

# REALITY TOWN®

## Variation

Emphasis: For older students or to enhance the teaching of “the importance of additional training after High School”.

This idea was created to address the stats that show students who do not plan the next steps after high school are more likely to stay in the job that they had in or right after high school.

**Simulation Time:** 1 ½ - 2 hours depending on the number of students

**Objective:** Increase FAFSA, tech school, college & university applications

*(you decide your objective here, we will show you how we went about meeting our objective)*

### Prep before Reality Town

#### Applying for jobs:

**Option#1:** Hand out the instructions for completing the FAFSA Forecaster application. Ask students to complete and print off the completion paper showing that they have completed the pre-FAFSA. They were to bring this on the day you will be having them fill out their Reality Town job applications.

Note: we used the on-line submission feature.

Students who brought the completion paper were told they may apply for a job based on their GPA. The job should be in a field that they have already studied or worked. For example, a Graphic Designer should have taken Graphic Design classes and have an artistic eye; to apply for a job in the medical field, he/she should be taking medical and science classes, or be working at an assisted living center; artist taking art classes, etc.

Students that didn't complete the FAFSA Forecaster application are told that due to a lack of planning regarding funding their education they will need to use a 1.7 as their GPA and choose from those jobs. These are generally the jobs a student will do with a High School Diploma. Click here for a list of jobs if you are not using the On-Line submit feature.

Students in the 1.7 GPA group should choose the job they are working at now, if they have a job. Again, they should choose a job that they have prior skill or interest. That may not always be possible.

**Optional Extension:** As you can imagine, students who do not complete the application are at an extreme disadvantage. After the initial exercise, you may want to offer an extended deadline and allow students more time to complete the FAFSA Forecaster application. If they complete the information by the new deadline, they would then be allowed to apply for a new job based on their actual GPA.

You may also want to allow students to share other ways that they are preparing for paying for post high school plans.

Note: From past experience, very few students complete the FASA Forecaster application even with the extended deadline.

**Option #2:** Have the student complete the Job Application at realitytown.com. The teacher then creates a spreadsheet or uses the paystub template found at realitytown.com of the student's name and job selections.

#### Option #3

Have your pay stubs produced by Reality Town with only High School Diploma or No Formal Education Jobs and randomly handout the pay stubs.

## **The Reality Town Simulation:**

Run the Reality Town simulation as you normally would. About 30 – 45 minutes into the simulation students begin to see how little they can purchase with their low skill jobs. Students are then told that if they would like to receive additional training for a better job that they could go to the Training Center.

## **Training Center:**

This area is set-up with people from your local Trade Schools, Jr. Colleges, employers, military, etc. These people do a short presentation on what they have to offer and how students can pay for further education or apply for work. We separated the presenters into areas. Students chose the presentation they want to attend.

After the short presentation students are given a sticker with a new salary based on the additional training they elected to do.

Students need to return to the bank in Reality Town to have the difference in old and new salaries added to the student register. Or you could set up a station for this as the students exit the Training Center.

## **Modifications for Reality Town:**

### **Pre-Simulation Ideas:**

**Options:** To reduce the number of volunteers and long lines at housing and transportation – have the students purchase houses & cars, utilities, and property tax in the pre-simulation. In order to facilitate this, you will want to increase the pre-simulation time to at least 40 minutes.

Have students do their own check register – students can use their phones or have calculators at the business tables.

Some students may not want to visit the businesses but rather sit and make purchases just using their handbooks – you may want to allow this as the overall objective is to help students see that additional training after high school is important to make a living wage.

Prepping students for this activity is critical if students have already participated in a Reality Town at a younger age. Explain that this is their chance to see if they can support themselves and a family with the career they are presently interested in.

Don't make lower skilled job assignments punitive, but rather a consequence of not planning for life after high school. Help students see the importance of additional training after High School. Terminology is extremely important. Refer to the jobs as "lower skilled", NOT "low paying" so that students start to understand that skills are directly correlated to make a higher wage.

**FYI:** They are lower paying because anyone can be trained to do the job and because of that employers don't have to pay as much – employers only offer more pay when workers have additional skills and specialties. A general rule is that usually the few people that have a skill and the skill is in demand, the higher the wage.

### **Larger group Management Idea:**

For larger groups of students, you may choose to color code the handbooks with a color dot and call students out to the training center by color coding groups, so you are working with smaller groups. Simply put a colored sticker in the corner of the handbook.