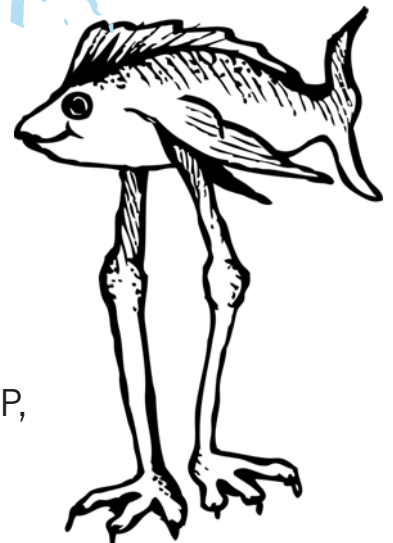




# Career Fair Preparation Activities

for middle school



created by the Vermont Student  
Assistance Corporation

funded in part by VT State GEAR UP,  
a federal college access program

[www.vsaac.org](http://www.vsaac.org)

# tips for teachers and counselors

- Convey to students a spirit of excitement about this event.
- Select all or some of the activities included in this booklet to complete with students. For more ideas, visit Start Where You Are Professional (see link at [www.vvac.org](http://www.vvac.org)).
- Discuss with students the intended outcomes for your career event, including:
  1. knowledge of personal characteristics, interests, aptitudes, and skills
  2. awareness of and respect for the diversity of the world of work
  3. understanding of the relationship between school performance and future choices
  4. understanding of personal goal-setting and decision-making patterns and attitudes
- Encourage students to research careers that interest them.
- If possible, provide students with a list of presenters so students can research presenters' careers prior to event.
- Prepare students to come to the career event prepared with questions for presenters.
- Invite parents to attend.
- Go to [www.vvac.org](http://www.vvac.org) to search for career resources, including the following:
  1. Start Where You Are
  2. VT Guidance Central
  3. VSAC Resource Center Library online collection
  4. Pathfinders
  5. The VSAC Resource Center library online catalog



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## After the event

Follow up with students to deepen their understanding of what they learned.

1. Have each student write him/herself a letter (lesson plan included).
2. Have students write thank-you notes to presenters.
3. Arrange job shadows. For tips and ideas, visit [www.uwplatt.edu/careercenter/resources/jobshadow.pdf](http://www.uwplatt.edu/careercenter/resources/jobshadow.pdf).
4. Have your students make collages, posters, or Web pages for younger students, to introduce particular careers that interested them.
5. Have students write a short article about the career fair for the school newspaper or a local newspaper.
6. In a "my story" assignment, ask students to discuss who they are, what inspires them, whom they admire, how they want to influence their communities, etc. Encourage them to present their stories in any format that appeals to them: short essay, film, audio interview, Web page, etc.

# when i am older ...

1

When I am older, I may want to work as a ...

2

The things in my life that I value most are ...

3

One way that my life will be different from my parents' life is ...

4

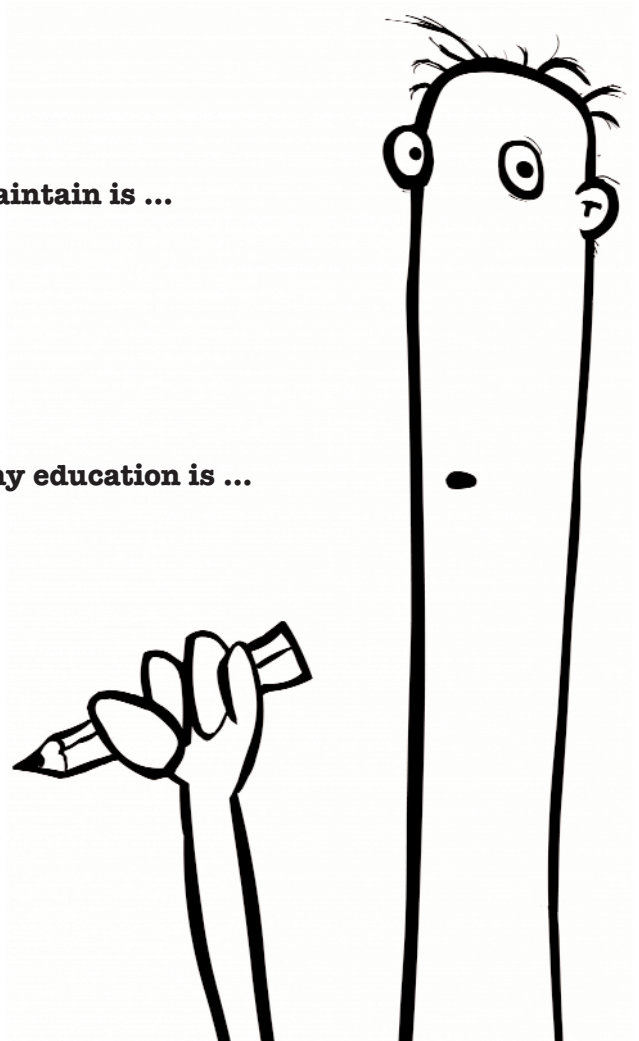
One thing from my current life that I want to maintain is ...

5

The best reason for thinking about continuing my education is ...

6

My number-one wish for my future self is ...



# lesson plan: seven questions, or “voting with your feet!”

**Objective:** Students will be able to identify their values, explain why they hold those values, and identify the ways those values relate to career choices.

**Grade level:** 6–10

**Teacher prep time:** 5–10 minutes

**Class time:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** String

**Format:** Group setting within the classroom

## Procedure

- Prior to class, set up a string across the room.
- Explain to students the concept of a continuum.
- With each question, ask students to stand on or near the point on the string that best describes them (their answers to the questions).
- For each question, ask students at the farthest extremes — and perhaps a few students in the middle — to explain their positions.

## Questions

1. How willing are you to work very hard for what you want?  
Very — I’ll stick with it and give it my best.  
Not very — I give up easily or am lazy.
2. How do you feel about school? Could you see yourself continuing after high school — or even after college?  
I like school so much that I could see myself staying in school for years.  
I might get my degree and begin working soon.
3. How comfortable are you working independently?  
I love working alone.  
I enjoy working with other people.
4. Would you rather have a 9–5 job that stays separate from your life, or would you rather have your job and your life be one and the same?  
I want my job and my life to be separate.  
I want my job and my life to overlap. (You are what you do!)
5. How important will your job be, compared to your family?  
Work is most important.  
Family is all-important.

6. Which is more important, personal fulfillment or material gain?

Personal satisfaction, self-fulfillment, using my abilities

Material success: money, security, power, prestige

7. How often do you think about your future?

Very often

“Future? What future?”

### **Questions to use for processing**

As students sit down, have them think about the following:

- Which question was the easiest to answer?
- Were there any for which you felt conflicted, or any for which both answers were true for you?
- How do these questions relate to careers and what you might do for a living?
- What did you learn about yourself? (Ask students to write down one thing they learned from the exercise.)

### **NCDCA guidelines for personal social development**

- develop an understanding of yourself to build and maintain a positive self-image
- begin the first steps in career management
- use a process of decision-making as one component of career development
- use accurate, current, and unbiased career information during career planning

### **Vermont’s Framework of Standards vital results**

- Section 3** Personal Development Standards — Making Decisions
- 3.7** Informed decisions — Students make informed decisions in the workplace
- 3.15** Career choices — Students know about various careers

### **VTSCA career standards**

Standard A: Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self, and to make informed career decisions.



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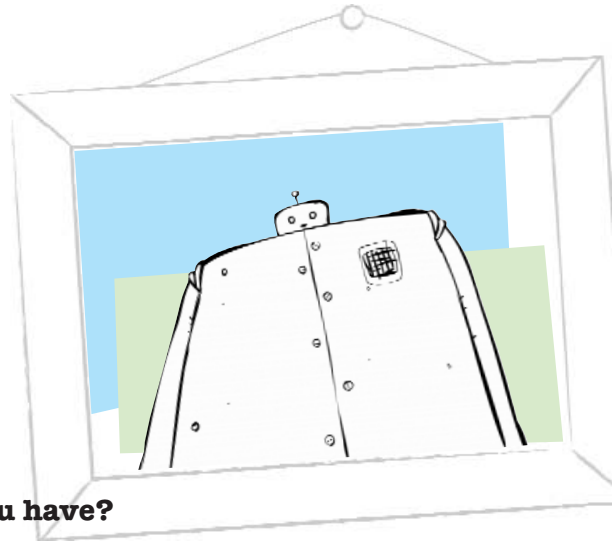
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# family career questionnaire

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Ask a family member to answer the following questions about his or her career. Write down his/her answers. Be as specific as possible.

1. What is your job title?
2. How did you find your job (newspaper ad, employment agency, personal contact, etc.)?
3. What made you decide to work in this career area (chance, parental influence, personal interest, salary, first available job, etc.)?
4. Is this a traditional job for a person of your gender?
5. What qualifications did you need for this job? How much education or training?
6. What duties do you have during a typical day?
7. What do you like best about your work?
8. What do you like least about your work?
9. When you were in school, what career dreams did you have?
10. Did your dreams come true? Why? Why not?
11. If you could have your dream career today, what would it be?



# lesson plan: what do you look for in a job?

**Objective:** Students will be able to identify their values and the ways those values relate to career choices.

**Grade level:** grades 7–12

**Expectations of students upon completion of activity**

- Students will determine their values and decide what's important in a future career choice.
- Based on their worksheet results, students will develop three questions to ask presenters/business people at a career fair.

**Teacher prep time:** 10–15 minutes

**Class time:** 30 minutes

**Materials**

- worksheets
- pens and pencils

**Format:** Group setting within the classroom

**Procedure**

- Prior to class, look over the worksheet “*What do you look for in a job?*” (see attached) to become familiar with the activity and what it entails.
- Have students complete the worksheet.
- Have the students discuss what's important and not important to them in a job.

**Related Web sites**

- [www.vsac.org](http://www.vsac.org)
- [www.acrnetwork.org/](http://www.acrnetwork.org/)
- [www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/step1.asp](http://www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/step1.asp)

**NCEA guidelines for personal social development**

- develop an understanding of yourself to build and maintain a positive self-image
- begin the first steps in career management
- use a process of decision-making as one component of career development
- use accurate, current, and unbiased career information during career planning

**Vermont's Framework of Standards vital results**

Section 3 Personal Development Standards — Making Decisions

3.7 Informed decisions — Students make informed decisions in the workplace.

3.15 Career choices — Students know about various careers.

**VTSCA career standards**

Standard A: Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self, and to make informed career decisions.



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# What do you look for in a job?

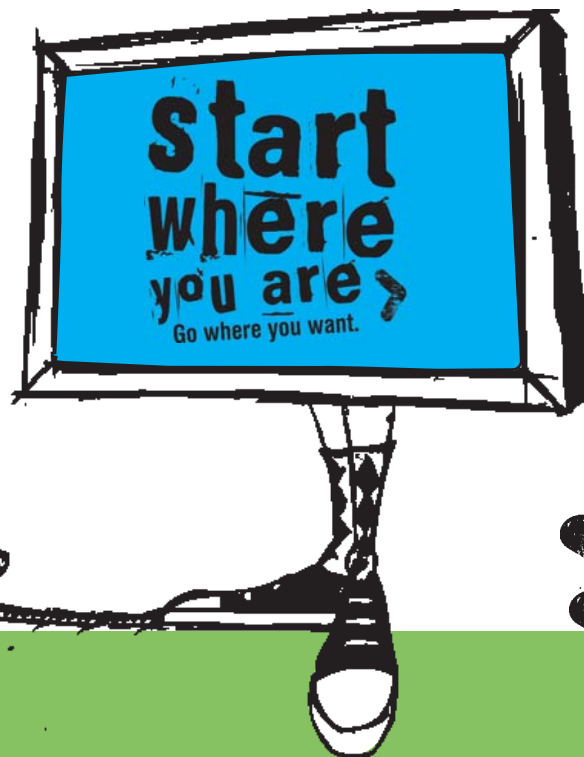
Look through the following list.

Put a **“J”** next to things you hope to find in a job.

Put a **“T”** next to the things you could tolerate in a job.

Put an **“R”** next to the things you would have to reject in a job.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working long, productive hours       | <input type="checkbox"/> Adding beauty to the world                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being your own boss                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Doing many different things                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making a lot of money                | <input type="checkbox"/> Having a good place to work                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working with and around other people | <input type="checkbox"/> Having freedom to choose what you do every day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performing similar duties every day  | <input type="checkbox"/> Being allowed to be yourself                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working alone                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Having to think for yourself                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being respected by other people      | <input type="checkbox"/> Working under pressure                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Using your imagination               | <input type="checkbox"/> Having your own office                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making important decisions           | <input type="checkbox"/> Being physically active                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selling things                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Working with animals                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traveling                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Living in the city                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being a leader                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Working at a slow pace                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Solving mechanical problems          | <input type="checkbox"/> Working at a fast pace                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talking to many people               | <input type="checkbox"/> Getting dressed up for work                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Solving challenging issues/problems  | <input type="checkbox"/> Working different shifts                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Helping other people                 |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taking risks                         |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doing a lot of writing               |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being inside all day                 |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being outside all day                |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Using a lot of math                  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading many things                  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working with your hands              |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having authority over others         |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having friendly colleagues           |   |





**5 things I would look for:**

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

**5 things I would reject:**

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

**Looking at the things you want in a job and the things you don't, think of three related questions to ask a presenter/business person at the career fair.**

1. >>

2. >>

3. >>



# career fair interview questions

- 1.** Would you please describe a typical day or typical tasks in your job?
- 2.** Do you work primarily alone or with others? What are the best and worst things about your work with other people?
- 3.** What do you like best about your work? What do you like least?
- 4.** What are some typical kinds of decisions you have to make at work?
- 5.** What is the salary range for this type of work? What other benefits (health insurance, vacation time, discounts at local businesses, etc.) come with this job?
- 6.** How does your job affect the rest of your daily life?



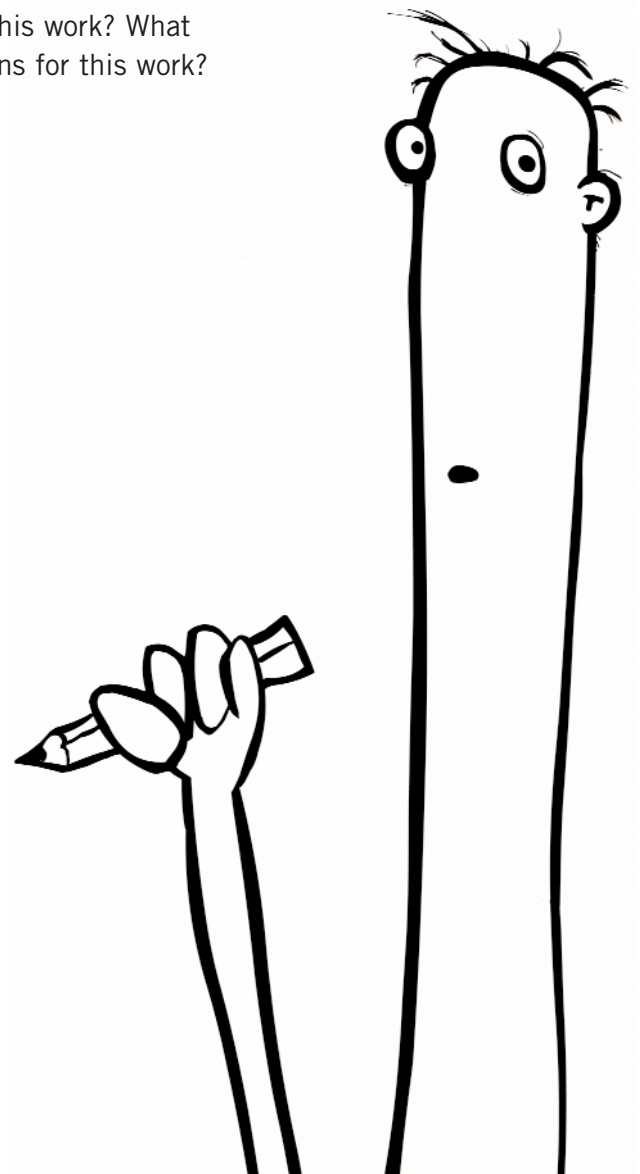
**7.** What kind of training or education does a person need for this job? What are the skills needed for this job?

**8.** What personal qualities (emotional, physical, and mental) does a person need in order to do well and be happy in your job?

**9.** What things did you learn in school that help you most in this work? What hobbies or activities outside of school have important lessons for this work?

**10.** What can I do now to help prepare me for this career?

**11.** Would you allow me to arrange a job shadow if I wanted to learn more about this career?



# career fair scavenger hunt

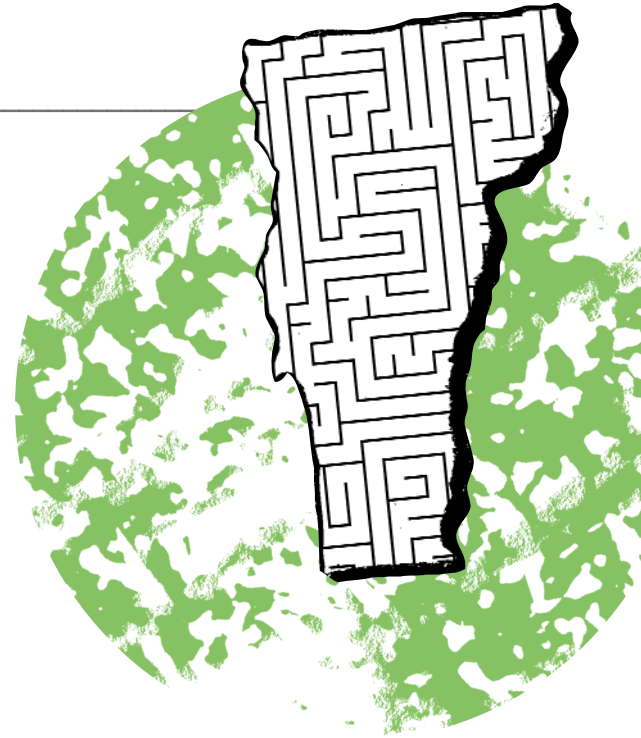
**Name and school**

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## Career Clusters

For three of the eight career clusters listed below, find one job. List each job and the career cluster to which it belongs.

1. Business, office, and sales
2. Engineering, science, and computers
3. Health
4. Social science and education (including counselors, religious workers, teachers)
5. Art, design, and communication (including entertainers and news reporters)
6. Personal and consumer services (including food, personal care, and protective services)
7. Agriculture, forestry, and natural resources
8. Mechanics, construction, industry, and transportation



Job found:

Career cluster it belongs to:

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## Tools of the Trade

Find a job in which a person uses:

a knife \_\_\_\_\_

a microphone \_\_\_\_\_

“scrubs” \_\_\_\_\_

a computer \_\_\_\_\_

a tool box \_\_\_\_\_

## People, Data, Things

Find a job for each of the following three interest categories:

People — jobs that involve working with the public \_\_\_\_\_

Data — jobs that involve using facts and numbers \_\_\_\_\_

Things — jobs that involve working with animals and/or machinery \_\_\_\_\_



**Skills**

Find three jobs that require computer skills:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Find two jobs in which a worker must be creative:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Find two jobs that require math:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Find two jobs that involve science:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Find two jobs in which it is important to be physically fit:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Interests**

Which of the jobs represented at this career fair is most interesting to you?

Wh

