

Lesson Title: Welcome Career Explorers!

Career Cluster: N/A

Essential Knowledge & Skills: Career Development / Communication

Career Concepts: N/A

Summary: This lesson is an introductory lesson for the course therefore is very basic. Students will learn why career exploration is important and fun by planning their personal “career roadmap,” researching careers, and discussing the differences between a job and a career with a guest speaker.

Course Objectives:

4.2 Students will be able to participate in a career exploration activity involving a professional contact.

5.3 Students will be able to talk to people to access career resources.

Lesson Objectives:

Students will...

- Describe why career exploration is important and fun.
- Describe the scope of career options.
- Distinguish between a job and a career.

Time: Three class periods

Required Materials: Poster board, markers, old magazines that can be cut from, copies of “The Roadmap of My Life” activity sheet, copies of “Career Dive-In” activity sheet, computer lab with internet access to www.NebraskaCareerConnections.org.

Optional Resources: N/A

Guest presenters: (optional) Invite a local speaker or panel of speakers (preferably from a variety of career fields) to speak on the importance of career exploration. Speakers should be knowledgeable about career opportunities and are charismatic. Speakers should also be able to discuss the difference between jobs and careers. Suggestions for speakers: Extension educator, veterinarian, police officer, school board member, etc. Speakers should be sent “Guidelines for Career Guest Speakers” found in the supporting document section.

Optional activity: Videotape the guest presenters, with permission, to use throughout the year.

Content and Teaching Strategies:

Anticipatory Set

Have students create a roadmap that represents where they are and where they want to go in life. Use “The Roadmap of My Life” activity sheet to help students segment their poster. It may be helpful to have students answer the questions on the activity sheet before the students complete the roadmap. As students work on their posters, you may create your own or speak with students about what they’re including. If you are concerned about the last question regarding career areas, use this to lead into the next lesson on career clusters. (Optional Activity: students could also create their roadmaps using Power Point, Comic Life, Inspiration, Photoshop, or collages on the computer, etc.)

Lesson Components

1. Describe why career exploration is important and fun.
 - a. Have students share their roadmaps with the class (or with a neighbor if time is running short). Explain that what they have just created is a roadmap that outlines where they are and what goals they have. They will use this road map through the class to see where it will take them. They may choose to change their maps at anytime through the course since this is all about them! (May be a good idea to look at roadmaps at the end of the course to see if students would make any changes.)
 - b. Have a discussion with students about the importance of thinking about careers now rather than when they start high school. Ask students if they have talked about future jobs. If they have talked about jobs before, with whom have they talked?
 - c. Hang the posters up in the room. If space permits, leave them up for the course. Allow students to change their roadmaps when they feel it necessary throughout the course.
2. Describe the scope of career options.
 - a. Have students register to the Nebraska Career Connections website. Use the worksheets in the Supporting Documents to help you do this.
Note to teacher: if you are not familiar with the Nebraska Career Connections website, it would be beneficial to explore before students.
 - b. Have students log-on to www.NebraskaCareerConnections.org and click on “Career Specialties”. This will take you to the Career Search page. Here they will find an alphabetical listing of nearly 1,000 career options. Using the “Career Dive-in” activity sheet, have students find information about three unique careers that start with the letter of the alphabet that you assign them. Assign letters of the alphabet to the students depending on your classroom size. *Be aware that certain letters contain only two listings, i.e. the letter J. (*Option:* Could let the students choose the careers themselves.)
 - c. After ample time, have students highlight and describe to the class the career they were most surprised to see on the list. Discuss with students the variety of career options available and that they should be open to changing their “roadmaps” as they progress through the course.
 - d. Explain what they have just completed was a “random” approach to career exploration. They have just chosen random careers and found out a little information about each. That approach is, unfortunately, how most people find careers. Explain to students there is a better way! This course is designed to take a



look at careers from a different perspective which will better prepare you for life after high school.

- e. *Note to the teacher (important to keep in mind throughout curriculum):* This curriculum is designed to take middle school students to the **career cluster level**; rarely will students delve to the career specialty (job) level. The rationale is that going this deep too often will **limit** the careers that students are willing to explore. Emphasize to students they need to be open to career clusters they may not immediately associate with themselves.
3. Distinguish between a job and a career
 - a. *Preferred option:* Invite an engaging guest speaker or a panel of professionals to speak to the class. Attempt to find a qualified and interesting professional to speak on the topic of career vs. job. Provide the talking points listed below to the speaker(s). Have students write thank you notes to the speaker following the presentation.
 - b. *Alternative Option:* Write “Career” on one end of the chalkboard and “Job” on the other. Have all students stand and write one to three words under both headings that they associate with the respective words. When all are re-seated, review the words and start a discussion using these talking points.
 - Career is often thought of as long term.
 - Jobs are thought of just as a source of income.
 - Careers take into account a person’s life goals (refer to their roadmaps).
 - Jobs oftentimes do not offer significant advancement opportunities.
 - Careers can bring a sense of passion to your work.
 - Jobs can be considered a ‘means to an end,’ something you have to do to get something you want.
 - The root of the word job is an Old English word that means “lump”.
 - The root of career is from two Middle French words meaning “car” and “street” (relate back to their roadmaps).



Lesson Closure

Give students the big picture of where the course will go. Let the students know they will talk about how careers are organized, explore the concept of career clusters, build their employability skills, focus their career options, and have fun.

Essential Knowledge and Skills Connection *(Do this activity only if you have introduced the EKS before this activity.)*

The components of this lesson emphasize **career development and communication**. Choose one of the following activities to help students connect the lesson with their own development of EKS:

- Write a journal entry, reflecting on one of the EKS used in this lesson. Students could choose a strength or weakness they wish to improve or enhance.

- Students complete a graphic organizer (see Supporting Documents—Teacher Resources) to emphasize EKS used in this lesson connected to home, school, and work.

Formative Assessment



“The Roadmap of My Life” poster and “Career Dive-in” activity sheet can be assessed for completion. Students may also use their The Student Notebook to write a reaction about the difference between a job and a career.

The Roadmap of My Life...

Name _____

Create a roadmap that contains all of the following about where you are and where you want to be in the future. You may draw pictures, use words, or cut out pictures from magazines to help you. Be creative and truly demonstrate who you are! Make it good as you will have to explain it to others.

Include the following in your poster:

About me now:

- What school subjects do you excel in?
- What subjects do you want to improve in most?
- What activities are you involved in at school or in the community?
- Who are two people you talk to about what you want to do in the future? (Cannot both be parents)
- What are you considering doing after you graduate from high school? (job, college, military, etc.)

About my future:

- Where you want to live (state, region, and city)?
- What size of town/city you want to live in/near?
- What your work schedule would be? (nights, M-F, weekends, days, etc.)
- What working environment would you like? (indoors, outdoor, etc.)
- Who do you want to work for? (a company or yourself)
- How much money do you expect to make?
- What career area or areas do you want to work in? (business, teaching, construction, etc.)

Career Dive-in!

www.nebraskacareerconnections.org

Name _____

Find two - four careers for the letter(s) assigned to you by your teacher and find the most unique careers for that letter. Find the required information:

Career Specialty:	
Description:	
Education:	
Income:	
Important Skills:	

Career Specialty:	
Description:	
Education:	
Income:	
Important Skills:	

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Education:	
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Important Skills:	

Rubric for the Roadmap of My Life

Name: _____

	Beginning – 1 pt.	Proficient – 2 pt.	Advanced – 3 pt.
Required Information	Four or more pieces of required information are not present.	Two or three pieces of required information are not present.	All of the following required information is present:
Attractiveness	The roadmap is distractingly messy or very poorly designed. It is not attractive.	The roadmap is acceptably attractive though it may be a bit messy.	The roadmap is exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness.

Total Points _____