

Welcome to Our Schools Curriculum

The CCSD ELL Division is grateful for the generosity of The New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance for providing us the rights to share their *Welcome to Our Schools* curriculum with our teachers. This curriculum was developed for New York Teachers of Refugee students. With this in mind, there are a few lessons that we will be offering adaptation suggestions to address the needs of Newcomer students living in Clark County.

When deciding what modules to teach, keep in mind who your students are and what they need to learn about being in a U.S. school. As they state in their materials, “Instructors should review the Modules and select the materials that would be most relevant to the refugee students (CCSD Newcomers) enrolled in their school system, and most useful when designing lesson plans and classroom activities.” Also, you may have English-speaking students who do not qualify as ELLs who could benefit from the acculturation pieces of this curriculum. A student coming from England speaks a different English and can experience culture shock as they begin living in the U.S. Please use these materials, as they seem appropriate for these students as well.

Please review pages 4-8, Background for Instructors. As you read any of these materials, remember that the authors are in New York, and programs mentioned do not align to CCSD programs. Reading considerations are also attached for you to review before reading each module. We are providing these materials as a starting point for you to be able to develop lessons to meet the acculturation needs of your Newcomer students. Thank you for looking at these materials. The CCSD ELL Division welcomes your feedback on this curriculum as we are offering it to our schools for the first time this year. If you have any questions or need additional supports for your Newcomer students please reach out to our Division at (702) 799-2137. Also, please look at the materials and links specifically provided to address newcomer needs found on our website at ell.ccsd.net. Most schools have an ELL Student Success Advocate. These staff members receive additional training from the ELL Division and can also act as a resource for you.

CCSD CONSIDERATIONS

Module 7: Interest and Talents

In this reading...

When it says ...	Think...
refugee	newcomer
Refugee Academy	school site
academic coach	mentor

- Videos are not available at this time.
- Handout 7-1 is not available.

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOLS



BUREAU OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE

**NEW YORK STATE OFFICE
OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE**

**REVISED 2011
ANDREW M. CUOMO, GOVERNOR**

The Refugee School Impact Grant (RSIG) *Welcome to our Schools*, which includes Refugee Academy and Mini-Academy Curricula, Parent and Professional Development Programs, a Guide to Academic Coaches, a Guide to the Videos, and the videos *Refugee Student Interviews*, *Refugee Parent Interviews*, *A Day in Elementary School*, *A Day in Middle School* and *A Day in High School*, was developed by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (OTDA/BRIA).

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MODULE 7
INTERESTS AND TALENTS

MODULE 7: Interests & Talents



PURPOSE

The purpose of Module 7 is to familiarize students with school and community opportunities to develop interests and talents.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Become familiar with extra-curricular activities to determine interests and talents
- Learn about opportunities for involvement in sports in American education
- Become familiar with community-based after-school and weekend programs



SUPPLIES

***Handout 7 – 1:
What Do You Enjoy?***

***Handout 7 – 2:
After School Plans***

Video

A Day in School
(Elementary, Middle
or High School)

Sports equipment:
basketball; hockey
stick and puck (field
and ice); soccer ball;
baseball and glove;
Frisbee; swim cap;
volleyball; football;
chalk (gymnastics)

Ballet slippers
Musical Instruments
Cooking equipment
Costume and wig

Brochures from local
community-based
programs (YMCA,
Boys/Girls Club, sports
organizations, etc.)



MODULE 7: Interests and Talents

VOCABULARY

Elementary Vocabulary

Baseball
Basketball
Frisbee
Swimming
Vacation Break
Volleyball
Soccer
Football
Talent
Interest

Secondary Vocabulary

Baseball
Basketball
Frisbee
Swimming
Games (sports)
Volleyball
Vacation Break
Football
Talent
Interest
Practice
Soccer
Coach
Permission



Key Points – Interests and Talents



- 1. *Students can develop interests and talents in the classroom, after school, and at community centers on the weekend and during school vacations.***



For many of the refugee students, enrollment in American schools opens up many opportunities to investigate new areas of interest. They may discover skills and talents that they did not even know they had.

Or they may have a chance to further develop interests and talents that they were already exploring in their native countries.

Students should be informed that they can participate in extracurricular programs after school during student organization and club meetings. They can join or try out for athletic teams. They can walk or take the bus to community organizations that provide recreational activities, classes, clubs, and special events that expose students to a variety of new areas of interest. Many organizations provide after-school activities in the community, and may also be open on the weekends and in the evenings. They may also provide vacation camps and summer programs.

Encourage students to expand their education beyond the school day. Encourage them to try many new activities, even if they have no experience or no one to attend with them. They will not only learn new skills and develop new interests and talents, they will meet new friends.

Give examples of peers and adults who have taken classes that have resulted in a hobby or profession. Perhaps a teacher is an amateur photographer after taking a photography class, a student works at a local restaurant after joining a cooking class, or another student has decided to pursue acting as a career after trying out for a school play.



- 2. *A variety of programs are offered by schools and by community organizations.***

Module 7 provides information about programs in the school and surrounding community that are designed to provide entertainment, fun, and skill development for the students. The programs can include sports, music, dance, and art, as well as service and volunteer opportunities. Depending upon the facilities and the interests of the local community, the programs can emphasize competition, parental involvement, skill acquisition, academic support, or simply enjoyment.

For example, community centers may offer basketball clinics, cooking classes, dance programs, and youth groups. Schools may have a number of clubs, music groups, dances, and theatrical productions.

Provide students with specific information about the programs available in the area, including:

- ✓ Schedule of the program
- ✓ Possible transportation options
- ✓ Fee required, and methods for fee reduction or waiver
- ✓ Where equipment and supplies can be purchased or obtained for free
- ✓ Permissions required from parents and physicians
- ✓ Level of competitiveness
- ✓ Skill emphasis
- ✓ Parental involvement
- ✓ Community support
- ✓ Systems for enrolling, trying out, attending



Students may be easily deterred if they are unfamiliar with the style of uniform required, or are hesitant to participate in an activity that may not be accepted by their families for religious or cultural reasons. Explain the value of participating in programs that build skills and enhance social experiences, but inform students that they must discuss their interests with their parents.

There may be a temptation for the students to become involved in a number of different programs, particularly if the student is excited about trying many new things. Make sure that students understand that schoolwork should be completed and grades should be satisfactory before they participate in after-school activities.



3. School programs may be offered specifically to cultivate talents.

Occasionally students may demonstrate a unique talent. A teacher may spot it or a parent may point it out to the school. The talent could be related to such areas as visual arts, sports, mechanics, or music, but students could also show a talent for service work or leadership. Inform students about opportunities to enroll in classes for

Module 7 Interests and Talents



the gifted, or how to obtain specialized instruction in specific areas of talent (e.g., individual lessons, internships, advanced placement).

Provide information about where students can attend classes to expand upon their skills, perhaps at local museums or postsecondary institutions. Invite representatives from the Big Brothers Big Sisters program to talk to students. Connect students with piano teachers, soccer coaches, camp directors, and so forth.

Observe participants in the Refugee Academy and find ways to cultivate their interests and talents. Perhaps they can try out for a sports team, join a Math Olympics or similar team, compete in the College Academic Bowl, or run for office in the school. Many of the students in the Refugee Academy will not know that these options are possible.



When reviewing the possibilities, keep in mind that students may need detailed explanations. For example, to tell the students that they can “try out for football” assumes that they know what football is and what it means to “try out.” They will not only need descriptions, they will need pictures, demonstrations, examples of equipment and uniforms, and anecdotes from instructors who can present with enthusiasm, and from peers who joined a program and enjoyed themselves.

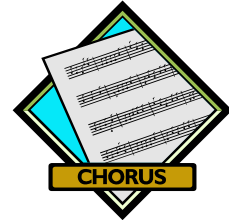
ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1: WHAT ARE YOUR INTERESTS?

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (120 minutes)

In this activity:

Students will discover the variety of extracurricular programs that are available for them in school and in the local community.



The purpose of this activity is not only to inform students about the many choices that they will have in pursuing interests and talents, but to expose them to classes, clubs, special events, tutoring, and other programs that focus on topics that will be brand-new to many of the students.

Take time to describe the programs in detail, encouraging students to identify activities that appeal to them, even if they have never tried any of the activities before.

- Distribute *Handout 7-1: What Do You Enjoy?*
 - Discuss each activity, showing “tools of the trade” such as ballet slippers, musical instruments, basketball, and so forth. (See the Supplies list for suggestions.) Explain:
 - What the school offers
 - What the community offers
 - Benefits of participation
 - How to get involved
 - Levels of difficulty
 - Sign-ups versus tryouts
 - Parental involvement
 - Community involvement

- Schedule and time invested
 - Requirements
 - How to improve
 - Recognition
- For as many activities as possible, introduce a guest coach, teacher, or community organization director who can provide information about available activities.
 - Academy instructors can demonstrate interests and talents such as:

- Playing guitar
- Making a video
- Sketching a picture
- Tap dancing
- Cooking



Show that enjoyment is the benefit, regardless of the level of talent.

- Invite students to discuss the activities, observing:
 - Comfort level with each activity
 - Past experience
 - Evidence of talent
 - Uncertainty about interests
 - Uncertainty about trying something new
 - Insecurity about skills
- Complete *Handout 7-1: What Do You Enjoy?* with additional illustrations of special interests.
 - Ask students what they have seen adults or their peers do that requires skill or talent. For example, students may pass a karate studio on the way to school, or watch a volleyball game in a park, or observe an artist sketching buildings in the neighborhood. Students may not realize that they can pursue those same interests in clubs and classes.



Show the video ***A Day in School*** (Elementary, Middle or High School) to provide new information and to encourage students to pursue new interests and cultivate talents.

Use the ***Guide to the Videos*** for introducing the video and for follow-up discussion.

ACTIVITY #2: AFTER SCHOOL

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 (30 minutes)

In this activity:

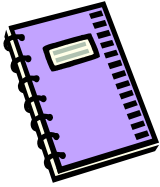
Students will meet with the instructors and discuss plans for participating in after-school activities.

Students can meet with the instructors in small groups, or individually with their Academic Coach.



- Divide students into groups and with each student discuss *Handout 7-2: After School Plans* individually, helping them to make plans for participation in an extracurricular activity.
 - Discuss:
 - Benefits
 - Expectations of schools
 - Fee coverage
 - Transportation
 - No pressure
 - Possible parental resistance
 - Friends attending together

Ask students to discuss *Handout 7-2: After-School Plans* with their parents.



JOURNAL TOPIC

Grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12

How will I learn new things in school and after school?



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Take field trips to sports sites, club meetings, special events in the community, and classes at local activity centers.
- Arrange for experiences in dance, specific sports, art projects, and other skill-based activities that are offered by schools and community organizations.
- Invite students to talk about their involvement in extracurricular activities, and to demonstrate the skills they have learned.
- Introduce students with demonstrated talents to special programs and teachers.
- Invite instructors to demonstrate what they teach. Encourage them to reassure students that many of the skills do not require fluency in English, just a desire to learn and try new things.
- Talk to local community organizations about how to modify curriculum and instruction so that refugee students can feel comfortable in their programs. If possible, identify volunteer translators who can assist in instruction during community programs.
- Give the students the opportunity to try on uniforms, experiment with the tools that artists use, look through the lens of a camera, and participate in other experiences that might pique their interest.

AFTER SCHOOL PLANS

Name: _____

Activity: _____

Time: _____

Contact: _____

Place: _____

Fee: _____

Need: _____ **Permission from parents**

_____ **Uniform**

_____ **Equipment**

_____ **Transportation**

_____ **Snack**