Dear Teachers:

This Newspaper in Education supplement is designed to expose your students to a wide range of career possibilities and help them explore the paths that seem right for them. All while using the newspaper – one of the most extensive and up-to-date textbooks in the world.

To make this NIE experience as successful and enjoyable as possible, consider these suggestions:

• Before introducing the section, read it through. A few of the activities are ongoing and some may require advanced preparation.

• Arrange to have sets of newspapers available in the classroom each day.

• Give the students plenty of space when they are using the newspaper. They can sit at tables or on the floor.

• If at all possible, have at least one copy of the Occupational Outlook Handbook (available in almost any library) on hand in the classroom for the duration of the section. If you can’t obtain a copy of the OOH, provide the students with alternate resources for investigating jobs and their requirements.

• One of the most beneficial activities in career exploration is Job Shadowing (see page 11). You are strongly encouraged to help your students participate.

• All of the activities in this section are optional. Feel free to change them to suit the personality of your class, or get creative and add your own.

• Have fun! Allow students to investigate their wildest career dreams, but also encourage them to explore more practical alternatives.

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Your Logo Here
What do you want to be when you grow up? No doubt, it’s a question you’ve been asked many times, starting when you were 5 or 6 or even younger. And, no doubt, you’ve had an answer ready each time you were asked, although that answer has probably changed more than once as you’ve grown.

And that’s not surprising – or bad. It’s unlikely, even ludicrous, to think a 5-year-old child could make a real career decision and then stick to it. A very few special people might be tiny violin-playing prodigies or seem to be born gymnasts, but for most of us, that’s far from the case.

So why do those aunts, uncles and other adults you meet insist on asking the question? For the same reason adults almost always ask, “What do you do?” when they meet. Because your answer says a lot about who you are.

The career you choose will go a long way in determining the sort of life you’ll lead: how much education you’ll have, how much money you’ll make, where you’ll live – even whether you’ll stay in one place or move frequently. It may also determine the hours you work and the people with whom you spend much of your time.

And, of course, your career choice will determine how you’ll spend much of your time. If you spend 40 hours a week 50 weeks a year for 45 years doing the same job, you’ll have spent 18,000 hours at it by the time you retire. And that figure’s probably low, since it doesn’t include overtime or the extra hours many professions demand.

Fortunately, you don’t have to make your career decision right this minute. In fact, you probably shouldn’t. Instead of making a firm decision that might end up being the wrong one, concentrate on exploring careers. That’s what this section is all about: Finding out about the amazing number of opportunities out there and trying the ones that seem interesting on for size. You might find that a job that seemed interesting to you isn’t as great as you thought and one that at first glance didn’t appeal to you at all suits you exactly. It’s a bit like shopping for clothes: What looks good on the rack might not fit you at all once you try it on. The trick is to learn as much as you can about yourself and as much as you can about careers and then put the information together.
The first – and arguably the most important – step in choosing a career is to study. But this time what you need to study isn’t math or social studies (we’ll get to those later). What you need to study is yourself.

That’s because the career you choose must suit your personality – your likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses. Otherwise, you’re almost certain to be unhappy. As Marsha Sinetar, author of Do What You Love, The Money Will Follow, put it, “Work needs to fit your personality just like shoes need to fit your feet.” You wouldn’t want to spend 40 or more hours a week wearing shoes that didn’t fit. It would be miserable – and you very likely wouldn’t get very far. In the same way, a person who hates math would be miserable as an accountant and a person who feels sick at the sight of blood would be unhappy working in a doctor’s office.

Unfortunately, though, studies show that up to 75 percent of workers in the United States are unhappy in their jobs. And when do most men have heart attacks? Monday mornings, of course.

So how do you find a career you can enjoy? Start by taking a good long look at yourself.

First, list your top five career choices, in order. Next to each one, write down what about it appeals to you.

Next, list your three best subjects in school.

List your three favorite subjects. For most people, this list and the one above will be either identical or very close. Why? Because people tend to enjoy the things they’re good at and be good at the things they enjoy. That’s why you’re more likely to be successful in a career you like than in one you only tolerate.

Whether they’re the same or not, though, your favorite subjects and your best subjects shed light on what you like to do and where your abilities lie.
Next, list your 10 favorite activities. Anything counts, whether it’s playing football, talking on the phone, or listening to music.

[Activity]

[Activity]

Now, list 10 things you’ve never done but would like to do. Want to fly a plane or sail solo around the world? Want to write a best-selling novel or record a No. 1 country single? Write them down, whatever they are.

[Activity]

[Activity]

Look at yourself through your best friend’s eyes and choose five adjectives he or she might use to describe your personality. Are you shy or outgoing? Athletic or bookish? (There’s no rule that says you can’t be athletic AND bookish.)

[Activity]

The next activity is a chance to indulge in pure fantasy. Close your eyes and imagine your life 10 years from now in as much detail as possible. Where will you live? In the heart of a big city or way out in the country? What kind of car will you drive? Will you have a long commute to work or live just around the corner? Will you be married, have children? What will your job be like? Will you work 9 to 5 or more irregular hours? What will you wear to work?

Now, write a one-page description of your dream.

Compare the list of career choices you made at the top of this page with the answers that followed. Are they consistent? Do they, particularly your top choice, fit in with the “perfect life” you imagined for yourself?

Make another list of career choices based on your answers on these two pages. (If your answers were consistent, it’s OK to keep the same list.)

As a class, conduct a survey of workers you know. Each student should ask five to 10 people what their job is and whether they’re happy doing it. Tally your results and figure the percentage of people who are unhappy in their jobs and the ratio of unhappy to happy people. Prepare a newspaper report of your findings. Remember to answer the 5 W’s: Who, What, When, Where, and Why.
The world you’ll soon step into is not the same one your parents stepped into two or three decades ago. When they started out it was fairly common for a young person to take a job with a company and stay with that company throughout their working life.

Statistics show it’s not that way anymore: Although people younger than 25 have always tended to change jobs frequently, these days even people 25 and older aren’t staying put for very long. Experts now say the average person entering the work force will change jobs eight times before reaching retirement. And what’s more, that same person will change careers – going from hair styling to accounting, for instance – three or more times.

Why? Because the world is changing so quickly. Every year the development of new technology makes some jobs obsolete while at the same time creating entirely new jobs – ones that never existed before. Experts predict that by the year 2005 the American work force will consist of 150 million people – an increase of more than 20 million jobs in just 20 years.

Another big trend in the ‘90s has been “down-sizing.” That’s where a company tries to save money by reducing the number of people it employs. This trend has caused hundreds of thousands of people to lose their jobs. Through no fault of their own, and with no choice in the matter, these people have been forced to find new jobs, often in different professions.

Although no one can predict with complete accuracy which jobs will thrive in the future and which will not, it is possible to check a specific job’s outlook. That’s an expert’s projection of how much opportunity will be available in a particular field in the next five or 10 years.

To determine the job’s outlook, experts look at a variety of factors, including the opportunity that exists in the field now, the average age of people working in the field (are the majority young and just starting out or are they approaching retirement age?), the number of people in training for the field, developing technology, and economic and demographic trends. It sounds pretty complicated, but really it’s not so difficult to understand.

This information is also listed in the Occupational Outlook Handbook. Check the outlook for the fields on your list. Do the experts predict the field will grow rapidly, grow slowly or decline?

Remember that a job’s outlook should not be the key factor in your decision to pursue it. Even jobs that are predicted to decline will need workers to replace those who leave the labor force. Follow the career that interests you most, do your best, and you’ll find opportunity. If, along the way, you happen to choose a field whose outlook is promising, it will be that much better for you.
Demographics is the statistical study of populations. In the United States, population growth tends to rise and fall unevenly. In the 20 years following World War II, for instance, babies were born in record numbers. This was called the baby boom, and its echo is still being heard.

The generation before the baby boom was much smaller, so as the boomers grew up, their sheer numbers overwhelmed just about everything in their path. Schools held classes in nearby churches and civic buildings or divided the students in half and held school twice a day because they just didn't have the facilities for so many students. When the baby boomers began to graduate, they flooded the job market in the same way. There were too many of them vying for the jobs the generation before them had held, and the competition was intense.

Now the baby boomers are older – your parents are probably among them – and your own smaller generation will soon be entering the job market. For you this means that finding an entry-level job will probably be easy, since the baby boomers have moved on in their careers. But because they are still working, you will be competing with them for higher-level jobs.

Demographics influences the job market in other ways, too. That's because people's wants and needs determine the demand for goods and services – and when a product or service is in high demand, jobs in that industry are generally plentiful. The baby boomers come into play here, too. One example of this is the health-care field. Because the baby-boomers are aging and new medical treatments are enabling people to live longer, the experts realize these people will need health care. The outlook for jobs in all facets of health-care, then, is extremely good.

Less than 100 years ago, 11 million people in the United States worked on farms, growing 100 percent of our national food supply. By 1992, fewer than 1 million people worked on farms and those who did were able to grow more than 120 percent of the food we need. Why the change? Technology. New and better machinery, fertilizers, and farming techniques have enabled fewer people to produce more.

These days, technology is changing faster than ever – and that means the job market is changing rapidly, too. But that isn't necessarily bad news, because even when technology means fewer jobs in one area, it usually creates a need for workers in other areas. Can you think of areas in which agricultural technology might have created jobs?

Technology is also the reason computer skills are so important in today's job market – and will continue to be important in the future.
The working world can be divided into 15 basic fields. Each field then contains many different jobs, which can be categorized by the education or training they require. This chart lists a few of these many jobs. The education/training levels are explained at right.

### Agribusiness & Natural Resources
- Fruit picker
- General farm hand
- Turkey raiser
- Fish hatchery worker
- Logger
- Park worker
- Quarry worker

### Business & Office
- Accounting clerk
- Bank teller
- Cashier
- Messenger
- Receptionist
- Typist

### Communications & Media
- Film projectionist
- Film splicer
- Stagehand
- Assistant to telephone line installer or repairer

### Construction
- Construction laborer
- Assistant to bricklayer or carpenter

### Environment
- Campground caretaker
- Forest-fire fighter
- Fire patroller
- Tree planter
- Orchard fumigator
- Sewage disposal worker

### Fine Arts & Humanities
- Stagehand
- Pop musician or singer

### Health
- Nurse’s aide
- Hospital orderly
- Diet clerk
- Home health aide
- Medical office clerk
- Receptionist

### Level 1
- Farmer
- Rancher
- Game warden
- Logging supervisor
- Sheep herder
- Driller
- Miner
- Mine supervisor
- Oil pumper
- Mining equipment mechanic

### Level 2
- Agricultural aide
- Dairy technologist
- Poultry technician
- Conservation aide
- Geological technician
- Park ranger
- Petroleum engineering aide

### Level 3
- Executive, legal or medical secretary
- Computer programmer
- Real estate salesperson

### Level 4
- Accountant
- Banker
- Business executive
- Economist
- Human resources director
- Statistician
- Lawyer
- Journalist
- Scriptwriter
- Producer
- Program director
- Radio, television or telephone engineer
- Radio or television station manager

### Find five jobs that interest you on the chart above. What level of training do they require? Where in your area might you get such training? Is there a need for this type of work in your area? Why or why not?
Choose one category on this chart that interests you (such as Construction or Health). Then choose one job at each level of the category and find out its average annual salary. How much more than the Level 1 person does the Level 4 person make in a year? If the average person works 45 years, how much more will the Level 4 person make? What do you conclude, then, about the value of education?
Take just a minute to write down a short definition of the word “work.”

Now do the same for “play.”

Got them? Now share what you wrote with the class.

Did you all say pretty much the same things?

Chances are you did, and chances are your definitions for work and play were exact opposites of each other. For work, you might have written, “It’s hard,” or “It’s boring,” and at least some of you probably wrote, “You get paid for doing it.” For play, you probably said, “It’s fun,” and maybe even “It’s what you do when you’re not working.”

Work and play then, must be mutually exclusive. Something can be work or it can be play, but it certainly can’t be both.

Or can it? We said before that 75 percent of Americans don’t enjoy their jobs. But that means 25 percent do. Wouldn’t you rather be part of the 25 percent that do than the 75 that don’t?

...75 percent of Americans don’t enjoy their jobs, but that means 25 percent like what they do.
So now you know a little bit more about yourself. But how do you know whether the career choices you think will suit you really will?

The next step is finding out everything you can about the jobs that interest you. You'll want to find out what the job really involves, what skills it requires, what training or education is necessary, employment projections, opportunity for advancement, and typical earnings.

Start by looking up the jobs you chose in the Occupational Outlook Handbook, a book published annually by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the U.S. Department of Labor. It gives all the information listed above for just about any job you can think of. Pay particular attention to the description of the work itself. Is it what you thought, or were there some surprises?

One excellent way to learn about a job is by spending a day observing someone who does it. If possible, arrange to spend a day with a professional in one of your chosen fields.

If you do get this opportunity, remember to:

• Be on time
• Dress appropriately
• Be dependable – don’t call at the last minute and plead illness
• Be courteous
• Cooperate with other workers
• Be honest

Ask the professional you shadow the following questions:

• What led to your being given this position?
• How much training or education is necessary?
• What are your responsibilities?
• What do you like best about the work?
• Are there any drawbacks?
• What advice would you have for a person considering this type of work?

Did what you observed surprise you?

Do you still think this career is for you? Why or why not?
By now you’ve read more than a few classified want ads and you’ve probably noticed that almost all of them, particularly the better-paying ones, require some sort of experience. But if you need a job to get experience and you need experience to get a job, how do you get started?

Here are a few ways you can begin building job skills. One hint: The sooner you get started, the better.

Working during the school year can be tough. School is already a full-time job – more if you’re involved in extracurricular activities – so adding a job to that already heavy load might be asking too much of yourself. Grades should be your top priority. For that reason, most career counselors recommend that you not work while you’re going to school unless it’s an absolute necessity.

But summer is a different story. It’s the perfect time to gain valuable work experience and insight into what sorts of jobs interest you – and maybe even earn a little money.

And it doesn’t matter what your summer job is, or even whether you like it. When you’re just starting out, the most important lessons can be learned just about anywhere. Those lessons are: the importance of being on time, how to take instructions from a supervisor, how to get along with superiors and clients, and how to handle money.

You can earn valuable references for future jobs by acting responsibly and doing your job well, and you can learn what tasks you enjoy doing. Even a job you hate has a valuable lesson to teach: that it’s not the job for you.

Just because a job doesn’t pay doesn’t mean it isn’t valuable. Volunteering is a great way to gain job skills, get a close-up look at different jobs, and make networking contacts – all while doing something good for the community. Most college applications ask about community involvement and volunteer work, too.

Many organizations offer volunteer opportunities. The best approach is to choose an organization whose work relates to your chosen career. If you think you’d like to be a doctor, for instance, volunteering at a hospital would give you a chance to meet and talk to doctors and to observe them at work. (You just might find that what goes on behind the scenes gives you a different perspective than observing the doctor from the patient’s point of view.)

Even if you’re unable to find work in your chosen field, volunteering can still be valuable in your career education. You’ll gain work skills no matter where you work and you never know, you could find you like doing something you never would have considered as a career otherwise.

List any volunteer work you’ve done. (It could be a one-time thing, like helping with the Muscular Dystrophy drive, or long-term, such as candy-stripping.) Now list every skill you gained from your involvement.
Getting involved in after-school activities is another great way to build job skills. Types of activities include school management, school publications, special interest clubs, dramatics and public speaking, music, academic-competition teams, and athletics.

Any of these activities offers the opportunity to learn competition and leadership, both of which are valuable on the job, and most teach particular skills, such as public speaking, acting or news writing.

Still not convinced? Studies show that involvement in extracurricular activities is actually a better predictor of future job success than academic achievement.
These days, the number of career opportunities you have depends more and more on how much education you have. Your level of education also affects how much money you can expect to make: Manufacturing jobs that pay well and require no more than a high school diploma are not as plentiful as they once were and the outlook for them is not expected to improve. Competition for these jobs is fierce.

Job security is another factor determined to a large extent by education. Although a college degree is no guarantee that you'll never face unemployment, it does reduce your chances of it, as well as the time you might spend looking for another job.

On average, jobs requiring the most education are growing fastest, too. But, depending on the field, that education doesn’t necessarily have to come in the form of a college degree.

The choice when you graduate from high school isn’t necessarily a four-year college or nothing at all. Other options include attending a community college for two years and then transferring to a four-year program, attending a community college for two years and receiving an associate degree, trade or technical school, military service, and on-the-job training or apprenticeship programs.

### Earnings Increase With Education and Training

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Average Earnings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HS Dropout</td>
<td>$14,652</td>
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<tr>
<td>HS Graduate</td>
<td>$18,348</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
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<td>Associate</td>
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<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>$30,492</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Somewhere between your choice of a career and the job of your dreams lies one inevitable obstacle: the interview. Job interviews can be pretty intimidating, but with a little preparation you just might find it’s a breeze.

Start with research. Find out as much as you can about the company you’re interviewing with. What do they do, exactly? Check your local public library for newspaper and magazine articles that might give you some insight. Then, when you’re being interviewed, tell the interviewer what you can do for the company.

Know, too, exactly what job you’d like to do. Don’t expect to lay out your qualifications and have the interviewer find a job for you. It’s unprofessional, and it most likely won’t work.

Arrive alone. It might be tempting to take your best friend, Carol, along for moral support, but deny yourself this temptation: It looks unprofessional. Instead, call Carol the minute you get home.

Be on time. If you’re late for the interview, they’ll assume you’ll be late coming to work.

Anticipate the interviewer’s questions. Be prepared, but don’t be too rehearsed. One hint: When the interviewer says, “Tell me about yourself.” it doesn’t mean, “Tell me about yourself.” it means, “Tell me what about you makes you the right person for this job and this company.”

Other questions that are often asked in interviews:
• What would you like to be doing in five years?
• What are your strengths?
• What are your weaknesses? (Nobody expects you to be brutally honest. Whatever your answer, put a positive spin on it.)
• What was the last book you read?

– Don’t ask about salary or benefits until you’ve been offered a job.
– Look the part. Dress the way professionals in that field dress; if in doubt, err on the side of the conservative. Don’t wear too much perfume or cologne, and women should go easy on the makeup.
– Do ask questions when the interviewer asks if you have any. Don’t grill the person you’re talking to, but do show you’re interested and alert by asking a question or two.
– Don’t talk about your problems or your personal life.
– Do send a thank-you note. You can bet it will impress them.

From the classifieds, choose an ad that interests you. Do some research on the company (if one is mentioned) or on a company that might have placed such an ad. Trade ads with a classmate and take turns interviewing each other for those jobs. Be sure to ask the questions on the list at left and also to throw in a question or two that your partner might not expect. Constructively evaluate each other’s answers.