

Career Assessment and Self Development

SUBMITTED BY: Kathryn McGinn

SUBJECT(S): Career Development

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

Students will identify general career interests and work together to brainstorm characteristics essential for their hypothetical professions. Students will consider how their own strengths match the skills necessary for their career interests and work in pairs to develop strategies to build on their assets and address any weaknesses.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Career Development, I. Self-Awareness

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- [“You’re Fired! Now What?”](#)
- [“You Must Be Joking? From Physics at Harvard to Comedy Writing for The Simpsons”](#)
- [“You Have 60 Seconds to Make Your Elevator Pitch. Go!”](#)
- [“Would You Bypass College for Real-world Learning?”](#)
- [“Who Knew the Job of a Prosecutor Looks Nothing Like “Law & Order?””](#)
- [“The Rising Costs of a U.S. College Education”](#)
- [“The College Investment: Will It Pay Off?”](#)
- [“Sam Cox Spends Her Sunday Mornings with High-Tech Mummies”](#)
- [“Roadtrip! A Year of Brand Building and Self Discovery Inside the Wienermobile”](#)
- [“Professional Athlete Stephanie McCaffrey Pursues Business in Her Life After Soccer”](#)
- [“Meet One of the World’s Most Well-Traveled Teens”](#)

- “Intel for Aspiring Investment Bankers”
- “How a Teen Joined Tesla’s Supercharger Analytics Team”
- “Family Influence: Choosing to Follow Your Parent’s Career Path”
- “Drone Technology: Exploring the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Industry”
- “CEO Katlyn Grasso Connects Young Women with Executive Role Models”
- “Career Spotlight: The Future of Journalism”
- “Career Spotlight: Scientist Charu Chaudhry on Life in a Big Biopharmaceutical Lab”
- “Career Spotlight: Motion Capture Is an Industry on the Move”
- “Career Spotlight: Civil Engineers Protect Our Health, Safety and Welfare”
- “Career Insight: CFO Lloyd Howell Jr. on Being Prepared for Anything”
- “Big Data and Your Future as a Data Scientist”
- “A Student’s Struggle to Speak English Leads to a Career as a Communicator”
- “A Michael Kors Knitwear Designer Discusses the Career She Believes She Was ‘Meant to Do’”
- “5 Ways to Prepare for Success in the New Year”

Common Core Standard(s):

- ELA CCR Reading 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- ELA CCR Reading 7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- ELA CCR Reading 10: Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.
- ELA CCR Speaking and Listening 1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- ELA CCR Speaking and Listening 2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Objectives/Purposes:

- Students will identify desirable employee characteristics for specific fields.
- Students will identify personal strengths and weaknesses.
- Students will create strategies to develop strengths and remedy weaknesses, as they relate to their chosen career paths.

- Students will provide constructive feedback to one another through a variety of activities.

Knowledge@Wharton Article:

- “One Ambivalent Economy + Many Cautious Employers = One Difficult Job Market”

Other Resources/Materials:

- Newsprint and markers

Activities:

1. Have students read “One Ambivalent Economy + Many Cautious Employers = One Difficult Job Market.” When they are finished, discuss the following questions with students:
 - What does the recession mean for new job seekers?*Job seekers will have to be more flexible, willing to take short-term assignments or relocate to places where jobs are plentiful. Fewer Americans will be hired by large corporations, and more will have to work at small companies, in guilds of contractors or through self-employment.*
 - How are job seekers handling the difficult market? or example, how are recent college graduates approaching their job searches?*Job seekers are taking whatever work they can get, even if it’s temporary or part time. Recent graduates are exploring fellowships or short-term opportunities. Some students have shifted their focus to making their own fortunes through entrepreneurship. Graduates may look for work overseas.*
 - How has the difficult job market *helped* individuals rethink their employment possibilities?
Individuals think more about why they are pursuing a given career: why the career matters to them and how they can balance their work with other life priorities. People think creatively about how to obtain secure employment and may be more willing to pursue their interests and start their own companies.

(10 mins)

2. Have students complete a brief free write about what career(s) they are interested in and why. In their free writes, students can address issues raised in the article by discussing whether or not they are worried about securing employment in their chosen field after they graduate from high school/college. Ask each student to share with the class.

(10 mins)

3. Give each student a piece of newsprint paper. If any students identified the same career, have them work together. Give each student a marker. At the top of the newsprint, students should write the name of the career in which they are interested. Post the sheets of newsprint around the room. Have the students walk around the room and look at the different careers posted. Under each career, students should brainstorm skills/abilities that are necessary for that career. Students should contribute at least one idea to each poster in the room. Encourage students to be as specific as possible.

(10 mins)

4. When everyone has written on each piece of newsprint, have students return to their original posters. Students should read over the attributes listed and add any more they think are necessary. Have students write a short reflection: what abilities do they currently possess? In which areas do the students need to develop skills? What are some possible ways to acquire these skills? Students share with a partner. If time allows, partners share with the class.

(10 mins)

Tying It All Together:

Ask students what stood out to them about the exercise? Were there skills they were surprised to see listed under their profession? Did they find a close match between their own strengths and the types of abilities necessary for their chosen career paths?

(5 mins)

Practice Outside of the Classroom:

Suggest that students do research at home or in the library about their chosen careers. Students can use the Internet to find information, or they can talk to people they know in their potential professions.

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently:

It took students a long time to read the lengthy article. In the future, I may pick out relevant excerpts for students to read in order to have more time to spend on the activities.

Students enjoyed the opportunity to walk around the room and brainstorm ideas about each other's chosen careers. Further, students appreciated each other's input, and they remarked that their peers pointed out necessary skills and qualifications that they had not thought about.

I put this lesson at the end of the sequence of self-awareness lessons, but it might actually make sense to put this lesson at the beginning of the mini-unit. That was, as students work on crafting their own personal brands and elevator pitches, they have a clearer sense of what characteristics their potential employers are seeking.

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