Lesson prerequisites

Introduction to Course Planner

Length:
30-40 minutes

About this lesson

5th-grade students are introduced to middle school course planning by exploring course options, submitting their 6th-grade plan in Xello, and reflecting on the classes they are most excited to take.

Learning objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- use **Course Planner** in Xello
- identify courses that align with their personal interests using the course descriptions
- select appropriate 6th-grade courses to build their course options for the following year
- explain their reasoning for choosing a specific course through a written reflection

Inquiry prompts

- What classes am I most excited to take next year?
- How will my middle school classes help me prepare for high school?

Before you begin

1. If needed, watch the Course Planner for middle school educators video and review the Work with middle school course plans educator guide to familiarize yourself with **Course Planner** before guiding the class.
2. Create a Xello Assignment for the reflection portion of this lesson. You can use this prompt: "Planning your middle school courses is a big step! Looking at your course plan, what is one 6th-grade class you are most excited to take and why?"
3. Ensure that you are able to log into your student demo account in Xello, can access the **Plans** menu, and can project your screen so that students can follow along with you.
4. Ensure that students are able to log into their accounts and access **Course Planner**.
5. Have the Plan your middle school courses in Xello video ready to project.
6. Ensure you have copies of the Course Planner for middle school student guide ready to distribute to students.

Teaching strategies

1. Pose a quick question to the class: What is one thing you are looking forward to about 6th grade? Take a few minutes to discuss why their selections matter. How can the choices they make in middle school impact their high school pathway?
2. Play the Plan your middle school courses in Xello video to introduce students

Materials required

- Computers or tablets with Internet access
- Projector
- Paper course selection sheets (optional, depending on your school's process)
- Course Planner for middle school educators video
- Work with middle school course plans educator guide
- Plan your middle school courses in Xello student video (also available in Spanish)
- Course Planner for middle school student guide (also available in Spanish)

Artifacts

Students:

- select their 6th-grade classes and submit their plan in **Course Planner**
- complete a reflection on their chosen classes in a Xello **Assignment**

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to the process of selecting their classes. Distribute the Course Planner for middle school student guide so students can refer to this resource as needed.

3. From your educator account, access your demo student account to model how to find **Course Planner**.
4. Open the **Plans** menu and click **Course Planner**. Project the planner to show the columns for the upcoming grades. Explain to students that while they will see columns for 7th and 8th grade, today they are only going to focus on picking their classes for 6th grade.
5. Point out the subjects in blue with a plus (+) sign, explaining this means the subject is ready for them to pick a class. Model clicking a subject, clicking a class name to read a short description of what they will learn, and clicking **Add** to add a class to their course plan. Show students how to click **Remove** if they make a mistake or want to remove a class they have added.
6. Allow students 15 minutes to log in. Instruct them to take out their paper course selection sheets (if your school uses them) and use their student guide to select their classes. Remind them that once a class is picked, a green checkmark indicates the course has been added to their plan. Once they have picked all their classes, instruct them to click **Submit** at the bottom of the grade column to send their plan to their teacher.
7. Direct students to the Xello **Assignment** you created. Have them complete the assignment by identifying the 6th-grade course they are most excited about and explaining why. Instruct them to click **Turn in** when they are done.