

## Lesson Plan 1A WHAT CAREER MIGHT BE BEST FOR ME?

### OBJECTIVE:

Upon successful completion, students will have matched and prioritized possible careers with their interests, skills, and values.

### CAREER PREPARATION LEARNING RESULTS MET OR PARTIALLY MET:

- A.2. Analyze skills and abilities required in a variety of career options and relate them to their own skills and abilities.
- A.3. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the changing nature of work and educational requirements.
- B.1. Use a career planning process that includes self-assessment, personal development, and a career portfolio as a way to gain initial entry into the workplace.
- B.3. Assess personal, educational, and career skills that are transferable among various jobs.

### SKILLS UTILIZED:

Self-evaluation, brainstorming, planning, research

### NECESSARY SUPPLIES:

- 1. Copies of *What Career Might Be Best for Me?* and *Career Exploration...Next Step* handouts.
- 2. *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (See the guidance office or librarian) or use the online version at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>.

### TIME REQUIRED:

1- 2 class periods

### LESSON PROCEDURE:

- 1. Ask students about their current career interests. The answers will vary, from students who absolutely know what they want to do to those who have not thought much about it. Ask students what they have done to help them along in their career decision-making process.
- 2. Stress the concept of this being a process. Otherwise, students may think they have to make irreversible decisions in the next few days. This is only the beginning for many of them.
- 3. Hand out *What Career Might Be Best for Me?* packets. Students should complete the pages titled: *My Interests and Abilities*, *Values Checklist*, and *Interest and Skill Areas*. These can be assigned as homework or as an in-class assignment, or in any combination.
- 4. At this point, students will be able to complete the top half of the *Brainstorming Careers* page. The next step will be for students to determine their educational level desired. Stress to students, that only 15% of new jobs in the future will require only a high school diploma.
- 5. Based on their previous work, students can now pick potential careers from the *Occupations* list. The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* is useful for students that want more information about particular careers. As students complete the last page, they should be able to narrow their choices to 5 career areas. Emphasize that they are not making a final decision. This is just the start of the process.
- 6. Distribute the handout *Career Exploration...Next Steps*, and use it to discuss options for learning more about specific careers.

### ASSIGNMENT:

Students will research their top choice of career and create a product showcasing what they've learned. This product could take the form of a: a) report; b) video; or c) web site, etc. The job shadow activity would assist students in their research process. (See the job shadowing lesson plan included in this guide.)

**SUGGESTED FOLLOW-UP:**

Students give presentations, based on their work, to the class about their career of choice. This is a useful experience as students learn about many careers.

## **WHAT CAREER MIGHT BE BEST FOR ME?**

It is very difficult and often overwhelming to evaluate your own unique characteristics and find where they fit in with the thirty thousand careers available in today's workforce. Even adults who have been in the workforce for years may not have discovered the exact job that provides adequate enjoyment, challenge, and satisfaction. It is extremely important to spend some time thinking about yourself, specifically what you like, what you're good at, and what's important to you in a job. These areas can also be referred to as your interests, skills, and values. It is also critical to spend time exploring the numerous career areas in the world of work and learn about how to get into the ones that interest you.

The following pages will help guide you through these thought processes and hopefully leave you with a general idea of what career direction you might like to take. Please talk to your parents, teachers, guidance counselors, and employers as you work on the following pages. These people may be able to offer valuable advice from their own career experience or the experiences of people they know. Career exploration is a life-long process and it is important not to stop once you have completed these worksheets. This is only a starting place.

## My Interests and Abilities

☞ Please give these questions careful thought and write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. People have told me that I am very good at... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. The hours seem to fly by when I am doing... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. When I was young, I always dreamed I would be... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. I think my greatest talent is... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. If I could make money doing whatever I wanted, I would... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. When I look at the magazine wall in a bookstore, I am drawn to magazines about...  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. If I could start out as an intern in any business right now, it would be... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. I think I know more about \_\_\_\_\_ than anyone else I know.

9. If I had a choice between working with people, working with things, or working with numbers I would choose... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. I have always had a natural ability to... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. If I had a choice between a job using my hands, a job that required me to think through complex problems, or a job that required me to communicate with numerous people all day, I would choose.  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. Of all the adults I know, the one who is doing the most interesting job is... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and the job he or she does is... \_\_\_\_\_

## VALUES CHECKLIST

**DIRECTIONS:** To the left of each value, place an X in the box representing the importance of the value to you. Answer as you feel now, *not* as you think you should feel or will feel at some time in the future.

Very Important	Important	So-So	Not Too Important	Not Important At All	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Achievement:</b> A sense of well-being from doing a job well.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Adequate Income:</b> Receiving enough money to take care of one's needs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Adventure:</b> Doing exciting things sometimes involving risk, danger, or the unknown.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Artistic-Aesthetic Expression:</b> Designing, working with, or producing pleasing or beautiful things.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Creativity:</b> Inventing, designing, or developing new ideas or things.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Independence:</b> Being free to plan one's work and move at one's own speed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Intellectual Satisfaction:</b> Using mental ability to solve problems.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Leadership:</b> Planning, mapping out, managing, or influencing the work of others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Location/Geography:</b> Being able to live and work in a pleasant town/city/state.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Recognition:</b> Being known by people, being given respect or having prestige.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Satisfactory Co-Workers:</b> Working with people you like.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Satisfactory Working Conditions:</b> Having pleasant work surroundings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Security:</b> Having steady work.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Social Services:</b> Helping others and being concerned for their interests.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Solitude:</b> Working alone or not very closely with others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Stability:</b> Working with familiar things and situations, having routine and order.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Variety:</b> Having the chance to do different tasks and activities.

Adapted from: Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc., *Activities for Exploring Career Decision-Making* (Bloomington, IL: McKnight, 1978).

## INTEREST AND SKILL AREAS

**DIRECTIONS:** As you read through the list, place checks in the “Interest” boxes next to any areas that just naturally attract you. Then read through the list again and place a check in the “Skill” boxes next to ones in which you feel you already have some skill.

Interest	Skills		Interest	Skills	
		Adventure			Law Enforcement
		Advertising/Marketing			Leadership
		Agriculture			Management
		Animal Care			Mathematics
		Architecture			Mechanical Activities
		Art/Design			Medicine
		Athletics/Physical Fitness			Research Medicine
		Biology			Practice Medicine
		Business			Military
		Business Management			Music, Performing
		Coaching			Music Education
		Computer Science			Office Work
		Cooking			Outdoor Work
		Counseling			Performing
		Crafts/Trades			Physical Education
		Creating			Physical Sciences
		Data Management			Planning
		Drama			Plants or Gardens
		Economics			Politics
		Engineering			Psychology
		Aeronautical Engineering			Psychology Research
		Chemical Engineering			Psychology Practice
		Civil Engineering			Public Speaking
		Electrical Engineering			Reading
		Mechanical Engineering			Sales
		English			Social Sciences
		Farming			Religious/Spiritual Activities
		Fashion			Sociology
		Finance			Supervision
		Foreign Languages			Teaching
		Forestry			Teaching Elementary
		Group Work or Activities			Teaching High School
		Healing			Teaching University
		Home Economics			Training
		Humanities			Woodworking
		International Activities			Writing
		Inventing			Other
		Lawyer			

Adapted from Charles Martin, *Looking At Type and Careers* (Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc., 1995) 11.

## BRAINSTORMING CAREERS

Now it's time to pull together all the information you have so far. Please refer to the three associated handouts to complete the following section:

1. I am naturally good at \_\_\_\_\_ and naturally interested in \_\_\_\_\_.
2. My dream job(s) would be \_\_\_\_\_.

### My Top 5 Values:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### My Top 5 Interests:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### My Top 5 Skills:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Educational Level Desired:** Career fields usually contain occupations ranging from high responsibility and high difficulty to jobs with low responsibility and low difficulty. In most cases, the higher the difficulty of the job, the more education and training required to be hired for that job. It is also safe to assume that most of the more difficult jobs requiring more training have the higher salaries. Remember: the more you learn, the more you earn! Out of the following choices, circle the highest educational level you would like to obtain.

1. High school diploma
2. One year program after high school (Certificate)
3. Military training
4. Two-year college degree (Associate)
5. Four-year college degree (Bachelor's)
6. Bachelors degree + two more years of college (Masters)
7. Bachelors degree + approximately four more years of college (Ph.D.)

Now, go to the list of occupations taken from the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (OOH). As you see careers that interest you, think about whether they would allow you to use your top five interests, skills, and values. Would they require an educational level that matches your desired level? If the answers are "yes," write them in the spaces below. You may want to look through your school's copy of the OOH (or go online at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>) to research the skills and education needed for these careers. Feel free to add any other interesting careers in the spaces below, even if you don't see them on the OOH list.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Do you notice any trends or patterns in your choices of careers? Do the majority of your choices have a common characteristic or two? For example, you may see that the majority of your careers involve working with people, require working outdoors, or are mostly in the health care field, etc. Please look at the list of careers you've chosen. In the spaces below, write down common trends.

1. The careers I've listed seem to meet my values for \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The careers I've listed seem to match my interests in \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The careers I've listed seem to use my skills in \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The careers I've listed seem to require the following level of education \_\_\_\_\_.

This next step involves reducing your list of career choices to a manageable number. This does not mean that you can never consider careers that you weed out. You can always go back at a later date to explore them. For now, take a look at your list and try to prioritize the choices. Imagine yourself in these jobs and think more about whether they match up with your interests, skills, and values. Are you willing to obtain the level of education these jobs require? Are these careers available in your geographic area or will you have to move? Are you willing to relocate if necessary? The state and federal Departments of Labor have projections about which career fields are expected to grow, be stable, or decline (see <http://www.bls.gov/emp/> ). Do your choices fall into the growth or stable lists? These are all questions to think about as you prioritize your choices. Discuss your list with your parents, friends, teachers, and guidance counselors. They can help you make the best choices.

**My Top 5 Career Choices:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Now that you have narrowed your list, think about the courses you are currently taking or will take later in high school. Which ones will help you get the skills and knowledge most closely related to your specific career choices or general career themes? This is a great time to go to your guidance counselor to discuss your high school courses, the level of education you need to pursue each career, and which colleges or universities have the appropriate programs of study. These are the high school courses I should consider to prepare me for my top career choices:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

You have just completed the hardest part of the process. However, you will probably want to go back many times to review your choices. The more we learn about careers and the more job experiences we have, the more we may change our minds about who we are as individuals and what we want for a career. While you may feel unsure and frustrated if you change your mind, it is a very natural part of the process.

# OCCUPATIONS

## EXECUTIVE, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND MANAGERIAL OCCUPATIONS

Accountants and auditors	Hotel managers and assistants
Administrative services managers	Industrial production managers
Budget analysts	Inspectors and compliance officers (other than construction)
Construction and building inspectors	Loan officers and counselors
Construction contractors and managers	Management analysts and consultants
Cost estimators	Marketing, advertising, and public relations managers
Education administrators	Personnel, training, and labor relations specialists and managers
Employment interviewers	Property and real estate managers
Engineering, science, and data processing managers	Purchasers and buyers
Financial managers	Restaurant and food service managers
Funeral directors	Retail managers
General managers and top executives	Underwriters
Government chief executives and legislators	
Health services managers	

## PROFESSIONAL SPECIALITY OCCUPATIONS

### Engineers

Aerospace engineers  
Chemical engineers  
Electrical and electronics engineers  
Industrial engineers  
Mechanical engineers  
Metallurgical, ceramic, and materials engineers  
Mining engineers  
Nuclear engineers  
Petroleum engineers

### Architects and Surveyors

Architects  
Landscape architects  
Surveyors

### Computer, Mathematical, and Operations Research Occupations

Actuaries  
Computer scientists and systems analysts  
Mathematicians

### Teachers, Librarians, and Counselors

Adult education teachers  
Archivists and curators  
College and university faculty  
Counselors  
Librarians  
School teachers – elementary, secondary

### Health Assessment and Treatment Occupations

Dietitians and nutritionists  
Occupational therapists  
Pharmacists

### Visual Arts Occupations

Designers  
Photographers and camera operators  
Visual artists

### Life Scientists

Agricultural scientists  
Biological scientists  
Foresters and conservation scientists

### Physical Scientists

Chemists  
Geologists and geophysicists  
Meteorologists  
Physicists and astronomers

### Lawyers and Judges

### Social Scientists and Urban Planners

Economists and marketing research analysts  
Psychologists  
Sociologists  
Social workers

### Religious Workers

Protestant ministers  
Rabbis  
Roman Catholic priests

### Health Practitioners

Chiropractors  
Dentists  
Optometrists  
Physicians  
Podiatrists  
Veterinarians

### Communications Occupations

Public relations specialists  
Radio and television announcers and newscasters  
Reporters and correspondence  
Writers and editors

### Performing Arts Occupations

Actors, directors, and producers  
Dancers and choreographers  
Musicians

# OCCUPATIONS

## TECHNICIANS AND RELATED SUPPORT OCCUPATIONS

### Health Technologists and Technicians

Cardiovascular technologists and technicians  
Clinical laboratory technologists and technicians  
Dental hygienists  
Dispensing opticians  
EEG technologists  
Emergency medical technicians (EMT)  
Licensed practical nurses  
Medical record technicians  
Nuclear medicine technologists  
Radiological technologists  
Surgical technicians

### Technologists (Other than Health)

Aircraft pilots  
Air traffic controllers  
Broadcast technicians  
Computer programmers  
Drafters  
Engineering technicians  
Library technicians  
Paralegals  
Science technicians

## MARKETING AND SALES OCCUPATIONS

Cashiers  
Counter and rental clerks  
Insurance agents and brokers  
Manufacturers' and wholesale sales representatives  
Real estate agents, brokers, and appraisers

Retail sales workers  
Securities and financial services sales representative  
Services sales representatives  
Travel agents

## ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT OCCUPATIONS (INCLUDING CLERICAL)

Adjusters, investigators, and collectors  
Bank tellers  
Clerical supervisors and managers  
Computer and peripheral equipment operators  
Credit clerks and authorizers  
General office clerks  
Information clerks  
    Hotel and motel clerks  
    Receptionists  
Reservation and transportation ticket agents and travel clerks  
Mail clerks and messengers  
Dispatchers  
Stock clerks  
Traffic and shipping and receiving clerks

Postal clerks and mail carriers  
Records clerks  
    Billing clerks  
    Bookkeeping, accounting, & auditing clerks  
    File clerks  
    Library assistants and bookmobile drivers  
    Order clerks  
    Payroll and timekeeping clerks  
    Personnel clerks  
Secretaries  
Stenographers and court reporters  
Teachers' aides  
Telephone operators  
Typists, word processors, and data entry clerks

## SERVICE OCCUPATIONS

### Personal Service and Building Grounds Service

#### Occupations

Animal caretakers (other than farm)  
Barbers and cosmetologists  
Preschool workers  
Flight attendants  
Gardeners and grounds keepers  
Homemaker  
Home health aides  
Janitors and cleaners  
Private household workers

### Food and Beverage Preparation and Service

#### Occupations

Chefs, cooks, and other kitchen workers  
Food and beverage service workers

#### Health Service Occupations

Dental assistants  
Medical assistants  
Nursing aides and psychiatric aides

#### Protective Service Occupations

Corrections officer  
Firefighters  
Security guards  
Police, detectives, and special agents

# OCCUPATIONS

## AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHING, AND RELATED OCCUPATIONS

Farm operators and managers  
Fishers, hunters, and trappers

Foresters and loggers

## MECHANICS, INSTALLERS, AND REPAIRERS

Aircraft mechanics and engine specialists  
Auto-body repairers  
Automotive mechanics  
Diesel mechanics  
Electronic equipment repairers  
    Commercial and industrial electronic  
        equipment repairers  
    Communications equipment repairers  
    Computer and office machine repairers  
    Electronic home entertainment equipment  
        repairers  
    Telephone installers and repairers

Elevator installers and repairers  
Farm equipment mechanics  
General maintenance mechanics  
Heating, air-conditioning, and refrigeration technicians  
Home appliance and power tool repairers  
Industrial machinery repairers  
Line installers and cable splicers  
Millwrights  
Mobile heavy equipment mechanics  
Musical instrument repairers and tuners  
Vending machine servicers and repairers

## CONSTRUCTION TRADES AND EXTRACTIVE OCCUPATIONS

Bricklayers and stonemasons  
Carpenters  
Carpet installers  
Concrete masons and terrazzo workers  
Drywall workers and lathers  
Electricians  
Insulation workers  
Painters and paperhangers

Plasterers  
Plumbing and pipefitters  
Roofers  
Roustabouts  
Sheet metal workers  
Structural and reinforcing ironworkers  
Tilesetters

## PRODUCTION OCCUPATIONS

### Assemblers

Precision assemblers  
Blue-collar worker supervisors

### Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, Weighers

### Plant and Systems Operators

Power plant operators, distributors, and dispatchers  
Stationary engineers & boiler operators  
Water and wastewater treatment plant operators

### Printing Occupations

Pre-press workers  
Printing press operators  
Bindery workers

### Woodworking Occupations

### Miscellaneous Production Occupations

Dental laboratory technicians  
Ophthalmic laboratory technicians  
Painting and coating machine operators  
Photographic process workers

### Food Processing Occupations

Butchers and meat, poultry, and fish cutters

### Metalworking & Plastics-Working Occupations

Boilermakers  
Jewelers  
Machinists and tool programmers  
Metalworking and plastics-working machine operators  
Tool and die makers  
Welders, cutters, and welding machine operators

### Textile, Apparel, and Furnishing Occupations

Apparel workers  
Shoe and leather workers and repairers  
Textile machinery operators  
Upholsters

## TRANSPORTATION AND MATERIAL-MOVING OCCUPATIONS

Bus drivers  
Material-moving equipment operators  
Rail transportation workers

Taxi drivers and chauffeurs  
Truck drivers  
Water transportation workers

Adapted from: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, 1994 – 95 ed. (Indianapolis: JIST Works, Inc., 1994) ix - xi.

## Career Exploration...NEXT STEPS!

You now know more about yourself and what general career fields you would want to explore further. The next step is to learn more about these occupational areas. There are resources and ideas available to help you in this effort, many of which are easy, free, and can be found in your community. The following material is only a partial collection of resources and ideas commonly used to explore careers. Please use your own creativity as well to get the information you need to make informed career decisions for yourself.

- Find a summer job working with people in the field.
- Volunteer for a person or business in the occupation.
- Call a person in the occupation and interview him or her. This is called an informational interview.
- Call a person in the occupation and ask to spend an hour (or a morning, a day, etc.) observing. This is called a job shadow.
- Ask parents, teachers, guidance counselors, employers, etc., what they know about a particular profession. These people will be valuable to you in networking for future part-time, summer, or full-time jobs.
- Read about the field.
  - ❖ Explore the computer program called CHOICES in the guidance office or library at your school.
  - ❖ Research books, videos, magazines, computer programs/CD-ROMs, and the internet in your school or town library.
  - ❖ Look through the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. Ask your guidance counselor or librarian, or look online at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>.
  - ❖ Contact professional organizations in the field (see addresses in the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*).
- Explore the programs that may be available at your school for career exploration/work experience. Opportunities include:
  - ❖ Maine Career Advantage internships
  - ❖ Tech Prep courses that lead to college credit at a technical college
  - ❖ Vocational school programs
  - ❖ Pre-apprenticeship work experiences
  - ❖ Jobs for Maine's Graduates (JMG) courses and work experience
  - ❖ Co-op work experiences

The more information you gather, the better your decisions will be when you think of educational or work options after high school. Knowing what you want to do after high school will help you know what courses to take and experiences to get while you are still in high school.