

PART TWO: DISCUSSIONS WITH KNOWLEDGEABLE ADULTS

Meet the Artist

Invite an arts professional from the community to speak or conduct a demonstration for the group. Possible outlets for **finding** speakers or presenters include:

- statewide artists' rosters
- university art, drama and music departments
- local art and music schools
- state and local arts councils
- local art galleries
- local theatres (especially children's theatres)
- local music stores
- actors' guilds (such as Screen Actors Guild)

When **planning** a visit to your Club by an artist, here are some things to remember:

- Decide on a focus and format for the artist's visit.
- Find out if he or she needs any special equipment.
- Make sure there is adequate space for the artist.
- Invite local school board personnel and/or local media.
- Make an agenda or schedule for the visit.

When **preparing** members for an artist's visit, be sure to do the following:

- Discuss expectations for appropriate behavior.
- Share background information about the artist.
- Brainstorm questions members might ask the artist.
- Allow youth to rehearse asking each other questions.

During the artist's visit, participate in the discussion and monitor youth's questions and behavior. After the visit, help youth reflect on the experience and encourage them to write thank-you letters to the artist.

Activity Type

Large-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Materials or equipment requested by artist

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- The Arts

Make a Difference!

Begin this activity by encouraging youth to think about needs in the community. Post a flip chart page with the following topics and instruct each member to come up and place a tally mark next to the topic they consider to be the most critical need in the community.

- _____ Alcohol/drug use/drunken driving
- _____ Community clean-up
- _____ Homelessness
- _____ Child abuse and/or domestic violence
- _____ Juvenile crime
- _____ Teen pregnancy
- _____ Adolescent suicide
- _____ Hunger/poverty
- _____ Racial, ethnic and/or gender discrimination
- _____ Illiteracy
- _____ Care for the elderly
- _____ Improper health care/safety
- _____ Transportation/road conditions
- _____ Meeting the needs of physically handicapped

After all members have voted, tally the marks to see which topic they consider most important. Have youth brainstorm ways to address this need and possible solutions to the problem. Encourage them to think about individuals who could make a difference in the areas they have identified or at least create awareness within the community. For example:

- local newspaper
- public officials
- mayor
- local social service agencies
- environmental groups
- MADD or other advocacy groups
- literacy organizations
- state department of transportation

Instruct each member to prepare a letter to an individual - one of these or someone they choose - to ask for action and to present the ideas brainstormed by the group. Help youth locate contact information and send the letters by e-mail or regular mail.

Activity Type

Large-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Flip chart paper
- Markers

Core Areas

- Character & Leadership Development
- Education & Career Development

Monster.com

Ask youth to think about all the different occupations they have considered during their lives. Keep a list on a white board or flip chart as they brainstorm ideas. Ask youth to think about the career they would most like to know more about and encourage them to write a letter to find out more information about what the job is like. Give some ideas of individuals youth might contact:

- someone they know personally or who is known by family or friends working in this career
- the president or chief executive officer of a firm where they might like to work in this job or career
- a representative of an executive search firm or job placement agency
- someone in the placement office of a local college
- a professional career counselor

Encourage youth to spend some time researching the career of field that interests them and identify individuals who might be able to provide more information about the field. Youth might include questions such as:

- What are the general duties of this job?
- What are the physical surroundings, work hours and demands of this work?
- What training or education is needed for this career?
- What salary range is this job in?

Once they have identified a contact person, encourage youth to send the letters by e-mail or regular mail.

Activity Type

Individual

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Paper
- Computers

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- Health & Life Skills

Money Wizard

Invite a representative from a local bank or a money management counselor from a local firm to speak to the group about money and finances. Possible topics for discussion include:

- banking services, including ATMs
- handling a bank account
- debit vs. credit cards
- budgeting
- saving for the future

Before the speaker arrives, brainstorm with members about possible questions they might ask.

Optional: Invite a stockbroker or financial advisor to visit the Club and discuss how stocks are traded. Before the visit, have members learn more about investing through activities at www.younginvestor.com.

Activity Type

Large-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Materials requested by speaker

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- Health & Life Skills

The Bod Squad

Invite a panel of individuals to come to the Club to be a resource for youth on fitness and health topics. Have each panelist spend a few moments speaking about their area of expertise, followed by a discussion of topics chosen by you and the group. Panelists might include:

- physical education instructors from local college
- athletic department chairpersons
- professional athletes
- coaches
- professional trainers
- nutritionists
- dieticians

Before the panel begins, brainstorm with youth about areas to focus on and possible questions to ask panelists. Come up with a list of agreed-upon questions before the panel begins and appoint a facilitator to moderate the panel, keeping everyone focused on the key topics.

Activity Type

Large-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Materials requested by panel members

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- Health & Life Skills
- Sports, Fitness & Recreation

It's Your Government

Invite a local government official - either from the city or the county in which the Club is located - to speak to Club members about how government works at the local level. Ask the speaker to give youth an overview of both city and county government and describe how they work together to keep everything running smoothly. Consider inviting the following individuals:

- mayor
- city manager
- city clerk
- county government official
- state senator or congressperson
- city council member

Prepare youth for the speaker by asking what they would most like to know about government and brainstorming possible topics for discussion.

Activity Type

Large-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Materials requested by speaker

Core Areas

- Character & Leadership Development
- Education & Career Development

Screenagers Today

Invite a media professional to speak to Club members about media literacy. Consider inviting the following individuals:

- newspaper publisher or editor
- magazine publisher or editor
- advertising or marketing representative
- television writer or producer
- radio or broadcast producer

Topics the speaker might cover include the following:

- information vs. entertainment ("infotainment")
- analyzing news stories
- detecting bias in the news
- propaganda techniques
- media messages
- the effect of media on youth
- media-saturated culture

Prepare youth for the speaker by asking what they would most like to know about media literacy and brainstorming possible topics for discussion.

Activity Type

Large-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Materials requested by speaker

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- Health & Life Skills
- Sports, Fitness & Recreation

Stop the Violence

Arrange for a Club conference or roundtable discussion on violence prevention. Invite representatives from all sectors of the community, including not only individuals working directly in law enforcement but also those who can help make the community safer. Try to include a representative from each sector of the community. Participants to consider include the following:

- law enforcement officers
- state and local government officials
- domestic violence shelter counselors
- gang prevention workers
- conflict resolution professionals
- school safety representatives

Prepare youth for the discussion by encouraging them to research topics for focus and discussion.

Activity Type

Large-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Computers

Core Areas

- Character & Leadership Development
- Education & Career Development
- Health & Life Skills

Who Do You Want To Be?

Ask youth to form into small groups of no more than five members each. Have all groups but one spend time conducting research on potential careers of interest to them. Ask them to jot down some notes about jobs they would like to explore. Meet with the first group to discuss careers they are interested in and help each member develop a set of goals to complete in order to move them in the direction of the career they like. Spend time with each youth discussing his or her interests. Rotate groups and discuss the second group's career interests, helping them develop goals.

Activity Type

Small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Computers

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- Health & Life Skills

Fair's Fair!

Invite a representative from the local court system to come speak to the group. A judge from any of the following branches would be a good candidate:

- juvenile court
- magistrate court
- probate court
- state court
- superior court
- traffic court

Ask the speaker to give members an overview of the court system in your state, a brief history of each court and the purpose for each. After the overview, request that the speaker talk specifically about fairness, how he or she makes a fair decision in the courtroom and the factors that influence that decision.

Activity Type

Large-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Materials requested by speaker

Core Areas

- Character & Leadership Development
- Education & Career Development