

Junior Achievement

JA Careers with a Purpose Summative Evaluation

Final Report
February 2008



Submitted by
Evaluation and Training Institute
12300 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 420
Los Angeles, CA 90025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	1
II. Methodology	1
Student Surveys	2
Teacher and Volunteer Online Surveys	2
JA Member Staff Online Surveys	3
Focus Groups and Interviews	3
Data Collection Process	5
Analysis.....	7
III. Findings	9
Student Findings	9
Volunteer, Teacher, and JA Staff Findings.....	26
IV. Summary of Findings	50
V. Conclusions	52
VI. Appendices	53
Appendix A: Student Surveys	
Appendix B: Volunteer Post-survey	
Appendix C: Teacher Post-survey	
Appendix D: JA Member Staff Post-survey	
Appendix E: Moderator’s Guide for Students	
Appendix F: Moderator’s Guide for Volunteers and Teachers	
Appendix G: Moderator’s Guide for Area Office Staff	

I. Introduction

Junior Achievement (JA) Worldwide is a not-for-profit organization financed by businesses, foundations, government, and individuals. Dedicated to inspiring and preparing young people to succeed in a global economy, JA's programs are developed with a primary emphasis on social studies content, while providing a strong secondary emphasis on mathematics, reading, and writing skills. Through classroom visits from JA volunteers and a variety of experiential activities, students learn fundamental business and economic concepts, explore career interests and opportunities, and learn important principles of financial literacy. It is also JA's intention that students gain a better understanding of the relationship between what they learn in school and their successful participation in a global economy.

JA Careers with a Purpose is part of JA Worldwide's integrated curricula for grades K-12, designed to help high school students understand the world of economics and help prepare them for lifelong learning and achievement. The program introduces students to the importance of seeking careers that help them realize their life potential and noble purpose. The program demonstrates the importance of positive values, life maxims, and ethical decision-making within the context of career and life decisions.

In 2007, JA contracted with the Evaluation and Training Institute (ETI) to conduct a summative evaluation of *JA Careers with a Purpose*. The evaluation was designed to assess the impact of the program on student learning, as well as address student, teacher, and JA Member staff's attitudes toward the program curriculum and materials. This report presents the findings from ETI's evaluation of *JA Careers with a Purpose*.

II. Methodology

For this study, ETI used a pre-post program and comparison group research design to measure the extent to which *JA Careers with a Purpose* improved students' knowledge of program content and changed their interest in/attitudes toward business, entrepreneurship, education, ethics, and sense of self-efficacy. Additional instruments were designed to garner attitudes from program stakeholders regarding various aspects of implementation, including the program content and materials. ETI relied on surveys, in both online and paper formats, as the primary method of data collection for the evaluation. Specifically, ETI developed surveys for participating students, volunteers, teachers, and JA Member staff.

Student Surveys

ETI designed a paper and pencil pre-/post-test outcome survey to be administered to program and control students and a post-program survey for program students.

Pre-/Post-test Outcome Survey. The pre-/post- test survey was designed to assess changes in students' understanding of curriculum concepts and ideas and consisted of a combination of 20 multiple-choice and true-false items covering the content of the *JA Careers with a Purpose* curriculum. This section of the pre-post outcome survey was designed to assess any changes in students' content knowledge taking place over the course of the program. The survey also included 26 attitudinal indicators and a demographic section.

Post-program Final Survey. The post-program survey examined students' overall impressions of the program after completing the seven *JA Careers with a Purpose* sessions. Specifically, the post-program survey addressed the following areas:

- Student demographics;
- Favorite and least favorite sessions;
- Program likes and dislikes;
- Perceptions of session length and content difficulty;
- Volunteer effectiveness; and,
- Satisfaction with the program overall.

Teacher and Volunteer Online Surveys

Post-Program Survey. The teacher and volunteer post-program online surveys centered on respondents' overall impressions of the program. Specifically, the post-program surveys asked respondents about:

- Demographic information;
- The quality and appeal of the program materials;
- The quality of the curriculum content;
- Perceived student satisfaction with, and interest in, the program;
- Student understanding;
- Effectiveness of the program in achieving stated objectives;
- Experiences working with the JA volunteer(s) (teachers only);
- Enjoyment volunteering for JA (volunteers only); and,
- The quality of the program overall.

JA Member Staff Online Surveys

Post-Program Survey. Similar to the teacher and volunteer surveys, the JA Member staff online post-program survey centered on staff members' overall impressions of the program. Specifically, the post-program survey asked respondents about:

- Tenure at JA;
- The quality and appeal of the program materials;
- Experiences working with the volunteer(s);
- The quality of the program overall; and,
- Additional comments.

Copies of the student, teacher, volunteer, and JA Member staff surveys can be found in **Appendix**.

Focus Groups and Interviews

To supplement the surveys, focus groups/interviews were held with students, volunteers, teachers, and JA Member staff to gather qualitative data about *JA Careers with a Purpose*. Participants involved with the program were asked about the following:

- Students' reactions to individual lessons and the program overall;
- Students' understanding of program content;
- The application and quality of the program materials;
- The *JA Careers with a Purpose* curriculum;
- The successes and challenges of the program; and,
- Additional comments.

As shown in **Table 1** on the following page, in November, 2007, site visits were conducted at two JA Member offices where a total of nine focus groups/interviews were conducted. Copies of the Moderators' Guides can be found in the **Appendix**. In addition to the focus groups and interviews, each site visit included at least one classroom observation.

Table 1
Breakdown of Focus Group and Interview Sites

JA Area Office City/State	Site Visit Activities	Date(s)
JA of the Great Lakes Grand Rapids, MI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Observation • Volunteer and Teacher Focus Groups (2) • JA Staff Interview • Student Focus Groups (2) 	November 8, 2007
JA of Southern California Los Angeles, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Observations (2) • Volunteer Focus Group • Teacher Interview • JA Staff Interview • Student Focus Group 	November 15-19, 2007

Three student focus groups were held with a total of 18 (nine male and nine female) students participating. Students ranged from 9th to 12th grade and had completed at least 4 sessions prior to participating in the focus groups. During the focus groups, students were asked about the following:

- Program expectations;
- Program comparison to regular class work;
- Ability to understand the content;
- Specific concepts learned;
- Usefulness to future career/college plans;
- Program likes and dislikes; and,
- Suggestions for program improvement.

A total of six volunteers and three teachers participated in four focus groups/interviews that were held at three schools. Two JA Member Office staff members participated in separate interviews. The topics discussed during these focus groups and interviews included:

- Students' reactions to the specific sessions and the program overall;
- The effectiveness of the program materials as tools to facilitate student understanding;
- Students' understanding and application of program content;
- Successes and challenges of the *JA Careers with a Purpose* curriculum; and,
- Suggestions for program improvement.

Data Collection Process

ETI worked with six domestic JA Members recruited for the evaluation by JA Worldwide to coordinate the administration and collection process for the surveys and to schedule the interviews and focus groups. Prior to distribution of the surveys, JA Worldwide and ETI conducted a conference call with the evaluation task force members from each participating Member office. During the conference call, ETI staff described the evaluation process in detail and fielded staff members' questions regarding the study design and implementation.

The JA Members participating in the evaluation of *JA Careers with a Purpose* initially recruited 21 program and 20 comparison classrooms for the study (**Table 2**).

Table 2
Sample of Participating Classrooms

Area Office	Number of Program Classrooms	Number of Control Classrooms
JA of Arizona	3	3
JA of Middle Tennessee	3	2
JA of South Central Kentucky	3	4
JA of Southern California	3	2
JA of the Great Lakes	5	5
JA of Wisconsin	4	4
Total	21	20

Prior to the start of the program, each JA Member received a set of clearly labeled program and control classroom packets for distribution. The program classroom packets contained a letter of instruction to the teacher and enough pre- and post-tests and post-program satisfaction surveys for each student in the class. The control classroom packets contained a similar instruction letter for the control class teacher administering the surveys and a pre- and post-test for each student in the control group. Both program and control class teachers were instructed to administer the pre- and post-tests to their students at the beginning of the program (program classes) or within one week of receipt of the surveys (control classes), and then after completion of the program (program classes) or seven weeks later (control classes), and then to return the completed tests to ETI using pre-paid FedEx envelopes that were provided to each JA Member. Volunteers, teachers, and JA Member staff were asked to complete an online post-program survey following the last program session.

ETI conducted extensive follow up with the sites via telephone and email to facilitate a high response rate. At the time that the data collection deadline was met, 13 of 25 volunteers (52 percent), 12 of 28 teachers (43 percent), and five of seven JA Member staff (71 percent) had submitted post-program surveys. ETI matched as many of the student pre-and post-tests as possible and **Table 3** displays the student survey

response rate.¹ As shown, 117 pre-/post-matched pairs from program students, 193 completed pre-/post-matched pairs from control group students, and 248 post-program surveys (program students only) were returned.

Table 3
Student Survey Response Rates

Area Office	Program Classrooms		Comparison Classrooms
	Pre-/Post-Matched Pairs	Post-program Survey	Pre-/Post- Matched Pairs
JA of Arizona	n=22	n=34	n=43
	19%	14%	22%
JA of Middle Tennessee	n=27	n=65	n=19
	23%	26%	10%
JA of South Central Kentucky	--	--	n=29
	0%	0%	15%
JA of Southern California	n=27	n=38	n=40
	23%	15%	21%
JA of the Great Lakes	n=37	n=92	n=22
	32%	37%	11%
JA of Wisconsin	n=4	n=19	n=40
	3%	8%	21%
Total	n=117	n=248	n=193

¹ The pre-survey asked students if they had ever participated in JA prior to the current *JA Careers with a Purpose* program. As JA's programs address similar core concepts, students who indicated that they had previous JA experience were not included in the analyses.

Analysis

The analysis of the pre-post program and control group data involved several steps: analysis of the demographic distribution of the data, a test for program and control group equivalence, analysis of gain scores and effect size, and item analysis.

Student Demographic Distribution

The demographic distribution of the data was reviewed in order to determine the extent to which the program and control groups were comparable in terms of grade level, gender, and ethnicity. As presented in **Tables 4** through **6**, our review revealed only minor disparities in students' demographic characteristics.

Grade Level

The largest proportion of students from both the program and control groups were in the 9th grade (44 and 50 percent respectively). With regard to the 10th through 12th grade levels, the two groups differed by less than 10 percent.

Table 4
School Grade Level Distribution

Grade Level	Number of Program Students	Percentage of Program Students	Number of Control Students	Percentage of Control Students
9 th Grade	n=52	44%	n=97	50%
10 ^h Grade	22	19	24	12
11 ^h Grade	17	15	44	23
12 th Grade	25	21	25	13
Other	1	1	3	2
Total	n=117	100%	n=193	100%

Gender

As shown in **Table 5**, both groups were more heavily represented by male students. However, this gender disparity was larger in the program group, which consisted of 22 percent more males than females.

Table 5
Gender Distribution

Gender	Program		Comparison	
Female	46	39%	n=87	45%
Male	71	61	106	55
Total	117	100	193	100

Ethnicity

Table 6 depicts the ethnic breakdown of program and comparison students. Overall, both groups demonstrated diversity. The majority of students in both the program group (53 percent) and the control group (49 percent) were Caucasian/White and the second largest proportion of students were Hispanic/Latino (27 percent and 30 percent respectively).

Table 6
Ethnic Distribution

Ethnicity	Program		Comparison	
	n	%	n	%
African American/Black	n=14	12%	n=27	14%
Caucasian/White	62	53	95	49
Hispanic/Latino	32	27	58	30
Asian	4	3	7	4
Pacific Islander	1	1	1	.5
American Indian/Alaskan Native	5	4	5	3
Other	6	5	6	3
Total	117	100	193	100

* Note this is a multi-response question.

Summary

The analysis of the demographic data revealed that the program and comparison groups were largely comparable across grade, age, and ethnicity. In addition to taking demographic differences into account when comparing the program and control groups, an additional test of group equivalence was conducted on the content survey data. A t-test comparing the pre-test scores of both program and control group students was performed on the sample to determine if, in terms of their content knowledge, the two groups were equivalent. The results of this and other analyses bulleted below are presented in the **Findings** section of this report.

- An analysis of gain scores was performed on the pre- and post-test difference scores of 117 program and 193 comparison students.
- An analysis of effect size was conducted to assess the relative magnitude of the treatment (e.g. *JA Careers with a Purpose*) on program students.
- An item analysis was conducted on the pre- and post-test items completed by program students in order to evaluate the content areas in which program students demonstrated gains and experienced challenges understanding curricular concepts.

III. Findings

Student Findings

Outcomes Assessment: Pre-/Post- Student Survey Results

Test for Group Equivalence

The test for group equivalence is often used when program and control groups are being compared on a pre-post measure. The test uses pre-test means to determine how alike or different the program and comparison groups are at the outset of the study. If there are no differences between the pre-test program and comparison means, the credibility of any comparative results increases considerably.

The results of the test for group equivalence performed on the sample are displayed in **Table 7** and show that the mean pre-test scores of the two groups were not found to be significantly different. This finding suggests that the control group students were, at the outset, much like the program group in terms of content knowledge.

Also shown in **Table 7** are mean post-test scores of the program and comparison students. After the program, the program group's mean post-test score was significantly higher than the comparison group's mean score ($p < .05$). Given that the pre-test scores between the two groups were equivalent, this gain can be attributed to program students' participation in *JA Careers with a Purpose*.

Table 7
Test for Group Equivalence of Number of Items Answered Correctly
(* $p < .05$)

	N	Pre-Test			Post-Test		
		Mean	SD	T-Test	Mean	SD	T-test
Program	117	13.74	3.28	.388	14.79	3.67	.0001
Comparison	193	13.42	3.06		13.43	3.28	

Analysis of Gain Scores

The results of the t-test performed on the program and comparison group post-test means displayed in **Table 7** suggest that *JA Careers with a Purpose* increased participating students' knowledge and understanding of pre-/post-survey content compared to comparison students. However, these results did not control for individual pre-test score differences between the two groups. Instead, an analysis of gain scores was used to control for individual students' scores and to measure the gains program students made above the change in overall score demonstrated by comparison students. The gain or difference score was the post-test score minus the pre-test score.

The gain scores for each student (paired pre-post case) were recorded and the gain scores for each group were compared using a t-test.

As displayed in **Table 8**, the results of the analysis of gain scores were significant at $p < .05$. From pre- to post-test, program students outperformed their comparison counterparts by just over one point, on average. Stated another way, students attending the program increased their overall scores by approximately one point from pre- to post-survey, while control group students' scores increased by a fraction of a point (.005). The difference between the program and comparison gain scores was a mean of 1.05 which produced a statistically significant t-test result at the .05 level.

Table 8
T-test on Gain Scores
(* $p < .05$)

	N	Mean Gain	SD	Mean Difference	T-Test	df	Significance
Program	117	1.05	3.14	1.05	.002*	308	.05
Comparison	193	.005	2.71				

Analysis of Effect Size

Not only is it important to know if differences between the program and comparison groups are statistically significant, but it also is important to know whether the differences identified are large enough to make a “real” difference. Whereas statistical significance tells us the likelihood that research results differ from chance expectations, effect size tells us the relative magnitude of the difference obtained.

In education, effect sizes of .30 or higher are often considered meaningful. Effect sizes of .50 are robust and effect sizes of 1.00 are considered to be an indisputable demonstration of program effectiveness. Cohen's d, the standard computation for effect size, was computed to determine the effect size of the t-test results. Cohen's d statistic produced an effect size of .33 for this analysis, indicating that the relative magnitude of the program's impact was meaningful and indicative of an influential experimental treatment. In laymen's terms, the program can be described as having influenced students' knowledge in the areas addressed by the pre-/post-test.²

Item Analysis

As a means of giving the statistical results more meaning, an item analysis evaluated the degree to which learning was successful across the test's individual questions. The percentage of correct responses from program students was computed for each test item on the pre- and post-tests. As displayed in **Table 9**, students demonstrated a statistically significant increase in the percentage of respondents who answered correctly for 6 of 20, or 30 percent of the content questions. Students also demonstrated an increase overall. On the pre-test, students answered an average of

² The simple Cohen's d formula for computing effect sizes (program group gain score - control group gain score/standard deviation of the program group) was used for the calculation above.

69 percent of the questions correctly, increasing to 74 percent upon completion of *JA Careers with a Purpose*. This increase was statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level. However, for 25 percent of the questions ($n=5$), the percentage of students answering the items correctly decreased over the course of the program. While none of these decreases were statistically significant, they may point to areas in the curriculum (i.e. work values, decision-making, life values, skills, and interests) that JA volunteers should place special emphasis upon as they present the program.

Table 9
Program Class Student Pre-/Post-test Results by Question
 (n=117)

Survey Question		Pre-test Percent Correct	Post-test Percent Correct	Significance Value (2-tailed)
1.	Someone’s interests are the same as their skills. (T/F)	69.2%	71.8%	.592
2.	Work values -- how people prefer to work -- are the same for most people. (T/F)	81.2	72.6	.058
3.	A person can achieve their noble purpose without having a career or making a noble purpose part of their career. (T/F)	68.4	73.5	.306
4.	In the decision-making process, one should examine the pros and cons of each possible option. (T/F)	94.9	93.2	.529
5.	Once a career is chosen, the opportunities within that career are very limited. (T/F)	78.6	83.8	.259
6.	Life values should never conflict with work values. (T/F)	53.0	48.7	.486
7.	Volunteering is one way to explore a potential career. (T/F)	95.7	95.7	1.00
8.	Skills (definition matching)	93.2	88.9	.166
9.	Interests (definition matching)	85.5	82.9	.494
10.	Ethics (definition matching)	43.6	59.0	.016**
11.	Values (definition matching)	38.5	55.6	.003*
12.	_____ are principles or rules of conduct.	25.6	42.7	.002*
13.	A “noble purpose” is defined as:	74.4	77.8	.452
14.	Honesty, integrity, and loyalty could be examples of someone’s:	88.9	88.9	1.00
15.	How is a career different from a job?	48.7	70.9	.000*
16.	What is a transitional job?	53.0	57.3	.486
17.	Within a Career Cluster, careers can be further divided into broad groupings of careers that share similar characteristics which are called _____.	65.8	71.8	.225
18.	Who or what develops personal ethics?	78.6	88.0	.034**
19.	A sketch or diagram that represents related thoughts and ideas around a central image is called a:	59.0	67.5	.096
20.	It is easier to find a career with a noble purpose if you find a job that matches your skills, interests, and _____.	78.6	88.9	.007*
Percentage Correct and Incorrect Overall:		68.7%	74.0%	.000*

*Indicates significance at the .01 level.

**Indicates significance at the .05 level.

Focus Group Findings Addressing Student Learning

To expand upon student data gathered with the content surveys, during the focus groups students were asked to provide examples of what they had learned in the program so far. Examples included the difference between a job and a career, as well as the ability to work in a group, treating others with respect, and the importance of choosing a career that meets one's noble purpose. Their comments emphasize the extent to which student learning moves beyond the basics of the core program content when *JA Careers with a Purpose* is implemented in the classroom.³

- *“Job versus career, because I never really knew there was that much of a difference.”*
- *“I learned that there is a difference between a job and a career. So this is basically about finding what I want to do as a career, not something that will just bring in money, but something that I’ll actually want to do.”*
- *“I didn’t grasp how many jobs there really were. So it was a mind opening thing.”*
- *“I learned that if you are on a team, regardless of everybody’s opinion, you have got to come to one conclusion to be proud of.”*
- *“It helped me to work in a team better and let everyone out there share what they want to say.”*
- *“We have to be honest; we have to be respected, respectable.”*
- *“Follow your heart. Don’t just go by the amount of money.”*
- *“It has also taught me that my purpose in life is not just to help people. I have been through stuff... I want to be a social worker, and it helped me learn once you have schooling, all that I have to do in order to do a job.”*

Students were also asked to describe how easy or hard it was for them to understand the content covered in the sessions. As shown by their responses below, students reported that they were able to understand the information presented.

- *“It is really easy actually. Like most of the stuff I do is just like what our morals and values are, and which careers adhere to those morals.”*
- *“The volunteers do a good job of explaining what they’re saying.”*
- *“I think it’s pretty easy, but it keeps your attention so it’s not that boring.”*
- *“Nothing that we can’t figure out.”*

Students’ Behaviors and Attitudes

As discussed in the **Methodology** section, in order to address any changes in students’ attitudes and behaviors resulting from their participation in *JA Careers with a Purpose*, a Student Attitude Questionnaire was included in the pre- and post-test student surveys. The surveys included items that spoke to students’ attitudes toward school, business, economics, entrepreneurship, ethics, and self-efficacy.

³ Comments have been edited for grammar and readability.

The first set of questions asked students to indicate the extent with which they agreed with a number of statements about school on a scale from one, or “strongly disagree,” to five, or “strongly agree.” A response of three on the scale indicated “don’t know/unsure.” Pre- and post-test means were calculated and then analyzed for differences using a 2-tailed t-test for both the program and the control groups. Post-test means for each group were also compared using a 2-tailed t-test. As displayed in **Table 10**, program students demonstrated statistically significant attitude changes for three survey items. Upon completion of the program they were more confident in their scholastic abilities and more likely to indicate that they were able to learn new concepts quickly and understood how to succeed in school. In addition, the program students’ post-survey mean scores addressing scholastic confidence and school success were significantly more positive than that of the control group.

Table 10
Attitudinal Indicators: School

Survey Question	Respondent Group	Sample Size	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-post-Significance Value (2-tailed)	Program/Control Post-survey Significance Value (2-tailed)
I am confident in my scholastic abilities.	Program	n=112	3.97	4.14	.036**	.034*
	Control	n=184	3.95	3.95	.932	
I do well in school.	Program	n=113	4.03	4.04	.893	.302
	Control	n=181	4.06	3.94	.052	
I learn new concepts quickly.	Program	n=111	3.83	3.99	.038**	.966
	Control	n=180	3.83	3.98	.010*	
I enjoy coming to school.	Program	n=111	3.43	3.55	.197	.260
	Control	n=181	3.40	3.39	.869	
I know how to succeed in school.	Program	n=111	4.07	4.25	.005*	.008*
	Control	n=176	4.03	4.00	.659	
I am planning to pursue a college degree.	Program	n=114	4.33	4.32	.815	.724
	Control	n=182	4.43	4.38	.367	
I am willing to work hard to succeed in school.	Program	n=114	4.33	4.35	.834	.061
	Control	n=182	4.32	4.19	.017	

*Indicates significance at the .01 level.

**Indicates significance at the .05 level.

It was also anticipated that participation in *JA Careers with a Purpose* would influence students’ attitudes toward business, economics, and entrepreneurship. As is evidenced in **Table 11**, program students were statistically significantly more likely to agree that entrepreneurs are highly respected by others and that they play an important role in solving society’s problems.

Table 11
Attitudinal Indicators: Business, Economics, and Entrepreneurship

Survey Question	Respondent Group	Sample Size	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-post-Significance Value (2-tailed)	Program/Control Post-survey Significance Value (2-tailed)
I think that being an entrepreneur could be an interesting career.	Program	n=115	4.01	3.95	.439	.114
	Control	n=187	3.95	3.77	.013**	
I am considering studying business in college.	Program	n=115	2.99	3.10	.313	.134
	Control	n=188	3.22	3.30	.276	
Most of the skills learned in business would be useful in everyday life.	Program	n=114	3.82	3.84	.783	.677
	Control	n=180	3.81	3.89	.207	
Entrepreneurs are highly respected by others.	Program	n=113	3.38	3.56	.041**	.114
	Control	n=180	3.33	3.39	.372	
Entrepreneurs play an important role in solving society’s problems.	Program	n=114	3.25	3.52	.005**	.268
	Control	n=184	3.42	3.41	.828	
I am interested in economics.	Program	n=115	2.87	2.89	.869	.436
	Control	n=188	3.04	2.98	.505	

*Indicates significance at the .01 level.

**Indicates significance at the .05 level.

The survey also addressed students’ self efficacy and ethics (Tables 12 and 13 below and on the following page). Interestingly, after completing the program students were less apt to indicate that they would persist on a job they couldn’t do the first time and less concerned with receiving others’ trust. However, score decreases were marginal (.14 and .16 points, respectively). On a more positive note, when comparing post-test scores between the program and control students, those who participated in JA Careers with a Purpose were significantly more apt to agree that failing “makes [them] try harder.”

Table 12
Attitudinal Indicators: Self Efficacy

Survey Question	Respondent Group	Sample Size	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-post-Significance Value (2-tailed)	Program/Control Post-survey Significance Value (2-tailed)
I am successful.	Program	n=112	4.19	4.20	.895	.038
	Control	n=183	3.98	3.99	.849	
If I can’t do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can.	Program	n=113	3.42	3.28	.025**	.154
	Control	n=183	3.22	3.20	.731	
I give up on things before finishing them.	Program	n=112	1.69	1.78	.277	.991
	Control	n=183	1.72	1.77	.403	
If something looks too hard, I will not even bother trying it.	Program	n=112	1.60	1.73	.155	.682
	Control	n=182	1.80	1.77	.765	
I handle new problems very well.	Program	n=112	2.97	2.98	.905	.195
	Control	n=182	2.81	2.87	.359	
When I fail, it just makes me try harder.	Program	n=109	3.17	3.22	.520	.017**
	Control	n=180	3.03	2.98	.450	
I am not sure how good I am at things.	Program	n=112	2.42	2.38	.702	.991
	Control	n=183	2.34	2.37	.713	

*Indicates significance at the .01 level.

**Indicates significance at the .05 level.

Table 13
Attitudinal Indicators: Ethics

Survey Question	Respondent Group	Sample Size	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-post-Significance Value (2-tailed)	Program/Control Post-survey Significance Value (2-tailed)
It's important for me to be a person of good character.	Program	n=112	4.38	4.35	.625	.172
	Control	n=184	4.30	4.22	.170	
It's important to me that people trust me.	Program	n=112	4.62	4.46	.024**	.390
	Control	n=183	4.43	4.39	.439	
It's not worth it to lie or cheat because it hurts your character.	Program	n=112	4.21	4.25	.646	.764
	Control	n=183	4.18	4.21	.608	
I am satisfied with my own ethics and character.	Program	n=112	4.28	4.34	.421	.169
	Control	n=184	4.22	4.22	.935	

*Indicates significance at the .01 level.
**Indicates significance at the .05 level.

Finally, students were asked how much education they expect to complete in their lives. Among program and control group students, the majority indicated that they planned to complete a college/university or post-graduate degree on both the pre- and post-survey.

Table 14
Education Goals
Program (n=117), Control (n=193)⁴

Education Level	Respondent Group	Pre-test	Post-test
General Education Diploma	Program	6.0%	5.1%
	Control	5.2	4.1
High School Diploma	Program	17.1	13.7
	Control	13.5	15.0
Technical Training	Program	8.5	9.4
	Control	6.7	4.1
Two-year Community College	Program	9.4	6.0
	Control	7.3	6.2
College/University Degree	Program	41.0	36.8
	Control	39.4	46.6
Post-graduate Degree	Program	35.0	33.3
	Control	34.7	27.5

⁴ Totals equal more than 100 percent. Some students selected more than one response, although the directions instructed respondents to select only one.

The focus groups also addressed students' plans for the future. While some students stated that the program had little impact on their plans, one student mentioned that the program had prepared him/her for "what might come down the road," and another indicated that it had "influenced [him/her] to go to culinary school, and to go to college."

Students' Satisfaction

To address students' satisfaction with the program, the post-program survey and the student focus groups addressed expectations for the program, session likes and dislikes, perceptions of session length and content difficulty, volunteer effectiveness, the program materials, and satisfaction with the program overall.

Expectations for the Program

During the focus groups, students were invited to describe their expectations prior to the start of the program, whether the program had met their expectations, and what their experiences were like during the program sessions. Students' expectations of the program varied in that some students anticipated that they would not enjoy the program while others thought it would be fun. For the most part, students expected to learn about and discuss careers and their futures. Overall, students indicated that the program had been interesting to them.

- *"I thought it was going to be boring."*
- *"I had it in 5th grade and I didn't really like it in 5th grade, but for some reason this year it was pretty interesting."*
- *"I had seen other people that had thought it was a lot of fun and I thought it was pretty fun."*
- *"It is so fun."*
- *"I thought we'd be doing a lot of internet surveys to see what we want to do."*
- *"I thought it was going to be about how we can set up a future for ourselves, a good future."*
- *"Kind of like what we've done before in school, but it was different...it's more like analysis of yourself."*
- *"First I thought that it's going to be about careers and jobs and which one is better. And I really think it is a good thing what you are doing, because it is educational."*

When asked how the program compared to their regular class work, students reported that the program complemented their regular class work, provided a greater range of information, and was more hands-on.

- *"This school is about jobs and getting job ready and career ready so it fits in a lot with our regular class."*
- *"A little broader, which might be even better because you're seeing more than just that little area that you thought you were interested in."*

- “I think you get a better range of careers. Like I have a career in mind, but we get a lot of different things that we could be interested in.”
- “It was more hands-on than other classes we got to work on. It was more subtle. It was really not that much book work, but it was just more hands-on, more activities.”

Satisfaction with Program Length and Difficulty of Content

In the post-program surveys, three-quarters of the students (75 percent) reported that the length of the sessions was “just right.” However, 15 percent of the students felt that the sessions were “too long” and 11 percent felt the sessions were “too short” (Table 15).

Table 15
Student Responses to the Question:
What did you think about the length of the sessions?
(n=261)

Response Options	Sample Size	Percentage of Respondents
Just right	n=195	75%
Too long	38	15
Too short	28	11

The majority of the students (86 percent) felt that the difficulty level of the information they learned in *JA Careers with a Purpose* was “just right” (Table 16).

Table 16
Student Responses to the Question:
What did you think about the information you learned in the sessions?
(n=261)

Response Options	Sample Size	Percentage of Respondents
Just right	n=224	86%
Too easy	24	9
Too hard	13	5

Favorite and Least Favorite Sessions

When students were asked to identify their most and least favorite session, the largest proportion of students reported that they liked Session 4 (18 percent) the most, and Session 1 (19 percent) the least (see Table 17 on the following page). However, it should be noted that a sizable proportion of the students (36 percent) could not remember which session they liked most or least.

Table 17
Student Responses to the Question:
What was your favorite/least favorite session?

Session	Most Favorite		Least Favorite	
	Sample Size (n=258)	Percentage of Respondents	Sample Size (n=254)	Percentage of Respondents
Session 1 A Sense of Purpose	n=37	14%	n=30	19%
Session 2 What do you Value?	42	16	17	7
Session 3 What's in a Name? Jobs vs. Careers	37	14	28	11
Session 4 The World of Work	46	18	16	6
Session 5 Your Decisions	24	9	19	8
Session 6 Your Code of Conduct	8	3	35	14
Session 7 Take Action	29	11	17	7
Don't remember	35	14	92	36

What Students Liked Most and Least

Of the various activities included in *JA Careers with a Purpose*, students liked working in groups (37 percent) the most, and liked the Student Workbook activities (60 percent) the least (**Table 18**).

Table 18
Student Responses to the Question:
What did you like most/least about this program?*

Response Options	Like Most		Like Least	
	Sample Size (n=257)	Percentage of Respondents	Sample Size (n=257)	Percentage of Respondents
Working in groups	n=94	37%	n=15	6%
Games	74	28	17	7
Class discussions	65	24	40	16
Student Workbook activities	10	4	155	60
Other	8	3	19	7
Liked all	4	2	8	3
Liked nothing	2	1	3	1

* Note this is a multi-response question.

To supplement quantitative survey data addressing program likes and dislikes, focus group attendees were also asked what they liked most and least about the program, as well as to make suggestions to improve the program.

The students reported that they enjoyed several aspects of the program, including group work and the subsequent discussions, hands-on activities, the Career Cluster Sheets, learning about different careers, the Job vs. Career activity, the Your Decisions scenario, and the volunteer's attitude toward the class. A representative list of their responses is provided below.

Liked Most

- *“I really like how we are in groups a lot, and then we all would share. Because it really showed a lot of different points of view from everyone else and that got you to think more outside the box.”*
- *“The group work that we’ve done, like when we come up with things in groups, and then I get to share it with everybody.”*
- *“The hands-on is really nice.”*
- *“[The Career Cluster Sheets] kind of helped because you can see everything all on one page, but it was all kind of related, and it really helped you if you are looking for something specific, but then you can see what else is like that on the overall picture.”*
- *“The different careers.”*
- *“I liked learning jobs from a career outlook.”*
- *“I liked the hospital...we had to make decisions because we were in the higher level.”*
- *“[The volunteer] seems more not like a teacher, but like a friend that’s helping you out with something.”*

As for what they liked least about the program, students would have preferred to choose which Career Cluster Sheet they received during Session 4. Some also indicated that they did not enjoy the length of the online assessment, writing, and lecture.

Liked Least

- *“They just give us a Career Cluster Sheet and tell us to pick the job you like on that sheet. What if you don’t like any of the jobs on that sheet? I would rather pick a sheet that I know I like.”*
- *“I feel like the online assessments, they were really long, and they were really repetitive, and they kind of were boring.”*
- *“The writing.”*
- *“I don’t like sitting down and listening.”*

Satisfaction with the JA Volunteer

To gauge volunteer effectiveness, students were asked to rate several statements on a scale of one to five ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” A rating of three was indicative of a neutral response. As displayed in **Table 19** on the following page, students’ mean responses indicated that they perceived the volunteer positively. In particular, students responded that the volunteer was well-prepared for the sessions and provided explanations that were understandable (mean=4.4).

Table 19
Student Responses to the Statement:
On a Scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being Strongly Disagree and 5 being Strongly Agree
The Volunteer...

Statements	Sample Size	Mean Response
Was well-prepared	n=263	4.4
Explained things so that I could understand them	262	4.4
Presented the program in an interesting way	262	4.1
Was a role model I could look up to	261	4.0

Relevance and Interest

As shown in **Table 20**, students found *JA Careers with a Purpose* to be relevant to the real world (mean=4.2), a great learning experience (mean=4.0), and interesting (mean=4.0).

Table 20
Student Responses to the Statement:
On a Scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being Strongly Disagree and 5 being Strongly Agree
Overall, *JA Careers with a Purpose* was...

Response Options	Sample Size	Mean Response
Relevant to the real world	n=259	4.2
A great learning experience	259	4.0
Interesting	259	4.0
Worthwhile	260	3.9
Fun	261	3.8

Students' Willingness to Recommend the Program to Others

When asked if they would recommend *JA Careers with a Purpose* to a friend, 90 percent of students said they would. Of the 10 percent who said they would not recommend the program to their friend, a common explanation provided for their response was that they found the program to be "boring."

Table 21
Student Responses to the Question:
Would you recommend this program to a friend?

Response Options	Sample Size (n=261)	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	n=236	90%
No	25	10

The survey asked students to rate their satisfaction with the program overall using a one to ten scale ranging from "totally unsatisfied" to "completely satisfied." Students' mean rating of their satisfaction was 7.8, indicating a high level of student satisfaction with the program (see **Table 22** on the following page).

Table 22
Student Responses to the Question:
On a Scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being Totally Unsatisfied and 10 being Completely Satisfied, How Satisfied Were You with JA Careers with a Purpose Overall?

Sample Size	Mean Response
n=252	7.8

Classroom Observation Narrative

To gain first-hand evidence of how the program was implemented at participating schools, an ETI staff member conducted classroom observations of program sites at two participating JA Member Offices. **Table 23** displays the program sites and sessions observed.

Table 23
Breakdown of Classroom Observations

JA Area Office	Program Site	Session(s) Observed
JA of the Great Lakes	Spring Lake High School	6
JA of Southern California	North Hollywood High School	1-2 and 7

JA of the Great Lakes

An ETI staff member observed the implementation of Session 6, Your Code of Conduct, during an hour long Business course at Spring Lake High School. Participating students (n=28) were enrolled in the 9th to 12th grades. As students entered the classroom, the JA Banner, Decision-Making Poster, and Career Cluster Poster were in view and their Student Workbooks were on their desks.

The volunteer began the class with a brief review of the previous session and challenged students to contribute to their community through such means as picking up trash outside of the school. The volunteer then proceeded to Session 6 by defining “code of conduct” and providing examples of codes of conduct such as the Fire Department’s mission statement. As a volunteer firefighter, the volunteer discussed the ethics involved in being a firefighter and the mission statement’s relationship to his noble purpose. The lecture then segued into how mission statements are used to make business decisions. With the class, the volunteer created a mission statement for his business and discussed how it related to his noble purpose and would contribute to its success. During the first 15 minutes of the lesson, the students appeared disinterested at first, but once the volunteer began to call on students, they became attentive.

During the Session 6 activity, students read the “Peace Comes to the Cola Wars” description and the volunteer tied the corporate rivalry back to experiences in his career. The students were given a few minutes to list in their Student Workbooks five qualities of an ethical worker before they were broken up into small groups. In their small groups, students were instructed to come up with two important qualities for an ethical code of conduct. Each group wrote these qualities on a white board and explained their choices. After all of the groups’ qualities were written on the board, each

group was allowed to erase one quality belonging to another team that they felt was not as vital as the other qualities. This led to a defense of that quality's importance by the group that had originally written it, an activity that students particularly enjoyed.

The volunteer then asked the students to identify who decides on the importance of ethical qualities and who develops a code of ethics. This was related to how negative behavior can be contagious. Students were asked to reflect on the ethics in society and what they would change. The class ended with a preview of the next week's session. The volunteer did an excellent job of integrating his personal business experience into the curriculum, and the students in the class were engaged overall.

JA of Southern California

Two Life Skills classes were observed at North Hollywood High School. Approximately 30 students were in attendance during both hour-long observations. The layout of the classroom was not typical as the class was divided into two columns with computers down the middle and sides, which was not conducive to group work.

Class One

The first class observed was composed mostly of juniors and seniors who were English as Second Language learners. The first six program sessions were taught by two volunteers, but only one volunteer was present during the final session, Take Action. The class did not begin promptly as the students who passed out the Student Workbooks and Noble Purpose Cards did not seem to be familiar with their classmates' names.

The volunteer began the session by asking students what they had learned over the course of the program. A couple of the students raised their hands and called out responses such as "values" and "careers;" the volunteer expanded upon their responses by reminding them of the specifics of the program content. The students then opened the Noble Purpose Cards they had filled out during Session 1, but did not seem very interested in them. The volunteer asked if their purpose or desired career had changed over the course of the program. Several students reported that theirs had not changed and the volunteer communicated that this was fine, especially if they had held the same noble purpose for most of their lives.

The transition to the Mind Maps activity was abrupt, with the volunteer only giving a brief description of a Mind Map before asking students to create their own, expecting the Student Workbook example to be self explanatory. Several of the students looked confused or uninterested in the activity. Most of the students finished the activity quickly and were off-task, with a couple of students resting their heads on their desks. The volunteer worked individually with a couple of students who solicited his help, but did not redirect those who were off-task.

Following the 15 minutes used by the activity, the volunteer asked if any students wanted to share their Mind Maps. Two students shared their Mind Maps with the class. The students who shared had specific career aspirations. The volunteer gave them encouragement and advice, such as explaining an internship. Interestingly, many students were concerned about being obligated to follow through on what they wrote down, so the volunteer emphasized that the Mind Maps were open to change and did not signify a commitment.

The volunteer skipped the small group Action Plan activity, which may have been due to a lack of time. In closing, the students were asked their opinion about the course, and the volunteer did a nice job of wrapping up the program by promoting *JA Success Skills*, which the students were scheduled to participate in following *JA Careers with a Purpose*. He ended the program by referring back to his love for his career.

Over the course of the class, the teacher performed classroom management with some students, especially those in the back of the classroom. He moved non-participating students closer to the front of the class and told others that they needed to pay closer attention to the volunteer.

Overall, students were very quiet with few actively participating. The volunteer asked a lot of questions, but answered the questions himself when students did not offer a response. In addition, when students in the front responded, they could not be heard in the back of the room. As a result of these factors, students in the back rarely participated and most were disengaged.

Class Two

Due to a miscommunication about scheduling between the classroom teacher and JA staff, the volunteer was unable to complete Session 1 during her first visit. During ETI's class observation, the volunteer completed Session 1 and started Session 2.

The session began with students assisting in passing out the Student Workbooks, name tents, and Maxim Cards. The teacher began by telling the class, composed mostly of 9th grade students, that he was disappointed in their behavior during the previous session and proceeded to move students closer to the front of the room. Then the volunteer passed out the JA Newsletter and directed students to visit the JA Worldwide website. The session content began with a volunteer-led review of the concepts of noble purpose and values, during which the volunteer called on students to discuss their personal values.

The volunteer assigned the students to small groups for the Maxim Card activity and instructed them to take turns choosing the five cards that best represented their personal values. Students appeared engaged by the activity, and the volunteer went around to individual groups to assist as some students did not understand the directions. Students were then instructed to write all five of the chosen Maxim Cards in their Student Workbooks, which they did so quietly. The volunteer asked the students

what Maxim Cards they chose and expounded on their responses. During the discussion, she was able to get the whole room to participate by moving between the front and back of the room and calling on individual students to share their answers and ideas.

The volunteer then proceeded to start Session 2 by discussing work preferences and provided examples such as working outside, working with animals, and working with others. She pointed out the Career Cluster Poster and its various careers. As students wrote down their top five work preferences in their Student Workbooks, the volunteer moved around the room to students' small groups and engaged them in conversation. Some students finished the group work early and started talking amongst themselves while the volunteer was working with individual groups. As she moved among the groups, the volunteer did an activity review with each group and physically came down to their level by kneeling next to their chairs. The volunteer ended the class by asking students to explore different careers and take the career assessment on the JA website.

Observation Summary

As is evidenced by the observation narratives above, the volunteers observed in the evaluation of *JA Careers with a Purpose* attempted to follow the program instructions provided in the Guide for Volunteers and Teachers closely. However, student engagement varied among the classes as a result of the volunteers' ability to garner student participation. For example, at the Spring Lake High School site, the volunteer directly called on students to engage them in the lesson. In addition, at the second North Hollywood High School class observed, the volunteer moved around the room, called on individual students for comments and answers, and talked with each small group to ensure that students understood the instructions and session concepts. However, the first volunteer observed at North Hollywood High School did not connect with the students or actively seek their participation. Overall, students were more engaged during group activities than individual Student Workbook activities.

Volunteer, Teacher, and JA Staff Findings

Volunteers, teachers, and JA staff were also well-positioned to offer feedback about *JA Careers with a Purpose*. To gather their opinions and attitudes, adult respondents were asked to submit online surveys upon completion of the program. Individuals from Los Angeles, California, and Grand Rapids, Michigan, also participated in focus group discussions where they offered more detailed feedback about the content, materials, delivery, and student reactions. Data from the surveys and focus groups are presented below, grouped thematically. Demographic profiles were drawn solely from the post-program surveys.

Demographic Profiles

Volunteer Profile

Table 24 lists the volunteers' organizations as well as their job titles. Many different job fields were represented from food service to banking to education.

Table 24
Organization Affiliation of Volunteers

Organization	Job Title
Allstate Insurance	Agent
Chase Bank	Branch Manager
Desert Aire Corp	President
Biz Visions Group	Professor
G&L Chili Dogs	Owner
Junior Achievement	Program Manager
Junior Achievement of Southern California	Vice President of Education
Lake Michigan Credit Union	Branch Manager
Life Lock	Executive Assistant
Life Lock	Business Developer
Los Angeles Venture Association	Business Developer
Port Washington State Bank	Assistant Vice President Branch Manager
State Farm	Agent

Volunteers' past experience with JA also ran the spectrum of possible responses with three of the thirteen volunteers being involved for the first time and four having participated 11 or more times previously (**Table 25**).

Table 25
Prior Experience Volunteering for JA
(n=13)

Prior JA Experience	Sample Size
This is my first time	n=3
1 time	1
2 times	2
3 times	0
4 times	0
5-7 times	3
8-10 times	0
11+ times	4

Many (n=5) of the volunteers indicated that they taught the curriculum to mixed grade level classes containing students from grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. One volunteer reported teaching a class comprised of students from grades 9, 10, and 11. The other volunteers (n=7) reported that they taught the program to single grade level classes, one of which was classified by the volunteer as a special needs class.

Table 26
Student Participant Grade Levels
(n=13)

Grade Level	Sample Size
9 th grade	7
10 th grade	7
11 th grade	8
12 th grade	7
Other (Special Needs)	1

*Note: this is a multi-response (check all that apply) question.

Out of 13 volunteers, almost all (n=12) identified themselves as White/Caucasian. One volunteer also selected Pacific Islander and another indicated Hispanic/Latino.

Table 27
Ethnic and Racial Background of Volunteers
(n=13)

Ethnicity/Racial Background	Sample Size
Caucasian/White	n=12
Asian	0
African American/Black	0
Hispanic/Latino	1
Pacific Islander	1
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0
Other	0

*Note: this is a multi-response (check all that apply) question.

Teacher Profile

Teachers were asked how many times they had participated in JA prior to this session of *JA Careers with a Purpose*. Out of 12 teachers, half (n=6) were participating for the first time.

Table 28
Prior Participation in JA
(n=12)

Prior JA Experience	Sample Size
This is my first time participating	n=6
1 time	2
2 times	0
3 times	2
4 times	0
5-7 times	2

All of the grade levels were represented. In addition, three-fourths (n=9) of the individual classes contained more than one grade level.

Table 29
Grade Level of Students Receiving the Program
(n=12)

Grade Level	Sample Size
9 th grade	7
10 th grade	9
11 th grade	7
12 th grade	10

*Note: this is a multi-response (check all that apply) question.

The majority of teachers (n=10) identified themselves as Caucasian/White. Asian (n=2), African American/Black (n=4), and American Indian/Alaskan Native (n=1) backgrounds were also represented.

Table 30
Ethnic and Racial Background of Teachers
(n=12)

Ethnicity/Racial Background	Sample Size
Caucasian/White	n=10
Asian	2
African American/Black	4
Hispanic/Latino	2
Pacific Islander	0
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1
Other	0

*Note: this is a multi-response (check all that apply) question.

JA Staff Profile

JA staff members reported that they had worked for JA between two and eight years (Table 31). When asked on the survey what grade levels received the program, they reported that all the high school grade levels were represented (Table 32).

Table 31
Number of Years Working for JA
(n=5)

Number of years	Sample Size
2 years	2
3 years	1
6 years	1
8 years	1

Table 32
Grade Level of Students Receiving the Program
(n=5)

Grade Level	Sample Size
9 th grade	4
10 th grade	4
11 th grade	4
12 th grade	4

*Note: this is a multi-response (check all that apply) question.

Volunteer, Teacher, and Staff Interactions

Using a one-to-five scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree,” online surveys asked teachers to respond to a series of statements in order to assess their experiences with the volunteers. Similarly, JA staff reported on their interactions with the volunteers and teachers.

JA Staff Impressions of the Volunteers and Teachers

Overall, JA staff indicated that they had relative ease recruiting and training volunteers and placing the program in classrooms (see Table 33 on the following page). Only one staff member disagreed that the recruitment process was easy citing “*the time of year [which makes it] hard to find volunteers [who can quickly be matched up with classes according to] their interest and comfort level.*”

JA staff members elaborated on the ease of their experiences training volunteers:

- “*I think this was laid out as all other JA programs are—easy to understand and easy to follow. Most interested volunteers already understand the need for a program like this and are eager to get involved with this content.*”
- “*Most people in the working world understand the concepts covered in this program. Furthermore, I went out of my way to recruit volunteers who truly*

understood the meaning of pursuing their ‘noble purpose in life.’ Therefore, training the volunteers was fairly easy for this program.”

Table 33
On a Scale from 1 to 5 with 1 Being Strongly Disagree and 5 Being Strongly Agree
JA Staff Level of Agreement to Statements Addressing the
Volunteers and Teachers
(n=5)

Statement	Mean Response
It was easy to recruit volunteers to teach this program.	3.8
I found it difficult to train volunteers for this program.	1.8
Teachers were interested in having this JA program in their classroom.	4.2

Teacher Impressions of the Volunteer

All teachers agreed that the volunteer arrived on time, effectively answered students' questions, and sought the teacher's assistance when necessary, giving these areas the highest responses in this category with average ratings of 4.7, 4.4, and 4.4, respectively (see **Table 34** on the following page).

In response to the other four statements, though the average ratings remained at a relatively high level of agreement (between 4.3 and 4.2) that the volunteer was well-prepared, comfortable, knowledgeable, and had good rapport with the students, one teacher disagreed. This teacher taught a special needs class, a fact which apparently was not communicated to the volunteer prior to the program's inception. The class turned out to be ill-matched with the program's format and demands. As a result, the teacher's ratings in this area as well as all others were low, negatively affecting the overall results of the teacher survey.

After disagreeing with the statement "The volunteer was well-prepared to lead the sessions," the special needs teacher elaborated commenting, "*He thought that he would be working with high school students. My students are at the cognitive ability of about 2nd or 3^d grade.*" The teacher further impressed the point in response to the statement "The volunteer was knowledgeable of the subject matter" adding, "*He was unprepared to work with cognitively disabled students.*"

Table 34
On a Scale from 1 to 5 with 1 Being Strongly Disagree and 5 Being Strongly Agree
Teacher Level of Agreement with Statements Addressing Impressions of the Volunteer
(n=12)

The volunteer...	Mean Response
Was well-prepared to lead the sessions.	4.3
Arrived on time to the sessions.	4.7
Appeared comfortable teaching <i>JA Careers With a Purpose</i> .	4.2
Was knowledgeable of the subject matter.	4.2
Effectively answered students' questions.	4.4
Had good rapport with the students.	4.2
Demonstrated effective classroom management techniques.	4.2
Sought my assistance appropriately when needed.	4.4

Attitudes Toward the Program Materials

Using a five-point scale ranging from “poor” to “excellent,” volunteers, teachers, and JA staff were asked to rate various qualities of the program materials. There were high levels of agreement among volunteers, teachers, and JA staff who reported that the Guide for Volunteers and Teachers was easy to understand and that the materials were of good quality (see **Table 35** on the following page).

Levels of agreement remained consistently high when almost all volunteers, teachers, and JA staff agreed that “The Guide for Volunteers and Teachers provided a practical, step-by-step description of each session.” Though only one volunteer indicated disagreement on the survey, two offered the following critiques:

- *“[The lesson] would be easier to prepare if the information was formatted in outline or bullet points for discussion.”*
- *“In the first session where the Noble Purpose card is completed, the directions are unclear as to how to fill it out. The fifth session case study is difficult for the students to grasp and keep focused.”*

While all the teachers and staff agreed that the materials were attractive, one volunteer commented that *“The career clusters poster specifically was distracting—good information but not reader friendly.”*

All JA staff agreed with the statement, “The materials appealed to me.” The ratings for volunteers and teachers were slightly lower. In explanation, one volunteer noted that “*The posters were hard to read.*”

Table 35
On a Scale from 1 to 5 with 1 Being Strongly Disagree and 5 Being Strongly Agree
Volunteer, Teacher and JA Staff Levels of Agreement to Statements Regarding Materials
(Volunteer n=13; Teacher n=12; JA Staff n=5)

Statement	Respondent	Mean Response
The Guide for Volunteers and Teachers was easy to understand.	Volunteer	4.3
	Teacher	4.1
	JA Staff	4.4
The Guide for Volunteers and Teachers provided a practical, step-by-step description of each session.	Volunteer	4.2
	Teacher	4.3
	JA Staff	4.2
The materials were attractive.	Volunteer	4.0
	Teacher	4.0
	JA Staff	4.4
The materials were of good quality.	Volunteer	4.2
	Teacher	4.2
	JA Staff	4.6
The materials appealed to me.	Volunteer	4.2
	Teacher	3.8
	JA Staff	4.4

In addition to the statements above to which all three groups responded, volunteers and teachers were asked to respond to additional statements concerning the materials (**Table 36** on the following page). Respondents from both groups unanimously agreed that the materials were free of stereotyping or bias.

While there was a high level of agreement among both volunteers (mean=4.2) and teachers (mean=4.1) that “The materials provided made it easy to prepare for each session,” one volunteer and one teacher disagreed. Their dissent clearly resulted from the fact, mentioned earlier, that the curriculum was being taught in a special needs class. The teacher elaborated on the inappropriateness of the materials for this class with the following statement: “*Although I teach high school my students have cognitive disabilities and the material was inappropriate for them. I reworked the entire program.*”

The volunteer simply noted that the materials were “*Not appropriate for special needs kids.*”

Responses to whether or not the materials held the students’ attention had the lowest average. From those who were unsure or disagreed, the special needs issue arose again. Aside from this issue two respondents also suggested that the material was too juvenile, commenting:

- “*A bit elementary for my high school students.*”
- “*I think the lessons were a little under their learning ability. I think it would have been better if it was more hands on.*”

Others responded more directly to the text with the following comments:

- “*Lessons 1-4 and 7 were very engaging. Five and 6 were okay.*”
- “*Supplemental activities would have been good additions to the workbook.*”

Table 36
On a Scale from 1 to 5 with 1 Being Strongly Disagree and 5 Being Strongly Agree
Volunteer and Teacher Agreement with Statements Addressing the Materials
(Volunteer n=13; Teacher n=12)

Statement	Respondent	Mean Response
The materials provided made it easy to prepare for each session.	Volunteer	4.2
	Teacher	4.1
The materials held the students’ attention.	Volunteer	3.7
	Teacher	3.5
The materials were free of stereotyping or bias.	Volunteer	4.4
	Teacher	4.3

In reference to the volunteer Guide, the special needs factor again influenced not just the teacher, but volunteer ratings. Although, on average, most volunteers agreed (mean=3.9) with the statement “The ‘A Guide to Working with Students’ section was helpful,” a volunteer who disagreed reiterated the idea that the materials were “*not appropriate for special needs kids*” (see **Table 37** on the following page).

Table 37
On a Scale from 1 to 5 with 1 Being Strongly Disagree and 5 Being Strongly Agree
Volunteer Agreement with Statements Addressing the Materials
(n=13)

Statement	Mean Response
The "A Guide to Working with Students" section was helpful.	3.9
The Guide for Volunteers and Teachers and Student Workbook worked well together.	4.1

Teachers were asked to respond separately to one final statement. With a mean response of 4.2, all teachers agreed that "The Guide for Volunteers and Teachers and student materials worked well together" (data not tabled).

In addition, all three groups were asked to rate the quality of the program materials overall. The mean ratings for volunteers and JA staff fell in the "very good" to "excellent" range with a mean rating of 4.2 for both groups. While teachers for the most part thought the materials were "very good" or "excellent," one teacher assigned the materials an overall "poor" rating, bringing the teachers' average to 3.6.

Table 38
Volunteer, Teacher, and JA Staff Responses to the Statement:
"Please rate the quality of the *JA Careers with a Purpose* materials overall."
(Volunteer n=13; Teacher n=12; JA Staff n=5)

Respondents	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Mean
Volunteers	--	--	n=1	n=8	n=4	4.2
Teachers	n=1	--	n=3	n=7	n=1	3.6
Staff	--	--	n=1	n=2	n=2	4.2

During the focus groups, volunteers, teachers, and JA Member Office staff were each asked to rate the program materials and manipulatives in terms of their effectiveness as tools to facilitate student learning using a one-to-five scale with five as the highest rating. A summary of their responses is displayed in **Table 39** on the following page. The Career Cluster Poster, Career Cluster Sheets, and Decision-Making Poster received an overall mean score below four.

Table 39
Focus Group Findings
Effectiveness of Program Manipulatives

Respondent	Response Subsets	The Guide for Volunteers and Teachers	Student Workbook	Maxim Cards	Noble Purpose Cards
Volunteers	# respondents	6	5	6	4
	Mean Response	4.7	4	4.7	4.4
Teachers	# respondents	2	3	3	3
	Mean Response	5	4.5	5	3.8
JA Staff	# respondents	2	2	2	1
	Mean Response	4.5	4	5	5
Overall	# respondents	10	10	11	8
	Mean Response	4.7	4.2	4.9	4.4

Table 39, Continued
Focus Group Findings
Effectiveness of Program Manipulatives

Respondent	Response Subsets	Job Vs. Career Stickers and Poster	Career Cluster Poster	Career Cluster Sheets	Decision-Making Poster
Volunteers	# respondents	6	6	6	4
	Mean Response	4.2	1.3	3	3.6
Teachers	# respondents	3	3	3	3
	Mean Response	4.3	2.3	3.8	3.5
JA Staff	# respondents	2	2	1	2
	Mean Response	4	3	5	4
Overall	# respondents	11	11	10	9
	Mean Response	4.2	2.2	3.9	3.7

For any items receiving a focus group respondent rating less than 4.0, volunteers, teachers, and JA staff were asked to provide an explanation for the rating and any suggestions for improvement. Overall, ratings of the Guide for Volunteers and Teachers and the Student Workbook were positive, although adult respondents did indicate that the information presented in the Guide could be more user-friendly and that the volunteers should monitor student writing in the Student Workbooks. Most responses indicated that students were engaged with the Maxim Cards and Job vs. Career Stickers and Poster activity. However, it was mentioned that the Career Cluster Poster could not be read easily by students in a classroom setting, and the volunteers and teachers felt that the Career Cluster Sheets would have been more effective if students were instructed to choose their own sheet as opposed to randomly being assigned a sheet by the volunteer. During the discussions, volunteers and JA staff also made several positive comments with regards to the program materials. Following is a representative list of their responses.

Volunteers' and Teachers' Ratings of the Program Materials

Guide for Volunteers and Teachers

- *"The [Guide for Volunteers and Teachers] is not a five just because there have been a couple of times where it seems like a lot of information in one little segment where you're trying to do stuff. Maybe [JA] could have separated it a little bit better to help."*

Student Workbook

- *"Make sure that there's a good follow up with how they're filling [the Student Workbook] out and how much they use that in the process."*
- *"I've noticed that they write down things we tell them to if we give them a prompt, but you never look back to it. They find it more of a hassle that they have to actually write it down instead of just talking about it...I think the discussions of activities are more engaging than the Workbooks."*

Maxim Cards

- *"The vocabulary on those Maxim Cards is very sophisticated. And we have a lot of English as Second Language students, and there was some difficulty...I had to help them out or had the class help them out with that. Also there was some relevance as to whether they even knew who the quotations were from, but it spurned conversation as to who those people were."*
- *"I think [the Maxim Cards were] very effective. The kids really glommed onto it, and liked the exercise."*

Noble Purpose Card

- *"The Noble Purpose Card, there was some confusion on that because it tells you to write your noble purpose, but nowhere during the session does it tell you to put my ideal career, there is no instruction on that."*

Job vs. Career

- *"[Job vs. Career] was a fun exercise. The kids really got into that, kind of arguing or discussing whether this is a career versus a job, or you could kind of make the case both ways, and it was interesting just to hear what values drove that for them."*
- *"[Job vs. Career] wasn't my favorite lesson. I just think that they had a hard time with some of the quotes that were in there, really putting them to jobs and careers."*

Career Clusters

- “[The Career Cluster Poster] is just not big enough. For a class this size, you put it up here, I can’t even read what’s on the board, let alone the kids, and so it was really hard to reference it and it was very busy.”
- “I think [the Career Cluster Poster] is a terrible poster to read. It is hard to understand.”
- “We can look at the different careers [on the Career Cluster Sheets], but there’s a lot missing, I think. Kids were looking for certain careers and stuff and we couldn’t find it anywhere.”
- “Give them a choice [of Career Cluster Sheet]. Or give them a set of all the sheets and let them pick.”

Decision-Making Poster

- “[The Decision-Making Poster] was more useful because the students actually got a little bit out of it, because they had to answer those questions.”

JA Staff’s Ratings of the Program Materials

Guide for Volunteers and Teachers

- “I love the colorfulness [of the Guide for Volunteers and Teachers]; I like the margins, the highlighted margins. I like the activity outline at the end.”

Noble Purpose Card

- “I personally think [the Noble Purpose Card] is a really neat idea to fill it out and then revisit it later.”

Job vs. Career

- “[The Job vs. Career activity] is a little confusing for them.”

Career Clusters

- “Visually I just don’t like the [Career Cluster] Poster...I don’t think it looks modern in terms of its appeal to young people.”

The JA Careers with a Purpose Curriculum

Volunteers and teachers who completed the post-program surveys were also asked to respond to a series of statements about the curriculum using a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Though overall ratings indicated positive perceptions of the curriculum, the highest percentage of respondents agreed with the

statement “The information in the curriculum conveyed the program’s concepts to the students,” to which 92 percent of volunteers and 83 percent of teachers agreed (see **Table 40** on next page).

Eighty-five percent of the volunteers and 75 percent of the teachers agreed with all three of the following statements:

- The curriculum encouraged students’ creativity and imagination.
- The curriculum resulted in a high level of student participation.
- The curriculum was applicable to the real world.

To the effect that the curriculum was not challenging enough, teachers made the following comments:

- *“Didn’t get them thinking outside the box.”*
- *“Students felt the answers were too obvious.”*

Other comments reflected specific observations about the curriculum content:

- *“There were terms on the pre/post test that weren’t really covered in the workshop sessions.”*
- *“I think some of the examples used could have related better to the students. The maxims would be a good example.”*

Volunteers and teachers were most likely to disagree that “The curriculum held the students’ attention” (see **Table 40** on next page). One volunteer maintained, *“I think if we weren’t so enthusiastic about it, it’d come off very boring,”* while a teacher noted, *“I had a smaller group of students (20) from all 4 grade levels (9-12), so the older students got bored at times.”*

Again, the fact that the curriculum was taught in a special needs class accounts for some of the lower ratings as well as the comment, reiterated in this category, that the curriculum is *“inappropriate for special needs kids.”*

Table 40
Volunteer and Teacher Agreement with Statements Addressing the Curriculum
(Volunteer n=13; Teacher n=12)

Statement	Volunteers in Agreement	Teachers in Agreement
The curriculum encouraged students' creativity and imagination.	n=11	n=9
	85%	75%
The information in the curriculum conveyed the program's concepts to the students.	12	10
	92%	83%
The curriculum held the students' attention.	11	8
	85%	67%
The curriculum resulted in a high level of student participation.	11	9
	85%	75%
The curriculum was applicable to the real world.	11	9
	85%	75%

The post-program survey asked teachers to respond to a few additional statements beyond those presented to volunteers and teachers. Though teachers' responses still averaged 3.7, they did not overwhelmingly agree that the curriculum met the state, district, and school standards. For one teacher who disagreed, the issue was once more that the curriculum didn't meet the standards of the special needs class.

In addition, although the mean response would indicate that most teachers agreed that the program was age-appropriate, two teachers disagreed, making the following comments:

- *“The curriculum seemed geared for the younger grades (9-10 graders), so having supplemental activities for use with the older students would have been beneficial.”*
- *“Too elementary—should include more real-life situations or case studies.”*

Table 41
On a Scale from 1 to 5 with 1 Being Strongly Disagree and 5 Being Strongly Agree
Teacher Agreement with Statements Addressing the Curriculum
(n=12)

Statement	Mean Response
The curriculum met the standards required by the state, district, and school.	3.7
The curriculum was age-appropriate	3.8

During the focus groups and interviews, volunteers and teachers also responded to a variety of questions addressing the curriculum content of the program. The sections to follow present their views.

Content Difficulty

Overall, volunteers and teachers felt that the concepts presented in the sessions were at the appropriate academic level for the majority of the 9th to 12th grade students. However, as evidenced by quotes presented toward the end of the list, some concepts required more explanation to facilitate student understanding.

Positive Comments Addressing Student Understanding of Curriculum Content

- *“The first couple of lessons when you’re talking about purpose and noble purpose and values, the kids got it right off the bat.”*
- *“The freshmen get it as much as the seniors. I think for the seniors that are going into the work force right after they get out of school it is very relevant, they are very interested, it is opening up their eyes as to what they should be thinking. Freshmen are probably not as engaged because they are just not there yet from a content standpoint. Academically they’re there, but in content they’re not.”*
- *“You go over so many common things from lesson to lesson, that at some point everybody has a little light bulb go on to where, okay, I kind of see where this is going.”*
- *“I think each lesson kind of builds on the previous lesson, so they have to be able to remember what we did in the first session, like their noble purpose, we talked about that again, and what that is, and so I think that you’re continually reinforcing each lesson as we go on. It’s just a building block.”*
- *“A lot of our kids already have done this in their head, or with their parents, or in other classes and stuff, so if anything it’s reinforcing some of their values of things like that.”*
- *“Very appropriate. It is challenging. Some of the terminology is challenging and that’s good.”*

Constructive Feedback Addressing Student Understanding of Curriculum Content

- *“Maybe the understanding of what a maxim is. We had to go over that a couple of times.”*
- *“I think they didn’t understand the idea of giving back and doing good for society. Or when you tie that to a job, a lot of them think [giving away] stuff. If you are an accountant, to them they might not think of doing some free tax work. We can give them those examples, but they are not in the business world yet, so they don’t always understand the idea.”*
- *“I think noble purpose, I think kids at this age are still selfish and self centered... They are not selfish kids because they’re malicious. They are just so wrapped up in themselves or insecure, so I think the word noble, that needs to be defined a little better.”*
- *“I think Session 4, which was the pathways, was the most difficult, because of the way the materials present themselves. They break up into small groups and then they are given a career cluster that may not have any relevance to any of them,*

and if it didn't have any relevance to them there was some difficulty in them engaging in it, because it didn't make sense."

Student Retention of Session Content

Most volunteers reported that students had retained the information from week to week. However, one teacher reported that meeting twice weekly instead of on a weekly basis would improve student retention.

- *"I do a review when I start my session of what we went over the last session and have kids identify concepts and definitions or whatever, just to test to see if they were present mentally, and they seem to be doing all right."*
- *"I think what I'd like to see is [presenting the sessions] twice a week. One week is a long time in between concepts."*

Value of the Information Contained in the Curriculum

In addition, when volunteers and teachers were asked whether the curriculum contained valuable information for the students to know, all volunteers and teachers unanimously agreed.

- *"On a scale of one to five, [I'd rate it a] six. This is invaluable. The information is needed, they're absorbing it. They are not getting it anywhere else."*
- *"I think the information gives a logical approach to careers, as opposed to just getting information from your family and friends. It builds upon one another...it challenges them to think for themselves about what they want to do with their lives. So that was valuable, and I think it addressed real life situations, so I think that was kind of cool."*

Additional questions addressing curriculum format and content were posed specifically to teachers. All teachers confirmed that the program supported differentiated learning styles and indicated that they also saw the value the program added to their own curriculum. Representative comments are below.

- *"It's visual as well as auditory and they also are able to get up and move around. We're not sitting for one full hour lecturing. They're able to hear, visually see and touch and move around. There are quite a few learning styles."*
- *"I plan on using [the program's] format for the classes that didn't have this."*

Perceptions of Student Reactions to the Program

The post-program surveys invited both teachers and volunteers to respond to a series of statements rating their perceptions of students' reactions to *JA Careers with a Purpose* in the post-program surveys. Overall, both teachers and volunteers reported that their students were positively engaged with the program, although volunteers

consistently, if only slightly, indicated a higher level of agreement than their counterparts (Table 42). For example, while all volunteers agreed that “Students actively participated in the sessions,” one teacher disagreed. In addition, while all volunteers agreed with the statement, “Overall, students enjoyed the program,” 10 out of 12 teachers (83 percent) indicated that they felt this to be the case.

Another slight gap in opinion between teachers and volunteers occurred in response to the statement “The students worked well together in groups.” Most of the volunteers (92 percent) responded in the affirmative while only 75 percent of teachers did the same.

Neither teachers nor volunteers provided comments explaining their rating choices.

Table 42
Volunteers and Teachers in Agreement that Students Responded Well to the Program
(Volunteer n=13; Teacher n=12)

Statement	Volunteers in Agreement	Teachers in Agreement
Students were interested in the program’s topics.	n=12	n=10
	92%	83%
Students actively participated in the sessions.	n=13	n=11
	100%	92%
The students worked well together in groups.	n=12	n=9
	92%	75%
Overall, students enjoyed the program.	n=13	n=10
	100%	83%

To delve more deeply into students’ reactions from the perspective of adult program stakeholders, lines of inquiry addressed in the focus groups included students’ likes and dislikes, as well as their engagement in the curriculum.

Volunteers and teachers were asked during the focus groups if they noticed a particular session or activity that students seemed to like or enjoy most and if there was a session or activity they did not seem to like as much. Both respondent groups reported that students enjoyed the hands-on activities, such as the Maxim Cards, and the values group discussion.

What Students Liked Most

- *“The group activities they loved.”*
- *“I think the opening one particularly, learning about their noble purpose and finding out that a job isn’t just a job, it’s a career and finding your passion.”*
- *“[The maxim] exercise, they all seemed to relate it to themselves very well. I remember that being a very positive exercise for them.”*
- *“The maxims. That really got them to think.”*
- *“The first session when they had the Maxim Cards, some of the students really liked those quotes and they asked to keep them, and they wanted to write them*

down, so I think they enjoyed that part of it...I also liked the [five] values scenario. Should [the students] go with more money or should they go with a job that leads them into what they want to do...That was a good group discussion session."

- "I think when we talked about values. When they had to choose the five values that were most important to them."
- "[The career cluster activity was] when I actually got to relate with some of the students talking one on one with them. I found out someone was really interested in fashion, and we dug in deeper."
- "I think the students would concur that Session 3, called What's In A Name? Jobs vs. Careers [was enjoyable. It contains] quotes and they need to figure out whether it is more job related or career related. That was one I think that they enjoyed."
- "They also enjoyed the hospital one."

What Students Liked Least

As to what students liked least, several volunteers and teachers responded that nothing stood out as negatively perceived by the students. Others reported that students were disengaged when writing in their Student Workbooks, during lectures, and when discussing career clusters.

- "There is one session [that] was just all about writing in their notebooks. It wasn't perceived very well and we got it done pretty quickly."
- "When the presenter spoke too much, the kids were not into this because their grades don't depend on this and so I think the kids lost interest. When the activities are engaging and they're allowed to move and talk that's always been the best time."
- "I found it somewhat confusing when we were relating to the World of Work careers clusters and trying to simulate career paths with the career clusters. I lost a bunch of students; quite frankly I lost myself in that."

Student Reactions to the Program Overall

In addition, during the focus groups volunteers, teachers, and JA staff were asked how students were reacting to the program overall. As demonstrated by the comments listed below, all three adult respondent groups indicated that students were engaged and interested in the program and its activities.

Volunteers and Teachers

- "They have been very receptive to it. They have been pretty engaged. I think the program itself leaves a lot of room for discussion, and to dive into their own personal lives and how it's relevant to them."

- *“It takes them a little bit to get into it because they’re such a large group, but once they get into it, they get really into it, so they have great discussions. They interact well.”*
- *“It varies... We had a very enthusiastic third period, a bunch of 9th graders. Their energy was really high and the conversation has been great. That is a great lively group. We have a second period that is seniors and juniors and they are a little more laid back, and so you might think they’re not listening or paying attention, but they actually got a lot of it, in my opinion. And I think one kid said today that... what he got out of it was that it made him think. That’s the whole point of this thing is just to make them think.”*
- *“I think they have had a lot of fun and they have enjoyed the sessions.”*
- *“I think there’s been a good mix of them being challenged and the activities... have worked well with some of the small groups. We do bigger groups. We do individual work, so it keeps it fresh. It keeps it a challenge. It keeps it interesting.”*

JA Staff

- *“The first sessions we have heard a lot of positive feedback about how [the students] were engaged. So I think overall the students are interested.”*
- *“They seem to be reacting very well.”*

Volunteer and Teacher Perceptions of Success in Meeting Program Objectives

Volunteers and teachers were also asked to respond to a series of statements about the success of the program in meeting stated objectives using a five point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Respondents who disagreed were asked to explain how the program could better meet the objective. Once again, the average volunteer response was consistently, though only slightly, higher than that of the teachers (see **Table 43** on page 47).

Teachers who disagreed that students “described possible career choices in terms of their individual noble purposes” made the following remarks:

- *“I’m not sure the students really understood ‘noble purpose.’ They needed examples of specific careers and how a noble purpose was achieved through them. Even though the presenter and the teacher gave their own examples, I’m not sure my students understood.”*
- *“The kids just wanted to do what either made money or an activity they liked.”*

Two volunteers also offered criticism for the noble purpose concept:

- *“Provide them activities where they can do something hands on instead of being in the classroom. It’s better when you get to experience it first hand.”*

- *“Students had a hard time relating noble purpose with career choices.”*

Though there was a high level of agreement among volunteers to the statement, “Students’ understanding of program concepts, terminology, and theories improved,” several commented that the program should attempt to relate more to the students’ lives, suggesting the following:

- *“Use examples that relate to their day and time.”*
- *“Don’t make the twelfth grade lesson so basic.”*
- *“Relate more to real world experience. Give examples.”*

One volunteer raised an objection to the notion that “Students discussed different career options,” observing, “A lot of them had it set in their mind what they wanted to do after high school.” Others felt the career options materials were confusing for the students stating:

- *“They didn’t always understand the options given in the career clusters.”*
- *“The career pathways were confusing and a bit overwhelming.”*

Though no volunteers disagreed with the statement “Students used ethical decision-making skills to make career and life decisions,” two qualified their responses with the following remarks:

- *“They are all great kids with good values. I think we should play on that a little more. Have them talk about what they would do and allow them to share their thoughts/views/experiences.”*
- *“Good discussion item in class.”*

Table 43
On a Scale from 1 to 5 with 1 Being Strongly Disagree and 5 Being Strongly Agree
Volunteer and Teacher Mean Responses to Statements Addressing the
Program Objectives
(Volunteer n=13; Teacher n=12)

Statement	Respondent	Mean
Students' understanding of program concepts, terminology, and theories improved.	Volunteer	3.9
	Teacher	3.8
Students discussed different career options.	Volunteer	3.9
	Teacher	3.8
Students described possible career choices in terms of their individual noble purposes.	Volunteer	4.2
	Teacher	3.8
Students used ethical decision-making skills to make career and life decisions.	Volunteer	4
	Teacher	3.8

Volunteer, Teacher, and JA Staff Reactions to the Program Overall

Program Successes

During the focus groups, volunteers, teachers, and JA staff were invited to share the program's greatest successes. Overall, it was reported that the program encourages students to start thinking seriously about the future, examine their own values and interests at a more complex level, and explore different career options.

Volunteers and Teachers

- *"I think the greatest success is getting kids to stop thinking about jobs and start thinking about what their noble purpose is, and what they want to do with their lives."*
- *"I would say that allowing them to connect their values to a career and just reminding them that that's important to keep in mind. It is probably the most important lesson to get to them, because now they are not just thinking of a career or a job, they are thinking 'What do I value in a career?'"*
- *"I think having a facilitator coming in and being able to talk about your personal story and tell kids and show kids what you can do with your life is very powerful... It is nice to bring an outsider in, and I think that brings some relevance and some importance and vitality to what they're going to be doing, especially if they are*

seniors and in six to eight months when they enter the job market or decide to go to school, it is a powerful thing. And it's been good for me. It's a way to give back. It is fun for me to be here with the kids."

- "It makes them analyze what they want to do with their lives. And you plant a seed which later on will grow into something much bigger."
- "This is really getting them to think about 'What are my values? What do I believe in? And does that follow what I really want to do?'...Maybe this will let them expand their thinking a little bit, to either reinforce that yes, this is what I want to go to school for, this is what I want to do, or maybe I need to rethink through and maybe that isn't what I want to do. So that's what I see this program doing. It really gets them to think through what they're doing."
- "I really like the curriculum because the whole maxims and noble purpose that get us to thinking about a job and career. They kind of know that they're going to have to do that eventually, but I think it takes them to another level as far as giving back, that being a positive influence on society should be a factor in the job and career of the process. I think the program brings that to the forefront."

JA Staff

- "I love it because it's getting the students to reflect and to think just beyond money and occupations in a superficial way and see beyond and find something rewarding."
- "It's not necessarily intended to drive kids to a particular career, but allows them to seek out the various opportunities that are available to them."

Program Challenges

Volunteers, teachers, and JA staff also identified program challenges, such as the importance of finding a good volunteer, which are presented below.

Volunteers and Teachers

- "In Session 3, it talks about getting on the internet and accessing the JA site. That just doesn't work. They are not internet facilitated or it just took too long, the address in the book, when you type it, the address part doesn't work."
- "I think you need good volunteers. I think the three we have are excellent, but I could imagine that there might not be those... You could be the greatest knowledgeable teacher, but if you can't pass that on, it doesn't make any difference."
- "To me it's just the normal kids stuff. It is not the program itself, it's with anything that you teach, especially with large groups or classes is to keep everybody's attention and keep them focused."

JA Staff

- *“It’s a little bit more abstract because it does require a lot of reflection with the students. So I think that can be challenging for the volunteer to communicate.”*
- *“For this to be effective, you have to get a volunteer who will do a good job and who believes that he or she is pursuing a career with a purpose.”*
- *“High school volunteers are always harder to find.”*

Suggestions for Improvement

During the focus groups and interviews, a few recommendations to improve the program emerged. Suggestions ranged from ensuring that the volunteer had enough program materials, replacing the writing-based Student Workbook activities with something hands-on, performing a less scripted presentation that offers more instances where the volunteer can share their personal experience, and including more hands-on activities for the younger grades. Respondents also recommended that Session 7 of the Student Workbook should be improved, and that the program should include a take-home CD-Rom.

Volunteers and Teachers

- *“I have such a big class that when I came in I didn’t have enough materials for all the kids and that’s something that needs to be evaluated.”*
- *“Since it was scripted, it didn’t flow naturally...I didn’t see the personalities of the presenters come out, and so I think the kids could sense that, and I think with kids when the presenters and adults are real, when adults are straight forward and they flow, [students] are a lot more responsive.”*
- *“They’ve had a couple of opportunities for us to share with the students our own personal circumstances here in these sessions...I’d like to see more of those because I think it’s probably easier to relate and we can tell them also a little bit about where we’re at.”*
- *“I prefer not having the Workbook as an activity, because I don’t see a hands-on activity for them as just writing the response down. And so that’s why I have seen all of the other sessions being more effective than that one session because that’s the only session where it relied on just writing down your answer. It didn’t really engage them as well as the other ones did.”*
- *“I’d like to see something in Session 7. There’s a great note in the volunteer guide about the picture in the Student Workbook on page 16 and 17, that has a universe and the whole concept there is so that other students realize that there is an universe of possibilities, and I tell them that verbally...I don’t think they’re going to remember that.”*

JA Staff

- “A CD-Rom that they can take home and have those career clusters...and then maybe links as to how they can research those pathways or those particular occupations.”

Volunteers’ and Teachers’ Personal Experiences

When asked to respond to the statement “I would like to volunteer for Junior Achievement again,” every volunteer (n=13) responded that he or she would. Furthermore, with the exception of one respondent, the volunteers indicated that they would recommend the experience to their friends or co-workers.

Similarly, all of the teachers (n=12) indicated that they would participate in Junior Achievement again. When asked if they would recommend *JA Careers with a Purpose* to other teachers, 11 out of 12 responded affirmatively.

Overall Program Ratings

Volunteers, teachers, and staff were asked to rate the overall program using a five-point scale ranging from “poor” to “excellent.” Though the average rating for all three groups hovered around “very good,” volunteers gave the program the highest rating with a mean response of 4.2 followed by staff who assigned an average rating of 4.0. Teachers’ ratings of the program overall were slightly lower, with a mean of 3.8. As discussed in previous sections, the teacher ratings were brought down somewhat by the fact that a special needs class took part in the program which the teacher ultimately deemed inappropriate for their learning level.

Table 44
Volunteers, Teachers and Staff Rating of the Program Overall
(Volunteer n=13; Teacher n=12; JA Staff n=5)

Respondents	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Mean
Volunteers	--	--	n=1	n=8	n=4	4.2
Teachers	--	n=1	n=3	n=5	n=3	3.8
Staff	--	--	n=2	n=1	n=2	4.0

IV. Summary of Findings

Students

Student Content Knowledge

To determine the impacts of the program on student content knowledge, program and comparison (control) group students were compared using a pre-/post-test quasi-experimental design.

- After the program, the program group's mean post-test score was significantly higher than the comparison group's mean score ($p < .05$), a gain that can be attributed to program students' participation in *JA Careers with a Purpose*.
- The results of a t-test performed on the program and comparison group post-test means suggest that *JA Careers with a Purpose* increased participating students' knowledge and understanding of pre-/post-survey content compared to control group students.
- The results of a gain score analysis showed that from pre- to post-test, program students outperformed their comparison counterparts by just over one point, on average. The difference produced a statistically significant t-test result at the .05 level.
- Students demonstrated a five percentage point increase in the percentage of content items answered correctly overall, a statistically significant increase at the .05 level.
- An analysis of effect size using Cohen's d produced an effect size of .33, indicating that the program influenced students' knowledge in the areas addressed by the pre-/post-test.

Student Behaviors and Attitudes

- Upon completion of the program, students were more confident in their scholastic abilities and more likely to indicate that they were able to learn new concepts quickly and understood how to succeed in school.
- The program students' post-survey mean score addressing scholastic confidence was significantly more positive than that of the control group.
- Program students were significantly more likely to agree that entrepreneurs are highly respected by others and that they play an important role in solving society's problems.

Student Satisfaction

- The majority of students felt that the length of the program sessions and the content difficulty were “just right.”
- Students preferred working in groups and playing games to class discussions and Student Workbook activities.
- Students rated the JA volunteers highly in all domains.
- Students identified the program as interesting, relevant to the real world, and a great learning experience.
- Ninety percent of students agreed that they would recommend *JA Careers with a Purpose* to a friend.

Teachers, Volunteers, and JA Staff

Adult Interactions

- JA Staff found it easy to recruit and train volunteers, and that teachers were interested in having the program in their classrooms.
- Teachers rated the JA volunteers highly across all domains, including punctuality, appearance, comfort with the material, and student rapport.

Program Materials

- Volunteers, teachers, and JA staff reported that the program materials were practical, user-friendly, attractive, high-quality, and held the students’ attention.
- Volunteers reported that the materials facilitated easy preparation for the program sessions.

Program Curriculum

- The majority of volunteers and teachers agreed that the curriculum:
 - Encouraged students’ creativity and imagination;
 - Conveyed the program’s concepts to students;
 - Held the students’ attention;
 - Resulted in a high level of student participation; and,
 - Was applicable to the real world.
- Most teachers also indicated that the curriculum met the standards required by the state, district, and school.

Student Reactions

- Over 80 percent of teachers and volunteers reported that students were interested in the program’s topics, actively participated in the sessions, and enjoyed the program.

Overall Impressions

- When asked to rate the quality of the program overall, teachers, volunteers, and JA staff rated *JA Careers with a Purpose* as very good to excellent, on average.
- Every volunteer and teacher surveyed indicated that he/she “would like to volunteer for/participate in Junior Achievement again.”

V. Conclusions

As is evidenced by the evaluation results, *JA Careers with a Purpose* successfully contributed to student knowledge. Participating students also became more confident in their scholastic abilities and reported that they better understood how to succeed in school.

Adult respondents were also pleased with the program, reporting satisfaction with the materials, curriculum, and students’ responses to the lessons. Most importantly, teachers and volunteers reported a willingness to recommend the program to others, as well as to participate in future JA programming. It is our recommendation that JA continue to offer *JA Careers with a Purpose* as it seeks to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy.

VII. Appendices

Appendix A: Student Surveys

Appendix B: Volunteer Survey

Appendix C: Teacher Survey

Appendix D: JA Member Staff Survey

Appendix E: Moderator's Guide for Students

Appendix F: Moderator's Guide for Volunteers and Teachers

Appendix G: Moderator's Guide for Staff