students work in teams and brainstorm innovative product ideas to build on their new product. Teams share their revised product ideas with the class (optional) and then continue working on their pitch decks.</p> <p>Wrap-Up: Review the session's key concepts and terms.</p>
Design and Prototype	Students learn about product design and the prototype process. Each student creates a sketch of his or her product or service to show its features and then explains its purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent a product or service idea and its features using rough sketches and drawings. • Recognize sketches as an important first step in the prototype process. 	<p>Warm-Up: Watch a short video about product design and define key terms.</p> <p>Activity: Students examine prototype sketches that show and explain a product idea. They create prototypes of their product or service ideas to present to the class. Teams continue working on their pitch decks.</p> <p>Wrap-Up: Review the session's key concepts and terms.</p>

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Testing the Market	Students learn about the importance of obtaining market feedback about new product and service ideas. They examine types of survey questions and then develop their own. They then determine whether the survey provides useful feedback about the product.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the importance of market research in the product development process. • Describe multiple types of survey questions 	<p>Warm-Up: Watch a short video featuring real-world market research and define key terms.</p> <p>Activity: Play the Market Testing game to test their new knowledge about market research and surveys. Students develop survey questions about their products then meet in their team to create a team survey. Teams continue working on their pitch decks.</p> <p>Wrap-Up: Review the session's key concepts and terms.</p>
Seek Funding	Students complete their pitch deck and learn to deliver a pitch presentation with the intent of attracting investors. In a mock competition, teams pitch their product idea to a guest judge or judges who award the winning team(s) with ceremonial start-up funds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the elements that make a strong pitch presentation. • Work together to create and deliver a product pitch to potential investors. 	<p>Warm-Up: Define key terms related to investors who fund a business idea. Watch a video demonstrating a successful product pitch.</p> <p>Activity: Student teams finalize their pitch deck and plan a pitch for their product or service idea.</p> <p>Activity: Teams take turns pitching their product or service idea to the class and potential investors. A winning team is selected.</p> <p>Wrap-Up: Review the session's key concepts and terms.</p>