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EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES

THEME OF THE DAY

NETWORKING-MAKING CONNECTIONS

THE HUMAN LIBRARY / Resource Material



Atlantic Canada
**Career
Week**



WHAT IS THE HUMAN LIBRARY?

OVERVIEW

The Human Library is called a Human Library because the humans are the books. It is set up so that students in small groups can “check-out” several books to find out more about their work. For this event community members who do various kinds of work are invited into the school so that students can talk with them and learn about what they do and also about local employment opportunities. Students will learn that, whatever their interests and skills—whether they like building things, being outside, crunching numbers, writing or being around people— there are opportunities that reflect those interests and use those skills right here in Atlantic Canada. The goal is that students will be exposed to lots of options and make connections between what they’re learning today at school and many possible futures.

The human library gives students the chance to meet and talk with real people working in a range of occupations and sectors to which they may not otherwise have access. The opportunity to meet and network with a variety of professionals can help to inform students about different occupations and sectors, especially those that they may not have considered before.

As background, check out videos about other Human Libraries:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k4rEh9ZfyYM> Human Library - UBC Okanagan Campus

<https://vimeo.com/107602044> Webinar about how to plan a Human Library

<https://vimeo.com/71730995> Human Library planned in less than 24 hours

WHAT IS THE TASK?

Students are asked to attend an Opportunity Human Library to gain exposure to a variety of people, occupations, and sectors in their province. At a Human Library, the people are the “books.” Students have the chance to check out “books” that interest them and ask questions to learn more.

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WHAT ARE THE DESIRED OUTCOMES?

Students will

- ✦ Gain awareness of the array of jobs, occupations and sectors in their communities
- ✦ Be introduced to growth sectors in their province by meeting people working in these areas locally
- ✦ Learn more about what jobs, occupations, and sectors may interest them
- ✦ Have the opportunity to network with community members
- ✦ Be prepared to include their key learnings from this experience on their library cards for inclusion in their portfolios
- ✦ Achieve curricular outcomes in the subject areas of physical education, health/personal development, language arts, and social studies

OPTIONS TO EXPLORE THIS TOPIC

Class discussion to introduce the concept of a Human Library

Brainstorming session of what questions students may want to ask “books”

PROBLEM-SOLVING

Once the task has been reviewed, check in with students to

- ✦ Confirm their understanding of the tasks associated with the human library
- ✦ Confirm their readiness to ask specific questions to community members present
- ✦ Brainstorm a good set of prepared questions, if needed
- ✦ Identify any problems that students may be having with the task
- ✦ Brainstorm supports including ideas of student collaboration
- ✦ Provide follow-up support or referral, if needed

WHAT STUDENTS CAN EXPECT

Each volunteer will be given a space where they can talk about their job and answer students' questions. The talks should be engaging, informal, and hands-on—ideally including tools, uniforms, instruments, and/or actual activities that students can try. In addition to talking about what they do, “books” are encouraged to talk about the path that led them to their job, what education is important for their job, and what occupations within their sector are growing.

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Examples

- ✦ A chef brought her knife kit and demonstrated different knife skills, emphasizing the safe use of knives. She also demonstrated ways to develop different dishes with the same set of ingredients and had students assist. Students then got to try samples of the dishes created.
- ✦ A sports medicine doctor brought bones and x-rays. The doctor also brought tools to build a cast and demonstrated how to create a cast for someone.
- ✦ Managers of a clothing store brought magazines, sample catalogues, clothes, and mannequins for students to prepare a window display. They also role-played best practices in customer service with students.
- ✦ A diplomat brought pictures and maps from where she had been and gave the students diplomatic scenarios for them to decide how they would problem-solve the situation.



APPENDIX 1 – SUGGESTED TIMELINES AND CHECKLIST FOR LARGE-SCALE HUMAN LIBRARY EVENT

***Note: This activity can be organized within a few weeks when the planning involves one or a few classrooms.

The timelines indicated below are for an entire school-based Human Library Event.

2 Months before the Event:

- ✦ Recruit staff members to join the School Team
- ✦ Have first meeting with School Team
- ✦ Brainstorm a list of potential “books” with students and/or School Team
- ✦ Connect with Home & School Committee to let them know about event and reach out for support and suggested “books”
- ✦ Prepare letter to be sent out to potential “books” (see Appendix 2 included) and decide who will be the contact person

7 Weeks before the Event:

- ✦ Send out letter to prospective “books” and ask for an RSVP within two weeks

5 Weeks before the Event:

- ✦ Meet with School Team to finalize Book List
- ✦ Send out Letter to “Books” re: confirmation and logistics (see Appendix 3)

1 Month before the Event:

- ✦ Ensure you have all necessary info from each “book” to create the Book List

3 Weeks before the Event:

- ✦ Decide what types of volunteers you’ll need to support the event
- ✦ Do a call-out for student/staff/parent volunteers to help with the event

2 Weeks before the Event:

- ✦ Send out final reminder to volunteer “books” and check in to see if they have questions
- ✦ Create a buzz about your event using school’s social media accounts, posters, and word of mouth
- ✦ Do a mock-up of the layout of the space where event will be taking place



- ✦ Prepare signage as required and name-tags if you are using them Finalize Book List and distribute to school staff

1 Week before the Event:

- ✦ Check in with all “books” to do a final confirmation and check-in about event logistics
- ✦ Finalize any additional requests “books” may have for their stations
- ✦ Issue media release
- ✦ Provide students with a Book List to review ahead of the event and invite them to sign up for their top three choices
- ✦ Develop a system and a schedule for groups of students to talk with the selected “books” Finalize student/staff/parent volunteers for event day and their roles

1 Day before the event:

- ✦ Have school team set up “book” stations. (Include stamps/stickers if required.)
- ✦ Ensure that requested items for stations are in place—power bars, access to an outlet, near a sink, etc.
- ✦ Finalize hospitality suite details
- ✦ Designate who will be meeting and welcoming “books” to the school and helping them set up

EVENT DAY!

Ensure all stations are set up as needed

Student/Staff/Parent volunteers are ready to welcome and support “books” as needed

Hospitality suite is set up with coffee/tea/lunch

- ✦ Check that students have their Library Cards (and individual schedules) ready (Appendix 7).
- ✦ Have a master schedule for students moving through their set number of stations
- ✦ One volunteer is designated with signalling when students are to move stations Designate volunteers for clean-up and tear-down after the event

After the Event:

- ✦ Send out personalized thank-you letters/cards to each “book” (see Appendix 6)
- ✦ Collect feedback from “books” about the event
- ✦ Collect student feedback either informally or by survey
- ✦ Debrief the event with School Team and brainstorm ways to make this event even better
- ✦ Remind teachers about post-activities linked with this event



APPENDIX 2 – INTEREST LETTER FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Dear **Insert Province Here** Community Members:

As part of an effort to support our students' career development, **Insert School Name Here** is planning an Opportunity Human Library event to showcase various occupations and sectors that are growing in **Insert Province Here**. This event will take place on **Insert Date and Times Here**.

We are writing to invite you to take part in this event by sharing some of your knowledge and time with our students by volunteering as a “book” at our Human Library. The Human Library is called a Human Library because the humans are the “books.” It is set up so that students in small groups can check out several books to find out more about their work. During this event community members who do various kinds of work are invited into the school so that students can talk with them and learn about what they do and also about local employment opportunities. Students will learn that, whatever their interests and skills, there are opportunities that reflect those interests and use those skills right here in Atlantic Canada. The goal is that students will be exposed to lots of options and make connections between what they're learning today at school and many possible futures.

The human library gives students the chance to meet and talk with people working in a range of occupations and sectors to which they may not otherwise have access. The opportunity to meet and network with a variety of professionals can help to inform students about different occupations and sectors, especially those that they may not have considered before.

Each “book” will have a station for their “show and tell” where they'll talk about their work and answer students' questions. The talks will be very hands-on—ideally including tools, uniforms, personal protective equipment/safety gear, instruments, and actual activities the students can try. Employers and employees are asked to talk about what path led them to their job, what education, training, and skills are important, and what occupations within their sector/industry are growing. Each student group will visit three stations for 10–15 minutes. The event will last approximately 1.5 hours, and it is anticipated that up to **Insert Number Here** groups of students may visit each station.

If you work or employ workers in a growing occupation or sector in our province, we invite you to come into the school to be a human “book.” If you are interested in volunteering as a book at our Opportunity Human Library event, please fill out the About You form below and return to **Insert Contact Name and Information Here** who will be in contact with you by **Insert Date Here**. Space will be limited, but we will try to accommodate as many “books” as we can!

Please consider participating in this event as a way to share real-world knowledge about the work that you do with our students.

Sincerely,

Insert Name/School Here



ABOUT YOU!

NAME	
E-MAIL ADDRESS	
SECTOR/INDUSTRY	
JOB	
WHAT COULD YOU PRESENT THAT WOULD BE INFORMATIVE AND FUN FOR STUDENTS?	



APPENDIX 3 – LETTER TO CONFIRMED BOOKS – LOGISTICS AND INFO

Dear Volunteer “Book,”

Thank you for agreeing to take part as a “book” at **Insert School Here** Human Library!

At our event, you'll meet with several rotations of **Insert Number Range Here** students each. You'll have 15–20 minutes with each group for a “show and tell” session about your job and to answer students’ questions. We encourage you to make your station as hands-on as possible, including tools, uniforms, safety gear, instruments, and/or actual activities that students can try. We also encourage you to talk about what education, training, and skills are important for your job and what areas in the sector/industry are growing.

LOGISTICS:

- ★ Please be sure to arrive by **xx am** at the latest on **date**.
- ★ Parking is at **location**.
- ★ Please check in at the reception area where a volunteer will show you to your station **location**.
- ★ The event will run from **xx–xx**.
- ★ Volunteers (add names if confirmed) will be available to help you set up and take down.
- ★ There will be a lunch and refreshments for you.
- ★ Tables will be available.
- ★ Electricity: we have a limited number of power bars, if you need one, but it would be great if you could provide your own.
- ★ If you have any requests regarding your station, please let us know.

Lastly, please see on the following page an information request form for you to complete and return to us so that we can develop our ‘Book List’ for the students.

Thanks again for being part of this exciting event that will help our students to gain awareness of the array of jobs, occupations, and sectors in their communities; be introduced to growth sectors in our province by meeting people working in these areas locally; and learn more about what jobs, occupations, and sectors may interest them.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you’d like to talk about any aspect of the Human Library.

Sincerely,

Educator School Team Lead(s)



HUMAN BOOK INFORMATION REQUEST

We will be preparing a “Book List” for the students so that they can choose which books they’d like to check out and plan their questions accordingly ahead of the event.

On the form below, please provide the information requested.

NAME	
JOB TITLE	
CONTACT INFO (EMAIL AND PHONE #)	
DESCRIPTION OF YOUR JOB (1-3 SENTENCES)	
WHAT INTERESTS, STRENGTHS, AND SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO HAVE TO ENJOY AND DO WELL AT YOUR JOB?	
WHAT EDUCATION/ TRAINING WAS IMPORTANT FOR YOUR JOB?	
WHAT AREAS IN YOUR SECTOR/ INDUSTRY ARE GROWING?	
WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO AND BRING?	
WHAT DO YOU NEED FOR SET-UP (ELECTRICAL PLUG, TABLE, ETC.)?	

Please complete and send back to **Contact** at **e-mail address** by **date**.



APPENDIX 4 – BOOK LIST

BOOKS (PRESENTER 'S NAME)	JOB TITLE	WHAT I DO	WHAT YOU'LL SEE AT MY STATION
1. Example	Software Product Manager	Do you find yourself taking the team lead role in group projects? Product software managers lead a team of people at software companies to develop a product from start to finish, including researching, marketing, and testing.	I will show you a quick demo of what I do and show you how a software product develops from idea to store shelf.
2. Example	Manager - Clothing Store	Have you wondered what it would be like to be paid to be a fashionista? I can talk to you about what it's like to dress the best dressed and what it's like working in the world of retail fashion.	At my station you'll have a chance to put together outfits for a mannequin based on fashion trends, do's and don'ts.
3. Example	Photographer	I work with an array of clients ranging from individuals requesting professional or family photos to businesses. I work independently and with different clients all the time. I'm really happy that I get to use my art form in my work every day.	At my station, I will present digital photographic processing. I will show the operation of digital cameras with images transferred directly to my notebook computer where I will show how the images can be manipulated for a number of interesting effects.



APPENDIX 5 - MEDIA RELEASE (OPTIONAL)

Media Release: **Name of School** School's First Human Library

Name of School is hosting its first Opportunity Human Library— **Date from xx am to xx pm**. It's called a Human

Library because humans are the “books” that students can “check out.” This Human Library has a career twist as the

“books” have been selected to help students find out more about growth opportunities in various sectors/industries in Province. The goal of the event is for students to learn that, whatever their interests and skills—whether they like building things, being outside, crunching numbers, writing, or being around people, there are jobs that reflect those interests and use those skills. They'll see that there are lots of options and that what they're learning today connects with many possible futures right here in **Province**.

For the event, each volunteer will have a station from which to provide a 15–20 minute “show and tell” session about their job and answer students' questions. The sessions will be very hands-on—including tools, uniforms, safety gear, instruments, and/or actual activities the students can try. In addition to talking about what they do, volunteers will also talk about what education, training, and skills are important for their job and what occupations/areas within their sector/industry are growing.

For more information, contact **Name and contact info**



APPENDIX 6 - THANK YOU LETTER

Dear **Name**:

Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in our school’s Human Library. The event was a success thanks to you and the other “books” who generously volunteered their time and energy towards this event. It is deeply appreciated.

We would welcome your feedback about any aspect of the event—the choice of occupations, the timing, the organizational structure, the venue—absolutely anything. We know that you are a busy professional and can’t thank you enough for taking the time to make this an enriching and memorable event for the students. Sincerely,

School Team



APPENDIX 7 - LIBRARY CARD

SCHOOL NAME AND LOGO		
DATE / /		
STUDENT NAME		

CHECKING OUT		
BOOK	TIME	LOCATION
SIGNATURE, STAMP, OR STICKER		

QUESTIONS



THINKING ABOUT YOUR HUMAN LIBRARY EXPERIENCE

1. What did you like best about the Human Library?

2. What did you learn about the different kinds of work done by people in our neighbourhood that you didn't know before? **Answer this question for each of the books you checked out.**

3. What opportunities did you hear about that are growing in our province?

Which ones in particular interested you?

Which ones would you like to know more about?

4. What interests, strengths, and skills did each human book talk about as being important for their work?

Did any of your interests, strengths, and skills match with those of the human books?

If so, which interests, strengths, and skills of the human book were similar to yours?

Answer this question for each of the books you checked out.



5. Which interests, strengths, or skills would you like to explore or get better at?

A large, empty rectangular box with a light gray background, intended for the user to write their response to question 5.

6. What did you learn about yourself and the kind of work you might like or might not like to do in the future?

A large, empty rectangular box with a light gray background, intended for the user to write their response to question 6.



APPENDIX 8 – SUGGESTED LESSON OVERVIEW

WHAT IS A HUMAN LIBRARY?

This is a chance to learn about jobs in Atlantic Canada, meet the people who do these jobs, and see and hear what they do. The Human Library is called a Human Library because the humans are like books. It is set up so that you and your classmates can “check-out” a few “books” to find out more about the work they do, and think about if you would like to do that work in the future! You’ll have a chance to meet with 3 different people (books) with three different jobs. The books have been asked to talk a bit about their job and show you what they do.

START WITH WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT YOU!

- ★ You and your classmates have talked about what interests, strengths, and skills are. We know that everyone has different interests, strengths, and skills.
- ★ You and your teacher have talked about your interest, and special strengths and skills.
- ★ Draw a picture of yourself. List at least five different interests, strengths and skills you have.
- ★ Working with a partner, share what your interests, strengths, and skills are. Ask your partner if they have noticed any other interests, strengths, and skills that you have.
- ★ Brainstorm a list of interests, strengths and skills students in your class have. Your teacher will record on chart paper. Brainstorm a list of things students in the class are interested in learning more about.

You and your teacher and your classmates have talked about jobs in your community where people are paid for their work, and jobs in your community where people volunteer their time and are not paid for their work. You have also talked about the people who work in these jobs.

- ★ On pretend date, our school will host a Human Library, where people who do these paid and unpaid jobs in our community come in and act as human books. Just like our school library where you get to check out real books, in our Human Library, you will get to check out human books! When you check out a human book, you and some of your classmates will get to find out more about the work that human book does or did in our community, and think about if you would like to do that work when you get older!
- ★ We are going to use what we know about our interests, strengths, and skills to choose what human books we would like to check out! Remember, you only get to check out three human books this time, so really think about it!

CHOOSING YOUR HUMAN BOOKS: HUMAN LIBRARY “BOOK LIST”

- ★ Read the book list to see which human books that are coming, and which ones you might like to sign out! Share the book list with your family, too, and ask them what they think of your choices.



- ✦ It's okay if you don't see a book that matches your top interests. If that happens you can check-out books for other reasons - you may like the sound of the job title or you know nothing about the job but something about it sounds interesting - there will always be something to learn!
- ✦ Once you have had a chance to review the book list, select three human books that you would like to meet. Consider choosing at least one book that does work that you either know nothing about or think you have no interest in. You may surprise yourself and find you like it! If not, you'll still be learning.
- ✦ List your three human books starting with your most favorite. Pass this list into your teacher. Your teacher will fill out your very own Human Library card with at least one of your favorite books on the list. You may also see a 'surprise' book on your list because we don't want any human library books feeling left out.
- ✦ You will see on the back of your human library card the list of three questions that you may use during your time with your human book.
- ✦ Have fun and remember to think about your interests, strengths, and skills while you are meeting with your human book choices. It could be you one day... doing that job!

GETTING READY TO MEET THE BOOKS!

The book list will have given you some idea of what each book is about. Think about what else you want to know. Listen, observe and ask questions that matter.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS OF QUESTIONS YOU MAY CHOOSE:

1. Please tell me about what you do at your work.
2. What's the best part of your job?
3. What's the worst part of your job?
4. Do you think this type of job will still be around when I get older?
5. What are the interests, strengths, and skills you need to have to be successful in your work?

These are suggestions only. Go with your honest curiosity.

Remember your speaking and listening skills, and communicate clearly with the people you will meet at the Human Library! Also remember to show respect for others by taking your turn and managing your behavior.

Keep in mind this is about what people and jobs may be of interest to you! So, choose books that are right for you, and don't forget to fill in your library card!