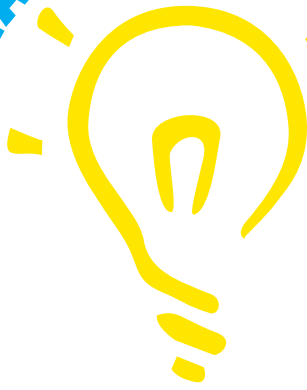


TAKE THE



CAREER IDEAS *Challenge*

...with your Middle Grade students!

The middle grades (4–7) are prime time for exploring careers. They are also an age-appropriate time for cultivating problem-solving skills. The **Career Ideas Challenge** lets students do both – explore careers within the context of solving real world problems.\

Use these 9 activities in career exploratory classes, CTE courses, in the library, or to build 21st century skills in core classes.

Actuary
CAD Drafter
Entrepreneur

Civil
Engineer
EMT
Interior
Designer

Pilot
Social Media
Manager
Social Worker

*Just in time to expand your middle grade
career exploration programs with Perkins V!*



Actuary

Do you know where Tornado Alley is? You would if you were an actuary. You'd also know which places are most likely to have natural disasters and which types of people are most likely to fall prey to calamity, injury, or untimely death.

No, actuaries aren't fortune-tellers. They are financial advisors who are experts at determining risk.

(Feel free to use the back of this sheet for longer answers)

What Do Actuaries Do?

Actuaries are risk managers. "Risk" is the chance that something bad or expensive might happen. For instance, how likely is it that certain types of drivers will get into an accident? That's why new drivers often pay more for insurance than experienced drivers with a good driving record. Or, what would be the cost of replacing a home that is hit by a hurricane? Actuaries analyze complex situations and figure out solutions.

Even though you have probably never heard of this career before, it may be worth a second look. This career often tops the lists of America's best jobs. It scores high in important categories like work environment, employment outlook, job security, growth opportunity, and salary. Necessary skills include math, business, communications, computer, and problem-solving.

CHALLENGE #1: *If you had this career...*

What kind of training would you need?

Where could you find a job?

How much money could you earn?

Who would you help and how would you make a difference?

Why would (or wouldn't) you like doing a job like this?



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CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

Some human behaviors are considered "high risk" by actuaries. Take smoking cigarettes, for instance. Other behaviors, like regular exercise, have obvious health benefits.

Make a chart with two columns. In one column, list as many high-risk behaviors as you can think of. In the second column, contrast the first list with a list of healthy behaviors.

At the bottom of each column, briefly explain how each type of behavior is likely to affect a person's health and life insurance premiums. Be specific about why costs might be different for high-risk and low-risk behaviors.

Actuary Teacher Tips

Actuary consistently appears on impressive top job lists with titles like 'High-paying jobs for people who don't like stress;' "Four degrees with 0% unemployment;' and "Most lucrative college degrees." It takes a college degree and a rigorous professional testing process to qualify for the job but it is an occupation that comes with plenty of job satisfaction, higher than average salary, and plenty of perks.



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DISCUSS

Ask students to share what they know about insurance. Discuss why insurance rates may be higher for certain people and in different geographical locations than others. Find out if anyone knows who makes the decision about how much insurance should cost in these types of situations.

READ

Students can read the text about actuaries out loud together (as a class or in teams) or on their own.

CHALLENGE #1: If You Had This Career...

Several questions prompt students to dig into essential information in a first person way that facilitates personal connections. Students can find answers to these questions by:

- Using Google (or another approved Internet search engine) to make specific queries like “what kind of training does an actuary need?” or “what do actuaries like about their jobs?”
- Visiting career information websites like www.getmyfuture.org or www.mynextmove.org. Both of these websites are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- If available, tapping into your school’s career development software platform (such as Career Cruising) or your state’s career and college information system (such as www.CFNC.org).

CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

Students are asked to create charts contrasting high-risk human behaviors like smoking with healthy behaviors like regular exercise. Using this information, they must then build a case for why it is appropriate to charge different rates of insurance premiums for people who engage in the two types of behaviors.

EXTEND THE DISCUSSION

To continue the discussion about what actuaries do and how to become one, encourage students to explore a website co-sponsored by the Society of Actuaries and the Casualty Actuarial Society at <http://www.beanactuary.org>.

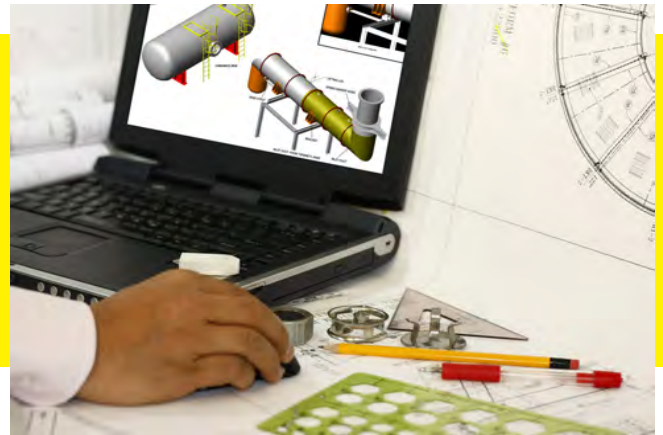
FIND MORE CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

Check out the Bright Futures Press career exploration collection of interactive books for middle grade readers at www.brightfuturespress.com. For more information about math and business-focused careers like this one, see *Find Your Future in Mathematics* and *World of Work: Business and Administration*.

CAD Drafter

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. This adage is certainly true when it comes to manufacturing products and constructing buildings. An engineer or architect's ideas must be drawn in great detail before others can implement the plans. These drawings are created by drafters or designers using computer-aided design (CAD) software.

(Feel free to use the back of this sheet for longer answers)



© Adobe Stock Photos/Marcky Ragsac, Jr.

What Do CAD Drafters Do?

Once upon a time drafters drew complicated technical drawings by hand. Now computer-aided design (CAD) technology is used to provide extremely complex 3-dimensional images. Technology makes the process more efficient, effective, and accurate. Drafters work closely with engineers and architects to translate ideas into blueprints that guide every phase of the manufacturing and building processes. Drafters need a blend of artistic creativity and technical skill. Future drafters need strong math and science backgrounds (think geometry and physics!). Many jobs require an associate degree and some also require professional credentials. If your high school offers computer-aided design or drafting classes, be sure to sign up and experience what this type of work involves for yourself.

CHALLENGE #1: *If you had this career...*

What kind of training would you need?

Where could you find a job?

How much money could you earn?

Who would you help and how would you make a difference?

Why would (or wouldn't) you like doing a job like this?

CHALLENGE #2: *Think Tank*

Hang on to your hats! A new amusement park is coming to town and they intend to build the world's greatest roller coaster. They have announced a city-wide competition to see who can come up with the most thrilling idea.

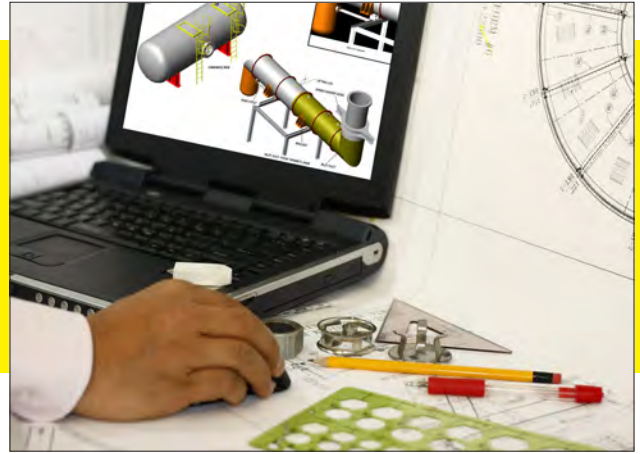
If you have access to design software, feel free to use it. Otherwise, use the backside of this page to sketch out your ideas. Be as specific as you can about things like proposed height and width and angles. Get creative, using different types of geometric shapes to indicate different types of twists and turns.

Since this is a brainstorming activity don't worry too much about if your ideas will really work. Just imagine a fun (and wild!) ride and add as much detail as you can.



CAD Drafter Teacher Tips

CAD drafter is a career that is supported by computer-aided design and technology courses available to many students. These types of courses often offer a chance for students to access their skills and interests as they relate to various career options.



DISCUSS

Ask students to list all the details that went into constructing the classroom they are sitting in. Guide their discussion towards things like measurements, materials, electricity, and safety. Ask how they think the people who built the room knew what to do and where to place things like windows and doors. As the discussion veers towards building plans and blueprints, introduce CAD drafters as the professionals who create the extremely detailed plans that guide building and manufacturing processes.

READ

Students can read the text about CAD drafters out loud together (as a class or in teams) or on their own.

CHALLENGE #1: If You Had This Career...

Several questions prompt students to dig into essential information in a first person way that facilitates personal connections. Students can find answers to these questions by:

- Using Google (or another approved Internet search engine) to make specific queries like “what kind of training does a CAD drafter need?” or “salary range for CAD drafters.”
- Visiting career information websites like www.getmyfuture.org or www.mynextmove.org. Both of these websites are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- If available, tapping into your school’s career development software platform (such as Career Cruising) or your state’s career and college information system (such as www.CFNC.org).

CHALLENGE #1: If You Had This Career...

This week's challenge involves visualizing the world's greatest roller coaster. Students are asked to sketch out a plan including as many details and dimensions as they can. This is intended to be a "sky is the limit" brainstorming exercise and it is not necessary for their ideas to be feasible. The purpose is to get them thinking about the details involved in such a complex project and "test driving" ways to convey their ideas in visual ways that others can understand.

EXTEND THE DISCUSSION

CAD drafters are creative and technical. Use this career option as a way to open up discussion about other careers that require multiple skill sets. Talk about how

FIND MORE CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

Check out the Bright Futures Press career exploration collection of interactive books for middle grade readers at www.brightfuturespress.com. The collection includes 43 titles in 5 distinct series. Plus, free classroom activity guides!

Entrepreneur

Have you ever watch the show *Shark Tank on TV*? People with ideas for new products or services come on to ask famous (and rich!) business people for funding to grow their businesses. Both the askers and givers are called entrepreneurs. The difference is that the givers are already wildly successful and the askers are just starting out.



©Adobe Stock Photos/Karen Roach

(Feel free to use the back of this sheet for longer answers)

What Do Entrepreneurs Do?

Entrepreneurs are people who, rather than working as an employee, start and run a small business, assuming all the risks and rewards of the venture. Simply put, an entrepreneur is a person who identifies a need and starts a business to fill that void. One of the best parts about being an entrepreneur is that they get to be their own boss. That can also be one of the worst parts because it means the success of the business depends on how hard--and how smart-- the entrepreneur works to produce the new product and sell it to the people who want it or need it. Some entrepreneurs get college degrees in business and start with solid business plans that cover everything from product design and capital (that's the money need to get started) to marketing and distribution. Others have an idea and run with it.

CHALLENGE #1: *If you had this career...*

What kind of training would you need?

Where could you find a job?

How much money could you earn?

Who would you help and how would you make a difference?

Why would (or wouldn't) you like doing a job like this?

CHALLENGE #2: *Think Tank*

Logos are symbols used to identify or "brand" a business. Some of the best ones are famous all over the world. Even toddlers quickly learn to recognize the golden arches that mean Happy Meals are nearby.

Your challenge is to think of a business you'd like to start (or an idea for a business that you wish someone else would start so you can buy their stuff!). Give it a name and then design a logo that gives your future customers clues about what the business is all about.

For inspiration, you may want to take a look at the logos of company's you admire.





Entrepreneur Teacher Tips

An entrepreneur is an individual who, rather than working as an employee, founds and runs a small business, assuming all the risks and rewards of the venture. In simple terms, entrepreneurs identify needs and start businesses to fill those voids. The bad news is that around 20 percent of these new businesses fail in the first year. The good news is that there are some 400 million entrepreneurs around the world giving it a try and learning valuable things about business and themselves in the process.



©Adobe Stock Images/Karen Roach

DISCUSS

Ask students to brainstorm entrepreneurs that they know about in their community (or even their own families).

READ

Students can read the text about entrepreneurship out loud together (as a class or in teams) or on their own.

CHALLENGE #1: If You Had This Career...

Several questions prompt students to dig into essential information in a first person way that facilitates personal connections. Students can find answers to these questions by:

- Using Google (or another approved Internet search engine) to make specific queries like “what kind of training does an entrepreneur need?” or “who are some famous entrepreneurs?”
- Visiting career information websites like www.getmyfuture.org or www.mynextmove.org. Both of these websites are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- If available, tapping into your school’s career development software platform (such as Career Cruising) or your state’s career and college information system (such as www.CFNC.org).

CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

Students are challenged to “brand” an idea they have for a new company. Prior to turning them loose to design logos for their companies, you may want to show examples of well known logos like McDonalds, Nike, Target, and CocaCola. Allow time for students to share their business ideas and show off their logos.

EXTEND THE DISCUSSION

Biz Kid\$ is a national financial education initiative based on an Emmy Award-winning public television series about kids, money, and business. Their website offers video clips and games that includes one that lets students run a virtual lemonade stand. Check it out at <http://bizkids.com>.

FIND MORE CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

Check out the Bright Futures Press career exploration collection of interactive books for middle grade readers at www.brightfuturespress.com. To share more career ideas related to business, take a look at our *World of Work: Business & Administration* title.

Civil Engineer

What do the Golden Gate Bridge, Hoover Dam, and the Grand Canyon Skywalk have in common? They are all examples of awesome civil engineering!

Civil engineers design and maintain the public places we share. When it comes to the types of projects that civil engineers work on, you need to think big!

(Feel free to use the back of this sheet for longer answers)



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What Do Civil Engineers Do?

Civil engineers design and maintain the public places we share. This includes highways, bridges, and water and energy systems. It also includes ports, railways, airports, and subway systems.

You'd have to travel all the way to Egypt and go back in time thousands of years to see some of the first known civil engineers in action. Long before the days of big trucks, cranes, and fancy tools, they built three amazing pyramids that were over 480 feet (146 meters) tall. One of these pyramids still stands today in Giza.

Designing today's modern wonders requires at least a 4-year college degree in civil engineering. You can start preparing now by taking lots of math classes.

CHALLENGE #1: *If you had this career...*

What kind of training would you need?

Where could you find a job?

How much money could you earn?

Who would you help and how would you make a difference?

Why would (or wouldn't) you like doing a job like this?

CHALLENGE #2: *Think Tank*



Civil engineers get inspiration from any places--other engineers, nature, history, and other sources. One surefire source of inspiration is the Seven Wonders of the World.

Use an Internet search engine to find information and images using search terms like "seven wonders of the natural world," "seven wonders of the ancient world," or "seven wonders of the modern world." Each search will yield different types of results--and inspiration.

Pick a favorite list of wonders and make a poster or flowchart showcasing each wonder. What makes each place so amazing? What can civil engineers learn from them? Label each entry with your answers and ideas.

Civil Engineer Teacher Tips

Herbert Hoover, America's 31st president and a former engineer, once said about engineering, "It is a great profession. There is the fascination of watching a figment of the imagination emerge through the aid of science to a plan on paper. Then it moves to realization in stone or metal or energy. Then it brings jobs and homes to men (and women). Then it elevates the standards of living and adds to the comforts of life. That is the engineer's high privilege."



©Adobe Stock Images/Stifman

DISCUSS

Ask students to list local examples of civil engineering--bridges, highways, dams, skyscrapers, etc.

READ

Students can read the text about civil engineers out loud together (as a class or in teams) or on their own.

CHALLENGE #1: If You Had This Career...

Several questions prompt students to dig into essential information in a first person way that facilitates personal connections. Students can find answers to these questions by:

- Using Google (or another approved Internet search engine) to make specific queries like "what kind of training does a civil engineer need?" or "what other kinds of engineers are there?"
- Visiting career information websites like www.getmyfuture.org or www.mynextmove.org. Both of these websites are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- If available, tapping into your school's career development software platform (such as Career Cruising) or your state's career and college information system (such as www.CFNC.org).

CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

Students are asked to look at the Seven Wonders of the World through the eyes of a civil engineer. The exercise offers the option to explore "seven wonders of the natural world," "seven wonders of the ancient world," or "seven wonders of the modern world." The results of all three queries are awe-inspiring! Allowing time for students to share the different discoveries they made will enrich the learning experience.

EXTEND THE DISCUSSION

Encourage students to visit the American Society of Civil Engineer's website, ASCEville, at www.asceville.org to explore what civil engineers do.

FIND MORE CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

Check out the Bright Futures Press career exploration collection of interactive books for middle grade readers at www.brightfuturespress.com. The following titles feature information about engineering careers: *Find Your Future: Engineering* and *World of Work: STEM*.

Emergency Medical Technician

Emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are real life superheroes. Like other first responders, they rush to the scene of all kinds of accidents, disasters, and emergencies. Whether it's a heart attack, a car crash, a dog bite, or an emergency childbirth--these medical professionals handle all kinds of life or death situations with skill and compassion.

(Feel free to use the back of this sheet for longer answers)

What Do EMTs Do?

When bad things happen, EMTs are on the job. They provide quick and competent care in two types of situations. Medical calls involve things like heart attacks, strokes, or severe allergic reactions. Trauma calls involve injuries caused by accidents, assaults, or natural disasters. No matter the cause, the EMT's job is to provide basic life support treatments like CPR and wound care while the patient is transported to a hospital. Training to become an EMT can start as early as high school with classes in CPR, first aid, and health sciences. EMTs must also complete special training that takes from six months to two years and pass a state or national exam to get certified. Saving lives is one of the best perks of this career.

CHALLENGE #1: *If you had this career...*

What kind of training would you need?

Where could you find a job?

How much money could you earn?

Who would you help and how would you make a difference?

Why would (or wouldn't) you like doing a job like this?



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CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

For big medical emergencies you dial 911 and get expert care. Other times, like when you fall and scrape a knee or get a splinter in your finger, it takes quick thinking and basic first aid skills to care for the injury.

Use the Internet plus advice from the school nurse or other medical professionals you may know to find out what you should do in case you

- get stung by a bee
- sprain your ankle
- burn yourself when cooking
- get a minor cut or scrape that bleeds
- get a bloody nose

Create a chart with first aid tips for each of these situations (and others you may think of).

Emergency Medical Technician Teacher Tips

Emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are among a elite group of first responders known for running into places where most people are running out. They provide an invaluable community service. The work is tough on many levels but many find great satisfaction in the life-saving aspects of the job. Opportunities for EMTs and paramedics are expected to increase by 15% over the next decade.



© Adobe Stock Images/Monkey Business

DISCUSS

Find out what kinds of encounters students may have observed or experienced with first responders. Ask them to describe the kinds of situations where emergency medical technicians might be needed.

READ

Students can read the text about emergency medical technicians out loud together (as a class or in teams) or on their own.

CHALLENGE #1: If You Had This Career...

Several questions prompt students to dig into essential information in a first person way that facilitates personal connections. Students can find answers to these questions by:

- Using Google (or another approved Internet search engine) to make specific queries like “what kind of training does an EMT need?” or “what is the difference between an EMT and a doctor?”
- Visiting career information websites like www.getmyfuture.org or www.mynextmove.org. Both of these websites are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- If available, tapping into your school’s career development software platform (such as Career Cruising) or your state’s career and college information system (such as www.CFNC.org).

CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

This challenge involves investigating proper first aid procedures in the event of a minor, everyday type of injury. Students are encouraged to use Internet research as well as interviews with the school nurse or other medical professionals they can ask for advice. The end goal of this research is to create a chart that they can refer when they find themselves in situations that require basic first aid care.

EXTEND THE DISCUSSION

If possible, invite an EMT to the class to talk about their jobs and to demonstrate basic life saving treatments such as CPR.

FIND MORE CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

Check out the Bright Futures Press career exploration collection of interactive books for middle grade readers at www.brightfuturespress.com. The following titles feature information about health care careers: *Get a Job: Hospital*, *World of Work: Health Science*, and *World of Work: Law & Public Safety*.

Interior Designer

Tune into any of the popular HGTV shows to see interior designers in action. On shows like *Fixer Upper*, *Property Brothers*, and *Love It or List It*, interior designers transform out-dated spaces into beautiful places. From new floors and lighting, to completely renovated bathrooms and kitchens, interior designers do what it takes to make their clients say "WOW"!

(Feel free to use the back of this sheet for longer answers)



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What Do Interior Designers Do?

Interior designers combine creative ideas and practical skills. Their job is to develop design solutions that look good and function well in places where people live, work, and play. Anything from a home or hotel, a hospital or even a jet airplane are fair game for an interior designer's touch. They work with architects, builders, furniture companies, painters, and other design professionals to make sure every last detail comes together according to plan.

Interior designers need special training, often including college, to learn the tricks of this trade. Some states also require professional licenses. It is up to interior designers to stay current on the latest design and color trends.

CHALLENGE #1: *If you had this career...*

What kind of training would you need?

Where could you find a job?

How much money could you earn?

Who would you help and how would you make a difference?

Why would (or wouldn't) you like doing a job like this?

CHALLENGE #2: *Think Tank*

It's time to give that "kid cave" that you call a bedroom a makeover! Out with the blah. And in with the awesome!

What can you do to create a comfortable hang-out that reflects your unique style and interests? Sketch out plans that include an overall design theme.

Are you going for cozy or modern; a Star Wars motif or a spa-like oasis? Add details about favorite colors, furniture lay-out, and special decor. Be sure to include space for sleeping, studying, and having fun.

For extra credit, measure the dimensions of your actual room and furniture and use graph paper to create an accurate diagram showing how you would use the space in a new and improved way.



Interior Designer Teacher Tips

There is often more than meets the eye in a well-designed interior space. Detail-oriented interior designers pull together a myriad of tasks, materials, and craftspeople to transform spaces from bleak to beautiful. Popular HGTV shows introduce impressive "before" and "after" results that can actually provide worthwhile learning experiences for aspiring interior designers.



© Adobe Stock Images/Davydov

DISCUSS

Ask students to describe especially memorable interiors of places they have visited (homes, hotels, restaurants, etc.). What caught their attention and made them stand out from other places? Guide the discussion toward the people and processes that make such places possible.

READ

Students can read the text about interior designers out loud together (as a class or in teams) or on their own.

CHALLENGE #1: If You Had This Career...

Several questions prompt students to dig into essential information in a first person way that facilitates personal connections. Students can find answers to these questions by:

- Using Google (or another approved Internet search engine) to make specific queries like “what kind of training does an interior designer need?” or “where do interior designers work.”
- Visiting career information websites like www.getmyfuture.org or www.mynextmove.org. Both of these websites are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- If available, tapping into your school’s career development software platform (such as Career Cruising) or your state’s career and college information system (such as www.CFNC.org).

CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

This activity encourages students to cultivate design plans by re-imagining their personal space at home. Depending on time and resources, students can simply use the back side of the Career Ideas Challenge to sketch out ideas. For added challenge, they use magazine photos, color swatches, and other elements to storyboard their plans. For extra credit (and to give students a glimpse of some of the mathematical skill involved in the process), students may use graph paper to provide precise dimensions of the space and various design elements.

EXTEND THE DISCUSSION

Interior design is part of a cadre of creative professions that each bring unique talents and resources to the design process. Encourage students to think about how other types of designers such as furniture designers, fabric designers, lighting designers, and others contribute to the final results of an interior design plan.

FIND MORE CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

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Pilot

Imagine you are sitting in the cockpit of a Boeing 747 jet. There are 392 passengers on board ready to take off from Los Angeles to Hong Kong. The destination is 7,233 miles away across the Pacific Ocean. The nonstop flight takes twelve and a half hours. You have co-pilots and relief pilots to help but you are the captain in charge. Ready for take-off?

(Feel free to use the back of this sheet for longer answers)



©Adobe Stock Photos/Roman6231

What Do Pilots Do?

If that sounds like a lot of responsibility it's because it is. Airline pilots must get jets that are worth millions of dollars, hundreds of people, and lots of cargo to their intended destinations. Safety is the goal of every flight. Pilots must file a flight plan, check the weather, and conduct safety checks each time they take-off. All it takes is one look inside a cockpit and you'll understand why it takes a college degree and lots of flight training to prepare for this career. It's complicated! But it is also a thrilling way to see the world. The demand for new pilots is expected to increase over the next decade or so as many experienced pilots will reach retirement age.

CHALLENGE #1: *If you had this career...*

What kind of training would you need?

Where could you find a job?

How much money could you earn?

Who would you help and how would you make a difference?

Why would (or wouldn't) you like doing a job like this?

CHALLENGE #2: *Think Tank*



Go online to <https://foldnfly.com> and pick three different types of paper airplanes. Follow the instructions to make them.

Use the back side of this page to create a chart and add one row for each airplane design that you choose. Add three columns, one each for Time, Distance, and Accuracy.

Conduct at least three test flights for each airplane. Use your chart to compare the performance of each design using this criteria:

- How many seconds did the plane stay aloft?
- How far did the plane travel?
- How well did the plane maintain a straight path from beginning to end?

What do the results tell you about the aerodynamics of the winning airplane design?

Pilot Teacher Tips

Research firm Cowen & Company estimates that “more than 42 percent of active U.S. airline pilots at the biggest carriers will retire over the next 10 years, roughly 22,000 of them.” This is just one profession expected to be affected by the exodus of Baby Boomer professionals.

Adding to this potential shortage is the fact that the military is training fewer pilots due to the use of unmanned aircraft.



©Adobe Stock Images/Roman6321

DISCUSS

Show images of different types of aircraft and see how many your students can identify. Ask them to describe their own experiences flying to different destinations and any observations they recall about the cockpit and flight crew.

READ

Students can read the text about pilots out loud together (as a class or in teams) or on their own.

CHALLENGE #1: If You Had This Career...

Several questions prompt students to dig into essential information in a first person way that facilitates personal connections. Students can find answers to these questions by:

- Using Google (or another approved Internet search engine) to make specific queries like “what kind of flight training does a pilot need?” or “what is a typical day on the job like for pilots.”
- Visiting career information websites like www.getmyfuture.org or www.mynextmove.org. Both of these websites are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- If available, tapping into your school’s career development software platform (such as Career Cruising) or your state’s career and college information system (such as www.CFNC.org).

CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

Students are asked to choose and create 3 different types of paper airplanes using instructions found at <https://foldnfly.com>. They are to record the results of 3 rounds of test flights using each design. While this activity is likely to fall under the “learning can be fun” category, it also provides the means to encourage further investigation into the science behind flight. Students can visit websites like <https://howthingsfly.si.edu/aerodynamics> to find information about the aerodynamics of paper airplanes.

EXTEND THE DISCUSSION

As Baby Boomer pilots retire, experts anticipate a shortage of qualified pilots. This is not the only profession expected to be impacted in this way. Discuss the concepts of supply and demand and demographics in regard to career opportunities.

FIND MORE CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

Check out the Bright Futures Press career exploration collection of interactive books for middle grade readers at www.brightfuturespress.com. For more information about careers like the one featured in this activity see *World of Work: Transportation*.

Social Media Manager

It may be hard to believe but there was no such thing as the Internet, cell phones, and tablets when your grandparents were your age. Social media did not exist. There was no texting. No video chats. And the idea of taking a "selfie" was unimaginable. When you wanted to talk to your friends you called them on your family's telephone or knocked on their front door.

(Feel free to use the back of this sheet for longer answers)



© Adobe Stock Photos/Denisismaglov

What Do Social Media Managers Do?

Today well over half of the world's 7.7 billion people use the Internet. And, 3.4 billion people are active social media users. Social media managers tap into that vast audience by using tweets, blogs, vlogs, Instagram stories, Facebook posts, and other social media tools to build brands and attract customers. The job takes lots of planning, tons of creativity, and an ability to stay at least one step ahead of all the online competition. Companies of all sizes hire social media managers. Some jobs require college degrees in communications or marketing. All require a proven track record in building successful social media platforms.

CHALLENGE #1: *If you had this career...*

What kind of training would you need?

Where could you find a job?

How much money could you earn?

Who would you help and how would you make a difference?

Why would (or wouldn't) you like doing a job like this?

CHALLENGE #2: *Think Tank*



No one does social media quite like celebrities. Actors, sports figures, and even politicians use it to reach out to millions of fans.

This kind of media "power" can be used in good ways to entertain, encourage, and educate. It can also be used in bad ways to bully, gossip, or even spread outright lies.

Hire yourself as the social media manager at your school. Put together a list of five rules that students must follow to keep your school's social media platform safe, friendly, and positive.

Pick a favorite type of tool social media like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and create posts to communicate those rules.

Social Media Manager Teacher Tips

It is quite possible that you will find that the Internet and social media is second nature to many of your students. As "digital natives" they were born into a high-tech world and, in many cases, their comfort level in using it is likely to rival your own. Like other types of technology, social media has created new career paths that continue to change and evolve. These types of careers are redefining traditional marketing and media communications opportunities.



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DISCUSS

Show examples of tweets and social media postings from companies your students may be familiar with. Ask students to describe the people and professions responsible for using social media to create an online buzz and attract fans to their favorite brands.

READ

Students can read the text about social media managers out loud together (as a class or in teams) or on their own.

CHALLENGE #1: If You Had This Career...

Several questions prompt students to dig into essential information in a first person way that facilitates personal connections. Students can find answers to these questions by:

- Using Google (or another approved Internet search engine) to make specific queries like “what kind of training does a social media manager need?” or “what kinds of companies hire social media managers?”
- Visiting career information websites like www.getmyfuture.org or www.mynextmove.org. Both of these websites are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- If available, tapping into your school’s career development software platform (such as Career Cruising) or your state’s career and college information system (such as www.CFNC.org).

CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

Students are encouraged to think about cyber-safety as it pertains to a young audience. They are asked to put themselves in the role of the school’s social media manager and put together five rules for keeping the online scene positive and safe. The bigger challenge is to translate these rules into acceptable social media formats like tweets, Facebook posts, Instagram stories, etc. This should be a fun, creative exercise in how to use social media in ways that do good and attract attention from an intended audience.

EXTEND THE DISCUSSION

Social media has become a powerful force in modern society. Discuss positive and negative influences that students have observed in their own social media worlds.

FIND MORE CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

Check out the Bright Futures Press career exploration collection of interactive books for middle grade readers at www.brightfuturespress.com. For more information about creative, high-tech careers like the one featured in this activity take a look at titles in our Emerging Tech Careers series.

Social Worker

Everyone has problems. It's a guaranteed part of life. In many cases, people sort things out and move on. Sometimes the problems are so big that people need help. Social workers help people find solutions when they are struggling with big problems like homelessness, drug addiction, serious illnesses, and abuse. This career is all about serving people in need.



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(Feel free to use the back of this sheet for longer answers)

What Do Social Workers Do?

Wherever people with big problems are found, you are likely to find social workers. They work at mental health clinics, drug rehabilitation centers, child welfare agencies, and hospitals. Some social workers specialize in providing counseling and therapy services. Others help link people with services and care that they need. For instance, a social worker specializing in family services might be involved in removing children from an abusive situation and placing them in foster care. Some social workers are patient advocates who help patients get proper medical treatment.

All social workers must earn a master's degree in social work. This type of work can be difficult and, at times, heartbreaking. Even so, it is rewarding and there is no doubt that social workers make a difference in people's lives.

CHALLENGE #1: *If you had this career...*

What kind of training would you need?

Where could you find a job?

How much money could you earn?

Who would you help and how would you make a difference?

Why would (or wouldn't) you like doing a job like this?

CHALLENGE #2: *Think Tank*

Moving from one school to another is never easy. Finding your way around, trying to fit in, and making new friends are tough challenges for anyone. Just imagine how much more difficult it would be if you were, not only moving schools, but moving from one country to another. Your clothes are different. The food you bring for lunch is different. You don't even speak the same language!

Your job as social worker for your school is to help immigrant students adjust to their new situations. Come up with a list of ideas to help them cope with the changes they face. Be specific about things like figuring out their class schedules, learning to speak English, and making friends.

Social Worker Teacher Tips

Social workers help people solve and cope with problems in their everyday lives. Clinical social workers also diagnose and treat mental, behavioral, and emotional issues. They are an important part of the community infrastructure.

It should come as no surprise that, since there is no shortage of people with problems, this is a high-demand career with job opportunities expected to grow 16 percent from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations.



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DISCUSS

Talk about big social issues that are common in your community--homelessness, immigration, substance abuse, etc. Ask students where people who face these problems can turn for help and discuss the different types of community agencies that provide support.

READ

Students can read the text about social workers out loud together (as a class or in teams) or on their own.

CHALLENGE #1: If You Had This Career...

Several questions prompt students to dig into essential information in a first person way that facilitates personal connections. Students can find answers to these questions by:

- Using Google (or another approved Internet search engine) to make specific queries like “what kind of training do social workers need?” or “where do social workers work?”
- Visiting career information websites like www.getmyfuture.org or www.mynextmove.org. Both of these websites are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- If available, tapping into your school’s career development software platform (such as Career Cruising) or your state’s career and college information system (such as www.CFNC.org).

CHALLENGE #2: Think Tank

Students are asked to empathize with an immigrant student who has just relocated to their school from another country. Taking on the role of school social worker, they are challenged to plan practical ways they could help the new student make the transition.

EXTEND THE DISCUSSION

Talk about why some people are better suited for “helping” careers than others. Discuss the emotional toll this type of work can cause and ways that helpers can help themselves stay healthy.

FIND MORE CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

Check out the Bright Futures Press career exploration collection of interactive books for middle grade readers at www.brightfuturespress.com. To share more career ideas related to business, take a look at our *World of Work: Human Services* title.