



Session by Session Teaching Tips

JA Our Nation



Scan the code for short session-by-session training videos: [JA Our Nation – JA Training](#)

All sessions:

- Thoroughly read your Facilitator Guide. Spend time planning your sessions and thinking about relevant stories you can share with students.
- Make sure to note which materials belong to each lesson within your kit of materials. For printed materials note the session number on the bottom of the page for your convenience. There is also a list of materials needed for each session listed in your Facilitator Guide.
- You may choose whether to use the Onscreen Presentation available at <https://learn.ja.org> during your lessons. JASD recommends displaying the presentation to provide students with visual support, but it is not required to successfully complete the classroom activities.
- Often the same students will raise their hands to answer questions. Be sure to allow for wait-time and to rotate so you are trying to hear from as many students as possible. It would also be an option to Implement "Think-Pair-Share" for some of the responses: Before calling on anyone, have students turn to a neighbor and share their answer for 15-30 seconds. This gives quieter students the confidence to raise their hands and ensures everyone gets to talk.
- It's helpful to have a signal to get students' attention whenever needed. You can ask the teacher what she/he uses as an attention-getting signal, or feel free to use your own. Just be sure to take a minute to teach the students what the signal is prior to starting the first lesson.
 - Ideas:
 - You: "1, 2, 3, eyes on me!" | Students: "1, 2, eyes on you!"
 - You: "Hocus Pocus..." | Students: "...Everybody focus!"
 - You: "Macaroni and cheese!" | Students: "Everybody freeze!"

Session 1:

- ****New**** As part of JA USA's outcome-based strategy, students are being asked to complete brief surveys before and after their JA experience.
 - Thank you for helping make this a priority in your classroom. The few extra minutes you invest will help JA measure student growth, strengthen our programs, and tell the story of the impact we are making together.
 - Work with your teacher to have students fill out the [pre-program digital survey](#). This can be completed when you are setting up the lesson or before your arrival.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JAOurNation2_0_Pre-programStudentSurveyFY25-26
 - For question #1, please scroll to the bottom of the list and select **JA of South Dakota**.
 - For question #6 JASD recommends using the classroom teacher's last name.
- **Activity: The Right Price-**
 - Decide prior to the lesson where, when, and how you want to tally the scores. *A large whiteboard is a good place for this.* It is something to mention to the teacher in advance if this will be your first time seeing the classroom.

- Optional: Consider allowing students a minute to give their team an appropriate name and write it on the board; maybe suggest a few and then they can write their team's name on the board with their names underneath. Optional names may include: the Ink Tank, Pixel Art Prints, Sticker Studio, Homework Hub, Pencil Grip Outlet, Hoodie Haven, etc.
- **Learning Log:** Consider asking the teacher prior to your arrival where students should put their take-home Learning Log paper so you can direct students accordingly.

Session 2:

- **Activity: Innovate to Be Great!**
 - See general tips for suggestions on how to divide students into 8 groups.
- **When completing the Innovation Challenge Cards Activity:** Each group can designate a 'reader' to read the card aloud to the other students in the group prior to the 5-minute brainstorming session, and to give a one-minute heads up prior to ending the activity.
- **Innovation Topic Cards:** There are eight Innovation Challenge Topic Cards. Some students may have trouble thinking of ideas for their innovative topic, below are examples to help prompt them. Remind students there is no *wrong* idea when brainstorming:
 - **Appliances:** Beeping Device: Create a device that beeps if left on or in standby mode.
 - **Textile:** Resuable Tote Bags: Old clothes can be turned into reusable tote bags.
 - **Water:** Drip Stopper: Create a drip-stopper that automatically shuts off leaks.
 - **Single-Use Plastics:** Refill Station: Create a refill station for drinks and snacks.
 - **Fast-Food Restaurants:** Compost bins for food scraps: Create bins that will be use for food scraps.
 - **Insects:** Bug-Repelling Picnic Table: Add plants around the edges of the tables to repel bugs.
 - **Pets:** Special Dog Tags: Create tags on dogs that remind owners to clean up after them.
 - **Electronic Devices:** Long-Lasting Battery: Design Long-lasting, easy-to-replace batteries.
- During the activity, remind students to refer to their STEM problem-solving poster (worksheet). It helps students remember the steps they should follow to solve their challenge topic.

Session 3:

- **Activity: Skill Seekers**
 - See the General Tips for suggestions on how to divide students into 8 groups and use the same method or a different one.
 - Allow for a 1–2-minute reminder prior to the game ending.

Session 4:

- **Activity: Career Compass**
 - See the General Tips section for ideas about how to divide students up into 8 groups. You can use the same method/ groups each time or change it up.
 - If time allows, students can share with a partner about a career they are interested in.

Session 5:

- **Activity: Community Connections-**
 - See the General Tips section for ideas about how to divide students up. Note that they need to be in 5 groups this time.
 - Feel free to model the activity prior to handing out the supplies to the students. Sometimes the students get excited about the supplies and may not attend to the instructions.
- ****Reminder**** Work with your teacher to have students fill out the post-program digital survey. This can be completed after the lesson while you are setting up for graduation.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JAOurNation2_0_Post-programStudentSurveyFY25-26
- **Graduation:**
 - The JA Certificates of Achievement have been provided. Please work with your teacher to obtain student names and fill these out to make graduation special. Allow ample time (5-10 minutes) for the graduation ceremony at the end.

- If you plan to bring something to hand out to the students during the last session, have the item “pre-approved” by the teacher. Please consider items such as company logo'd trinkets, pencils, erasers, stickers, etc., as most schools now promote healthy/peanut-free options and no longer allow candy.
- If you bring an edible treat, ask the teacher if they can eat it right away. Also, allow time for them to finish the snack during the JA session time. Please make sure your treat is peanut-free, as this may be a school district policy and make sure you have approved the treat with the teacher.
- Make this time special. Call the students up one-at-a-time to receive their certificates and have other students provide applause. Teach them to shake your hand properly (no ‘limp fish’ or ‘super squeezers’) and to shake with the right hand while accepting the certificate with the left.
- Please feel free to recycle any leftover materials or pass them along to the classroom teacher. There is no need to return unused supplies to JASD.

General Tips for all Programs:

- For Arrival:
 - Bring a State Issued Photo ID (Driver’s License) to check in at the school office each visit.
 - Arrive to the class a few minutes early so you have time to log onto the learning platform OR work with your teacher ahead of time to ensure they can log in before you get there.
- During Class:
 - During your introduction and throughout your sessions, emphasize WHY you are teaching JA! Why did you care enough to take time out of your schedule to be a volunteer? Did you have JA when you were a student – how did it impact you? If not, how do you think having JA would have influenced you? What do you hope the students will get out of the time you are there?
 - Please refrain from discussing sensitive topics like alcohol, tobacco, gambling, firearms, religion, etc.
 - Distribute the table tents and have students write their names legibly. This will allow you to call on students using their name during the activities. Collect them back after each lesson to be used in the following lessons.
- **Suggestion about how to divide students up into groups:** Either connect with the teacher prior and allow him/her to make groups or have a strategy prepared for this beforehand to make this transition more seamless. Here are a few ideas:
 - **Popsicle Sticks:** Write each student's name on a craft stick and pull them randomly from a jar to build unbiased teams; keep these to use when needed.
 - **Playing Cards:** Hand out cards, then group them by matching numbers, colors (red/black), or suits (hearts, spades, etc.)
 - **Numbering them off 1-8,** then all 1’s to go to a certain part of the room, 2’s etc.
 - **Colored Cubes, Blocks, sticks, paper squares:** They each grab one and then find their partners.
- Consider posting your experience of teaching JA on social media! *Please do not post any pictures of student faces.* Since JA does not have photo releases for students, faces cannot be posted. Ideas: action shots of you teaching, showcasing activities, prepping material, a favorite student quote or ‘aha’ moment of the lesson, etc. Be sure to tag Junior Achievement of South Dakota on Facebook (@JASouthDakota), Instagram (@ja.southdakota) or LinkedIn (@Junior Achievement of South Dakota).

How to Access the Digital Platform

How to log in/access the digital resources.

- 1st time logging in:
 - Go to <https://learn.ja.org> (JA Learning Platform/D2L).
 - **All volunteers will need to create a login by clicking “Volunteer/Educator – Sign Up”.**
 - Enter your Email: the email JA has on file for you.
 - Send verification code.
 - Create password (JA does not have access to this. If you forget your password, you will need to create a new one.

- Fill out remaining information (select JA of South Dakota as your area).
- Accessing the platform after initial setup.
 - Go to <https://learn.ja.org> (JA Learning Platform/D2L).
 - Click on “Community Login”
 - Enter your Email and Password you created.
- Once you have logged in to the digital platform
 - Volunteers teaching one class will automatically enter into their program’s materials.
 - Volunteers teaching more than one class will see each of the class programs displayed under “My Courses”. You will need to select the correct program to continue. You can toggle between classes if needed by using the button at the top of your screen.
 - Select the session you will be teaching. Use the left navigation bar to select the  “Onscreen Presentation” for your session.
 - Once you have selected “Onscreen Presentation”, below are some tips on presenting the materials.
 - To expand the presentation to “Full Screen”, click the icon on the top right. 
 - To exit Full Screen, click the icon in the top middle, the “Esc” key, or  F11.
 - Pop-ups may need to be enabled for games to work properly.
 - Use the “Next” and “Back” buttons to navigate the presentation.
 - If you need to zoom in or out on the computer to have the screen fit the board select **Ctrl + or -**.