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## Windsor Public Schools Grade 4 Humanities Curriculum Industry Partnership Activity

### Overview

Our Humanities curriculum emphasizes the development of excellent literacy skills and social studies knowledge, including an understanding of civics, economics, and local history. To help reach our curricular goals, our fourth graders work with local business and industries in an “Industry Partnership Activity.” Through this exercise, students connect with Windsor’s local businesses and industries, and in turn, better understand how greatly they contribute to the success of the community. They learn how to create a professional presentation and communicate their ideas. Students also have an opportunity to think critically about the economic and civic influences of business and industry on the town of Windsor.

### What exactly is the Industry Partnership Activity?

A representative from a local business or industry will pose an “industry problem” to small groups of students. The students work as a team of critical thinkers to solve the problem and to present their solutions to an audience. A representative from the business or industry attends the presentation to provide students with instant and actionable feedback about their ideas.

### What exactly is an industry problem?

An industry problem is a *real problem* that occurs in a business or industry, which interferes with the ability of the business to be financially successful, productive, and/or efficient. Our fourth graders need to be challenged with industry problems that require them to conduct inquiry, research, and to draft a solution-focused plan of their design. (They do not necessarily need to work on their math skills for this activity). Our staff can work with the industry partner to help them identify a problem that will be engaging and challenging.

### ***Examples of industry problems could be as follows.***

- (1) A locally owned grocery store wants to start a food delivery service, but they are competing with large grocers like Pea Pod and Whole Foods, both of which also offer

delivery. What can the locally owned store do to promote their business and make it “stand out” from the rest?

(2) There is a shortage of chocolate because of an environmental issue with the health of the cocoa plant. A bakery in town is known for its famous walnut double chocolate chip cookies. What should the bakery do to continue serving its customers well, despite this setback?

(3) A new business opens in Windsor and a large number of people move here to be closer to work. The roads are starting to get very crowded in the morning and the workers are always late for their early shift, despite leaving extra travel time. What can this new business do to help their workers, and to guarantee they arrive safely and in a timely manner (what service(s) can they provide)?

### **What is the time commitment for participating in the Industry Partnership Activity?**

A representative from the business or industry must be available to meet face-to-face with student groups *twice* during a two-month period. (The activity will likely begin around April). The two in-person meetings will occur to first “kick off” the activity and then at the presentation of the solutions. The representative should also be available periodically for video or phone consultation with the groups, as needed; students have access to Skype and Google Hangouts.

### **How do I know if my business or industry qualifies for a partnership?**

You should consider partnering with our students, if you answer “yes” to the following questions:

- Are you passionate about working with Windsor’s students?
- Do you feel committed to the potential of our students as future employees and/or consumers in town?
- Do you want to be impressed by the critical thinking capabilities of the students in Windsor?
- Do you have real industry problems that require innovative solutions?
- Are you willing to make a small commitment to “give back” to Windsor and its students?

### **Contact Information**

If you/your business or industry would like to participate in the Industry Partnership Activity, please contact the Director of Arts and Humanities for Windsor Public Schools, Bonnie Fineman, at [bfineman@windsorct.org](mailto:bfineman@windsorct.org) or 860-687-2000, ext. 1285.