

WEEKLY MIDDLE SCHOOL LESSON

#KEEPLearning



Week Six: Assembling your Career

Overview: This lesson introduces STEM careers and STEM skills and how they are important. Students will identify two to three STEM fields that they wish to explore and chart a path to get themselves from where they are now to a potential STEM career.

Preparation: Review the activity and session materials. Make sure your students have all the needed materials to complete the lesson.

Recommended Time: 60 mins

Materials: Computer/Tablet with Internet
Printer (Optional)
Blank Paper
Writing Utensil

1) Presentation: Begin the lesson by telling your students that many high-demand, high-growth careers can be found in the disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Explain that STEM careers are in demand in today's workforce around the world and are predicted to remain so over the next 10 years. Encourage the students to think about how the STEM disciplines might help them achieve their goals. Some STEM careers don't require a college degree and offer students exciting, high-paying opportunities.

2) Watch: Have your students watch the video [STEM Careers: Inspire the Next Generation of Innovators](#).

3) Discussion: After you watch the video, ask the following questions. You can ask them verbally or have students write out their answers.

1. What does STEM stand for?
2. Have you heard of any of these careers before?
3. Who inspired these professionals to go into their career choices?

4) Activity: Assembling your Career

Next, have the students go to JA Assembling Your Career landing page by selecting the link below. Point out the different sections (Introduction, Opportunities Abound, Play the Part, Steps to Success.) Explain that JA Assembling Your Career is designed to provide students with practical information about STEM-related careers and ways to prepare for these high-growth careers while still in school.

JA Assembling your Career

*Side note - If you do not have time to complete the entire game (it will likely take about 45 minutes), you can ask your students to complete one section at a time and break it up into multiple days/lessons.

Part I - Introduction

Have your students begin by watching the introduction video, then ask the following questions. You can ask them verbally or have students write out their answers.

1. What does Reshma do for Alcoa?
2. What is her title?
3. Describe the work she does in her current career.
4. Who inspired Reshma to consider a career in STEM?
5. What advice does she give students? Specifically, what does she say about the opportunities available to students not interested in pursuing a four-year degree?

After students complete the discussion questions, they should select the forward arrow to return to the menu.

Part II - Opportunities Abound

Introduce Opportunities Abound by explaining that the information in this section will help students identify and evaluate different high-demand careers. The information will help students compare and evaluate the education requirements, interests, work environments, and STEM disciplines associated with the different careers. Tell your students to select Opportunities Abound and complete this section. After students complete this section, they select the forward arrow to return to the menu.

Part III - Play the Part

Let students know that in this section, they will learn about and simulate the work done by professionals in the following careers: Environmental scientist, Video game designer, Aircraft mechanic, Sports statistician, Rolling mill operator, and Process engineer..

Tell your students they will now have the opportunity to shadow professionals working in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Have the students click the Play the Part button, and ask them to take their time exploring the careers to learn more about the daily tasks, work environments, interests, and education levels required in each career. Tell the students they will have the opportunity in the interactives to conduct one of the many workplace tasks required in these high-demand careers. Once students reach the Conclusion screen, they will be directed back to the landing page.

Part IV - Steps to Success

Share with your students that, in this last section, they will discover which high-demand careers might be right for them, as well as the steps they can take now to research and prepare for them. Students should complete the online activities, including a brief multiple-choice assessment and a personalized career plan. Once students reach the Conclusion screen, they will be directed back to the landing page.

5) Discussion: Ask students the following questions. You can ask them verbally or have students write out their answers.

1. Looking at your potential career plan, does anything surprise you?
2. What are some short term goals for you to complete this plan?
3. What are some long term goals to complete this plan?

The Money JAR - What's a smart way to find out if you'd really be happy and successful in a career? What makes a cool career ? [Click here](#) to listen to this week's podcast episode on **Cool Careers**.

Bonus Activity: Interview

Extended Activity: 15-30 mins

Materials: Computer/Tablet with Excel (optional)

Blank paper

Writing utensil

Activity: Ask the students to interview a professional in the field they identified. Work with the students to develop interview questions and discussion topics. Sample questions and discussion topics could include: What are your daily tasks? Describe your work environment. What classes did you take in high school? What other school activities were you involved in? What level of education do you need for your job? After the interview, ask students to complete a writing assignment to share what they learned.