

EXPLORING CAREER PATHS

Encourage students to think about their future while they build key writing and research skills.

Standards

CCSS ELA

Grs. 6–8:

- L.4.A Use context clues
- RI.2 Determine central idea
- W.4 Write clearly
- W.6 Use technology to publish writing
- W.7 Conduct research

Materials

Activity 1

- Use Your (Job) Words! activity sheet
- Dictionary OR internet

Activity 2

- Find Your Future Job activity sheet
- *Jobs of the Future* magazine OR internet

Activity 3

- Interview Your Future Self activity sheet
- *Jobs of the Future* magazine

Additional Activity Extensions

- Bringing Careers to the Classroom activity: Students interview professionals (bit.ly/jobsfuture2)
- Family Activity Page: Students and families discuss careers (bit.ly/jobsfuture4)
- Spotlight Your Strengths activity: Students write mock résumés for careers that interest them (bit.ly/jobsfuture3)



ACTIVITY 1 Brushing Up On Career Vocab

GOAL Reinforce key career-related vocabulary with students and strengthen reading strategies.

1. Guide students to read the text on the **Use Your (Job) Words!** activity sheet and infer the meaning of each vocabulary word.

2. Prompt them to research the correct definitions. (Definition for **youth apprenticeships**:

An apprenticeship is a career pathway that provides paid work experience, classroom instruction, and an industry-recognized credential. Youth apprenticeships are designed for high school juniors or seniors to prepare them for success after high school.)

3. Direct students to write their vocabulary stories and invite them to share with their classmates.

4. Give further details about youth apprenticeships by explaining that they are for teens who are at least 16 years old, and provide multiple pathways after high school: Kids can choose to enroll in college, begin a full-time job, or do a combination of both.

5. Exit Ticket: Have students write and hand in a sentence using one of the vocabulary words.

Answer Key

- 1) job; 2) a career pathway that provides paid work experience and classroom training; 3) money received for work; 4) proof of training or skills; 5) a long-term profession that you train for

Learning Extensions

- Jobs of the Future magazine and accompanying Learning on the Job activity sheet (bit.ly/jobsfuture1)



ACTIVITY 2 Researching Hot Jobs of the Future

GOAL Introduce students to ever-changing career fields through a reading passage, then have them conduct job research.

1. Invite students to read the **Find Your Future Job** activity sheet. Discuss responses.

2. Have students select a career to research. Direct

them to the Jobs of the Future magazine (bit.ly/jobsfuture1) and/or these resources from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

- mynextmove.org
- bls.gov/ooh

3. Exit Ticket: Have students write down and hand in one fact from their research and cite their source.

Answer Key

- 1) New career fields emerge over time.
2) This section gives an example of a new career field that didn't exist a few decades ago but is now important and in demand.
3–4) Answers will vary.

Learning Extensions

- Jobs Then Versus Now lesson (bit.ly/jobsfuture2)
- Find Your “Right Now” Job activity sheet (bit.ly/jobsfuture3) paired with these resources for student research:
 - apprenticeship.gov/educators/high-school-and-middle-school
 - bls.gov/careeroutlook/departments/youre-a-what.htm
 - bls.gov/careeroutlook/departments/interview.htm
- Plot Your Career Path research activity sheet (bit.ly/jobsfuture3)



ACTIVITY 3 Writing an Interview with Your Future Self

GOAL Have students imagine a career goal, then write a Q&A with their future selves about why they chose that career and how they got there.

1. Review the structure of an interview with students. Examine the apprentice interviews in the Jobs of the Future magazine (bit.ly/jobsfuture1) as examples. Note the number of interview questions that are open-ended and start with words like “what,” “why,” and “how.”

2. Have students use the **Interview Your Future Self** activity sheet to plan and write an interview.

3. Invite students to share their completed interviews with their classmates.

Name _____

USE YOUR (JOB) WORDS!

Brush up on some key career vocabulary below.



PART A: AUDREY'S STORY

Directions: Read the passage, then fill in the table. Underline the context clues that helped you predict the meaning of the words.

Audrey loves taking photos and creating graphics. She's super talented! She makes party invites for her friends, signs for neighborhood events, and posters for clubs at her school. Audrey dreams about finding an **occupation** or job where she can use her artistic skills, but she's not sure where to start.

"You should apply for a graphic design **youth apprenticeship** when you start high school!" says her older brother Gabriel. Audrey remembers that Gabriel was a youth apprentice at a medical lab when he was in high school. "Being a youth apprentice is a

great way for teens to get real-world work experience," Gabriel says. "That's why I'm majoring in biology at college—I know I'll get a good job as a lab technician when I graduate."

Gabriel explains that a youth apprenticeship can help Audrey earn **income** and save for the future. She researches graphic design apprenticeships and learns that she'll also get classroom training and earn a **credential** showing she's proficient in the latest design software. Sounds awesome! Audrey can't wait to apply. She plans to use her apprenticeship to explore a **career** in graphic design.

WORD	I PREDICT IT MEANS...
occupation	
youth apprenticeship	
income	
credential	
career	

Now check your answers by researching the definitions. Revise your definitions if needed.



PART B: YOUR TURN

On a separate sheet of paper, write your own story using the new vocabulary words. Here are some ideas of job fields your character could explore: computer science, engineering, robotics, electrical fields, transportation and logistics, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, education; or you can choose another career to focus on.

Name _____

FIND YOUR FUTURE JOB

Read about exciting new career fields, then research some jobs or apprenticeships that interest you!

PART A: FIELDS OF TOMORROW

Some of the most popular fields today didn't even exist several decades ago. A few examples:



Social Media Managers

About 20 years ago, social media

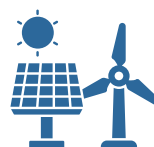
was a new invention that allowed users to connect online. Now platforms like Twitter and Instagram are an important part of a company's marketing strategy. Social media managers share content to promote the company, interact with users online, and help monitor the company's reputation.



Educational Technology Specialists

For much of

history, educators used books and written materials to teach students. Now technology provides new ways to learn. If you've ever used an online learning platform or played a digital learning game, you've used educational technology. These specialists develop digital resources and train others how to use technology in their classrooms.



Solar Photovoltaic Installers

About 50 years

ago, the idea of using solar panels for energy started to become popular. Now environmentally sustainable forms of energy are in high demand. And jobs for solar photovoltaic installers are expected to grow. These professionals set up and maintain solar energy systems on the roofs of houses and commercial buildings.

THINK IT THROUGH Discuss your answers or write them on separate paper.

1. What is the central idea of the passage?
2. How does the "Social Media Managers" section support the central idea?
3. Do any of the careers in the passage appeal to you? Why or why not?
4. When there are big changes in the economy, some careers disappear and people need to find new types of jobs. Their skills may transfer to a new job field, or they might need to "upskill" by learning skills in a different area. Employers may even offer training or apprenticeship programs for career changers. **Challenge:** Based on what's happening in the world and job market right now, predict which careers will become more popular (or which careers will become less popular). Use facts to explain your reasoning.



PART B: YOUR TURN

Pick one of the fields above or another career you're interested in. Investigate the **skills** that are needed, the typical **working environment**, and the **outlook** for this occupation (whether there will be more or fewer jobs in the future).

Name _____

INTERVIEW YOUR FUTURE SELF

What job will you have in 20 years? Plan out a mock interview with an older version of yourself.



PART A: ASK QUESTIONS

Ask your future self the three questions below, then add your own in the remaining three spaces. Be specific! Use a separate sheet of paper if you need more space.

QUESTION	RESPONSE
1. What is your career?	
2. What parts of your job do you like the most?	
3. What activities did you love as a kid—and how did they inspire your career choice?	
4. What kind of training or apprenticeship did you do to prepare for your career?	
5. Add your own question here	
6. Add your own question here	



PART B: CREATE YOUR FINAL INTERVIEW

Choose one of the following options:

- Write your interview in the style of a **magazine article**. Read the interviews in *Jobs of the Future* (bit.ly/jobsfuture5) for inspiration.
- Record your interview as a **podcast** or **video**. You can act out both sides of the interview or ask someone else for help.
- Use a **digital storytelling app** to create your interview.