

Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education

The **BIG** Idea

- What are the working conditions, earnings, and education for the careers I am most interested in, and how will this information affect my opinions about these careers?

AGENDA

- Approx. 45 minutes
- I. Warm Up: Match Up! (5 minutes)
 - II. Research & Compare Working Conditions (15 minutes)
 - III. Earn It! (10 minutes)
 - IV. Learn It! (10 minutes)
 - V. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

MATERIALS

- PORTFOLIO PAGES:**
 - Portfolio pages 4 and 5, Comparing Careers: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education
- STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:**
 - Student Handbook page 86, Match Up!
 - Student Handbook page 87, IHaveAPlanlowa.gov Directions: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education
- FACILITATOR PAGES:**
 - Facilitator Resource 1, Match Up! Answer Key
- Overhead projector
- Laptop
- LCD projector

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Research and compare working conditions, earnings, and education for their top choice careers.
- Identify working conditions, earnings, and education that best meet their needs.

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students discover how “working conditions” (i.e., work hours, travel, physical demands, etc.), earnings, and education requirements may affect their career choices.

PREPARATION

- Make arrangements for the class to use the computer lab, and make sure the IHaveAPlanlowa.gov website is accessible from students’ computers in advance of this lesson.
- List the day’s **BIG IDEA** and activities on the board.
- Write the day’s vocabulary words and definitions on the board.
- Write the web address www.IHaveAPlanlowa.gov on the board.
- The following handouts need to be made into overhead transparencies or copied onto chart paper:
 - **Portfolio pages 4 and 5, Comparing Careers: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education**
 - **Student Handbook page 86, Match Up!**
 - **Student Handbook page 87, IHaveAPlanlowa.gov Directions: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education**
 - **Facilitator Resource 1, Match Up! Answer Key**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As students research potential careers, perhaps one of the most important considerations is what the job is like day-to-day, or in other words the “working conditions.” Working conditions encompass everything from wages and hours to the organization of the company and flexibility of the employer to adapt working life to the demands of employees’ lives outside of work. By knowing what is most important to them, students will be better able to identify which careers best meet their needs and interests.

This lesson requires students to use the IHaveAPlanlowa.gov website (www.IHaveAPlanlowa.gov). For instructions on accessing and using the site, see **Grade 10, Careers One, Student Handbook pages 79-79A, IHaveAPlanlowa.gov Basic Directions.**

VOCABULARY

Earnings: money earned for work.

Salary: fixed payment for work, paid to an employee on a regular basis.

Wages: payment for work done, usually figured by the hour.

Working Conditions: what a job is like day to day, including job environment, hours of work, safety, paid holidays and vacations, rest periods, possibilities of advancement, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

DO NOW:

If you prefer, you may choose to use **Student Handbook page 86, Match Up!** as a DO NOW. Give students three minutes to answer the questions. Once the students have completed their quiz, begin with the discussion as written in the **Warm Up**.

Have students who are experienced Internet users show less experienced students how to navigate through the site using the browser arrows and buttons within the website.

For **Activity I, Warm Up: Match Up!**, if students are not able to work productively in pairs, have them complete the game independently.

As an extra challenge, encourage students to continue using IHaveAPlanlowa.gov at home to explore the working conditions for additional career interests. Remind them that to access the site, they need their Account ID and password.

If your students are very experienced with the IHaveAPlanlowa.gov website, you may choose to model parts of the activity (researching working conditions, earnings and education) at the beginning of the lesson and then allow students to work independently to complete all three sections.

If students finish their independent work early, pair students to share results from their research.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. Warm Up: Match Up! (5 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** What do you think is most important when deciding on a career? [Most students will say “money.”] Money you make in a job (known as earnings, wages, and salary) is very important, but just as important, or maybe even *more* important, is what the job is like day to day. For example, are the hours 9am to 5pm, or a night shift? Will you need to sit at a desk all day or get to work outdoors? Will you work with others or independently all day? When considering a career, it is very important to decide what characteristics, also known as “working conditions,” are most important to you. For example, perhaps you are someone who enjoys working with others, so you’ll want to consider careers that involve working with a team.
2. [Divide the class into pairs, and have them open to **Student Handbook page 86, Match Up!** Explain that for each of the five careers listed in the left column there are two working conditions from the right column. Instruct them to write the numbers for the matching conditions in the spaces beneath each career. After completing the page, encourage pairs to discuss which of the working conditions they consider positive and which negative, and why. Share the correct answers by projecting **Facilitator Resource 1, Match Up! Answer Key** on the overhead.]

II. Research & Compare Working Conditions (15 minutes)

1. [Project a copy of **Portfolio pages 4 and 5, Comparing Careers: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education** on the overhead projector as students refer to their own pages.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Today you will research and compare working conditions, earnings, and education requirements for your top three career choices using the IHaveAPlanlowa.gov website. Take a look at Row 8: “Working Conditions.” For each career, you will list three working conditions. Then in Row 9, you will evaluate the working conditions, and write down your opinion. Let me show you how.

2. [Instruct students to turn to **Student Handbook page 87, IHaveAPlanlowa.gov Instructions: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education**. Use the LCD projector to display the IHaveAPlanlowa.gov website. Remind students how to navigate to a particular career by clicking the **Career Planning** Tab from the home page, clicking on **Explore Careers**, and then typing in the name of the career in the **Search Careers** box. Model this by typing in “Forensic Science Technician” and clicking **Go**. When the

link appears, click it. Remind the class that they can also search for careers alphabetically, by clicking on the appropriate letter in the **Search Careers** section of the **Explore Careers** page. Working conditions appear on the **What They Do** tab (this is the first page that you will see). Part way down the page is a section with the heading Working Conditions and Physical Demands.]

3. [Invite a volunteer to read aloud the Working Conditions and Physical Demands section of the **What They Do** Page for “Forensic Science Technician.” Then project **Portfolio pages 4 and 5, Comparing Careers: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education** on the overhead projector and model for students how to list one of the working conditions. For example, you may write “irregular hours.” Then have volunteers suggest two other working conditions and jot them on the overhead.]
4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Which of these working conditions are ones that you would like? Why? Which would you not like? Why?

[Jot their responses as they provide them, in row 9 on the **Comparing Careers Portfolio page**.]

5. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now is your chance to investigate the working conditions for each of your three careers, and to identify which of the working conditions are ones you’d like or dislike, and why.

[Circulate around the computer lab, helping students as needed.]

III. Earn It! (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now that you’ve had a chance to think about what your day-to-day life would be like in each of your top choice careers, you are going to look at earnings, and how that may affect your interest in a career.

[On the chalkboard, or chart paper, list the following three careers in a column in this order:

retail sales person
 general/family practitioner
 automobile mechanic

Ask students to rank the three careers from highest salary to lowest.]

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Let's find out if you ranked the earnings correctly by looking on the IHaveAPlanlowa.gov website.

Direct students' attention to the IHaveAPlanlowa.gov website on the LCD panel. Click the **Career Planning** tab, then **Explore Careers**, and type "Retail Salesperson" in the Search Careers box and click **Go**. When the link appears, click it, and then click the **Money and Outlook** tab in the left column of the page.

3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Wage means payment for work done. What do you think entry, average, and experienced mean? [Give students a chance to answer before continuing.] These are the different levels of experience. Entry means someone who just started in a career, like a beginner. At the other end, experienced means someone who has been working in this career for many, many years. Some careers in IHaveAPlanlowa.gov include entry, average, and experienced wages while others only include average wages. Let's write down the average wages next to retail salesperson. Note that it's possible to compare wages in different cities, or "metropolitan areas." Would you expect wages in rural areas to be higher or lower? [Point out that living expenses are often higher in cities.]

It's hard to really know whether a wage is high, low, or average until you can compare it to other careers.

4. [Repeat the process of looking up earnings for the other two careers—family/general practitioner (doctor) and automobile mechanic—on IHaveAPlanlowa.gov and jotting down the average wages on the chalkboard. Then, have students confirm whether their ranking was correct.]
5. [Refer students to **Portfolio pages 4 and 5, Comparing Careers: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education**, items 10 and 11.]
6. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now you will research and compare earnings for your top three career choices using the IHaveAPlanlowa.gov website. Remember that National Earnings instead of State-Wide earnings might appear in some cases. Take a look at Row 10: "Earnings" on **Portfolio pages 4 and 5, Comparing Careers: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education**. For each career, record the average salary. Then in Row 11, respond to the question about how the wages for the career affects your opinion of it.

IV. Learn It! (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Our third and final research category for the day is education requirements. This is a big one – almost as important as whether or not you like the job description. Some careers, like veterinarian or dentist, have a definite education requirement before you can enter the profession. Others have a range of educational choices. Generally, the more education you have, the more opportunities you'll have. Let's take a look.
2. [Direct students' attention to the IHaveAPlanIowa.gov website on the LCD panel. Click **Explore Careers**, and type "Hotel/Motel Manager" in the Search Careers box and click **GO**. When the link appears, click it, and then click the **What to Learn** tab in the left column of the page. Read the section titled Education Level aloud, and ask students which of the three boxes should be checked based on this paragraph. (*tech/trade school, two-year college, four-year college*)]
3. [Remind students that it's important to skim all of the material because there's often more than one option. Discuss whether or not a person could become a hotel manager with only a high school diploma.]
4. [Direct students' attention to questions 12 and 13 of **Portfolio pages 4 and 5, Comparing Careers: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education**. Explain that question 12 asks for facts found on IHaveAPlanIowa.gov, and question 13 asks for their opinions based on their research.]
5. [Allow students to complete their research independently, circulating to provide help as needed.]

V. WRAP UP (5 minutes)

1. [If time permits, invite the class to summarize their understanding of the importance of education requirements as outlined below.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: What's the relationship between earnings and education requirements? (*Jobs requiring more education pay better. Investing time and money in post-secondary education now helps increase your earning power and your job opportunities in the future.*)

How does knowing the education requirements for your future career help you today? (*Knowing the education requirements helps you "begin with the end in mind." What you learn today helps prepare you for the education you'll need after high school.*)

MATCH-UP! Answer Key

Careers	Working Conditions
Multimedia Artist/Animator 3 8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Often work evenings and Saturdays Regular Monday to Friday, 9-to-5 schedule Spend long hours at a drawing board or computer Spend four hours a day, five days a week on physical conditioning and practice Summers off Most work for themselves in private practice Many repetitive tasks (example: entering data into a computer) Usually work in design studios either at home, or in an office Spend lots of time away from home Work inside in classroom most of the day
Bank Teller 2 7	
Teacher Assistant 5 10	
Dentist 1 6	
Professional Athlete 4 9	

MATCH-UP!

Match each working condition to its career by writing the numbers on the lines below each career. There are two working conditions for each career.

Careers	Working Conditions
Multimedia Artist/Animator _____	1. Often work evenings and Saturdays
Bank Teller _____	2. Regular Monday to Friday, 9-to-5 schedule
Teacher Assistant _____	3. Spend long hours at a drawing board or computer
Dentist _____	4. Spend four hours a day, five days a week on physical conditioning and practice
Professional Athlete _____	5. Summers off
	6. Most work for themselves in private practice
	7. Many repetitive tasks (example: entering data into a computer)
	8. Usually work in design studios either at home, or in an office
	9. Spend lots of time away from home
	10. Work inside in classroom most of the day

IHaveAPlanIowa.gov Directions

Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education

I. Connecting to IHaveAPlanIowa.gov

- Turn on the computer.
- Click on the icon that connects to the Internet (Internet Explorer, Mozilla, Firefox, etc).
- Type the web address into the dialog box (**www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov**).
- When the IHaveAPlanIowa.gov home page appears enter your account name and password into the sign in area on the right side of the screen.

II. Working Conditions

- Click on the Career Planning Tab at the top of the screen.
- Click on the **Explore Careers** section.
- Type in the name of the career you want to search for in the **Search Careers** box and click **Go!** (As an example, type in Website Designer, and click **Go!**).
- When the link appears, click it. If more than one career appears, choose the career that is the most interesting to you.
- Scroll down the **What They Do** page (the page that appears first) until you see the section titled **Working Conditions and Physical Demands**. Read that section. Don't worry if your chosen career doesn't have these tabs. Read What They Do and the Interviews (tab on the left) for some information on working conditions.
- Record three of the Working Conditions on the chart on **Portfolio pages 4 and 5, Comparing Careers: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education**.

III. Earnings

- Repeat the first four bullet points listed under Part II: Working Conditions, above.
- Then click the **Money and Outlook** button on the left-hand side of the screen.
- Record the **Average Wage** in the chart. Choose the most appropriate region based on your own location.
- If your career does not have a chart, you may need to read the paragraphs under Earnings to find average wage.

IV. Education

- Repeat the first four bullet points listed under Part II. Working Conditions, above.
- Then click the **What to Learn** button on the left-hand side of the screen.
- Read the information and check the appropriate level of education recommended for that career in the chart on **Portfolio pages 4 and 5, Comparing Careers: Working Conditions, Earnings, and Education**.

Comparing Careers: Working Conditions, Earnings & Education

List the careers you're considering in the boxes at the top of the chart. For each career, respond to the questions in the column to the left.

Question		Career 1:	Career 2:	Career 3:
8	Working Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
9	My Opinion	Like: Dislike:	Like: Dislike:	Like: Dislike:
10	Earnings	Average:	Average:	Average:
		Which 3 working conditions would I like? Why? Which would I dislike? Why?		
		What are the average wages for an entry-level and experienced worker?		

11	My Opinion	Does the earnings info make me more or less likely to pursue the career? Explain.			
12	Education	Check the recommended level of education for this career.	<input type="checkbox"/> high school <input type="checkbox"/> apprenticeship <input type="checkbox"/> tech or trade school <input type="checkbox"/> 2-year college <input type="checkbox"/> 4-year college <input type="checkbox"/> more than 4 years of college	<input type="checkbox"/> high school <input type="checkbox"/> apprenticeship <input type="checkbox"/> tech or trade school <input type="checkbox"/> 2-year college <input type="checkbox"/> 4-year college <input type="checkbox"/> more than 4 years of college	<input type="checkbox"/> high school <input type="checkbox"/> apprenticeship <input type="checkbox"/> tech or trade school <input type="checkbox"/> 2-year college <input type="checkbox"/> 4-year college <input type="checkbox"/> more than 4 years of college
13	My Opinion	What is one thing I can do this year to better prepare myself for this level of education? Explain.			