JA HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Semester Courses

OVERVIEW

The JA High School Experience® is a series of semester-long, experiential learning courses designed to empower students to own their economic success. Through a combination of instructional approaches, students progress from foundational principles through application, synthesis, and immersion in JA's three Pillars of Student Success: Entrepreneurship, Financial Literacy, and Work and Career Readiness. Rich with partnership opportunities, students, educators, and school and corporate partners all benefit.

Every course is accompanied by state-creditable instructional content (IC) that includes projects and support career pathways that most closely align with JA areas of expertise. Each course also incorporates a business-based case study (CS) that integrates interdisciplinary lessons on core principles. All JA High School Experience semester courses have received California A-G approval from High School Articulation, Office of Undergraduate Admissions, University of California.

Case study sponsorship and volunteer engagement opportunities bring real-world professionals into the learning. Courses are educator-taught with volunteer engagement planned five times throughout the semester. Volunteers engage as subject matter experts and/or as coaches during the project or case study.

Combined, these components equip students to: learn concepts that meet educational standards; synthesize elective concepts; show learning through tangible artifacts; and demonstrate competencies for future success (e.g., collaboration, creativity, innovation, critical and analytical thinking, cultural agility, effective communication, and self-direction).

COURSE OVERVIEW

JA Financial Literacy®

Students learn foundational personal finance skills, including how to earn and save money, create and use a budget, manage credit and debt, assess risks and use insurance, and address financial problems. They also get an introduction to investing, the stock market, and the global environment, including spending habits, business etiquette, and exchange rates. In the semester-long project, students apply the information from the course to their own lives and develop plans to help meet their personal financial goals.

Junior Achievement™

© 2025-2026 Junior Achievement USA

Semester Courses

JA Introduction to Business and Technology® 1

Students are introduced to the basic skills necessary to succeed in business. This course includes themes that address personal skills, like teamwork, leadership, and ethics. They also learn basic technical skills, like how to use word processing, presentations, and spreadsheets effectively. Students also identify techniques for solving problems and making decisions, as well as explore their possible future career path, examine techniques for writing resumes, and learn about flexible schedule work models.

JA Introduction to Business and Technology® 2

Students explore the history of innovation and the concept of ideation to develop a blog and add posts addressing business concepts from the perspective of a CEO or business owner. They focus on functions of management, including planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. Marketing concepts and functions are introduced, as are accounting basics, and students learn to compare and contrast various financial statements.

JA Financial Capability® 1

Students examine financial capabilities from a business perspective, focusing on investing, banking, and insurance. The course includes themes that introduce economics, banking services, business planning, financial decision making, and risk management. Students apply their learning in the project as they develop plans for paying for postsecondary training and education, managing finances, reviewing the basics of the stock markets, and creating a mock stock portfolio.

JA Financial Capability® 2

Students continue their examination of financial capabilities from a business perspective. The course themes include employee benefits, work experience, business growth and expansion, financial ethics and social responsibility, compliance, contracts and arbitration, and cultural impacts on business. During theme projects, students explore ways to mitigate risks involved in today's cyber world, evaluate short- and long-term impacts of having or not having auto insurance, develop a vision and strategic plan for the future, and more.

JA Entrepreneurial Mindset®

Students learn the basics about starting a business, including developing entrepreneurial abilities, identifying a business opportunity, creating a business plan, and learning about economics and the stages of business growth. In the accompanying project, students work in teams to identify a product or service that they would like to take to market.

Semester Courses

JA Business Communications®

Students focus on communication skills necessary to succeed in business, including communicating up, down, and across organizations; talking about performance; and writing in a business setting. In the course project, students develop a comprehensive business plan to share with potential investors and stakeholders.

JA Marketing Principles® 1

Students are introduced to marketing and some basic marketing techniques. Themes in this course address topics such as the marketing mix, communication channels, ethics, market segmentation and consumer decision making, global marketing, and competitive analysis. Students apply their learning in the semester project as they analyze and evaluate the marketing strategies for a particular brand.

JA Marketing Principles® 2

Students learn about marketing in the world around them and potential careers in the field. Themes in the courses address topics such as the market research, elements of, and development of a marketing plan; and retail, online, e-commerce, and business-to-business marketing. Students also learn about potential careers in the field. They apply their learning in the semester project to develop a content marketing plan, develop messaging across various channels, explore customer service trends, and discover the importance of making an emotional connection with customers.

JA Economics® (Grades 11–12)

Students learn personal and business applications of micro- and macroeconomic principles. They begin with foundational concepts of scarcity and opportunity cost and the circular flow of the economy as a framework for understanding how the consumer, producers, and institutions, such as the government, influence the market—locally, nationally, and internationally.