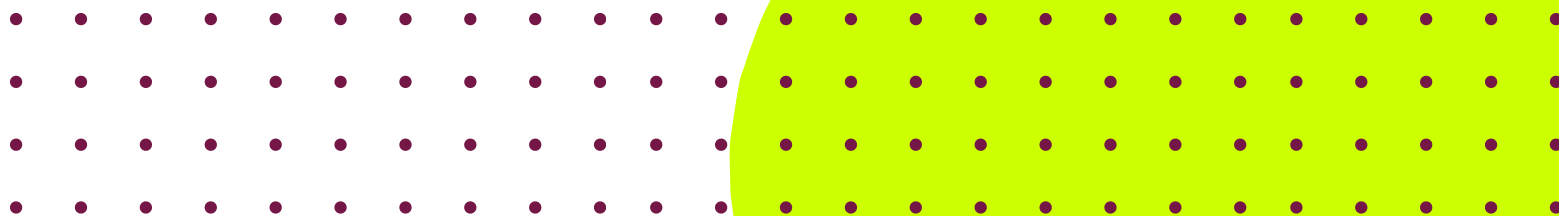
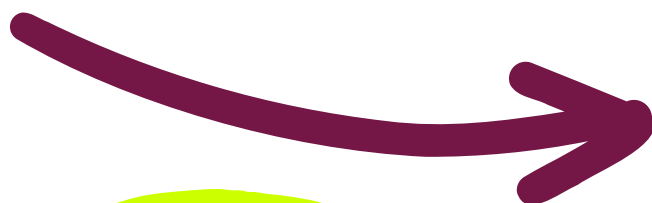
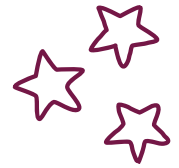




CPAS IN THE CLASSROOM VOLUNTEER GUIDE

all the info & details you'll need for a
successful presentation!





THANK YOU!

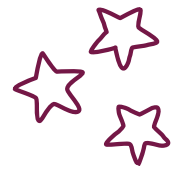
CPAS IN THE CLASSROOM



With presentations scheduled throughout the school year, we are thrilled to bring the accounting profession into classrooms throughout Virginia. We anticipate over 1,000 students will hear from volunteers like yourself, learning more about what accountants do, the benefits of becoming an accountant and all the opportunities that lie ahead in the profession.

As the VSCPA works to address challenges in the talent pipeline, it is clear we need to expose students to the profession as much as possible. Through CPAs in the Classroom, we will provide presentations (both live and virtual) and other resources to high school educators and students.

In preparation for your upcoming presentation, carefully review these presenter tips and talking points. And be sure to reach out if you have any questions.



WHO WE ARE

If you have questions, concerns or feedback about CPAs in the Classroom, please do not hesitate to contact your VSCPA CPAs in the Classroom team.

Molly



I'm Molly Wash, Pipeline & Diversity Director at the VSCPA. I work with students and educators...*a lot*. If you have questions about your presentation, ideas on improving the program or need help, just reach out!

How to reach me:

Phone: (804) 612-9417

Email: mwash@vscpa.com



Diane

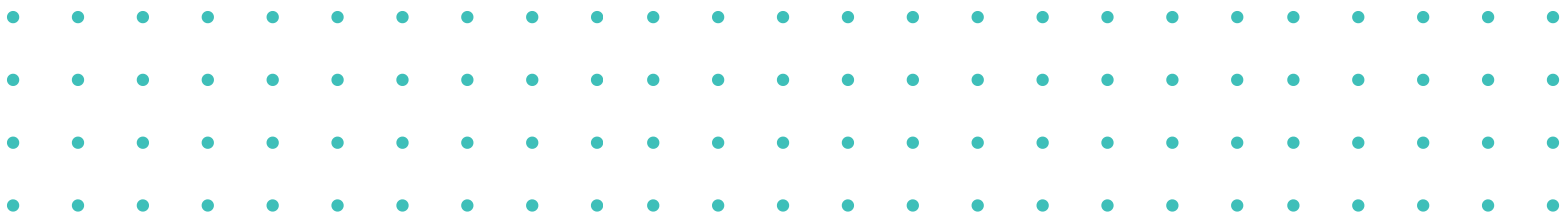


I'm Diane Jones, Senior Manager, Finance & Administration. In addition to my work on our finance team, I also work on our student outreach initiatives. If you have any questions, feedback or ideas on improving the program, please reach out!

How to reach me:

Phone: (804) 612-9415

Email: djones@vscpa.com





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1 What is the expected time commitment?

Volunteers should expect to spend about 1.5 to 2 hours total, per presentation. We recommend all volunteers spend time reviewing this CPAs in the Classroom Volunteer Guide, reviewing the presentation and other resources on the [CPAs in the Classroom](#) website. Presentation times vary from 30 to 60 minutes.

2 Do the students have any accounting experience?

It really depends on the class or event. Some students may have taken a semester or two of accounting, others may be in their first accounting class. That said, some students attending a career awareness event may have had no exposure to accounting. This is why it's important to review this CPA Week Volunteer Guide, so your message will resonate with the students.

3 If an unexpected event occurs and I am not able to attend my presentation, what should I do?

If something comes up you should email the teacher/organizer and copy Molly Wash (mwash@vscpa.com) and Diane Jones (djones@vscpa.com). If we can find another volunteer, we'll coordinate with the teacher and the volunteer.

4 What is the suggested attire for the presentation?

You are encouraged to wear whatever you would typically wear to work. If you wear jeans and a polo shirt, feel free to wear them for the presentation. If you want to dress up, do that. The idea is to help students see the realities of the profession.

5 Do I need to create my own presentation?

No. [Click here](#) for a PPT presentation and additional resources. We want presenters to use these PPT slides to ensure students hear a consistent (research-backed) message.





6 Am I required to use the presentation materials?

All CPAs in the Classroom volunteers are asked to use the CPAs in the Classroom presentation, if possible. The Society uses the Center for Audit Quality's research on the influences and expectations of high school students and incorporates many of their interests into the presentation. We want all students to hear a consistent message.



7 Where can I learn more about the CAC's student research?

[Click here](#) to learn more about Bold Ambition and Accounting+.

8 Can I schedule my own presentation?

Absolutely! If you want to schedule your own presentation, just let Molly & Diane know where you are going and how many students you are expected to reach. Check out the email template on the next page. It's a good starting point for reaching out to schools or organizations.

The No-No's



Acronyms: It's so easy to slip into "CPA speak" but remember, you are talking to high school students who will not know the majority of the acronyms you would say. If you do use an acronym, follow it with what the word means.

Gold Star for Working A Lot: We know there are busy times and that you may experience long hours. Saying, "Well, I've worked 96 hours the last 2 weeks!" will not score any points with the students. We aren't suggesting you be untruthful, but for their first introduction to accounting, we want to stay positive.

CPA Exam & License Details: At this point, hearing the details of passing the CPA Exam and getting the necessary hours to become a CPA, is just too much information for a high school student. VSCPA works to help **college students** better understand the requirements and the value of obtaining the CPA license. For CPAs in the Classroom, we're sticking to the basics: ***Opportunities in Accounting.***

Remember: Be positive & show your enthusiasm for accounting!



SAMPLE EMAIL TEMPLATE

When contacting a school or organization, use the following template as a starting point. Feel free to tailor it to your specific needs.



DRAFTS



1

Subject Line: Inspire Future Accountants with the VSCPA

Dear [Contact's Name]

The Virginia Society of CPAs (VSCPA) is committed to fostering the next generation of accounting professionals. Through our CPAs in the Classroom program, we bring real-world experiences into middle and high school classrooms. Our volunteer accountants and CPAs share the excitement and rewards of their careers, explore the diverse opportunities within the field, and debunk common myths.

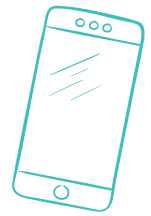
We welcome the opportunity to arrange a visit from a CPA to your classroom, student organizations (such as DECA or FBLA) or career events. We can also accommodate speaking engagements during any other part of the school day.

If you believe another member of your school community would be interested in this program, please feel free to forward this message. Thank you for your support in fostering student interest in accounting.

I look forward to hearing from you. Again, thank you for considering this request and let me know if you have any questions.

Best regards, [Your Name]





INFLUENCE STUDENTS

Giving a presentation to high school students can be a challenging experience. Unlike doing a college presentation, students are required to be in class, and depending on the class, not every student will be interested in the content. Experiencing a disengaged student (or class) can be disheartening. However, rest assured that you are making an impact on the students! We asked high school educators to share their tips for connecting with students.



Damon DeSue, CPA



Damon DeSue, CPA,
in middle school



HOW TO GUIDE:

for connecting with students!

Don't be intimidated by how students may respond but just lean into a fun cool way to connect with them first.

Oftentimes, conversations are difficult with students when they don't feel a connection.

Make small talk with the students as they enter the class and sit down. Asking what their favorite food is or what they're watching on Netflix is a quick way to connect with students.

Standing in the back of the classroom looking at emails on your phone is not the best way to establish a good connection.

Have you watched anything good on Netflix lately?



PRESENTATION PREPARATION

It's important that you prepare for your presentation. Follow the four to-do's for a successful presentation.

TO-DO'S

Confirm Presentation Details & Logistics

Ensure the presentation is added to your calendar. Collaborate with the teacher or organizer to understand the visit's goals. Coordinate logistical arrangements and finalize other presentation specifics.

Review the CPAs in the Classroom Volunteer Guide

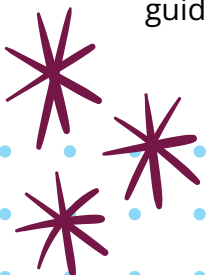
If you made it this far, you are actively completing this step. Great job!

Practice

Take time to think about what you want to say, the stories you plan on telling, and how you are going to explain concepts.

Check out the presentation resources

[Click here](#) for the presentation, volunteer guide and other helpful resources.





PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

Before we dive into the presentation, it's important that you understand our goals with CPAs in the Classroom and the strategy we're taking when discussing career opportunities with high school students.

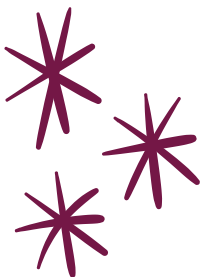
The focus of this presentation is on accounting itself, rather than the CPA Exam and license. Our primary goal is to **expose students to the vast array of opportunities that accounting offers**, dispelling any misconceptions that may shroud it. And, we want to do this in a way that resonates with the audience: high school students.

While CPAs in the Classroom is one of the many steps the VCPA is taking to help build the CPA talent pipeline, talking about the intricate details of the CPA profession (the education, the Exam, the experience, the license) is too much information and not necessary at this point. Rather, we want to focus on accounting as profession of opportunity and stick with the basics.

To prepare for your presentation, you should review this toolkit and the presentation slide discussion guides.

Throughout the presentation, you will explore the multifaceted nature of work that accountants engage in, showcasing the diverse career paths that accountants have. The presentation begins by answering the question: "What is accounting?"

Next, you'll walk through accounting myths that are *quickly* followed with the realities of accounting. You'll then move on to several examples of accounting career paths. This is where you can talk about what you do!





PPT PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- 1** Introductions
- 2** What is accounting?
- 3** Accounting myths & realities
- 4** Variety in accounting jobs
- 5** Accounting+ Resources
- 6** Questions





WHAT IS ACCOUNTING?

WHAT IS ACCOUNTING?

Accounting is the language of business. Accountants know how businesses work, how they function and how they present themselves to the world... through their financial statements.

Discussion Guide:



Remember to keep your language simple and relatable to high school students. Think "back to the basics."

- **Introduction to Accounting:** Explain that accounting is often referred to as the "language of business." It's a fundamental part of how businesses operate and communicate their financial health.
- **Understanding Business Operations:** Emphasize that accountants play a crucial role in understanding how businesses work. They are like financial detectives who examine and analyze various aspects of a company's finances.
- **Why Accounting Matters:** Explain that accounting is not just about numbers; it's about helping businesses thrive and make responsible financial choices. Accountants are like financial advisors for companies.



MATH WIZ

Slides 3-4



Discussion Guide:



This slide aims to dispel the common myth that accounting is solely for math geniuses by emphasizing that accountants primarily use basic math skills. It's important to reassure students that a strong affinity for advanced math is not a requirement for success in the field of accounting.

- **Basic Math Skills:** Emphasize that while math plays a role in accounting, it's primarily basic arithmetic, such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Accountants use calculators and software to perform complex calculations, so you don't need to be a math prodigy.
- **Problem-Solving and Analysis:** Highlight that accounting is more about problem-solving and analytical thinking. Accountants analyze financial data, interpret trends, and make strategic recommendations to help businesses thrive. It's about understanding the story behind the numbers.
- **Technology and Tools:** Mention that technology has transformed the accounting profession. Accountants rely on software and tools that automate many mathematical tasks. Being tech-savvy and having a knack for using accounting software is just as important as math skills.



EVERY BUSINESS NEEDS ACCOUNTANTS

Slides 5-6



Discussion Guide:



Here you will debunk the misconception that accountants are confined to working exclusively in accounting firms. In reality, individuals with accounting skills are in demand across various industries, emphasizing the versatility and wide range of career opportunities within the field.

- **Versatile Career Opportunities:** Stress that accounting is not limited to just CPA firms. Accountants are essential in every industry, including healthcare, technology, entertainment, non-profits, and more. They play a crucial role in managing finances and making informed decisions.
- **Tailored Career Paths:** Explain that accountants have the flexibility to choose a career path that aligns with their interests. If someone is passionate about a particular industry, they can specialize in that field as an accountant and contribute to its success.

Later, you'll dive into a few examples of the various opportunities for accountants. No need to spend a lot of time here.



MORE THAN TAXES

Slides 1-8



Discussion Guide:



High school students always think accountants exclusively focus on doing taxes. In reality, the accounting profession encompasses a wide range of roles, and many accountants never work on tax returns. It's essential to emphasize the diversity of tasks and responsibilities within the field.

- **Diverse Roles in Accounting:** Highlight that accounting is a multifaceted profession with a variety of career paths. While some accountants and CPAs specialize in tax preparation and planning, many others work in areas such as budgeting, financial analysis, strategic planning, and more.
- **Non-Tax Roles:** Provide examples of non-tax-related roles within accounting, such as financial analysts who assess a company's financial health, management accountants who focus on internal financial reporting, and forensic accountants who investigate financial irregularities. Mention that these roles don't involve tax work.

If you don't work in tax, you can mention that.



MAKING MONEY

Slides 9-10

MYTH:

ACCOUNTANTS HAVE LOW EARNING POTENTIAL



REALITY:

ACCOUNTANTS HAVE UNLIMITED EARNING POTENTIAL

MAKE 6 FIGURES EARLY ON

Not only can you **make a great living**, the accounting profession is known to be one of the **most stable careers**.

Even **accounting interns** are making bank? Many accounting interns are making **\$25+ an hour** (as college students)

Corporate:

- Staff Accountant: \$61,614-\$90,708
- Finance Director: \$127,546-\$226,917
- CFO: \$201,824-\$478,153

Public:

- Tax Associate: \$55,513-\$71,728
- Audit Manager: \$89,672-\$140,173
- Partner: \$162,630-\$329,909

2024 Robert Half Salary Guide

Discussion Guide:



This slide aims to challenge the misconception that accountants have limited earning potential. In reality, accountants can achieve a high level of financial success, and their earning potential is virtually unlimited, especially as they advance in their careers.

- **Specifics:** Students sometimes ask, "How much do you make?" If you aren't comfortable telling them (you don't have to) prove them with a ball park range for accountants & CPAs. Also, **giving them your intern hourly rate is always helpful.**
- **Salary Guide:** The example salaries are from the 2024 Robert Half Salary Guide and students can easily download it to see the salaries of many accounting and finance positions.
- **Career Progression:** Emphasize that as accountants gain experience and advance in their careers, their earning potential increases significantly. They can move into higher-paying positions such as managerial roles, financial analysts, controllers, and eventually, CFOs.
- **Obtaining the License:** You can give a quick mention that pursuing the CPA license can substantially boost earning potential. CPAs often command higher salaries and have access to a broader range of career opportunities.





INTRO/EXTROVERTS

Slides 11-13



Discussion Guide:



By addressing this myth, you can help students understand that the accounting profession values diversity in personality traits, and there is no singular "best" personality type for success. Instead, it's about leveraging individual strengths and adapting to various situations to excel in the field.

- **Finding Your Fit:** Encourage students to recognize their own strengths and preferences and choose a career path within accounting that aligns with their personality. There's no one-size-fits-all approach, and the profession offers roles suited to various personality types.



Slide 13 contains a QR code to take a quiz about what kind of accountant they are! If students can't scan the code, see if the teacher can use it as a follow up activity! !



TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

Slides 14-15



Discussion Guide:



This is “the Travel” slide! It can help students understand that accounting positions can include travel, making it an appealing option for those with the travel bug. Students never realize that they wouldn’t have to pay for “work travel” and those expenses are covered by the employer.

- **Global Opportunities:** Mention that the accounting profession is not limited to a single region or country. Accountants with international clients or working for multinational corporations may have the chance to travel internationally, experiencing different cultures and business practices.
- **Field Work:** Discuss roles like forensic accountants or auditors, who may need to visit different clients.
- **Conferences and Training:** Even if you don’t travel for work, you can mention training opportunities that accountants can travel for.



If you’ve been to cool places, give the students a few examples!



ALL ABOUT YOU!

Slides 16-17



Discussion Guide:



This is where you'll tell the students about yourself and your career path. You have several prompts on the slide, but feel free to share different aspects of your career. Just remember, the no-no's from page 7!

Take time to really think about your answers and remember what resonates with high school students.

- **Favorite Part About Your Job:** Be sure to elaborate on this. If your favorite part of your job is "solving problems" then give an example of how you solved a problem. If you love helping people, tell them a story about how you helped a client.
- **The Skills You Use Most:** This is where they'll hear (again) that accounting is more than math. Give examples of one or two skills you use each day. An example would be: Communication Skills, then sharing how you need to be able to communicate with your team, clients, the public... share an example.
- **What Surprises You About Your Job (or Accounting):** This can be a challenge to answer, so if you can't think of something, feel free to skip it. This is another great way to break some stereotypes that are attached to accounting!



ENTREPRENEUR

Slides 18-19

BUSINESS OWNER

ENTREPRENEUR

RUN YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Because accounting is often considered the **language of business**, there's something about a career in accounting that makes owning your own business **more attainable**.

Accounting is like **boot camp** for **entrepreneurs**, understanding how money works, where it goes is critical for business owners.

"The founder of Nike, Phil Knight Studied accounting & was a CPA"

BUSINESS OWNER

ENTREPRENEUR

RUN YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Because accounting is often considered the **language of business**, there's something about a career in accounting that makes owning your own business **more attainable**.

Accounting is like **boot camp** for **entrepreneurs**, understanding how money works, where it goes is critical for business owners.

"Estimated net worth: \$97.7 billion
AKA... the 24th richest person in the world!"

Discussion Guide:



Students are very interested in entrepreneurship and don't often realize that having accounting skills can help them be successful business owners. They don't even think of firm partners as business owners.

- **Entrepreneurial Opportunities:** Start by explaining that accountants are well-positioned to become entrepreneurs and business owners. Their financial acumen, budgeting skills, and ability to manage financial data are invaluable when starting and running a business.
- **Role of Accounting Skills:** Emphasize that accounting skills, such as financial forecasting, budgeting, and financial analysis, play a pivotal role in an entrepreneur's ability to make informed financial decisions about their business.
- **Phil Knight and Nike:** Introduce Phil Knight as a prime example. Mention how he founded Nike and initially worked as an accountant before tapping into his accounting skills and founding Nike. He is now the 24th richest person in the world...
- **Jordan's:** Just an FYI, the background of this slide is various Jordan's...students love them. And if you have a pair, feel free to wear them to your presentation for some extra cool points.



NFP & ESG



Slides 20-21

COMMUNITY LEADER

NOT-FOR-PROFIT

HELP YOUR COMMUNITY

Not-for-profit organizations need funding, planning, and allocation of resources to operate and **help members of our communities**.

Perks: Work with organizations that are **making a difference**, be a part of something bigger and **do what you love** using skills that suit you.

Jessica McClain, CPA
CFO | Earth's Capital
National's Capital



EARTH LOVER

ESG: ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & (CORPORATE) GOVERNANCE

MAKE AN IMPACT

As companies are starting to take a more significant look at how **their business impacts the environment**, Accountants are becoming a popular choice to help **analyze and report** on these ESG (environmental, social and governance) areas.

You can help companies think about their impact with your accounting skills!



Discussion Guide:



NFP: *By discussing the rewarding nature of working for not-for-profit organizations, you can inspire students who are interested in helping their communities to consider accounting as a pathway to make a meaningful impact through their financial expertise.*

- **Be a Part of Something Bigger:** Emphasize the opportunity to be part of a mission-driven organization that works toward positive change. Accountants in not-for-profits play a vital role in advancing these missions.
- **Jessica McClain:** The CPA highlighted on this slide is Jessica McClain, VSCPA member who uses her passions and accounting skills to give back to support her community

ESG: *By discussing the role of accountants in ESG analysis and reporting, you can inspire students to consider accounting as a pathway to contribute to a more sustainable and responsible business world while using their financial expertise to make a difference. Students care a lot about this.*

- **Accounting's Role:** Emphasize that accountants are well-suited to address ESG concerns. Their skills in data analysis, financial reporting, and risk assessment can help companies measure, report, and improve their ESG performance.



FORENSIC ACCOUNTING

Slide 22



Discussion Guide:



Here you will engage students' interest in solving financial puzzles and how accountants have the opportunity to make a significant impact in preventing and uncovering financial misconduct.

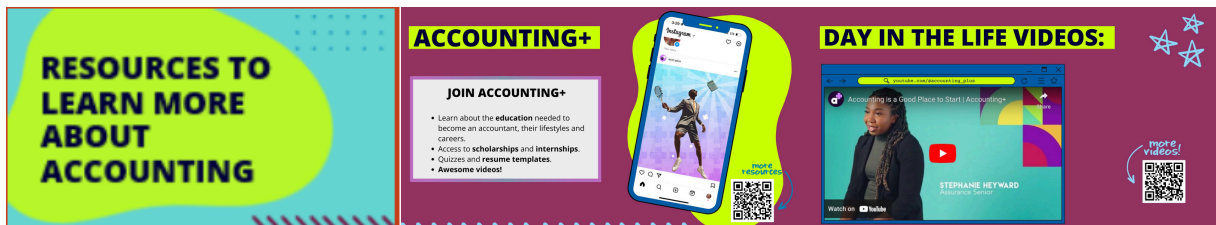
- **Uncovering Financial Mysteries:** Explain that forensic accountants are financial detectives who investigate financial discrepancies, fraud, and misconduct. They use their accounting skills to follow the money and unravel complex financial mysteries.
- **Minimizing Loss:** Emphasize that forensic accountants work with organizations to identify weaknesses in financial controls and procedures. By doing so, they help minimize and prevent financial loss.
- **Aiding Legal Cases:** Mention that forensic accountants often collaborate with law enforcement agencies and legal teams. They provide critical financial evidence in criminal and civil cases, helping to catch individuals involved in financial wrongdoing.

An awesome forensic accounting documentary on the largest case of municipal fraud in American history is All the Queens Horses on Netflix.
It's awesome!



ACCOUNTING+

Slide 23-25

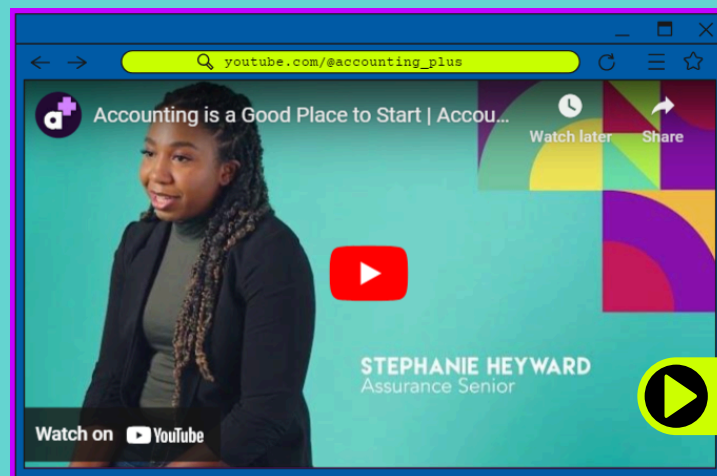


Discussion Guide:



Introduce the students to Accounting+. They have incredible resources for high school students.

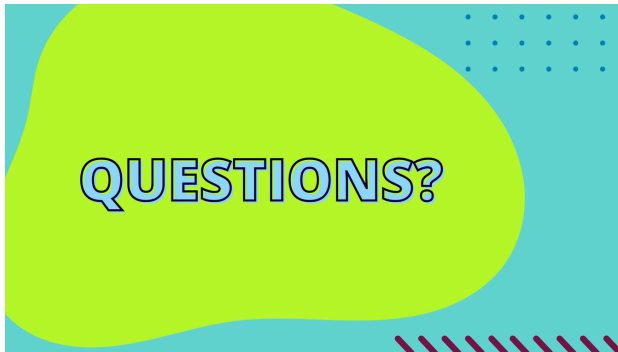
- **QR Code Registration:** Students can use the QR code provided on the screen or in their materials to register quickly and easily.
- **Fun Videos:** You are not expected to show this video. However, if you need to fill time, feel free to click play. The video is just under 2 minutes.





QUESTIONS?

Slide 26



Discussion Guide:



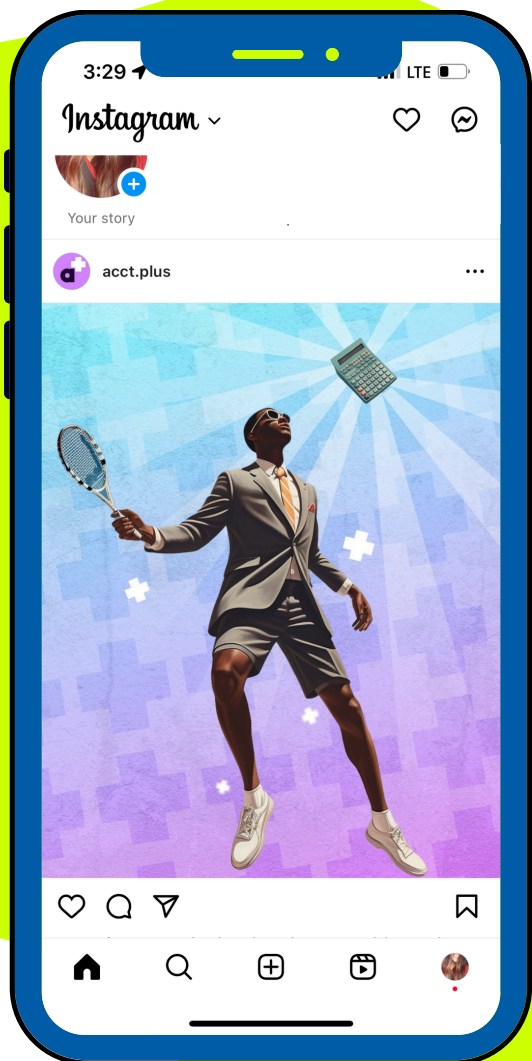
Ask the students if they have any questions. If they don't this is a great time for you to ask the students questions.

Here are some suggestions:

- What were you surprised to learn about that might be opposite of what you previously thought about accounting?
- When it comes to your future, what excited you the most?
- What types of jobs are you considering in your future?
 - Bonus: you may be able to connect their future jobs to accounting!

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

The Virginia Society of CPAs partnered with the Center for Audit Quality to support Accounting+. Accounting+ helps students discover the vast opportunities in the accounting field.



ACCOUNTING+

 joinaccountingplus.com

 accounting.plus

 acct.plus

Education: What does going to school for accounting look like? Is it hard? Is it all math (no!!)? See what it's like for accounting students and find scholarships!

Lifestyle: Travel the world as an accountant. It's true, that there are countless travel opportunities for accountants. No matter the kind of work you're passionate about or the industry you want to work in, you can find a job that helps you see the world.

Career: There are many ways to be an accountant. You can own your own business, support your local community, or work in any industry that matches your passion. And because there are so many different ways to be an accountant, you can count on every day being different.