



Golf Course Operations

Golf is a game which was first played in Scotland more than 500 years ago. The game made its way to the United States in the early 1800's and today is enjoyed by more than 30 million Americans. Golf courses are classified into two major categories based on accessibility for golfers. They are either open to the public or accessible through a private membership. The game of golf is growing in popularity, and as a business, contributes substantially to the local economy through employment, taxes, property value improvement and the support of local charities through fund raisers.

In 2022, golf's economic impact in the United States was \$101.7 billion dollars. Within a golf course operation there are usually at least three departments; turfgrass maintenance, food and beverage, and the pro shop operation. Each department is managed by professionally trained staff that work together to produce the best possible playing experience for their guests. In fact, over 1.6 million jobs in the United States are impacted by the golf industry.

Student Learning Objectives

- 1. Become familiar with and understand the specific uses of the different equipment used to maintain a golf course.**
Walking and riding mowers, reel and rotary mowers, bunker rakes, carts and special equipment.
- 2. Identify and investigate the career opportunities available in the golf industry. Gain a deeper understanding of the golf course management profession and the skills and abilities that go into managing and maintaining a golf course.**
Golf course design, landscape and maintenance; golf professional, club house management. Visit the maintenance facility and the STEAM learning stations.
- 3. Experience golf through participation in a golfing activity.**
Become a golfer by hitting golf balls on the driving range or putting green.
- 4. Identify and explain the different playing surfaces that comprise a golf course.**
Green, tee, fairway, rough, bunker, water hazards and out-of-bounds.
- 5. Learn more about the environmental stewardship practices underway by the maintenance staff.**
Water conservation efforts through irrigation practices; BMPs at the course; cultural practices and IPM techniques. Observe wildlife corridors and habitats.

Field Trip Requirements

- Safe location on the golf course such as the putting green or driving range to facilitate several First Green learning stations and to participate in a putting practice.
- Group will tour clubhouse, pro shop, and golf course maintenance facilities.
- Printed job descriptions and job applications.
- Golf clubs and/or putters, golf balls.

Field Trip Outline

The golf course superintendent or golf course representative will host a walking tour of the golf course. Stops will be made at the clubhouse, pro shop, maintenance facility and First Green learning station area. The emphasis of the tour will be to introduce students to various concepts in golf course management, introduce available career opportunities, and have the students participate in several STEAM focused learning stations.

- The host will greet the students when they arrive. Introduce any staff or volunteers assisting with the field trip and give a brief overview of what to expect.
- The host will then lead the group on a walking tour of the golf course; pointing out the different playing surfaces such as greens, tees, fairways, roughs, bunkers, water hazards and out-of-bounds. Tell the purpose of each surface and include some maintenance practices required for each area.
- Upon arriving at the maintenance facility, show the students the equipment used to maintain the golf course. Allow the students the opportunity to sit on the equipment. Discuss with the students the available careers in the golf course industry and pass out seasonal job applications to all who are interested.
- Travel to the location where the STEAM learning stations, and golf activity will take place. A few ideas of possible learning stations include:
 - Soil/Plant Science Station – soil and plant health are at the core of the golf course. This learning station emphasizes the importance of each.
 - Cool Tools on the Green – highlight the tools and technology that enables golf course superintendents and staff to maintain the golf course. (moisture meters; drones; irrigation equipment; cup cutter, etc.,)
 - Water Conservation/Quality – discuss methods in use to conserve water and ensure its quality.
 - Environmental Stewardship – what environmental stewardship efforts are underway at your golf course? Be sure to communicate these to the students, teachers and chaperones attending the field trip.