By Marty Falling

The Modular Curriculum with Tech Equipment

Does your school provide anything on careers for students? Modular labs offer a practical way to introduce day-to-day activities within specific career areas.

These labs include all the hardware and software students will need to complete modular activities. Each module has a detailed guide not only with the directions for completing activities, but also information on the educational requirements with salary ranges for any specific area.

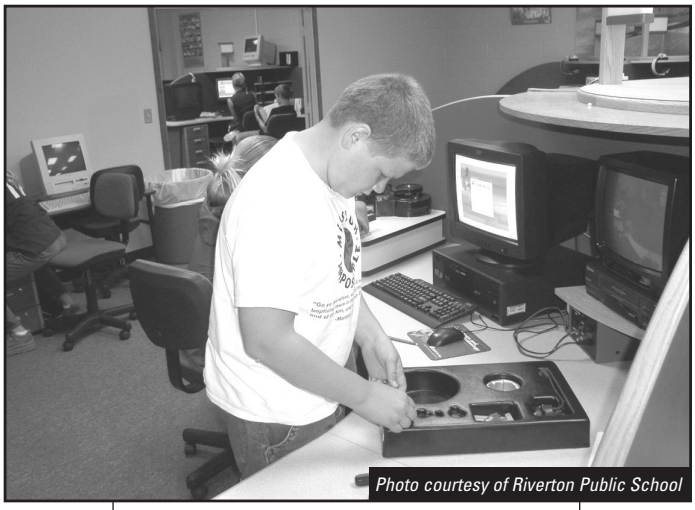

Photo courtesy of Riverton Public School

While working within modules, students practice reading, math, writing, and communication skills. They work in teams of two on each specific module and are responsible for their own learning and work.

What follows are several examples of learning modules that are a part of the modular labs available to schools.

Engineering Structure Module:
Students build bridges and then test them to discover the strengths and weaknesses of the bridges.
Professions: Structural Engineer, Structural Analysis Engineer, Construction Engineer.

Photography Module:
Students learn how to use digital cameras, edit pictures and manipulate them.
Professions: Photographer, Digital Media Designer, Graphics Designer.

Plastics Engineering Module:
Students learn about the chemical make-up of different kinds of plastics, what raw materials are needed to make them and what they are used for. They also learn how plastics can be stretched and molded.
Professions: Plastics Engineer, Fabrication Engineer, Manufacturing Engineer.

3-D Modeling:
Students learn how to use different software programs to create 3-D graphics for commercials and the movie industry.
Professions: Animator, Digital Designer, Graphic Artist.

Computer-Aided Drafting Module:
With this module, students learn the language of computer-aided drafting and how to use a drafting board. Using the CAD software, students draw a valve, 3-dimensional box and an inside floor plan of a house.
Professions: Architect, Mechanical Engineer, Interior Decorator.

Publishing Module:
Students learn about the printing industry and newspaper layout. They use Pagemaker software to create various signs, letterhead and ads. They do newspaper pages including the text, columns, graphics and pictures.
Professions: Journalist, Layout Editor, Designer.

Desktop Publishing Module:
Students learn how to do databases, spreadsheets and memos using computers. They also learn how to set up an e-mail account, do research on the Internet, create a website and a portfolio they can use when looking for a job.
Professions: Administrative Assistant, Office Manager, Desktop Publisher.

Teaching and learning with modular labs is different from traditional classroom experiences. Instead of focusing on teacher presentations and textbooks, students are focused on exploring a variety of technologies and making practical objects and end products. They use the same skills they will use in a work environment one day. There's no better way to teach about career possibilities than within a focused modular lab setting. ■

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