

TRAINING LEADERS *of* CADETS

BASIC COURSE

LESSON PLAN

1.1 Elements, Traits, & Outcomes of the Cadet Program

- VERSION:** April 2016 *please verify this is the latest version by visiting capmembers.com/TLC*
- DURATION:** 45 minutes approximately, and subtopic times shown in margins below are also approximate
- INSTRUCTOR:** Course director or a master-rated cadet programs officer is suggested
- KEY QUESTION:** What does the Cadet Program aim to accomplish, and why?
- OBJECTIVES:**
1. Give basic demographic facts about the cadet corps
 2. Identify the Cadet Program's mission and vision
 3. Describe the four program elements and explain the outcome of each
 4. Discuss the "look and feel" of cadet life, in regard to the five key traits
 5. Identify the #1 challenge facing the Cadet Program
- SIMPLE OUTLINE:**
1. Starter: From cadet to . . . astronaut
 2. Overview
 3. Demographics
 4. Program Goals
 5. Program Elements
 6. Key Traits of Cadet Life
 7. Our #1 Challenge
 8. Review
 9. Outcomes / Final Thought
- CLASS ACTIVITIES:** Group discussions, "walk-and-write," and an optional follow-along memory-jogger worksheet
- EQUIPMENT:** Butcher paper / easel pad with markers is highly recommended; white board also suggested



Welcome & Starter

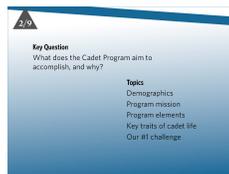
2 min

"From cadet to . . ."

Young people's behavior may show the effects of the Cadet Program right away in the form of better discipline in everyday life, better focus at school, more self-confidence, and so on. But the Cadet Program's real, lasting outcomes may take years or even decades to form.

Local Item / Personalization: *If you know of any home-grown "heroes," mention them here. Invite the students to do the same.*





Overview

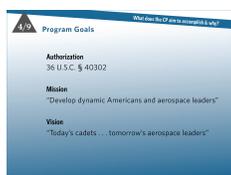
1 min

Our key question for the next 45 minutes is: "What does the Cadet Program aim to accomplish, and why?"

To answer that key question, we'll consider five topics:

1. Demographics
2. Program mission
3. Program elements
4. Key traits of cadet life
5. Our #1 challenge

Note-Taker: An optional worksheet is available that may make it easier for you to follow-along, take notes, and retain what you're learning.



Program Goals

4 min

First, before we get into a discussion, some key facts.

The Cadet Program is broadly mentioned in the U.S. Code, the federal law that establishes CAP. For the Cadet Program's specific mission and vision statements, we have to turn to CAP regulations, specifically CAPR 52-16. Today's program mission and vision are:

Mission: "Develop dynamic Americans and aerospace leaders"

Vision: "Today's cadets . . . tomorrow's aerospace leaders"

It may be helpful to discuss the mission and vision by paraphrasing them, expressing them in our own words. *Record student replies on a whiteboard, if available*

Q1: What's the mission and/or vision mean to you?

A: Varies. Accept anything connected to youth leadership / character development, aerospace careers, etc. But, be careful not to accept "recruit for the military." If cadets enter military service, great, but as with AFJROTC, ours is not a recruiting program.

Transition: How will we achieve our mission and realize our vision? Next, let's look at the "Program Elements," four areas that describe "what" cadets will learn.



Program Elements

15 min

Everything a cadet does can be located within one of four Program Elements. If an activity cannot be reasonably attached to one of these elements, then that's a warning sign that it doesn't belong in the Cadet Program. Learning how to speak Korean is admirable, but it doesn't exactly fit. Watching NASCAR races may be fun, but it doesn't fit, either.

Activity: Walk & Write

Create four stations by positioning four large sheets of butcher paper or easel pad sheets on the walls around the room, preferably 10 feet apart. Have magic markers available. Designate each sheet to one of the four program elements. Write the program element name in large type on the top of the page, as a title.

Divide the class into four groups, each starting at a different station.

At each station, have the students list a handful of cadet activities, textbook titles, aspects of cadet life, etc. that belong to that program element. Give the students about 2 minutes for each station, then have them rotate to the next station.

After they've completed all four stations, have everyone walk through each station one final time so they can read what their colleagues wrote.

Be prepared to contribute a couple ideas of your own, in case the students overlook important components of a program element. Finally, have the class regroup and return to their seats.

Follow Up. We know what the four program elements are. We've made some good lists showing the types of activities that fit into each program element, and have seen that some activities straddle two or more elements. But remember, the program elements exist to move us toward mission accomplishment. We don't have cadets drill, for example, simply because drill is properly part of leadership. We engage in each program element because it brings about an outcome.

Q1: What is the outcome of the leadership element? Ref: CAPR 52-16, 1.7.a1

A: Cadets having developed the ability to think independently and lead others in an atmosphere of teamwork and mutual respect

Q2: What is the outcome of the aerospace element? Ref: CAPR 52-16, 1.7.b1

A: Cadets having been inspired by aviation, space, or technology; cadets understanding basic aerospace science; cadets knowing about aerospace career opportunities

Q3: What is the outcome of the fitness element? Ref: CAPR 52-16, 1.7.c1

A: Cadets having developed a habit of regular exercise

Q4: What is the outcome of the character element? Ref: CAPR 52-16, 1.7.d1

A: Cadets having developed an ability to think critically about moral and ethical issues and their having made a commitment to the Core Values

Transition: So, everything a cadet does or learns about fits into one of the four program elements. Still, to know what the Cadet Program aims to accomplish and why, it's important to understand the "look and feel" that makes cadet life different from Scouting, high school sports, and other endeavors that develop kids into leaders.



Key Traits of Cadet Life

10 min

America has lots of great youth organizations. Here, this slide shows what makes ours unique. When you're planning activities, and when they're underway, ask yourself if the five traits are fully present. If not, adjust to make them present.

You can read each trait literally and just accept it at first glance, without going much deeper. But if you really want to learn the proper "look and feel" of the Cadet Program you have to go beyond the surface definitions and use some imagination.

Use a whiteboard or large easel pad to record student responses to the following. To help get this exercise going, it may be helpful for you to provide the answers to Q1 on your own, thereby modeling the types of responses we're looking for on the other four traits.

If you have time, this segment of the lesson could be done as a "walk and write," in the same manner as slide 5.

Q1: One of the key traits is "The Uniform." If we interpret that trait broadly, what are some specific examples of cadet life that might fit under the large banner called "The Uniform"?

A: *Replies may vary; anything along these lines is acceptable*

Runs hand-in-hand with military-style customs and courtesies (sir / ma'am, saluting)

Addressing cadets as "Cadet Curry" or "Captain Curry" (grade), not by first name

Having cadets assemble into formation and marching for transportation when possible

Taking time to have your own uniform look good and know how to return salutes

The uniform and the "military stuff" is what motivates cadets to think of themselves as young leaders, not mere kids; it inspires them to strive for the Core Values

Q2: If we interpret the trait, "Opportunity to Lead" broadly, what could it include?

A: *Replies may vary; anything along these lines is acceptable; note that the finer points about cadet / senior relations are discussed in depth in Lesson 2.2, Service Learning.*

Cadet activities should operate through a cadre, a formal cadet staff structure

Ranking cadets should enjoy some ownership and autonomy.

Cadet life is not a school classroom with adult teachers up front; adults lead through the cadet chain of command

Experienced cadets should be given some instructor roles

Cadets lead in a safe environment; adults allow them to make mistakes so they learn to bounce-back and grow

Q3: If we interpret the trait, "Aerospace Theme" broadly, what could it include?

A: *Replies may vary; anything along these lines is acceptable*

Whenever possible, leadership, fitness, and character topics should be presented through an aerospace lens; we use Air Force and aviation nomenclature like “wingman” and “check ride”

Aerospace is more than simply piloting an aircraft; activities relating to aviation, space, and a lot of technology could count as aerospace

Aerospace could include scientific study (Bernoulli’s principle), or be less academic and more aspirational through career explorations

The one thread connecting CAP’s cadet, aerospace, and emergency services missions is their common enthusiasm for aviation

Q4: If we interpret the trait “Challenge” broadly, what could it include?

A: *Replies may vary; anything along these lines is acceptable*

We challenge cadets academically in their study of leadership and aerospace textbooks

We challenge cadets physically in our fitness programs

We challenge cadets morally by inviting them to abide the Core Values

We challenge cadets personally or spiritually when they attempt to reach personal goals of any kind or try something new (obstacle courses, flying solo, public speaking, etc.)

The “challenge” trait means we view cadets as young adults, not children, and that their growth and development requires that we lead them (carefully and deliberately) beyond their current comfort zones, even if that means they experience momentary setbacks

Q5: If we interpret the trait “Fun” broadly, what could it include?

A: *Replies may vary; anything along these lines is acceptable*

Cadets are volunteers, so they will “vote with their feet” if the program is not enjoyable, meaningful, or “fun”

It is developmentally appropriate for a youth program to include social activities such as a cadet ball or dining out; social interaction is important to youth, and is a prerequisite for “fun”

Reward and recognition programs (ribbons, certificates, awards, etc.) are important tools in keeping the program fun

One of toughest parts of mentoring is getting a feel for the seriousness of purpose cadets have and yet knowing how to balance that against their youthfulness and need to goof around

For adult volunteers, CAP should not be drudgery but “fun,” which could include opportunities for adults to find joy simply by being around the cadets, sharing in their victories, and enjoying camaraderie with fellow adult volunteers

Transition: So far we’ve discussed the cadet mission, how we educate cadets across four program elements to fulfill that mission, and that five key traits inform the “look and feel” of cadet life. Before concluding, it’ll be important to wrestle with one simple, direct question.



Our #1 Challenge

2 min

Q1: What is the #1 challenge affecting the CAP Cadet Program?

A: "Adult leadership" is the only acceptable answer, but the rationale may vary along these lines:

Local squadrons succeed only if they have a team of dedicated, well-trained (TLC grads) adults who take a positive approach to youth

The cadets themselves recognize this; survey after survey they've said the #1 factor affecting their cadet experience is the quality of adults available to mentor them

Every youth organization is likely to say the same thing - adult leadership is the #1 challenge



Review

4 min

Q1: Does anyone have any final or lingering questions or comments?

Q2: Before concluding, let's return to our key question: What does the program aim to accomplish and why?

A: Replies may vary; anything along these lines is acceptable

We develop dynamic Americans and aerospace leaders. As our principal funders, the Air Force has validated the need for us to continue this important work. Further, our Air Force-themed approach to leadership, stem, fitness, and character is what makes us unique.

Q3: Let's briefly recap some of the more important details:

Q4: What is the official mission statement?

A: "To develop dynamic Americans and aerospace leaders"

Q5: What are our four program elements?

A: Leadership, Aerospace, Fitness, and Character

Q6: What are our five key traits of cadet life?

A: The Uniform, Opportunity to Lead, Aerospace Theme, Challenge, and Fun

Q7: What's the perennial, #1 challenge affecting cadet success?

A: Local programs thrive only when they have dedicated, well-trained, adult leaders



Outcomes / Final Thought

1 min

Think about the great things we do together for cadets. Be proud and respect the opportunity we have to develop dynamic Americans and aerospace leaders.