

Career Fair: Career Research 1

The **BIG** Idea

- What are some things to consider when deciding if a career is a good “fit”?

AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up: Career Fair Announcement and Expectations (10 minutes)
- II. RUReadyND.com and Choices Explorer Review (10–15 minutes)
- III. Career Research (15–20 minutes)
- IV. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

MATERIALS

☐ **STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:**

- Student Handbook pages 49 and 50, Career Research
- Student Handbook page 51, What They Do: Lawyer
- Student Handbook page 52, Education: Lawyer

☐ **FACILITATOR PAGES:**

- Facilitator Resource 1, Monthly Calendar
- Facilitator Resource 2, Highlighted What They Do: Lawyer
- Facilitator Resource 3, Highlighted Education: Lawyer

☐ LCD projector

☐ Laptop

☐ Overhead projector

☐ Highlighters

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Use RUReadyND.com and Choices Explorer to find career information, including the job description (**What They Do**), earnings (**Salary & Outlook**), and **Education**. Summarize career information.

OVERVIEW

This lesson launches preparations for a career fair to be held approximately six weeks from now. In the next three lessons (weeks one to three), each student will research a career they've identified as being of interest, creating materials to share their research with others. In week four, they'll prepare their presentation boards. In week five, they'll learn more about the art of listening and asking good questions. In week six, they'll hone their skills as presenters. Following the career fair, the final lesson allows them to reflect on the experience and share what they learned.

To begin this lesson, you'll describe the career fair and set expectations regarding students' finished projects. Then students will use Choices Explorer to begin researching their own assigned careers. (This lesson presumes previous experience with the Career Profiles in Choices Explorer.)

PREPARATION

- ☐ Discuss career fair possibilities with your administration and cooperating teachers.
- ☐ Assign each student a career to investigate based on what they signed up for last week, and keep a master list to help you organize the career fair day. Ideally, each student in the class will research a different career, so decide how you want to handle duplicate requests. In case of duplication, you may wish to let students consult their **Portfolio page 9, Career Finder Results**, to select an alternate career.
- ☐ Create a sample career display and pamphlet, or use examples from previous years, to show students what they're aiming for.

Career Fair Display (sample format)

Best and Worst Day	Career Pamphlet page 1	Career Images
	Career Pamphlet page 2	Career Images
		Personal Reflection

- ☐ Make arrangements for the class to use the computer lab, and make sure the RUReadyND.com is accessible from students' computers.
- ☐ The following handouts need to be made into overhead transparencies or copied onto chart paper:
 - **Student Handbook pages 49 and 50, Career Research**
 - **Student Handbook page 51, What They Do: Lawyer**
 - **Student Handbook page 52, Education: Lawyer**
 - **Facilitator Resource 1, Monthly Calendar**
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with the Career Profiles in Choices Explorer.
- ☐ List the day's **BIG IDEA** and activities on the board.
- ☐ Write the web address RUReadyND.com on the board.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CAREER FAIR INFO

This lesson is the first of a seven-lesson career fair unit. (See below for a week-by-week schedule.) During the first six lessons, students prepare for a seventh-grade career fair to be held in a location, place, and time where career displays can be visited by all participating seventh-graders. During the fair, students will take turns presenting their career research and gathering information about new careers. If it's not possible for the entire grade to participate, you could implement the career fair with smaller groups, such as half the seventh grade, two classes, or even within a single class where scheduling won't permit more. The aim is to create an event that's celebratory and allows students to show off their knowledge.

During this week's lesson, students will begin their research on Choices Explorer. Over the course of three weeks, each student will be responsible for creating a career display and pamphlets as follows:

- **Career Information** (organized using the career pamphlet as a display item, which is also duplicated for use as take-aways for students interested in a career)
- **Personal Reflection**
- **Career Images**
- **Best and Worst Day** (optional)

Over the next three weeks, students will prepare the following materials for their career fair display:

- WEEK 1. **What They Do, Salary & Outlook, and Education**, research
- WEEK 2. **Ask the Experts Likes and Dislikes** research
 Fill out **Career Pamphlet**
- WEEK 3. Complete **Career Pamphlet**
 Complete **Best and Worst Days**
 Complete **Personal Reflection**
- WEEK 4. Assemble materials
- WEEK 5. Discuss effective strategies for listening and asking questions
- WEEK 6. Discuss effective speaking strategies, practice oral presentations

CAREER FAIR

- WEEK 7. Evaluate participation and reflect on what they learned

RUREADYND.COM & CHOICES EXPLORER INFORMATION

RUReadyND.com and Choices Explorer (RUReadyND.com) is searchable by career in any of the following ways:

- Option 1: Click on the **Work** tab, and then click on the **Keyword Search** in the **Find Careers By** section. Type the name of the occupation you're looking for into the **Search for** box.
- Option 2: Type the name of the occupation that you're looking for into the **Search** box in the upper right hand corner of any screen.
- Option 3: Click on the **Work** tab and explore careers by cluster using the **Choose a Career Cluster** section.
- Option 4: Click on the **Work** tab and explore occupations by school subject using the links in the **Your School Subjects** area.

Each occupation profile includes the following:

- What They Do
- Salary & Outlook (including wages and employment outlook)
- Education
- Interviews
- Get Started (links to related websites and real-life activities)

Some careers also include video clips describing the career. To view the video clips, you need:

- Either Windows Media Player or QuickTime 4.0 or higher.

Note: Students can save interesting careers to their portfolios or print a copy to take home.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

See Careers Lesson 1 for background information on computers and modifications in case computers are not available.

For the most part, Choices Explorer is written at a sixth grade reading level. However, the reading will be a challenge for many students. If students have difficulty reading the material, they'll need to help each other with difficult vocabulary and re-read complex passages to figure out the meaning. You'll need to circulate and provide help to students who need it.

It may help to print out Choices Explorer resources so students can mark up the pages. If your class finishes quickly, it's appropriate to move on to next week's lesson, as students will only have three more in-class opportunities to create the materials required for the career fair.

In **Activity II**, you may find that walking students through the process of identifying job description details and education needed is too much for one lesson. If so, skip **Student Handbook page 51, What They Do: Lawyer** and focus on **Student Handbook page 52, Education: Lawyer**.

You may want to talk to your students' English teacher to see how much modeling is needed to illustrate summarizing a passage's main idea and supporting details.

Feel free to allow students who struggle with reading and writing to present their career in an alternative way. One example could be creating a slide show set to music.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. Warm Up: Career Fair Announcement and Expectations (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Welcome back, everyone. By now, you probably realize that there are hundreds of careers to choose from—including many that you may never have heard of before. If you started today and researched one career a week... well, you'd graduate from high school without investigating them all. But imagine how many careers you could learn about if everyone in the seventh grade researched a career and shared what they learned. That's why we're having a career fair just ____ weeks from ____!

Your assignment for the career fair is to become an expert in one career. You will design a display that describes your career, as well as a pamphlet that interested students can take with them.

[Show students a sample career display and pamphlet.]

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** If this seems like a lot to research and prepare, don't worry. We're going to break down the work into manageable weekly tasks. Here's a look at what we'll be doing each week to prepare for the career fair.

[Show the overhead transparencies of **Facilitator Resource 1, Monthly Calendar** (two copies) and show students the date of the career fair and what you'll be doing each week to prepare. Middle-school students struggle with long-term planning, and it's helpful for you to map things out so they have an idea of the time frame.]

3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** How much effort you put into your "performance" will be entirely up to you. You can bring in props, dress like someone who would have this career, do whatever it takes to give seventh-graders from other classes a clear idea of what someone who has this career does for a living.

All displays will be set up in the _____. Not only will you have a chance to present information about your own career, but you will also have a chance to listen to the presentations about other careers. You should be prepared to talk to a small group of students at a time—say, three to five people, and answer any questions they might have about your career.

We will spend the next three weeks researching and preparing materials. The week after that (week four), we'll create presentation boards. During the fifth week, we'll create a list of questions to ask presenters. During the sixth and final week, we'll prepare and practice our oral presentations.

Are you ready to get started?

4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** I've assigned each of you a different career based on the preferences you listed last week. If you didn't get one of your top choices, it means many people were interested in the same careers as you were. [Distribute assignments to students, and provide an opportunity for unassigned students to make an alternate choice from their **Portfolio page 9, Career Finder Results.**]

II. Choices Explorer Review (10 - 15 minutes)

1. [Ask students to turn to **Student Handbook pages 49 and 50, Career Research.**]
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** This is the form you'll use to take notes about your career. You are encouraged to include as many details as possible, so feel free to use a separate piece of paper if you need more space. Use the same headings—**What They Do, Education, Salary & Outlook**, and so on, to help you stay organized.

Today, we're going to focus on three sections of the **Career Research** page: **What They Do, Education, and Salary and Outlook.** We'll research information for the other sections next week.

At the top of the page, write the name of your career. On the second line, write the name of the website you use. For today, we'll all be searching in the same place—**Choices Explorer** in RUPrepareND.com.

3. [Write RUPrepareND.com on the board and assist the students with signing in.]
4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Together, let's review where to research information about your career's job description, which we'll call **What They Do, Education**, and earnings which we'll call **Salary & Outlook.**

[Illustrate each step using your laptop and LCD projector.]

Once you've signed in, click on the **Work** tab. Then click on the **Keyword Search** link in the **Find Careers By** section and type the career into the Search For box. For practice,

let's type in "lawyer." Now click on Lawyer in the list of careers that appear. There are several types of lawyers in this list. We want the one that's just called "Lawyer."

Now, let's look for the information we need about this career:

- **What They Do:** This is the first page that comes up. As you know from using this site before, this section gives a good overview of the job, what it involves, and where people with this career usually work. As you complete this section in your portfolio page, remember that you are summarizing the information in your own words.

Let's practice one example together.

[Place a copy of the **Student Handbook page 51, What They Do: Lawyer** on an overhead projector. Pass out a highlighter to each student.]

Turn to **Student Handbook page 51, What They Do: Lawyer**. After reading the "What They Do," we are going to stop and discuss the most important facts. I will underline the important facts on the overhead and you should highlight those facts with the highlighters you were just given. Wait to highlight the information until we go over it together. After reading over these two sections, we'll have an overview of what a career is about.

[Have a different volunteer read each bulleted item. Stop as needed, and illustrate how to underline key information, using **Facilitator Resource 2, Highlighted What They Do: Lawyer** as your guide.]

If you need to return to the **What They Do** page, just click the blue tab in the left-hand menu.

- **Salary & Outlook:** To find information about the career's earnings, just click the blue tab labeled **Salary & Outlook**. You'll find some great information here. You can find the **Average Annual Earnings** and **Average Hourly Earnings** for the career at the top of the page. Who knows what an average annual earnings is? (This combines the wages for the beginning, middle, and experienced levels of the career.) You'll write down the average annual earnings on your **Career Research** sheet.

[Demonstrate how to do this on the **Career Research** sheet.]

- **What to Learn:** As you'll see on the **Career Research** portfolio page, you are asked to check the education needed for this career. Who remembers where we found this information last week?

You can find more details by clicking the blue **Education** tab. Please click it now.

You'll find information about education needed beyond high school on this page. Some careers have more than one education path—you might learn to be an electrician by going to a trade school or by working as an apprentice, where you get on-the-job training. Be sure to read all the information so you know what your options are.

[Have students turn to **Student Handbook page 52, Education: Lawyer** and follow the same procedure they did for the **What They Do** section, above, using **Facilitator Resource 3, Highlighted Education: Lawyer** as your guide.]

5. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** These are the three sections you'll be researching today.
[Answer any questions and instruct students to begin their research.]

III. Career Research (15–20 minutes)

1. [Allow students to spend the remainder of the period researching on their own, while you circulate to answer questions, troubleshoot, and keep them on task.]

IV. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Next week, you'll continue your career research. You'll learn how people who are working in a career can help you decide if it's right for you.
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** You all did a great job today. I hope you're looking forward to learning even more about your career next week!

Month: _____

[illegible]

Month: _____

[illegible]

Highlighted What They Do: Lawyer From Choices Explorer

Lawyers, also called attorneys, are experts in persuasion and law. While they perform a variety of functions, **their common goal is to use their knowledge of the law to help clients get what they want** and, in a way, to reduce friction.

Law is sometimes called the skeleton of society. It is the underlying, hidden structure to the interactions between people. **Lawyers help guide those interactions and settle disputes.**

Some **lawyers work for the government as prosecutors.** They prosecute people charged with crimes on behalf of society. Other **lawyers work in private practice.** They may specialize in different areas, like criminal or family law.

Lawyers tend to work long hours, especially at big city firms. "It's a client-based industry, so when the clients are there and they need you, you have to be there," says Deanna Morash. She's a lawyer as well as director of career services at a law school.

Two of the most important qualities a future lawyer can have are a solid work ethic and attention to detail, says Morash. "In addition to that, **strong reading, writing and analytical skills are also key to success,**" she says.

Large firms tend to focus on a variety of areas, **including complicated commercial and corporate law.** Smaller specialty firms (also called boutique firms) will **often focus on just one or two areas, such as family law or intellectual property.**

Law firms charge on an hourly basis or on a percentage (contingency) basis. That means that the lawyers get a cut of the settlement or lawsuit once it's all over.

Lawyers work in many places other than just law firms. **One big employer of lawyers is government.**

"All levels of government have a need for actual practicing lawyers in their area," says Morash. "They also want people who weren't necessarily even called to the bar... but people with law degrees and the skill set that that offers."

Being called to the bar is what happens after a law student has finished their law degree. When you're called to the bar, you're admitted to a state law society. You're then qualified to call yourself a lawyer and provide legal advice.

Consulting is another career option that's often overlooked. **Lawyers provide consulting services in the areas of legal issues (of course!), management, human resources, and business in general.** They can also work as in-house legal counsel for a corporation.

"One of the benefits or upsides of a legal degree is that it provides really good skills that tend to be transferable to a lot of other areas, so it's a good foundation," says Morash.

For those interested in humanitarian causes, **there are international positions with non-governmental associations such as the Red Cross and Lawyers Without Borders.** Academia is another option, although a master's degree or PhD in law is generally required.

Those who want to help people with low incomes can work for a legal aid office. Jeremy White is the managing attorney at a legal aid office in Virginia. "[Lawyers] come here because they kind of want to get their hands dirty, so to speak, and want client contact," says White. "They want to... feel like they're doing some good."

"It's very tangible, it's real basic needs—your housing, your health care, your job," says White. "Even though the case may not be a million dollar case, the effect on that family is just like a million dollar case would be to a corporation."

You might think that legal aid work would be an especially difficult area in which to work. But White says that isn't necessarily true.

"I don't know if it's any more stressful or draining than any other area of the law," he says. "You've got to have a personality that digs in and can endure for the long haul, and I think that's probably true across the legal profession."

SOURCE: RUPrepareND.com

Highlighted Education: Lawyer From Choices Explorer

Law school is tough and you have to have high marks to get in. Once you're in, hard work will help set you apart from your classmates when it's time to search for a job.

Jonathan Bida is a new lawyer who earned several awards for academic achievement while completing his law degree.

"If you pay attention, if you have some modicum of interest in what you're doing, and you're committed to it, then I think you'll do well," he says of his law school experience. "I really can't see that I'm smarter than other people that I went to law school with. I think I worked harder than most."

Experts say law school graduates who are willing to move to find jobs and who have a specialty will have the easiest time finding employment.

Aspiring law students have to have a full, four-year degree before they start law school. Then, they must write an aptitude test (LSAT) to get into a law school. Law school is three years. At law school, they may attend specialized clinics or courses pertaining to a specific area of law.

Finally, they must pass a bar examination administered by a state law society in order to become a licensed lawyer.

SOURCE: RUReadyND.com

Career Research

My Career: _____

Website: _____



What They Do:

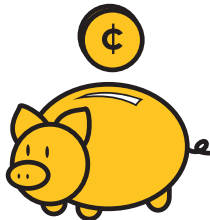
Summarize this career in one or two sentences. _____

List some of the things this person has to do on the job.

- _____

- _____

- _____



Salary & Outlook

List the average annual earnings and the average hourly earnings for the career that you have chosen. For most careers, these will appear in a grid. For some careers, you will need to read the text on the page to find these answers.

Average Annual Earnings: \$_____ a year

Average Hourly Earnings: \$_____ an hour



Education

Check the boxes that best describe the education needed for this career.

- ☐ High school
- ☐ Apprenticeship (paid to learn on the job)
- ☐ Tech or trade school (cooking or car repair, for example)
- ☐ Two-year community college (associate's degree)
- ☐ Four-year college (bachelor's degree)
- ☐ More than four years of college

Details:

Ask the Experts! Likes and Dislikes

(found on the **Interview** tab)

One of the best ways to learn about a career is to learn what the experts have to say about it. Write down at least two things that the experts like and two things that the experts dislike about the career you chose based on the interview you read.

Likes:

1. _____
2. _____

Dislikes:

1. _____
2. _____

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