

CareerZone Activities

Dream it! Plan it! Make it happen!

Keep youth engaged in career planning by using this list of interactive activities that correspond to the NYS CareerZone website. All activities are meant to be brainstormed, discussed, and researched, and can be altered to suit your youth program and resources.

Specific activities are marked with the following icons:



Create



Play



Present

Beginning Activities

The CareerZone Homepage: Beginning Activities



- Discuss what a logo is, using the CareerZone logo as an example. Discuss what the symbol “R” after the logo stands for. Have youth create their own CareerZone logo.
- Notice the “.org” or “.com” at the end of the URL. Discuss the importance of validity in websites by seeing its domain name. As a group, make a list of favorite websites, and note what their domain names are.
- Explain what a career information delivery system is, and how and why it’s used by students who want to explore careers. Ask students to list other ways people can explore careers.

Home page-Career Clusters



- Display signs around the room labeled with each career cluster. Have students think of their future career and then stand next to the sign that applies to it. Go around the room and discuss 1.)
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- Divide the class into groups, giving each group a different workplace. Have students discuss 1.) Which occupations are employed there, 2) which cluster does it fall under, and 3.) Which are STEM jobs? Share what they came up with on a poster and present it to the class.

Occupations



- Have youth make their own video for an occupation that doesn’t have one. Use the existing videos as examples. When students are finished, have them post the videos to YouTube or Teacher Tube.
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- Have youth try to identify occupation titles written on post-it notes affixed to their backs by walking around and asking others yes or no questions.
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- Show pictures of people’s faces as students guess what careers those pictured might have. Use this activity to introduce the concept of non-traditional careers.
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- Decorate a bag to reflect a career. The bag should contain five items or pictures related to the careers such as tools, uniforms, etc. Students present their careers using their bags as visuals.

Jobs in New York

- Have youth explore in-demand jobs by picking at least three occupations and noticing the amount of jobs available in New York State. Which occupations have no listed occupations and which occupations have several? What does S-T-E-M (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) have to do with this?

- Have youth look up a potential occupation and then use the job listings to contact the employer about potential job shadowing, internships, or apprentice opportunities.
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Using Career Videos



- In groups, view 2- 3 videos, comparing and contrasting the various occupations. Then have each group create a Venn-diagram to organize the information.
- Have the youth watch a video twice, first without and then with sound, recording what they learned each time. Discuss the differences between auditory and visual learning styles, and how they influence how information is processed.



- Have youth watch videos for careers they want to learn more about. Have them create a “KWL” chart (a list of what students already know prior to watching the video, what they want to know, and what they learned after completing the activity) chart about those careers.
- Interview a guest speaker from a local business to determine how the business trains new employees.

S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math)



- Break youth into four groups, each being a different STEM subject. Have them explore their assigned subject (Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math) further using information from Career Zone and create a poster to present to the other groups.
- Have students create their own scene to add to the STEMventure video. Use a storyboard chart by creating/drawing a character and picking a STEM job using CareerZone. Dress the character in proper attire; as well as having the character portray the tasks of their job. Also include four written bullets of those tasks, just like in the video.
- Ask a senior citizen to describe the kinds of technology they used when they were in elementary school. Compare this with the technology students use now. Discuss how new technologies will impact the workplace of the future.

Assess yourself



- “Finding your Place” Activity- Have students imagine that they are walking into a room where everyone is talking about their future plans. Place six signs around the room: each describing a common group of interests that go hand-in-hand with the career clusters. Then have the students join which group they most fit in with and talk about why. After a few minutes have them join a second group, then a third.

The Portfolio Module Activities

Beginning Activities



- Discuss with students the concept of a portfolio. Ask if they have ever made a portfolio before, such as an Art portfolio. List out together the benefits that keeping a portfolio may have.
- Hand out manila folders for students to label and decorate as “_____’s Portfolio.” When students finish a module they wish to keep, print it out using the “Print printer friendly version” option to put in the folder. Students can keep or even hand in a hard copy of what they did online, or you can give it to their guidance counselor.

Personal Information

- Have students find and review the privacy statement of some of their favorite websites. Discuss as a group what youth think about online privacy. What kind of personal information have they given websites? When is it safe and when is it not safe? Talk about why sometimes personal information like an address, or phone number is required, and other times they can leave it blank.

- Have youth search for themselves using Google or any search engine to see how private their online identity is, then discuss their results.
- Have students make their own landing page for their particular grade level. Have them choose between a cartoon or more realistic design. What modules should they include that applies to their certain grade level? After make a landing page for an elementary grade level.



Interest Profiler

- What are some interests people may have that could potentially harm their chances in getting a job? (E.g.: illegal activities that lead to arrests or failing a drug test.). Also discuss the pros and cons sharing interests on networking sites that an employer can look at.
- Have students collect 5 of their “favorite” objects at home to put in a brown paper bag and bring in. Show the class what five things they chose and why they are a part of their interests. Create a shield (coat of arms) with the student’s name in the center. Use magazine clippings or pictures to create a collage of things the student are interested in. Afterwards, have students reflect on their shield and discuss what kind of careers suit their interests.
- Have students choose three jobs from the interest profiler results and explore them. Create a poster of their favorite occupation to present.
- Play Musical Careers (like musical chairs): a student draws a card and reads a question related to student interests. For example, “Do you like science?” or, “Do you help people?” Students get up and switch seats if they answer the question yes. Later, discuss how interests relate to careers.



Journaling

- Have students generate ideas for journal entries.
- Have students read the “Did you Know?” fact on the main page (Each refreshed page leads to a different fact). Have them react to it in their journal.
- Have students review their earlier journal entries and document how they changed over time.
- Have students practice applying for colleges by answering questions found in the college admittance essays. They can practice writing a personal statement to help get them accepted.

Abilities



- Have youth write a paragraph or make a mini-book about “Me, Myself, and I.” Include likes, dislikes, hobbies, and talents. Have youth discuss what they wrote with each other.
- Brainstorm together what occupations require good writing and communication skills.
- Have students brainstorm personality characteristics. Try to think of both positive and negative characteristics. List these on the chalkboard.
- Practice interviewing by highlighting personal traits.
- Complete a “Pieces of Me” Worksheet with a partner. Each student is given a worksheet with a large circle divided like a pie. Partners fill in each labeled piece: skills, aptitudes, experience, personal traits, interests, and employability traits.

Job Readiness Skills

- Set up classroom jobs around the room and assign students to them each week. Jobs can include watering plants, filing, answering phone. Discuss with youth the skills necessary to succeed in each of the jobs.
- Have students brainstorm a list of traits of a good worker. Then ask the students to prioritize these traits from the most important to the least important. This can be done by having the class work in small groups. Then, have students individually look at which skills they do or do not have.



- Create a help wanted ad pretending you are an employer seeking a new employee. What kind of things are you looking for? Look at existing ads to guide students.
- Have students create a checklist and title it “Get Ready for a Job.” What things will go on the checklist? Include, things such as “Get working papers” (Do they need a physical?), “Find references,” and “Figure out transportation.” Have students imagine they fast forward straight to become a business owner, at the age and training they are currently at. What tasks can they successfully do versus which tasks do they not have enough knowledge or preparation for yet?



- Active students can survey local employers to find out what characteristics employers look for in an employee. Report back to the class.
- Dress for success when youth come to the class for mock job interviews.
- Practice, in pairs, how to tie a necktie for a job interview.

School Classes



- Have students pick their favorite subjects. Ask them to identify skills they feel they’ve learned in that particular class. Share ideas in a final list entitled “Why Do I Need to Know This?”
- Have students write a children’s story where the main character experiences a typical day where they have no knowledge on a particular subject. Each page will have a different scenario where their life was negatively affected. For example, Lisa’s Life without Language Arts, could have her not being able to read street signs, or not being able to comprehend stories that her friends tell her.
- Ask students to identify how the skills they learned in school will transfer to the world of work.
- Have students look up courses, programs, training, or workshops that your school/program offers and have them decide which ones are right for them to take next year and why.

Areas for Growth



- Ask students to brainstorm ideas for possible areas of growth. Write the ideas on the board.
- Three possible reasons for lack of growth are provided in this module: lack of interest, lack of effort, and lack of opportunity. Ask students to brainstorm what they could write in the “Other” text box provided
- Have students review these entries periodically to see if they are making progress. Ask them to record their reaction in the journal section of the Portfolio.
- Have students search magazine or newspaper articles portraying individuals involved in crime or wrong-doing. Identify traits that are being portrayed and what they can do to improve to display on a poster.

Life Skills

- Brainstorm a list of adjectives that are tips for making a good first impression. Notice these can all be divided into either hygiene tips or attitude tips.
- Have students choose the one occupation they are most interested in then make lists of the skills they have that would be required in their chosen occupation. Last, have students make lists of the skills they would need to pursue those occupations.
- Have students pretend to be an employer. Tell them to imagine they are about to interview several workers for a position and to create a checklist of behaviors and traits that they are seeking. Then ask the students to compare those traits and behaviors that they listed with ones that they demonstrate.
- Make a chart that divides students’ ages into 0-5 years old, 6-10, 11-15 etc. For each section have your students write down the life skills that they acquired then. Have students share their charts with each other.



- Apply and analyze the skills of the entrepreneur in a class activity: to introduce entrepreneurship, spell out business on post- it notes; one letter peer paper. Place one each on the back of certain students. Tell the class they are on their own to figure out what to do, and can only talk about the activity. Usually a leader emerges fairly quickly and they realize it is a work and get people lined up accordingly. Try this again with the word entrepreneur. Discuss the skills students used for this activity, such as cooperation, communication, leadership, and team building. How would these skills help an entrepreneur?
- Have youth interview working adults for suggestions they have for strategies to balance work and family.

My Saved Occupations



- After students get to know a majority of occupations, play divide the class into 2-4 teams. One player from each team goes at a time and draws a hint on the board as their own team tries to guess which occupation is being drawn.
- Have students chose one of their saved occupations. Then, take a trip to your local library and have the students find information and books on that occupation.
- Distribute Department of Labor publications. Have the students identify status and trends identified for occupations in which they are interested. Then have students make lists of those occupations they are interest in and record the number of people employed in the field and job outlook.
- Have youth individually interview someone who is currently in their dream occupation. Ask questions about the steps they took to get where they are. Then draw a “Career Ladder” showing each step they took to get them to the top. Last, discuss various paths that could have taken them to their same goal.
- As a group, list all the jobs necessary to make and package a product and make it available to consumers.

My Future Goals and Dreams



- Make up a worksheet that tells the future of your students’ careers. The first part is a palm reading that tells describes their personality. Have students trace their hand and draw their three “lifelines” from their palm. Using the assessment tool, have them write down the three interests on those lines. Next, have them chose their favorite career using CareerZone, and draw it inside a crystal ball template.
- Organize a field trip to a museum, firehouse, or police station so youth can learn about the jobs within that workplace.
- Have the students pick two occupations that they are interested in exploring. Ask them to list several pros and cons for each occupation. After this, have the students discuss which occupation they think they would like better.
- Have students pretend they are at their five year reunion. Writing from an outsider’s point of view (3rd person) describes what someone thinks when they look and talk to you. Are you successful? What do you do for a living? What is your personal life like?
- Have youth write one goal about a career, list three resources needed to achieve that goal, and three things that might get in the way of achieving it.

After School Activities

- Ask students to share in small groups, one activity that they participate in outside of school. They may include sports, clubs, or hobbies. Then have the entire group try to figure out what skills could be acquired from these activities.

- Brainstorm a list of associations/ programs for students to join that widens their professional contact. Have them look up membership requirements and how to join. Have them make a list of networking opportunities and resources available through that association.
- Ask the students to identify and discuss activities outside the classroom and how these activities contribute to career preparation. Find examples of college essay questions based on extra curriculum activities.
- Have every youth participate in one after school activity any day during the school year. Afterwards, write about their experience.

Community Service



- Help students organize a bake sale fundraiser for a particular cause. Students can make advertisements; as well learn about the exchange of money and sales. Hold the fundraiser at an open house or program event.
- Have students create a set of volunteer coupons to hand out. These can be as simple as they want, and students can give them to their classmates (e.g.: I will help you study for a test), or parent/caregiver (e.g.: I will help cook dinner).
- Have students pick a school, community, or global issue that currently exists then create an outline for a volunteer project that they could possibly put together. Have them be detailed in the steps they would have to take by using outside resources. Most websites can match students' interests with volunteer activities.
- Make a list of different volunteer opportunities that people can get involved in. Then create a contract to hand out to students that gives their promise to volunteer a chosen amount of hours, in any volunteer work, by a certain date. Tell the students to keep their goals reasonable and something that they're able to do like 1 hour to give blood by the end of the year.

My Work Experience



- Have students discuss work-related experiences both paid and unpaid and what duties each activity entail. (Internships, job-shadowing, apprenticeships, summer employment, part-time, full-time, etc.) Display these words on a bulletin or word wall, or play a vocab. game with them (see Budgeting Tool: Ideas for Classroom Applications).
- Ask the students to make a list of work experiences they have had, starting with the most recent. These work experiences can include summer jobs, baby-sitting, running errands for an elderly person, or anything for the provided list using the module. The students can discuss their work experiences with the class.
- Use JOBZONE to explore potential Summer Jobs/Part time employment opportunities for students. Have students write a follow up journal entry on how JOBZONE was useful.
- Apply for working papers as youth turn 14. Obtain the forms needed and information on laws pertaining to teens working.

Work Importance Profiler



- Provide students with a list of what the results are: recognition, working conditions, independence, achievement, relationships, and support. Make a chart to display the six values as headers and then a brainstormed list underneath each one that gives an example of what it means. (For example, independence could have things like, working on your own or being your own boss)
- Discuss with students how their environment impacts their career choice.
- Put the students into 3-6 groups and each group pick out of a hat from the 6 values: recognition, working conditions, independence, achievement, relationships, and support. No other group will know what the other groups have. Have them pick 5 careers they think suits that value. Students

can also use CareerZone and the internet to help. Have one group go to the front of the room at a time and say the jobs they had picked. Other groups can quietly discuss then write down which value they think that group had. At the end, see which group guessed the most correctly.



- Break the class into groups and have a competition for who can come up with the most, listing tangible and intangible rewards for a variety of jobs.

My Colleges



- Have students practice writing business letters. Write to three colleges that interest them and ask for more information or anything that the college would be willing to give to help the student learn more about them. Mail it in using an envelope and stamp. Have them share what they received.
- Brainstorm a list of what students look for in selecting a college. After narrowing down schools by academic factors, chose whether students want a city or small town, 2 or 4 year college, etc. Then have students circle their favorite factors and compare with each other to see who may be going to the same college one day.
- Have students pick one New York college or University they would like to attend one day and print out an online application. As they fill out the application have them notice a few things they need to consider such as how much the application costs, if one application can be used for several colleges (ex: all the SUNY schools use the same application), or what references do they plan on using?
- “Make the College Connection” activity- Prepare a college-readiness packet with students. Provide information on college financing (FASFA, scholarships, etc.), potential degrees and colleges, backup plans, and where your degree could take you post-college.

Education History



- Discuss with students the correlation between education and getting a good job. Look at the salaries for jobs that require little to no education verses those that require more education. Ask, how does this affect your future lifestyle?
- Research a successful entrepreneur (Bill Gates, Tyra Banks, Walt Disney, Oprah Winfrey, or Steve Jobs, etc.) and create and present a poster of their education history. Include facts about what they do in their career and how their education has brought them to that point.

My Final Activity



- Have students give oral presentations about their career development accomplishments or a video of them presenting.
- Extend your program’s use of CareerZone by having youth be CareerZone Ambassadors. Older ages can present their experiences of CareerZone to younger ages in your program, or their peers.
- Have students make a collage out of magazines about their interests they established in my portfolio. Include any clippings about colleges, leisure time, academic achievements, etc.
- Students can make their own CareerZone Scavenger Hunt by providing questions/descriptions of certain sections inside the CareerZone website, along with an answer key. Have students switch their creation with a partner. Partners can provide a link or screen shot (Print Screen keyboard button) as they find each page

My Annual Review

- Brainstorm what role each of the people listed in the module (student, parent, teacher, guidance counselor, etc.) play in the career planning process.

- Have students review their career plan with their parents by logging on at home if possible.
- Brainstorm how each of the people listed in the module can help them in the review of their career plan.
- List who else can be helpful to them when completing their career plan and fill in the “other People” box on the Annual Review page.

View Career Plan

- Discuss the importance of career planning and emphasize that this is a life-long process. What does career planning mean to them and how are they going to continue to use it? Then, have students interview someone who has made a career change. What did that person learn from the experience?
- Have students fast forward twenty years and reflect back on their life. Create a timeline beginning with the education they currently have. Include any sports, clubs, volunteer opportunities, jobs, and schooling that are relevant to the career the student wants to have.
- Tell students to create a ten year career plan to specify where they want to be in one year, five years, and ten years. Have them write specific and measurable career goals and then a plan of action and strategies for reaching them.



Resume Builder

- Make up a resume with information that would not help a job-seeker get the job they want. Include things like a picture, irrelevant skills, and an unprofessional email address. Include education experience that is unqualified for that specific job using information from CareerZone. Discuss why not to include these things in their resume.
- After creating a resume, have students create a list of interview questions they would ask if they were an employer seeking a new employee. Then, pair the students up and have them take turns interviewing each other after looking at their resumes. Last, have students list his or her partner’s strengths, interests, and values.
- Discuss the importance of honesty and accurate information when building a resume.
- Teach students about all the different aspects of resume building. Learn about the different types of resumes, cover letters, references, and transferable skills.
- Have youth evaluate two completed job applications/ resumes provided by the instructor and decide whom to offer the job.

Budgeting Tool

- Discuss the difference in pricing between housing near urban versus rural areas. Use a map to find which of the listed counties have a higher price in living and show where they are.
- Create a word wall to display with words pertaining to the Budgeting module. Discuss what each word means and check that youth understand these words prior to completing this activity. Add words to the word wall as they explore CareerZone. Words could include: budget, endorse, utilities, healthcare, insurance, debt, etc.)
- Take the vocabulary words from the budgeting tool/word wall and display them on 5 X 8 or larger index cards. Space them out on a wall or chalkboard. Divide the class into groups. One person from each group goes to the chalkboard with a flyswatter. Give the definition of the word. Then the students at the board, each with a flyswatter in their hand, race to locate the word on the board. Rotate so each person in each group goes the same amount of times.
- Divide youth into groups and have one person from each group draw a picture to the rest of the group. You give the drawers all the same vocabulary word at the same time, but the rest of the



students' do not know what the word is. At the same time, they all draw a picture of the word as the person behind them guesses (not the whole team). The first team to guess it right wins a point!

- Brainstorm a list of events that spontaneously happen in people's lives that this budget plan does not take into account (e.g. a natural disaster or loss of a job). Talk about how saving money by not buying insurance or a dental plan could be harmful in the future. How could having a family affect this budget plan? Look up particular careers that allow for a more flexible budget plan in case any of these things happen. These occupations will have higher salaries and most likely be in-demand.
- Have students imagine their life if they lived by this budget plan. For those who are in debt after their purchases, what are the next steps they would have to take? For those who have extra money left over, how would they spend it? (E.g. vacation?)
- Print out sample checks. Teach the proper way to write out a check. Then have youth write out a pretend check to their landlord for housing and utilities.
- Have students balance their budget as it pertains to their future college. Have them look at how much their dream college costs, savings they already have, and any scholarships/Financial Aid they could receive. Also, have them include costs for college living.

Activities for Using Resources

- *Choosing a Pathway to Success* - Discuss with students' the choices they have for life after college. What are their options? Use these resource tools to explore the military as a career, trade schools, 2-year colleges, and 4-years colleges. Have the students evaluate each of these options.
- *Affording College* - Discuss ways to make college affordable through saving, filing a FASFA, and applying for scholarships. Use the links to guide discussions with students so they are aware of their options.
-  *CareerZone Lesson Plans*- Have youth look through the lesson plans, then create their own unique lesson. Have them provide enough handouts or materials for the entire group. Then, take turns teaching their lessons to the rest of the group.
- *College readiness*- Preparing for college and making the right choice is one of the biggest decisions in a young adult's life. Point your students in the right direction by researching potential colleges online. Select the "**College Preparation and Choice**" link to view a list of websites that can guide further discussion.
- *Finding Work*- Discuss specific tips, strategies and suggestions for all phases of the job search. Learn how the New York State Department of Labor can help you land the job you need. Use the "Finding a Job in New York State" link or "JobZone" to further explore the discussion.
- *"Search" for Success*- When multiple titles are returned for a search term, expand the boundaries of the students' career knowledge by discussing the similarities and differences of the occupations listed.