

NEW MEXICO 4-H

Aggie Next Step

Exploring Careers



Post Secondary Pathways



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**College of Agricultural, Consumer
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 Cooperative Extension Service
 Extension 4-H Youth Development



Exploring Careers

Note: Although this activity can be completed with no prerequisites, it is advised to complete the *Career Clusters Interest Survey* in the *Career Interests Lesson* before beginning this lesson. The results will help guide their exploration.

INTRODUCTION

Exploring careers helps you understand education, skills, salary, and opportunities connected to your future. This lesson guides participants through research, reflection, and discovery, so they can make informed choices about career paths and education that align with their goals.

SET UP

Review lesson materials and determine which worksheets and handouts you will use for the lesson. Print enough pre/post assessments, worksheets, and handouts for each participant.

ACTIVITY

1. Have participants complete the *Pre-assessment*.
2. Introduce the lesson: *Exploring careers helps us understand the education, skills, salary, and opportunities connected to our future. A career is more than just a title.*
3. Facilitate a group discussion:
Q: Think about a career that you are interested in pursuing.
Q: What questions do you think are important to answer before choosing a career? (e.g., education requirements, pay, job, locations, duties, advancement opportunities, benefits)
5. Distribute *Career Clusters and Career Pathways* and the *Career Exploration Worksheet*. Briefly review the 16 clusters.

Have participants identify their top three clusters from the *Career Clusters Interest Survey* in the *Career Interests Lesson*. (*Note: If participants have not completed the *Interest Survey*, they can choose 3 clusters from the *Career Clusters and Career Pathways* handout in this lesson.)
6. Instruct participants to choose 1 cluster to explore in this activity. Guide them to use the provided websites for accurate, up-to-date information. Emphasize the importance of using reputable sources for complete and accurate data.

Supplies

- Worksheets
- Handouts
- Pens/Pencils

OUTCOMES

Students will be able to:

- **Identify** career clusters and pathways
- **Describe** job duties and advancement options
- **Recognize** required education and skills
- **Match** personal strengths to career needs
- **Outline** first steps for career planning



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7. Once the worksheets are complete, facilitate a group discussion, if time allows:

Q: What surprised you about the career(s) you researched?

Q: Did your interest in a particular career strengthen or change?

8. If time allows, continue with the **lesson extension** below (or assign as independent work).

9. *Exit Ticket* – depending on time, this can be done as a class discussion, or students can complete the worksheet in class, as homework, or in the following class.

10. Have participants complete *Post-assessment*.

LESSON EXTENSION

Career Informational Interview

Explain expectations:

- Interview a professional in a career of interest (20 minutes minimum).
- Use the *Career Informational Interview Worksheet* as a guide.
- Stress professionalism: prepare questions, be respectful, and send a thank-you.
- Schedule time in class later for students to share their insights.

WRAP UP

Career exploration is about understanding yourself and the world of work. By researching, reflecting, and connecting with professionals, you are building knowledge to guide your future. Remember, your career journey is flexible and grows as you continue to learn and discover.

Explore
THE
Possibilities



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RESOURCES

NM Standards:

NM PED Standards: Career and Technical Education (CTE):

CTE 1.1.1: identify training, education, and certification requirements for one's occupational choice

CTE 1.1.2: Demonstrate knowledge and skills in language arts required to pursue the full range of postsecondary education and career opportunities

CTE 2.1.1: Select and employ appropriate reading and communication strategies to learn and use technical concepts and vocabulary

CTE 2.1.4: Evaluate and use information resources to accomplish specific tasks

CTE 2.1.6: Develop and deliver formal and informal presentations

CTE 2.1.9: Listen to and speak with diverse individuals to enhance communication skills

CTE 4.1.3 Operate internet applications to search for information and resources;

CTE 9.1.1: Identify and demonstrate the use of positive work behaviors and personal qualities needed to be employable

CTE 9.2.2: Demonstrate skills in evaluating and comparing employment opportunities to accept positions that match career goals

Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) Standards: Career Ready Practices (CRP):

CRP-10. Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals

Optional ELA Alignment (Grades 6-12)

R1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and make logical inferences from it

R7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats

W7: Conduct short research projects

W8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources

SL1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations

SL4: Present information, findings, and supportive evidence

L6: Acquire and use academic and domain-specific vocabulary relevant to career fields



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Video Resources: Note: Please preview all videos before showing them to students to ensure they are age-appropriate, relevant, and aligned with your classroom needs.

Explore Career Pathways (1:49)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOVgshjOv8k>

Introduction to Researching Postsecondary Options (:47)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SKb_pJ7HGg

Career Exploration in High School (2:22)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmROfyNVH5I>

Middle School Career Exploration (3:16)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8N7aDwKEGPK>

SkillsUSA's Why Career Clusters? (2:42)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-pyQEh5-4g>

HOW TO CHOOSE A CAREER PATH IN HIGH SCHOOL (7:34)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_gdjZmatu0