



## Bridge to College and Careers: Business Career Focused High School Equivalency (HSE) Program

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**The Bridge to College and Careers Program at LaGuardia Community College provides educational and career pathways for adults and out-of-school youth.**

Students in the Bridge Program prepare to pass the High School Equivalency exam and develop transferable academic competencies and professional awareness that will serve them in the workplace, college, or vocational training. Coursework in the Bridge to Business Program covers topics in business and develops academic reading, writing and math skills in preparation for college and employment in this area.

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### **Our Approach**

The Bridge classroom is a collaborative learning environment where students discover key concepts and practice professional skills focused on a specific career pathway. Favoring an interdisciplinary range of texts and primary source materials, the rigorous course content emphasizes basic reading, writing and math skills. The Bridge Program uses contextualized instruction, a sector focused approach to developmental instruction, to build basic skills.

The Bridge to Business curriculum develops basic skills and introduces career focused concepts required for success in financial, business administration and management professions. Students read a variety of level appropriate informational texts, chosen for their focus on business issues and connections to students' professional aspirations. Over the course of the semester, students complete activities that introduce them to the daily demands of business administration and development as well as issues they will encounter in the workplace.

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### **Lesson Preview: Cracking the Razor Market**

Students complete introductory activities for the "Thinking like an Entrepreneur" unit in the Cracking the Razor Market lesson. They practice skills of compare and contrast and learn about basic ideas in marketing with the coffee cup inquiry activity and complete a short reading to explore the daily decisions and challenges new entrepreneurs may face.

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## Cracking the Razor Market

### Essential Questions

Who is an entrepreneur? What types of decisions does he/she have to make when introducing a new product?

### Description

#### Part 1

During this lesson, students are introduced to the Thinking Like an Entrepreneur unit. They start with writing and discussing two different coffee cups from the point of view of a consumer and of a business owner. During this introductory activity students apply two different points of view on the same object, and for the first time they start thinking as entrepreneurs. The *Coffee Cup Inquiry* activity will be repeated several times during the semester in different contexts.

#### Part 2

Students read the article “Bringing an Innovative Razor to the Masses” by Mickey Meece as homework and answer a number of questions. Through small group work and presentations, students learn about entrepreneurs and the typical questions they have to address every day. Finally, when reflecting on the small group work, students refer back to the article in order to analyze its structure (e.g., use of subheadings and topic sentences) and compile a list of rules for using quotes in writing.

### Learning Objectives

#### Content

Define *entrepreneur* and learn about his/her typical decision making process

#### Literacy

**Key Ideas and Details:** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

**Key Ideas and Details:** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

**Key Ideas and Details:** Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

**Craft and Structure:** Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

**Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

 **Materials:**

- Lesson handouts and instructions
- 5 Starbucks and 5 ordinary bodega (corner market) coffee cups
- Meece, Mickey. "Bringing an Innovative Razor to the Masses." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 28 April 2010. Web. 19 Sep. 2011. Available at <http://nyti.ms/1v5Cihq>

**Learning Plan****Part 1****Introduction: 3 minutes**

Introduce the beginning of a new unit to students, saying "Today we start the discussion about entrepreneurship. You have enrolled in this class in order to get ready for the HSE test, as well as to learn about economics and starting your own business. Many of you are interested in studying business in college and in becoming business owners yourself. During this semester, we will read and write about GDP, supply and demand, marketing, advertising, and other topics related to business. Furthermore, you will design your own business plan and solve many math problems that will help you with choosing a location and planning expenses for your business."

**Coffee Cup Inquiry: 10 minutes**

Distribute Starbucks and ordinary bodega coffee cups and the handout *Coffee Cup Inquiry* to the class. Invite students to look at the coffee cups closely and answer the following questions in writing:



- What are similarities and differences between these two coffee cups from a consumer's point of view?
- What are similarities and differences between these two coffee cups from the point of view of a business owner?

**Whole Class Discussion: 15 minutes**

Invite students to share the similarities and differences about the coffee cups from a consumer's point of view. It is easy for students to write from a consumer's point of view, as they are consumers of coffee.

Record students' answers on the board and encourage students to take notes as well. You can organize your notes on the board in the following way:



<b>Consumer's Point of View</b>	
<b>Similarities</b>	<b>Differences</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Both cups are made to hold coffee</li><li>• Both cups have lids</li><li>• Both cups are for single use</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Starbucks can be bought only at Starbucks coffee shop</li><li>• Starbucks lid is more comfortable to drink from</li><li>• Starbucks cup has a comfortable sleeve</li><li>• Starbucks coffee is more expensive</li></ul>

Ask students to assume the role of a business owner and try to describe the coffee cups. Record students' answers on the board similarly to the previous question, modeling a note taking strategy. It might be more challenging for students to write from the point of view of a business owner, but you can infer their answers by asking the following questions:

- Which of the cups has a recognizable logo?
- How are the cups designed? What colors are used? Does it make a difference?
- Where can one find each type of coffee? What associations does each selling place bring?
- Are these cups harmful to the environment? Can one recycle them?



*During this activity, students analyze very familiar objects from the point of view of a business owner. Students will be applying a similar strategy to many business readings, objects, and events throughout the semester.*

### **Homework:**



1. Read the article "Bringing an Innovative Razor to the Masses" by Mickey Meece and answer a number of questions in writing (the handout *Defining Entrepreneurship*). When answering the questions in writing, students learn to look for specific information in the text.

## Part 2

### **Pair Work: 5 minutes**

1. Ask students to share their answers to the questions about the article “Bringing an Innovative Razor to the Masses” by Mickey Meece with a student who is sitting next to them.

### **Defining Entrepreneurship**

**Homework Assignment:** Please read the article “Bringing an Innovative Razor to the Masses” by Mickey Meece, using active reading strategies we have discussed in a few previous classes (e.g., underlining important points, writing margin notes, asking questions).

2. While everyone is working in pairs, ask volunteers to come up to the board and write their definitions of *entrepreneur* on the board. Ask students to add to those definitions with as many details as possible.
3. When students are working in pairs, circle the room and check the copies of students’ articles for use of different active reading strategies (e.g., highlights, margin notes, questions). Ask some students individually what active strategies they used when reading the article.

### **Whole-Class Discussion: 15 minutes**

4. Discuss students’ answers to the questions as a whole class. Discuss the definitions of *entrepreneur* and how students understand his/her role and duties. Infer from students further details about the definition by asking the following questions:
  - What duties does an entrepreneur have to fulfill?
  - What does his/her typical day look like?
  - What does an entrepreneur need to know to do his/her job?

Encourage every student to contribute to the conversation and add new examples and ideas. Discuss every question with the class. It is important to discuss this article as, for the first time, students read about different questions that a business owner should consider when developing and marketing a new product.



### **Small Group Work: 20 minutes**

5. Divide the class into small groups by asking students who were born in summer, winter, fall, and spring months to get together. Then break those bigger groups into small groups of three students. Distribute the handout *Cracking the Razor Market* and encourage students to select group roles (e.g., discussion leader, scribe, and presenter).

## Cracking the Razor Market

Discussion Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Scribe \_\_\_\_\_ Presenter \_\_\_\_\_

### Part 1: Working as a Team

- Distribute chart paper and markers and encourage students to copy the table on chart paper before filling it out. Check in with groups during the small group work in order to answer students' questions, monitor their progress, and remind them about the time limit.
- Once students finish filling out the table, ask them to post their chart papers on classroom walls and answer the reflection questions in writing (*Part 2: Reflection Questions*).

### Group Presentations: 20 minutes

- Invite each group to present their poster to the class. The students who have selected the role of *Presenter* will present their group's posters. However, during each presentation ask other members of the group to contribute to the presentations and answer the *Reflection Questions*.
- When students are answering *Reflection Questions*, write their answers on the board in the following way:



1. Structure of the Article	2. Citation Rules
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The article has subheadings. It helped to find the right information quickly.</li><li>The sentences which contain the main idea of the paragraph/section are following subheadings.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use quotation marks when using quotes</li><li>Indicate the name of the author of the article, page numbers, and paragraph numbers in parenthesis.</li></ul>



### **Homework:**

Ask students to write one or two paragraphs in response to a quote from the article “Bringing an Innovative Razor to the Masses” by Mickey Meece (the handout *Responding to Quotes*). You can collect students’ homework at the beginning of the next lesson.



### **Assessment:**

1. Group work allows the instructor to assess teamwork skills and individual understanding (by observing individuals during group work).
2. By collecting students’ homework (*Defining Entrepreneurship*), the instructor can assess individual understanding.





4. Choose a quote, event or paragraph that struck you in the article. Summarize the quote, event, or paragraph of your choice and explain its significance to you.

# Cracking the Razor Market

Discussion Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Scribe \_\_\_\_\_  
Presenter \_\_\_\_\_

## Part 1: Working as a Team

1. Please copy the following table on chart paper first to save time and fill it out as a group. During this activity, you can refer to the article and use examples and quotes from it.

<p><b><u>Problem:</u></b> What challenge did the Tomassetti brothers have to overcome?</p>
<p><b><u>Solution:</u></b> What steps did they take “to crack the \$2.6 billion United States razor and blade market”? (Meece)</p>
<p><b><u>Results:</u></b> What results did they reach?</p>

## Part 2: Reflection Questions

2. Did the structure of the article make it easier for you to fill out the table? Why? Were the subheadings useful? What helped you to locate the main ideas in the article?

3. What punctuation did you use to incorporate quotes from the article in your answers?

## Responding to Quotes

**Homework Assignment:** Please write one or two paragraphs explaining the following quote from the article “Bringing an Innovative Razor to the Masses” by Mickey Meece. In your response, mention the title of the article and the author’s name and use some examples and quotes from the article to support your point. Refer to the list of quotation rules we compiled in class in order to use correct punctuation when citing.

**Quote:** “The goal is to sell a few million of the three-packs in one year (sales are currently at about 250,000), Mr. Sullivan said, adding, ‘In the grand scheme of razor blades, that’s probably a drop in the ocean’” (Meece 2).

Your response: