

5 Easy Activities For Exploring Careers in Any Class

Help middle and high school students discover opportunities that match their interests and values



What is Career Exploration?

Career exploration is the process of learning and evaluating career opportunities based on one's own interests and values. The discovery process should be FUN — students are learning about themselves and what their futures could hold! Whether their graduation plans include college or the workforce, career exploration in middle and high school encourage students to consider potential routes for meeting career goals. It also helps them make informed decisions about their futures.

This guide contains 5 easy-to-implement ideas for incorporating career exploration into any classroom:



Take Time to Research



Integrate Soft Skills



Bring in Guest Speakers



Incorporate Scenario-Based Learning



Use Hands-on Learning Aids

Interactive learning aids that promote career exploration:

Engage your students and help them discover potential careers with hands-on learning aids that explore a variety of content areas.

<https://www.realityworks.com/career-exploration-implementation/>

Take Time to Research



Research projects give students the opportunity to learn where to find information on various careers while learning about those careers. What's more, research skills are important. Being able to identify, collect and evaluate information will benefit students in school, college and the workplace. Two key parts to making your research project successful are to give students sources as well as parameters on what to research. Use the steps below to facilitate your own research project.

- 1 Create a list of careers:** Trending careers, local industry needs, student-driven ideas
- 2 Give parameters to share on their career:** Wage, job tasks, job outlook, education required, skills to be successful (both technical skills and soft skills)
- 3 Have students choose a career**
- 4 Share places to learn more about that career**
- 5 Present that career to others**

User-friendly website:

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics – Career Exploration

<https://www.bls.gov/k12/students/careers/career-exploration.htm>

Integrate Soft Skills!

Soft skills, employability skills, job-readiness skills, emotional intelligence... there are many phrases used to describe these skills, but they all mean one thing: they are the personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people.

When you're exploring careers, don't miss the opportunity to emphasize these key skills along the way!

Below are top soft skills employers need from employees, plus activities for teaching them in your classroom:



Teamwork:

Assign group work

Group work is a great way to build teamwork skills. When you assign group projects and other collaborative learning experiences, you force your students to work with one another to learn the content and apply it.



Critical Thinking:

Reflection activities

Reflection engages critical thinking and allows information to become meaningful knowledge. Reflection activities can be used during any lesson or project. The more you do it, the stronger your students' critical thinking skills will be!



Communication:

Role play

Role play is great for many reasons — it builds confidence, promotes self-esteem, and of course, it's a great method of student-driven, active learning, which we know today's students crave.

Realityworks offers comprehensive products and programs for purchase on teaching employability, leadership and other key soft skills that can be implemented into any classroom. Pathway-specific activities are also available.

<https://www.realityworks.com/soft-skills-implementation>

Bring in Guest Speakers

This idea could expand on the research project — almost a next step! A great place to start looking for guest speakers or panelist is your community. Your community has a lot to offer, and students will realize that as they hear from local industry representatives and discover what jobs will be available. Your industry and community want to support the schools — students are their future. You just have to ask.

Tips for speakers in the classroom:



Have students **prepare questions** ahead of presentations.



Create panel discussions by getting several speakers to talk about their jobs. A panel could bring speakers with similar backgrounds together to share different opportunities.



Use **post-secondary institutes** for your speakers. Post-secondary professors could talk about college offerings and what students will be doing in classes.



Consider a **virtual** speaker as this may be easier for a professional to attend.



Incorporate Scenario-Based Learning

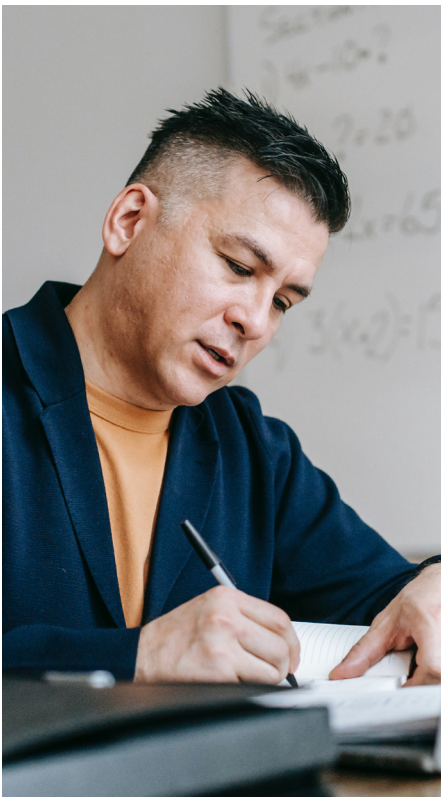
Scenario-based learning can be used for career exploration as it incorporates real-world situations paired with critical thinking activities. Scenario-based learning is a fun and engaging strategy for helping students learn concepts and make lasting connections with classroom material. One easy way to allow students to explore careers is to have real-world scenarios or situations written out for students to review.

Tips for creating scenarios for students to learn from:

Colleagues. Ask your coworkers to write scenarios from career situations they have experienced. Share ideas to spark their creativity, such as communication problems, customer disagreements or successful meetings.

Students' family members. Ask your students to interview their family members about experiences they have had in the workplace.

YouTube. Keywords like “work scenarios” and “career situations” yield many intriguing results when entered into YouTube.



Check out this free resource from Realityworks:

Free Guide: Using Scenario-Based Learning To Explore Careers

<https://www.realityworks.com/sample-scenario-cards/>

Use Hands-on Learning Aids

Today's students need to have their attention captivated. Twenty-first century learning aids can help you grab their attention and engage them in the career exploration process while developing skills.

Realityworks offers a variety of products to help students get hands-on training in various career areas. Use them to introduce students to the skills required by potential careers to help them develop a better understanding of job requirements.



Food Truck Design Kit

Give your students hands-on experience designing all aspects of a food truck business with this comprehensive kit, which includes lesson plans and activities.



RealCareer™ Electrical Wiring Kit

Introduce students to the basics of electrical wiring in safe, shock-free manner with this all-in-one kit, which uses a battery-operated assessment kit to test light and outlet socket wiring.



Geriatric Sensory Impairment Kit

Help students develop a basic understanding of the common sensory challenges elderly patients face — essential skills for future health care professionals!



Discover more career exploration resources:

<https://www.realityworks.com/career-exploration-implementation/>