

Exploring the Discovery Zone

This lesson is designed to promote early career exploration and introduce students to potential career opportunities and post-secondary planning.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Build career navigation skills
2. Identify education level & areas of knowledge needed for potential careers
3. Identify a career category of interest

ACTIVITIES

PART 1

Content Knowledge

Start this lesson by having a discussion with students about career exploration and why it's important to start in middle school.

What is career exploration?

1. Starting to identify interests, subjects, and values that may apply to a potential career path
2. Starting to identify the necessary skills and areas of knowledge that will make students employable in the future
3. Encouraging the development of short and long-term goals

What are the benefits of early career exploration?

1. Improvement of academic performance
2. Improvement of attitude and motivation
3. Motivation to create a high school course plan
4. Motivation to create a post-secondary plan

PART 2

Applying Information

Students should log in to mefapathway.org and navigate to *Career Discovery Zone* under the *Discover Careers* tab. Students can then select the Career Discovery Zone activity they would like to explore.

Grade Level: 6-8

MEFA PATHWAY SECTIONS WITHIN THIS LESSON:

- Discovery Zone
- Career List

SUBJECT AREAS:

- Career Exploration

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Internet connection to work with the MEFA Pathway website
- Computer program to create a presentation

Email any questions to:
info@mefapathway.org

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LESSON PLAN

- *Everyday Things* allows students to explore careers based on subjects or activities they enjoy
- *Says Who* exposes students to various careers by identifying on-the-job tasks related to specific work environments
- *Favorite Subjects* shows students the connection between the subjects studied in school to potential college majors and career options
- *Would You Rather* allows students to answer a series of questions to help them discover career categories of interest

The results of each Discovery Zone activity will generate a list of careers students can explore further. Students should select a career to view its details page, which includes a short summary, education level needed, median wage, career category, and areas of knowledge required. Students should save careers they would like to explore further, which will place them on the student's *My Career List*.

Encourage students to identify areas of knowledge they would need expertise in to pursue a particular career category.

PART 3

Evaluating Information

1. Once students have started saving careers to their *My Career List* they should review and take note of career categories that appear repeatedly and identify a potential area of study.
2. Encourage students to think about courses they will take in high school to support a specific career category and ultimately to identify and build a post-secondary plan.
3. Encourage students to revisit the activities within the *Career Discovery Zone* to see if their areas of interests, favorite subjects, or career categories have changed or expanded over time.

PART 4

Critical Thinking/Creative Application

Students should create an advertisement, billboard, flyer, collage, or video promoting the career category that has appeared the most on their *My Career List*. The creation should answer the questions included in the *Career Category Handout*, look professional, and use images.

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Career Category Handout

1. What is the name of the career category selected?
2. What are the three most appealing careers to you in this career category?
3. What education, experience, and job training is required for these careers?
4. What are some of the daily tasks and work activities of these careers?
5. What are areas of knowledge that may be required of these careers?
6. What kind of wages could you make at these jobs?
7. What are some related professions?

Exploring the Discovery Zone

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CATEGORY	EXCELLENT 4	GOOD 3	SATISFACTORY 2	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT 1
Content Accuracy	All content on the presentation is accurate. There are no factual errors.	Most of the content is accurate but there is one piece of information that seems inaccurate.	The content is generally accurate, but one piece of information is clearly inaccurate.	The content is confusing or contains more than one factual error.
Sequencing of Information	The information is organized in a clear, logical way.	Most information is organized in a clear, logical way.	Some information is logically sequenced.	There is no clear plan for the organization of information.
Effectiveness	The presentation includes all material needed to give a good understanding of the topic.	The presentation is lacking one or two key elements.	The presentation is missing more than two key elements.	The presentation is lacking several key elements and has inaccuracies.
Use of Graphics	All graphics are attractive (size and colors) and support the topic of the presentation.	A few graphics are not attractive but all support the topic of the presentation.	All graphics are attractive but a few do not support the topic of the presentation.	Several graphics are unattractive AND detract from the content of the presentation.
Font Choice & Formatting	Font formats (size, bold, italic) have been carefully planned to enhance readability and content.	Font formats have been carefully planned to enhance readability.	Font formats have been carefully planned to complement the content. It may be a little hard to read.	Font formatting makes it very difficult to read the material.
Conventions. Student uses proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	The presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors.	The presentation has 1- 2 misspellings, but no grammatical errors.	The presentation has 1- 2 grammatical errors but no misspellings.	The presentation has more than 2 grammatical and/or spelling errors.