



ELEMENTARY and MIDDLE SCHOOL | GRADES 5–8
DE Docs: Money Mastery | Activity

Title

You Do What?

DE DOCS: MONEY MASTERY

Use this classroom activity before or after showing [DE Docs: Money Mastery](#). This activity can be used beforehand to get students thinking about careers and earning income and increase student engagement with the video. If students watch the video first, the activity can be used to reinforce concepts discussed in the documentary, particularly the young entrepreneur, Davidson, who provides lawn care services for neighbors and friends. The activity offers specific suggestions of when to show or mention the video.

Overview

How do you prepare for a career? In this lesson, students explore careers, including the education and training needed to obtain them. At the beginning of the activity, students brainstorm jobs that start with each letter of the alphabet, enhancing their awareness of different professions. Next, they guess the correct descriptions of lesser-known careers. Students then work in small groups to consider the education, training, skills, and interests associated with these careers. After presenting their results with the class, students revisit or watch the [Earning](#) segment of [DE Docs: Money Mastery](#) featuring Davidson, a teen with a successful lawn-mowing business. The lesson concludes with a brief discussion of human capital and students reflecting on their own career interests and what skills they could develop to achieve them.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Identify a variety of careers across different industries.
- Understand the importance of education and training in career development.
- Explain how gaining knowledge and skills increases their value to future employers or as entrepreneurs.
- Reflect on personal career interests and future skill development.

National Standards for Personal Financial Literacy

I. Earning Income 4–1: People have different job choices depending on their knowledge, skills, interests, and experience.

I. Earning Income 4–2: People may be able to improve their ability to earn income by gaining new knowledge, skills, and experience.

I. Earning Income 8–2: People make many decisions over a lifetime about their education, jobs, and careers that affect their incomes and opportunities.

I. Earning Income 8–3: Getting more education, training, and experience can increase a person’s human capital, productivity, and income-earning potential.

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MATERIALS

- [DE Docs: Money Mastery Video](#)
- **A to Z Careers Student Capture Sheet**—one per pair or small group of students
- **You Do What? Student Capture Sheet**—one per student
- **You Do What? Signs**—one of each to hang around the room (optional)
- **What It Takes Student Capture Sheet**—one per student
- **What It Takes Discussion Guide**—one for reference
- **Tape**—enough to hang the three signs

ALTERNATE APPROACH

If you want to get students up and moving around, invite them to move to the **You Do What? Sign** that matches the answer they chose for each career.

Engage

- Let students know that you have a challenge for them. You want them to work with a partner or in a small group to brainstorm careers that start with each letter of the alphabet. Share several examples or brainstorm options for one letter before beginning (e.g., "A for Artist, B for Baker, C for Carpenter").
- Distribute a copy of the **A to Z Careers Student Capture Sheet** to each pair or small group. Let students know they do not need to go in order and that it is okay if they can't think of one for every letter.
- Allow students several minutes to fill in as many careers as they can. Setting a specific time limit for the brainstorming activity (e.g., 5 minutes) can keep students focused and ensure the activity stays on schedule.
- Invite volunteers to share careers they listed for each letter of the alphabet. Quickly go around the room, asking each pair to offer a new, unique job. Request that students not repeat a job that has already been stated. If desired, keep track of the jobs named by writing them on the board or a scrap sheet of paper. If you can electronically display the **A to Z Careers Student Capture Sheet**, add student responses as they are given.
- Consider keeping a tally of the unique job names listed or give this job to a trusted student.
- Congratulate students for their efforts and announce the total number of jobs listed if tallied. If students were unable to list any careers for certain letters of the alphabet, use the Bureau of Labor Statistics' [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) as a reference to locate one. Their [A to Z listing](#) has at least one career per letter.

Teach

- Let students know that there were a few careers you didn't hear mentioned.
- Invite them to guess the true description of several lesser-known careers. Distribute a copy of the **You Do What? Student Capture Sheet** to each student.
- Direct students to work individually or in small groups to guess the correct answers. Take a poll or ask students to share their responses for each career.
- Share the correct answer for each round and congratulate students who guessed correctly.
 - **Phlebotomist:** Draws blood from people, usually for tests or donations (Option 2)
 - **Mycologist:** Studies fungi, including mushrooms, and how they grow (Option 2)
 - **Seismologist:** Studies earthquakes and volcanic eruptions (Option 3)
 - **Foley Artist:** Creates sound effects for movies and television shows by using everyday objects (Option 1)

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- **Cobbler:** Makes or repairs shoes, fixing soles, heels, and more (Option 1)
 - **Perfusionist:** Operates the heart-lung machine during surgeries to keep a patient's blood and oxygen moving (Option 3)
 - **Farrier:** Takes care of horses' hooves by trimming them and fitting horseshoes (Option 2)
- Ask students if any clues helped them guess the correct answers. Did anyone get all of them correct?
 - If students have already watched [DE Docs: Money Mastery](#), ask them to recall the story of Davidson, whose dad taught him how to mow lawns and how this knowledge enabled him to earn money. For students who have yet to see the video, play the [Earning](#) segment or describe it to them.
 - Discuss how education, training, and experience impact earning potential and how investing in one's skills can lead to a higher income. For example, when Davidson started, he only did the basics, like mowing and blowing the grass. Now he edges and lays sod. In order to do these things, he had to gain additional knowledge and training.
 - Divide students into small groups and assign one of the "You Do What?" jobs to each group.
 - Distribute a copy of the **What It Takes Student Capture Sheet** to each student. Challenge each group to answer the questions for the career they were assigned. If students have access to technology, invite them to research each job after making some preliminary guesses in order to provide more informed responses.
 - Invite groups to share their work. Use the **What It Takes Discussion Guide** to fill in gaps and correct student responses as needed.

Conclude

- Ask students to reflect on what they've learned by writing a short paragraph about a career they found interesting and if they might want to explore it further. This reflection can help reinforce the lesson's objectives.
- Tell students that gaining knowledge and skills builds "human capital" and improves their job chances. Human capital can also be used when starting a business of their own. Ask students how they can start building their human capital and why it's important for their future.
- Direct students to submit an exit ticket answering the following: What skill would you like to develop? List one step you could take to start working on it.

Extend

- **Career Profiles:** Challenge students to create brief "career profiles" for each of the lesser-known jobs with visuals or short videos to give students a better understanding of what these professionals do.
- **Forms of Pay:** Introduce ways people can be paid for their work. Explain the differences between hourly wages, salary, tips, commission, and piecework. Ask students how they think people in each of the careers in the activity might be paid and why they chose this answer.
- **Davidson's Savings:** Remind students that in [DE Docs: Money Mastery](#), Davidson shares that he puts 20% of what he earns into savings. Quantify that percentage by explaining that for every \$10 Davidson earns, he saves \$2. Ask students if they think that is enough money to put into savings, and then invite them to explain their rationale.
- **Career Exploration:** Introduce students to research tools such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics' [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#), which has information about many careers and includes videos showcasing what people do in various jobs.
- **Family Discussion:** Encourage students to talk with their families about how they ended up in their jobs. Would they choose the same one if they could do it over again or would they choose something else? What influenced their decisions? What "new" jobs are available now that weren't an option when they were younger?

A to Z Careers

Directions: How many careers can you think of that start with each letter of the alphabet? List as many as you can.

A _____ **N** _____

B _____ **O** _____

C _____ **P** _____

D _____ **Q** _____

E _____ **R** _____

F _____ **S** _____

G _____ **T** _____

H _____ **U** _____

I _____ **V** _____

J _____ **W** _____

K _____ **X** _____

L _____ **Y** _____

M _____ **Z** _____

You Do What?

Directions: Which description correctly describes what people in each career do for a living? Circle your guess.

Career	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Phlebotomist	Makes maps of the human body, showing where different muscles and bones are located	Draws blood from people, usually for tests or donations	Studies plants and how they grow in different environments
Mycologist	Specializes in training and caring for monkeys in zoos	Studies fungi, including mushrooms, and how they grow	A doctor who treats people with allergies to certain foods and plants
Seismologist	Studies weather patterns to predict storms and tornadoes	Studies ocean waves and tides to understand how they affect the shore	Studies earthquakes and volcanic eruptions
Foley Artist	Creates sound effects for movies and television shows by using everyday objects	Paints backgrounds for movies and television shows	Designs realistic explosions for action scenes in movies
Cobbler	Makes or repairs shoes, fixing soles, heels, and more	Specializes in making pies, especially fruit pies with a crumbly top	Carves wooden sculptures to decorate houses and parks
Perfusionist	Designs and tests air filters for use in cars and buildings	Studies perfumes and how different scents are made	Operates the heart-lung machine during surgeries to keep a patient's blood and oxygen moving
Farrier	Makes and repairs leather goods like belts, bags, and shoes	Takes care of horses' hooves by trimming them and fitting horseshoes	Grows and harvests different kinds of berries and fruits







What It Takes

Directions: Circle the career you were assigned and then answer the questions. Make informed guesses or do some online research to find out more information.

Phlebotomist

Mycologist

Seismologist

Foley Artist

Cobbler

Perfusionist

Farrier

1. What training or education do you think someone in this career must obtain?
2. When someone doing this work was younger, what subjects do you imagine they enjoyed in school?
3. What interests might someone in this field have had as a child?
4. How easy or hard do you think it would be to find a job in this career? What factors might influence that?
5. Would anyone in your group be interested in this career in the future? Why or why not?

What It Takes

Directions: Use information about each career to enhance your discussion. Student answers may vary.

	Phlebotomist	Mycologist	Seismologist	Foley Artist	Cobbler	Perfusionist	Farrier
1. Training or Education	Learn how to draw blood in a special medical program	Study fungi and plants in college	Study earthquakes and earth sciences in college	Learn sound effects creation, often through practice or specialized training	Learn shoe-making and repair through apprenticeships or trade schools	Special medical training to work with heart machines	Learn to care for horses' hooves in a trade school or apprenticeship
2. School subject	Science	Science (Biology)	Science (Earth Science)	Music, Art	Art, Math	Science (Biology)	Science (Biology), Art
3. Childhood interests	Helping people, learning about the body	Exploring nature, collecting mushrooms	Studying rocks, learning about the Earth	Making sounds, creating fun noises, watching movies	Fixing things, creating with hands	Learning how things work, helping others	Working with animals, being outdoors
4. Job outlook	High demand as people always need help with medical tests and our population ages	Limited jobs, mostly in research and at colleges	Specialized field but needed to predict earthquakes and keep people safe	Needed for movies, TV shows, and video games but could be replaced by AI technology	May have less demand as people tend to purchase new shoes instead of having theirs repaired	Important job in surgeries, so it's always in demand	Needed wherever there are horses, mostly in rural areas