

**OVERVIEW**

Working full time may seem a long time from now. But what you do today can greatly expand or limit the options you will have for many years to come. Everyone has skills and talents to make the most of in a career. Your potential is determined by you.

Continuing your education is your best chance for securing a good job so you can live a life you want. Investing in training and education throughout your career can pay off in salary increases and promotions as well as give you fallback options should you encounter a work interruption such as a layoff.

This lesson will help you maximize your future earning potential so you can achieve your dreams and live a life you enjoy.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

In this lesson students explore the payoffs of investing in themselves through education and by continually developing skills. Along the way they will:

- ☒ Discuss the value of investing in themselves, now and throughout their work lives.
- ☒ Identify how education can impact future earnings.
- ☒ List strategies to minimize the costs of advanced education.

Students will use what they learn to outline a career training and preparation plan.

**PREPARATION**

- ☐ Order a Module 3 Student Guide for each student. (The Guide is also available online to download.)
- ☐ Preview the lesson PowerPoint presentation, learning tasks, and Module 3 Student Guide, particularly pages 3-20.
- ☐ Print or download the Student Learning Plan for this lesson so each student has a copy.

**WHAT YOU WILL NEED**

- ☐ Module 3 Student Guide (pages 3-20)
- ☐ PowerPoint Presentation 3-1
- ☐ Student Learning Plan 3-1
- ☐ Task: What is it Worth to Be in Class?
- ☐ Task: Building a Path to My Career
- ☐ Task: Compare Options
- ☐ Internet access
- ☐ Activity 3.2: My Interests
- ☐ Activity 3.3: Worth Checking Out
- ☐ Activity 3.5: What is the Cost?
- ☐ Activity 3.6: Worth the Cost?
- ☐ Challenge 3-A: My Education Options

**NOTES:**

Approximate time: 45 minutes (minimum) - 90 minutes (with extension activities)

## Lesson 3-1: Invest in Yourself

LEARNING TASKS	TEACHING NOTES	MATERIALS
1. Make a list of everything you feel you are successful at or have done successfully at some time in your life—small things and big things. Include all areas of your life, not just work.	<p>PROCEDURE <span style="float: right;">TIME ESTIMATE: 5 minutes</span></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ask students to think about ways they feel they have been successful already in their young lives. Display Slide 2 to prompt students to think about specific successes they have had. Allow two or three minutes for students to quietly think-write (keep the pen or pencil moving on the page) a list of personal successes. Encourage them to think of awards or honors they have achieved; successes in school, in clubs or in sports; personal skills (things they can do better than most people they know); etc. Push students to list as many items as they can, aiming for at least ten items. If students are challenged by this, have them ask friends, family members and others who know them well how they excel.</p> <p>NOTES: This exercise can help students increase their self-awareness. Many times, their successes can translate into transferable job skills.</p> <p>EXTENSION: Extended name tags: Have students consider their list and try to come up with one or two adjectives to summarize their success, skills or talents. Just one catch—adjectives have to begin with the same letter as their first names. Students should then write the adjective and first name on a name tag to wear during class. Students should refer to each other by their extended name tags. (Examples: Singing Sam, Bilingual Bob, Entrepreneur Ellie.)</p>	<p>Module 3 Student Guide</p> <p>Student Learning Plan</p> <p>SLIDE 2 – Your Successes!</p> <p>ACTIVITY (optional) name tags</p>
2. Gina makes good pay in her Uncle's shop but knows it's in her best interest to finish high school. Prove to her she's right! Complete the <b>What is it Worth to be in Class?</b> task to find out how much your time is worth-while you are in school today.	<p>PROCEDURE <span style="float: right;">TIME: 10 minutes</span></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Have students complete the <b>What is it Worth to be in Class? task</b>. Use this to transition into the lesson by telling the students that they will explore the payoffs of investing in themselves, which includes continuing their education.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> [Slide 3] Preview the Learning Outcomes in the Student Learning Plan. By the end of this lesson, the students should be able to outline a career training and preparation plan.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> [Slide 4] Introduce Kevin and Gina as the young people featured in the Student Guide. The students will follow Kevin and Gina as they make decisions about their careers and training.</p>	<p>STUDENT GUIDE Pages 3-9</p> <p>SLIDES 3 – Preview 4 – Meet Kevin and Gina</p> <p>ACTIVITY Task: What is it Worth to be in Class? calculators</p>

## Lesson 3-1: Invest in Yourself

LEARNING TASKS	TEACHING NOTES	MATERIALS
	<p>EXTENSION: For more advanced students, have them research more current data on annual earnings. Assign the students to calculate out the lifetime earnings based on education level. Have students develop a formula that takes into account the recent average rate of inflation.</p> <p>RESOURCES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ US Census, <a href="http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/income_expenditures_poverty_wealth.html">www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/income_expenditures_poverty_wealth.html</a></li> <li>■ Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Education Pays,” <a href="http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm">www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm</a>, the average number of years worked</li> <li>■ Social Security Administration’s “Myths &amp; Facts: Raising the Social Security Retirement Age,” <a href="http://www.socialsecuritymatters.org/Resources_files/MythsFactsRetAge.pdf">www.socialsecuritymatters.org/Resources_files/MythsFactsRetAge.pdf</a></li> </ul>	
<p>3. Before you decide on a college, it helps to have a sense of what your first career might be so that any education and training after high school has a purpose and will help you towards your career goal.</p> <p>Think of two different possible careers that sound interesting to you. Complete the <b>Building a Path to My Career</b> task to map out information that will help you plan your path forward.</p>	<p>PROCEDURE</p> <p>TIME ESTIMATE: 20+ minutes</p> <p>❑ [Slide 5] Point out the value of continuing education beyond high school. Having a haphazard career and training plan or no plan can delay the potential for future career advances and increases in income. Starting to think about career and education options now can help students take advantage of opportunities available during their teen years. (For example, enrolling in classes for college credit, ensuring coursework is completed to be eligible for entrance requirements.) Planning ahead can also reduce the risk of barriers (such as not enough credits to graduate, insufficient grades or coursework to get into a training/college program) that might impact eligibility requirements.</p> <p>❑ Make sure each student has access to a computer with Internet. Distribute the <b>Building a Path to My Career</b> task. (You may opt to have students work in pairs if computer access is limited. Each student must still complete his or her own worksheet, and students paired together cannot choose the same careers.) Circulate among students to make sure they understand the task directions and are putting accurate information on their task worksheets.</p> <p>NOTES: Before this activity, it would be helpful to have students complete <b>Activity 3.2: My Interests</b>, <b>Activity 3.3: Worth Checking Out</b>, and/or perform a career interest inventory. There are several free inventories available online. O*NET has seven different free assessments available online: <a href="http://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html">www.onetcenter.org/IP.html</a>.</p>	<p>STUDENT GUIDE Pages 5-7</p> <p>SLIDE 5 – Plan Ahead for a Career</p> <p>ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Task: Building a Path to My Career</p> <p>Activity 3.2: My Interests</p> <p>Activity 3.3: Worth Checking Out</p> <p>Internet</p>

## Lesson 3-1: Invest in Yourself

LEARNING TASKS	TEACHING NOTES	MATERIALS
	RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ O*NET Resource Center, <a href="http://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html">www.onetcenter.org/IP.html</a></li> <li>▪ Occupational Outlook Handbook, <a href="http://www.bls.gov/oco/">www.bls.gov/oco/</a></li> <li>▪ Exploring Career Information, Bureau of Labor Statistics, <a href="http://www.bls.gov/k12/">www.bls.gov/k12/</a></li> <li>▪ American Job Center Network, <a href="http://jobcenter.usa.gov">http://jobcenter.usa.gov</a></li> </ul>	
<p>4. A college education may be one of the most important (and expensive!) investments you will ever make.</p> <p>Review the <b>Building a Path to My Career</b> task to determine what type of advanced education best fits your needs. Then complete the <b>Compare Options</b> task to compare at least two options that meet your criteria.</p> <p>Use this information to complete <b>Activity 3.5: What is the Cost?</b> and <b>Activity 3.6: Worth the Cost?</b></p>	<p>PROCEDURE <span style="float: right;">TIME ESTIMATE: 15+ minutes</span></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> [Slide 6] Point out the value of investing in an education as a way to stay current in the job market and to have the skills needed to adapt when work situations change. Student Guide, page 11.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> [Slide 7] Give a general overview of how four- and two-year colleges, apprenticeship, and military programs prepare people for careers (page 12). Use Kevin's and Gina's stories to feature different routes used to gain education and training for careers. Expand or contract this conversation based on the time available, previous knowledge of your students, and the relevancy to the student grade level. Invite the students to share personal stories about education choices made by family members or friends who entered their careers via a two-year college, apprenticeship, or military program.</p> <p>EXTENSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This is a good time to invite guest speakers to share details about specific education options.</li> <li>▪ Encourage students to attend a local education fair.</li> <li>▪ Assign students to learn more about each option through an Internet search or in-person visits.</li> </ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> [Slides 8-9] Kick off a discussion about the costs of education by guiding the students to study the <b>Cost of College</b> chart on page 13. Point out ways to manage the costs of continuing education beyond high school. More detailed recommendations are provided in the Student Guide, pages 13-19.</p> <p>Extension: Encourage students to explore these NEFE resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 40 Money Management Tips for College Students, <a href="http://www.smartaboutmoney.org/40moneytips">www.smartaboutmoney.org/40moneytips</a></li> <li>▪ College CashCourse, <a href="http://www.cashcourse.org">www.cashcourse.org</a> (worksheets: Job Priorities, Job Comparison). Students and Instructors who are not affiliated with a college or university can register as "Other" to access CashCourse and utilize the site resources.</li> </ul>	<p>STUDENT GUIDE Page 11-19</p> <p>SLIDES 6 – Education is an Investment in You 7 – Education Options 8 – How to Manage Education Costs 9 – More Ways to Manage Education Costs</p> <p>ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Task: Compare Options</p> <p>Task: Building a Path to My Career</p> <p>Activity 3.5: What is the Cost?</p> <p>Activity 3.6: Worth the Cost?</p> <p>Internet</p>

## Lesson 3-1: Invest in Yourself

LEARNING TASKS	TEACHING NOTES	MATERIALS
	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Make sure each student has access to the Internet. Guide students to review the information from their <b>Building a Path to My Career</b> task to research two options for advanced education (four-year colleges, community or technical colleges, apprenticeship programs, or military) based on their career interests. Students should document what was listed for comparison criteria using the <b>Compare Options</b> task. Point out web resources on page 12 where students can narrow down options.</p> <p>WEB RESOURCES (available as of September 2012):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ College Search feature, <a href="http://www.collegeboard.org">www.collegeboard.org</a></li> <li>▪ Community College Finder, <a href="http://www.aacc.nche.edu">www.aacc.nche.edu</a></li> <li>▪ Potential apprentices – an introduction, <a href="http://www.dir.ca.gov/Apprenticeship/ApprenticeshipIntro.htm">www.dir.ca.gov/Apprenticeship/ApprenticeshipIntro.htm</a></li> <li>▪ Join Armed Forces info, <a href="http://www.military.com/join-armed-forces">www.military.com/join-armed-forces</a></li> </ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Have students refer back to the <b>Building a Path to My College task</b> and their newly completed tasks to complete <b>Activity 3.5: What is the Cost?</b> and <b>Activity 3.6: Worth the Cost?</b></p> <p>NOTES: For the sake of consistency, be sure students compare the same length of degree (two-year, four-year, etc.) for each college selected. Students can substitute a two-year degree or a five-year combined degree program for their tasks as long as they are making “apples to apples” comparisons between their selected colleges. If students choose a shorter degree term (two-years or less), have them change the length of the loan to five years.</p> <p>EXTENSION: You can extend this activity by assigning the students to research financial aid options for the colleges they have selected. Students can also research potential scholarships provided by/for: academic scholarship, athletic capability, artistic talent, employer, parents’ employers, religious organization, community organization, military, ethnicity, place of residence, noteworthy achievements, etc.</p> <p>RESOURCES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ College View, <a href="http://www.collegeview.com">www.collegeview.com</a></li> <li>▪ Peterson’s, <a href="http://www.petersons.com">www.petersons.com</a></li> </ul>	
5. Complete <b>Challenge 3-A: My Education Options.</b>	<p>PROCEDURE In- class or out-of-class assignment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assign the students to complete <b>Challenge 3-A: My Education Options</b> to consider their best type of training options(s).</p>	<p>SLIDE 10 - Challenge</p> <p>ACTIVITY Challenge 3-A: My Education Options</p>

## Lesson 3-1: Invest in Yourself

LEARNING TASKS	TEACHING NOTES	MATERIALS
REFLECTION	<p>PROCEDURE In-class or out-of-class</p> <p>Tell students to reflect on the following two questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the three greatest challenges I will face when preparing for my first career?</li> <li>What are the greatest opportunities I might encounter while preparing for my first career?</li> </ul>	SLIDE 11 - Reflection
<p>FURTHER STUDY</p> <p>Investigate the cost of remediation.</p>	<p>PROCEDURE In-class or out-of-class assignment</p> <p>PREP: Contact your local community college to see if you can arrange for practice testing. If it is not possible for students to take the Accuplacer or similar placement test, ask the Placement Testing Center staff of a local college or university if you can get old copies of any placement tests they have used in the past. Try to get at least one math test (Algebra) and one English test (Reading Comprehension).</p> <p>RESOURCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>College Board, <a href="http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/accuplacer/">www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/accuplacer/</a></li> <li>Describe the difference between admissions tests (such as the SAT or ACT) and college placement exams (such as the Accuplacer).</li> </ul>	<p>ACTIVITY</p> <p>College information</p> <p>Internet</p> <p>Access to practice or actual college placement test such as the Accuplacer</p>
<p>FURTHER STUDY</p> <p>Explore growing industry career opportunities.</p>	<p>PROCEDURE In-class or out-of-class assignment</p> <p>Direct the students to independently consider two possible careers to pursue, one that represents their passions and one that would make a good fallback option. Prompt the students to research the two current fastest growing industries and then explain how their chosen career options can apply to each growing industry.</p> <p>Provide students with examples to get them started. For example, a career with plenty of openings, one that would allow for advancement, and one that provides a livable wage, etc.).</p> <p>RESOURCE: <a href="http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_203.htm">www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_203.htm</a></p>	Internet

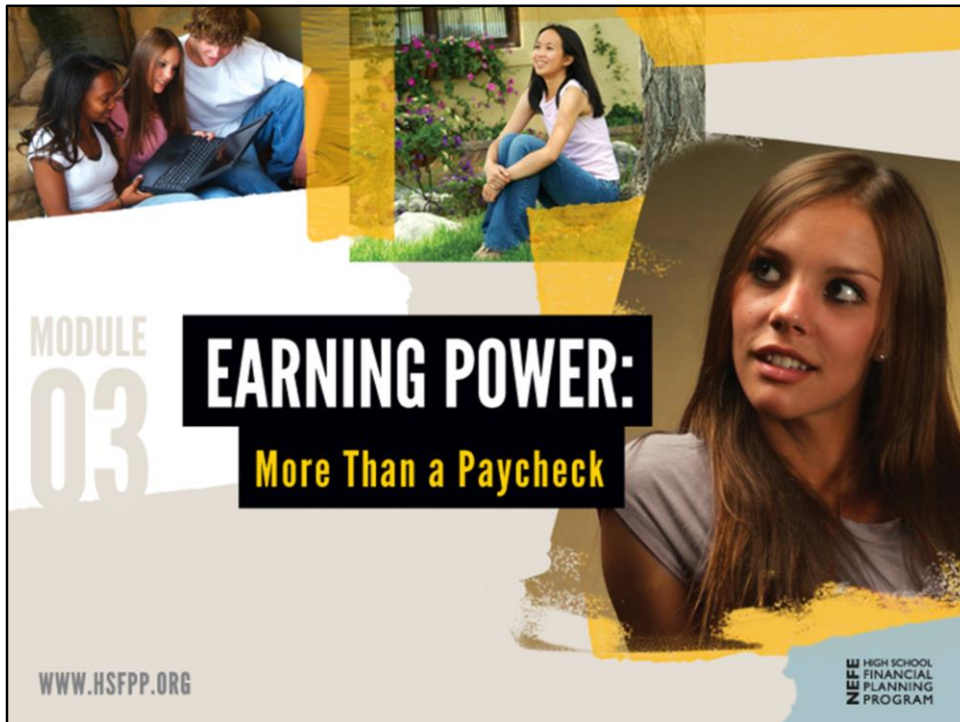
**FURTHER STUDY:**

Are you college ready? Check to see how well you perform on a college placement test, and then calculate the cost of remediation, if needed.

**FURTHER STUDY**

Consider two possible careers for yourself—one that represents your passion and one that would make a good fallback option. Research the two current fastest growing industries. How can you apply your chosen career options to each growing industry?







- ❑ Display this slide as you introduce today's lesson.



**Your Successes!**

*I taught myself to ride a bicycle when I was eight.*

*I'm a great cook.*

*I created my first work opportunity when I was 14.*

*I had perfect school attendance last year.*

*I'm a teacher's assistant in my Tae-Kwon-Do class.*

*I fluently speak at least two languages.*

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- Ask students to think about ways they feel they have been successful already in their young lives. Display this slide to prompt students to think about specific successes they have had. Allow two or three minutes for students to quietly think-write (keep the pen or pencil moving on the page) a list of personal successes. Encourage them to think of awards or honors they have achieved; successes in school, in clubs or in sports; personal skills (things they can do better than most people they know); etc. Push students to list as many items as they can, aiming for at least ten items. If students are challenged by this, have them ask friends, family members and others who know them well how they excel.

NOTES: This exercise can help students increase their self-awareness. Many times, their successes can translate into transferable job skills.

EXTENSION: Extended name tags: Have students consider their list and try to come up with one or two adjectives to summarize their success, skills or talents. Just one catch—adjectives have to begin with the same letter as their first names. Students should then write the adjective and first name on a name tag to wear during class. Students should refer to each other by their extended name tags. (Examples: Singing Sam, Bilingual Bob, Entrepreneur Ellie.)

## Preview

Today we will answer these questions

- What does it mean to “invest in myself”?
- Does education really have an impact on my future earnings?
- How can I minimize the costs of advanced education?

Use what you learn today  
to outline a plan to “invest” in yourself through  
education and by continually developing skills.

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- ❑ Have students complete the What is it **Worth to Be in Class?** task. Use this to transition into the lesson by telling the students that they will explore the payoffs of investing in themselves, which includes continuing their education.
- ❑ Preview the Learning Outcomes in the Student Learning Plan. By the end of this lesson, the students should be able to outline a career training and preparation plan.

## Meet Kevin and Gina

**Kevin – senior**

- Works part-time in restaurant
- Pursuing career in medical field
- Worried about paying for college

**Gina – sophomore**

- Works part-time at uncle's auto repair shop
- Wants to work full-time after graduation
- Uncertain about post-secondary education
- Worries about family finances



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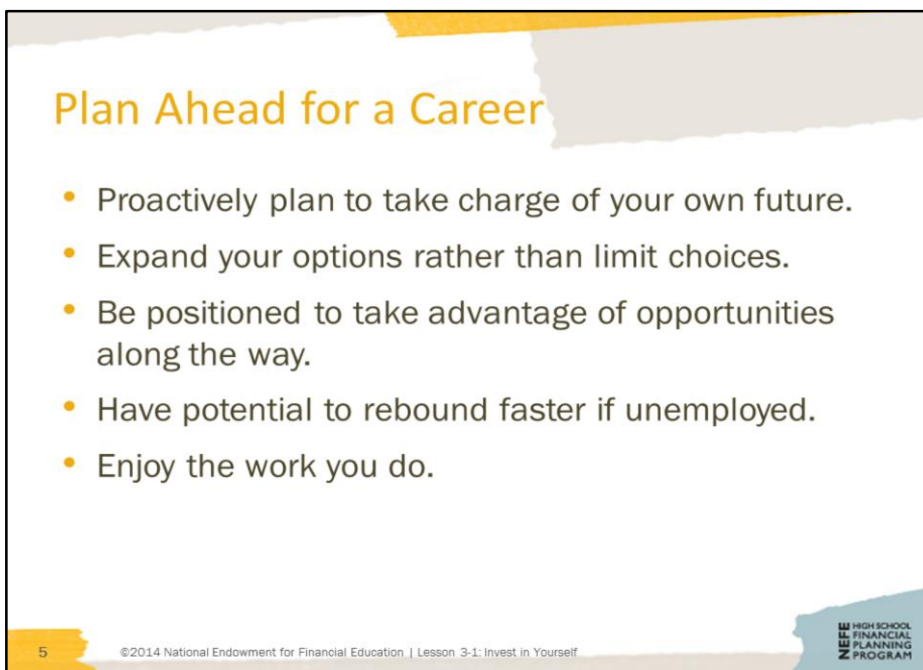
HIGH SCHOOL FINANCIAL PLANNING PROGRAM

- Introduce Kevin and Gina as the young people featured in the Student Guide. The students will follow Kevin and Gina as they make decisions about their careers and training.

EXTENSION: For more advanced students, have them research more current data on annual earnings. Assign the students to calculate out the lifetime earnings based on education level. Have students develop a formula that takes into account the recent average rate of inflation.

#### RESOURCES:

- US Census,  
[www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/income\\_expenditures\\_poverty\\_wealth.html](http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/income_expenditures_poverty_wealth.html)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Education Pays,” [www.bls.gov/emp/ep\\_chart\\_001.htm](http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm),  
the average number of years worked
- Social Security Administration’s “Myths & Facts: Raising the Social Security Retirement Age,”  
[www.socialsecuritymatters.org/Resources\\_files/MythsFactsRetAge.pdf](http://www.socialsecuritymatters.org/Resources_files/MythsFactsRetAge.pdf)



## Plan Ahead for a Career

- Proactively plan to take charge of your own future.
- Expand your options rather than limit choices.
- Be positioned to take advantage of opportunities along the way.
- Have potential to rebound faster if unemployed.
- Enjoy the work you do.

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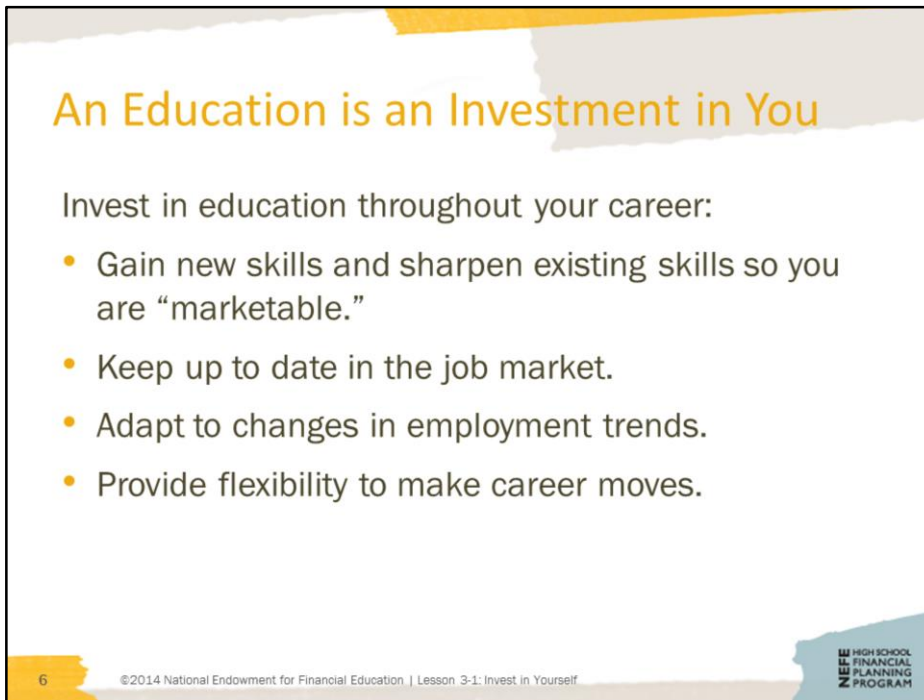
Student Guide, pages 5-7

- ☐ Point out the value of continuing education beyond high school. Having a haphazard career and training plan or no plan can delay the potential for future career advances and increases in income. Starting to think about career and education options now can help students take advantage of opportunities available during their teen years. (For example, enrolling in classes for college credit, ensuring coursework is completed to be eligible for entrance requirements.) Planning ahead can also reduce the risk of barriers (such as not enough credits to graduate, insufficient grades or coursework to get into a training/college program) that might impact eligibility requirements.
- ☐ Make sure each student has access to a computer with Internet. Distribute the **Building a Path to My Career** task. (You may opt to have students work in pairs if computer access is limited. This activity will take more time if students are paired. Each student must still complete his or her own worksheet and students paired together cannot choose the same careers.)
- ☐ Circulate among students to make sure they understand the worksheet directions and are putting accurate information on their worksheets.

NOTES: Before this activity, it would be helpful to have students complete Activity 3.2: My Interests, Activity 3.3: Worth Checking Out, and/or perform a career interest inventory. There are several free inventories available online. O\*NET has seven different free assessments available online: [www.onetcenter.org/IP.html](http://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html).

#### RESOURCES:

- O\*NET Resource Center, [www.onetcenter.org/IP.html](http://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html)
- Occupational Outlook Handbook, [www.bls.gov/oco/](http://www.bls.gov/oco/)
- Exploring Career Information, Bureau of Labor Statistics, [www.bls.gov/k12/](http://www.bls.gov/k12/)
- American Job Center Network, <http://jobcenter.usa.gov>



**An Education is an Investment in You**

Invest in education throughout your career:

- Gain new skills and sharpen existing skills so you are “marketable.”
- Keep up to date in the job market.
- Adapt to changes in employment trends.
- Provide flexibility to make career moves.

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Student Guide, pages 9-11

- ❑ Point out the value of investing in an education as a way to stay current in the job market and to have the skills to adapt to changes in work situations. Study the content on Student Guide, page 11.



## Education Options

- Four-year colleges
- Two-year colleges
- Apprenticeships
- Military

Which option(s) seem a good match for you?

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Student Guide, pages 11-13

- Give a general overview of how four- and two-year colleges, apprenticeship, and military programs prepare people for careers (page 12). Use Kevin's and Gina's stories to feature different routes used to gain education and training for careers. Expand or contract this conversation based on the time available, previous knowledge of your students, and the relevancy to the student grade level. Invite the students to share personal stories about education choices made by family members or friends who entered their careers via a two-year college, apprenticeship, or military program.

#### EXTENSION:

- This is a good time to invite guest speakers to share details about specific education options.
- Encourage students to explore each option by attending a local education fair.
- Assign students to learn more about each option through an Internet search or in-person visits.



## How to Manage Education Costs

One of the most important and expensive events in your life should not be handled with haphazard decisions.

Streamline Expenses	Comparison Shop	Be Strategic About Income Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stick to a budget</li><li>• Avoid nonessential expenses</li><li>• Use discounts</li><li>• Look for freebies: scholarships, grants, credit in high school, testing-out options</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish minimum criteria</li><li>• Weigh value with what you can afford</li><li>• Match to your situation and future plans</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider the long-term value</li><li>• Explore or jumpstart your career</li><li>• Earn while you learn</li><li>• Apply for tuition reimbursement or scholarships</li><li>• Use loans with caution</li></ul>

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Student Guide, pages 13-19

- ❑ Kick off a discussion about the costs of education by guiding the students to study the **Cost of College chart** on page 13. Point out ways to manage the costs of continuing education beyond high school. More detailed recommendations are provided in the Student Guide. (This continues onto the next slide.)

Extension: Encourage students to explore additional tips provided in NEFE resources:

- 40 Money Management Tips for College Students, [www.smartaboutmoney.org/40moneytips](http://www.smartaboutmoney.org/40moneytips)
- CashCourse Prep, [www.cashcourse.org](http://www.cashcourse.org). Students and Instructors who are not affiliated with a college or university can register as “Other” to access CashCourse and utilize the site resources.
  - Financial Basics
  - Paying for College
  - College Life

**More Ways to Manage Education Costs**  
More students drop out of college programs due to finances than because of grades.\*

Know Before You Go	Finish on Time (or Early)	Take Steps Now
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find out prerequisites</li> <li>Prepare to meet requirements</li> <li>Plan to cover costs (tuition and living costs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map out a plan</li> <li>Stick to the plan</li> <li>Minimize need for catch-up courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Save and invest money</li> <li>Take care of required courses in high school</li> <li>Explore options</li> <li>Position self for eligibility (entrance requirements, entry-level jobs, scholarships, internships)</li> </ul>

\*Source: [www.publicagenda.org/theirwholivesaheadofthem/reality1](http://www.publicagenda.org/theirwholivesaheadofthem/reality1)

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Student Guide, pages 13-19

- ☐ (Continued) Point out additional ways to manage the costs of continuing education beyond high school.
- ☐ Make sure each student has access to the Internet. Guide students to review the information from their **Building a Path to My Career** task to research two options for advanced education (four-year colleges, community or technical colleges, apprenticeship programs, or military) based on their career interests. Students should document what was listed for comparison criteria using the **Compare Options** task. Point out web resources on page 12 where students can narrow down options.

WEB RESOURCES (available as of September 2012):

- College Search feature, [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)
- Community College Finder, [www.aacc.nche.edu](http://www.aacc.nche.edu)
- Potential apprentices – an introduction, [www.dir.ca.gov/Apprenticeship/ApprenticeshipIntro.htm](http://www.dir.ca.gov/Apprenticeship/ApprenticeshipIntro.htm)
- Join Armed Forces info, [www.military.com/join-armed-forces](http://www.military.com/join-armed-forces)

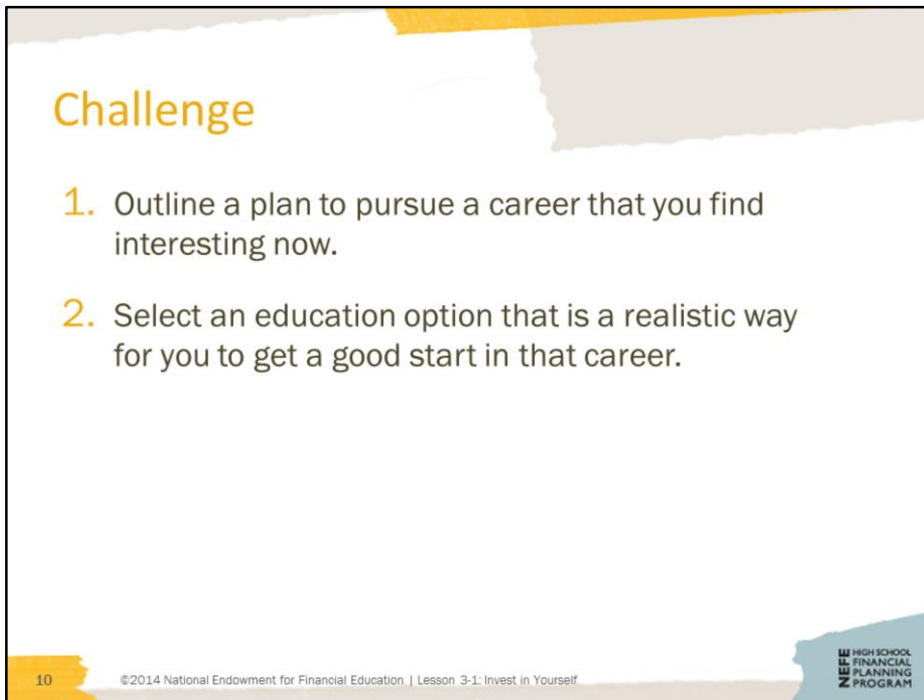
- ☐ Finally, have students refer back to the **Building a Path to My College** task and their newly completed tasks to complete **Activity 3.5: What is the Cost?** and **Activity 3.6: Worth the Cost?**

NOTES: For the sake of consistency, be sure students compare the same length of degree (two-year, four-year, etc.) for each college selected. Students can substitute a two-year degree or a five-year combined degree program for their tasks as long as they are making “apples to apples” comparisons between their selected colleges. If students choose a shorter degree term (two-years or less), have them change the length of the loan to five years.

EXTENSION: You can extend this activity by encouraging the students to research financial aid options for the colleges they have selected. Students can also research potential scholarships provided by/for: academic scholarship, athletic capability, artistic talent, employer, parents’ employers, religious organization, community organization, military, ethnicity, place of residence, noteworthy achievements, etc.

RESOURCES:

- College View, [www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com)
- Peterson’s, [www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)



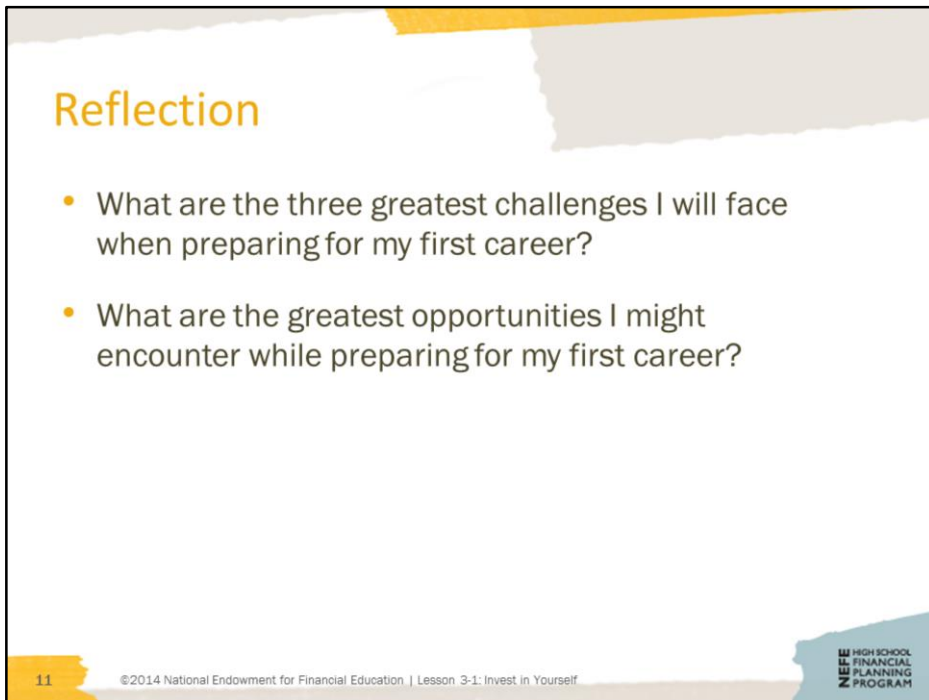
**Challenge**

1. Outline a plan to pursue a career that you find interesting now.
2. Select an education option that is a realistic way for you to get a good start in that career.

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In-class or out-of-class

- ☐ Assign the students to complete **Challenge 3-A: My Education Options** to consider their best type of training option(s).



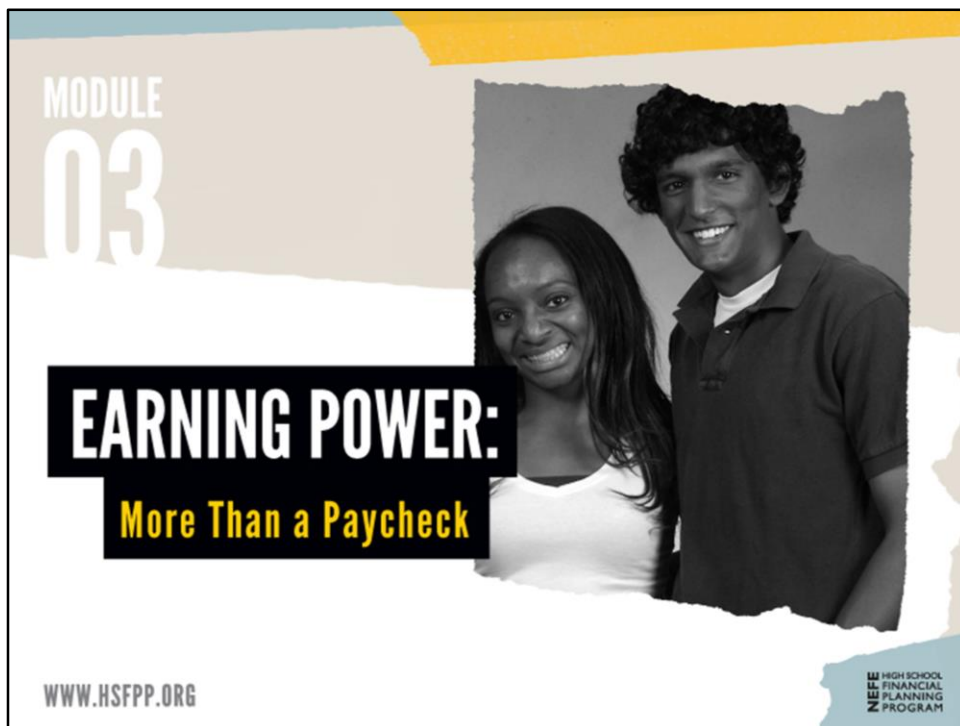
**Reflection**

- What are the three greatest challenges I will face when preparing for my first career?
- What are the greatest opportunities I might encounter while preparing for my first career?

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In-class or out-of-class

- ☐ Tell students to reflect on the two questions about challenges and opportunities.



## OVERVIEW

Working full time may seem a long time from now. But what you do today can greatly expand or limit the options you will have for many years to come. Everyone has skills and talents to make the most of in a career. Your potential is determined by you.

Continuing your education is your best chance for securing a good job so you can live a life you want. Investing in training and education throughout your career can pay off in salary increases and promotions as well as give you fallback options should you encounter a work interruption such as a layoff.

This lesson will help you maximize your future earning potential so you can achieve your dreams and live a life you enjoy.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

In this lesson you will explore the payoffs of investing in yourself through education and by continually developing skills. Along the way you will:

- ☒ Discuss the value of investing in yourself, now and throughout your work life.
- ☒ Identify how education can impact your future earnings.
- ☒ List strategies to minimize the costs of advanced education.

Use what you learn to outline a career training and preparation plan.

## LEARNING TASKS

These tasks match pages 3-20 in Student Guide 3.

__ 1.	Make a list of everything you feel you are successful at or have done successfully at some time in your life—small things and big things. Include all areas of your life, not just work.
__ 2.	Gina makes good pay in her Uncle's shop but knows it's in her best interest to finish high school. Prove to her she's right! Complete the <b>What is it Worth to be in Class?</b> task to find out how much your time is worth while you are in school today.
__ 3.	Before you decide on a college, it helps to have a sense of what your first career might be so that any education and training after high school has a purpose and will help you towards your career goal. Think of two different possible careers that sound interesting to you. Fill out the <b>Building a Path to My Career</b> task to map out information that will help you plan your path forward.
__ 4.	A college education may be one of the most important (and expensive!) investments you will ever make. Review the <b>Building a Path to My Career</b> task to determine what type of advanced education best fits your needs. Then complete the <b>Compare Options</b> task to compare at least two options that meet your criteria. Use this information to complete <b>Activity 3.5: What is the Cost?</b> and <b>Activity 3.6: Worth the Cost?</b>
__ 5.	Consider the best type of training option(s) for you. Complete <b>Challenge 3-A: My Education Options.</b>



## FURTHER STUDY:

Are you college ready? Check to see how well you perform on a college placement test, and then calculate the cost of remediation, if needed.



## FURTHER STUDY

Consider two possible careers for yourself—one that represents your passion and one that would make a good fallback option. Research the two current fastest growing industries. How can you apply your chosen career options to each growing industry?



## Activity 3.1: What do YOU Think?

**NAME:**

**DATE:**

1. What type of life do you see yourself living the year after high school?

2. Now, jump ahead a few years to your life at age 25. How will your life be different?

3. Finally, what will your life be like when you're the same age as your parents are now?

## Activity 3.2: My Interests

**NAME:**

**DATE:**

**Directions:**

In the space below, write words or draw pictures for 10 things that you like to do in your free time, in school, or on the job.

Things I Like to Do	

## Activity 3.3: Worth Checking Out

**NAME:**

**DATE:**

**Directions:**

1. Review your interests list from Activity 3.2 and the results of any career interest surveys that you have completed in the past two years.
2. Identify two careers you are interested in learning more about.
3. Choose one that represents your passion and one that might be a good fallback option, or Plan B.

Go to the American Job Center Network ([jobcenter.usa.gov](http://jobcenter.usa.gov)), a one-stop website where you can do the following:

- ☐ take an interest assessment
- ☐ explore careers
- ☐ research education opportunities
- ☐ plan a job search

**Plan A:** .....

**Plan B:** .....

## Activity 3.4: My Investment in Me

**NAME:**

**DATE:**

**Directions:**

List three ways that you have already invested in building skills and planning for a job or career.

How else can you invest in yourself over the next one to three years?

Already Invested	Next Investment Strategies

## Activity 3.5: What is the Cost?

**NAME:**

**DATE:**

**Directions:**

Compare the most recently published annual costs to attend and live on campus at three different colleges. Tip: You can find the estimated cost of attendance on college websites.

Research costs of a college from each one of the following categories:

- private nonprofit college
- in-state public college
- out-of-state public college

College Type	Private	In-State	Out-of-State
College Name			
Annual Costs	\$	\$	\$

## Activity 3.6: Worth the Cost?

NAME:

DATE:

Directions:

- ☐ Look up the average annual salaries for the careers you listed in **Activity 3.3: Worth Checking Out**.
- ☐ Use the college cost amounts from **Activity 3.5: What is the Cost** to compare the average salaries with four years of average college costs at private and public schools.

Based on your comparison, which school options seem financially reasonable for the careers you are considering? Be prepared to defend your response.



## Activity 3-12: Advice for Kevin

**NAME:**

**DATE:**

**Directions:**

Imagine that Kevin lives and attends school in your community. Recommend three strategies he can use to learn more about careers in the health care industry.

1.

2.

3.

## Task: What is it Worth to Be in Class?

NAME:

DATE:

**Directions:** Calculate how much getting that high school diploma is worth.

*Given the average lifetime earnings for:*

Professional Degree .....	\$4,159,000
Doctoral Degree .....	\$3,525,000
Master's Degree .....	\$2,834,000
College graduate with bachelor's degree .....	\$2,422,000
Two-year college associate's degree .....	\$1,813,000
High school diploma (or GED) .....	\$1,371,000
Less than high school .....	\$ 936,000

1. Figure the difference in potential income between a high school graduate and someone who did not go to school beyond the ninth grade:

$$\begin{array}{rcl} \$ 1,371,000 & \text{Average lifetime earnings (high school diploma)} & \\ - \$ 936,000 & \text{Average lifetime earnings (ninth-grade education or less)} & \\ \hline = \$ & \text{(A) Potential additional future earnings for a high school graduate} & \end{array}$$

2. Divide the potential additional future earnings for a high school graduate (A) by the number of years typically spent in high school:

$$\begin{array}{rcl} \$ & \text{(A) Potential additional future earnings for a high school graduate} & \\ \text{(A) } \div 4 \text{ years} & & \\ \hline = \$ & \text{(B) Potential additional future earnings associated with each year of high school} & \end{array}$$

3. Divide the potential additional future earnings per school year (B) by the average number of school days per school year (C):

$$\begin{array}{rcl} \$ & \text{(B) Potential additional future earnings per school year (for a high school graduate)} & \\ \text{(B) } \div 180 \text{ days per school year} & & \\ \hline = \$ & \text{(C) Approximate value of a day's education for a high school graduate} & \end{array}$$

<sup>i</sup> Note: Based on the sum of median 2011 earnings of workers aged 25 to 64 who maintain full-time, year-round employment over a 40-year time period. No allowance is made for the shorter work life resulting from time spent in college or out of the labor force for other reasons. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Study.

Additional Source: Sandy Baum, Jennifer Ma and Kathleen Payea; Education Pays 2010: The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society, College Board Advocacy & Policy Center.

## Task: What is it Worth to Be in Class?

NAME: KEY

DATE:

**Directions:** Calculate how much getting that high school diploma is worth.

*Given the average lifetime earnings for:*

Professional Degree .....	\$4,159,000
Doctoral Degree .....	\$3,525,000
Master's Degree .....	\$2,834,000
College graduate with bachelor's degree .....	\$2,422,000
Two-year college associate's degree .....	\$1,813,000
High school diploma (or GED) .....	\$1,371,000
Less than high school .....	\$ 936,000

1. Figure the difference in potential income between a high school graduate and someone who did not go to school beyond the ninth grade:

$$\begin{array}{rcl} \$ 1,371,000 & \text{Average lifetime earnings (high school diploma)} & \\ - \$ 936,000 & \text{Average lifetime earnings (ninth-grade education or less)} & \\ \hline = \$ 435,000 & \text{(A) Potential additional future earnings for a high school graduate} & \end{array}$$

2. Divide the potential additional future earnings for a high school graduate (A) by the number of years typically spent in high school:

$$\begin{array}{rcl} \$ 435,000 & \text{(A) Potential additional future earnings for a high school graduate} & \\ (A) \div 4 \text{ years} & & \\ \hline = \$ 108,750 & \text{(B) Potential additional future earnings associated with each year of high school} & \end{array}$$

3. Divide the potential additional future earnings per school year (B) by the average number of school days per school year (C):

$$\begin{array}{rcl} \$ 108,750 & \text{(B) Potential additional future earnings per school year (for a high school graduate)} & \\ (B) \div 180 \text{ days per school year} & & \\ \hline = \$ 604.00 & \text{(C) Approximate value of a day's education for a high school graduate} & \end{array}$$

<sup>i</sup> Note: Based on the sum of median 2011 earnings of workers aged 25 to 64 who maintain full-time, year-round employment over a 40-year time period. No allowance is made for the shorter work life resulting from time spent in college or out of the labor force for other reasons. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Study.

Additional Source: Sandy Baum, Jennifer Ma and Kathleen Payea; Education Pays 2010: The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society, College Board Advocacy & Policy Center.

## Task: Building a Path to My Career

NAME:

DATE:

### Directions:

Use the Occupational Outlook Handbook and/or labor market and occupational data from your state to research information for your top two career choices. Then, compare your answers to a classmate's. Two examples are done for you.

Occupation	Hairdresser*	Architect*
Employment Outlook	<i>better than average (20 percent growth)</i>	<i>better than average (16 percent growth)</i>
Expected Entry-Level Wage (hourly or annually)	<i>about \$10 per hour plus tips</i>	<i>About \$60,000 per year</i>
Possible Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 44 percent are self-employed</li> <li>• competition for higher paying openings is high</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About 21 percent are self-employed</li> <li>• Stiff competition, for jobs in most prestigious firms.</li> <li>• Many work more than 50 hours per week</li> </ul>
Hiring Requirements	<i>License, post-high school training</i>	<i>To get licensed: 5 yr. professional degree, 3+ years of practical work, training, and pass license exam</i>
School or College Where I Can Train	<i>Diva Hairdressing Academy</i>	<i>XXX State University</i>
Length of Training	<i>1,000 hours</i>	<i>Minimum 6 years</i>
Cost of Training	<i>Approximately \$11,857</i>	<i>Approximately \$132,744</i>
Three Skills I Can Develop Now to Prepare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• build communication skills</li> <li>• learn budgeting</li> <li>• develop marketing skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research (Where is new construction?)</li> <li>• time/stress management</li> <li>• computer-aided drawing</li> </ul>

\*Occupation data is based on 2011 available data.

## Task: Building a Path to My Career

Now it's your turn. Gather information about two careers that are interesting to you.

Occupation		
Employment Outlook		
Expected Entry-Level Wage (hourly or annually)		
Possible Concerns		
Hiring Requirements		
School or College Where I Can Train		
Length of Training		
Cost of Training		
Three Skills I Can Develop Now to Prepare		

## Task: Compare Options

**NAME:**

**DATE:**

**Directions:** Compare at least two post-secondary education or training options based on your future career interests. You may find one of the following websites helpful in your search.

- College Search feature, [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)
- Community College Finder, [www.aacc.nche.edu](http://www.aacc.nche.edu)
- Potential Apprentices—An Introduction, [www.dir.ca.gov/Apprenticeship/ApprenticeshipIntro.htm](http://www.dir.ca.gov/Apprenticeship/ApprenticeshipIntro.htm)
- Join Armed Forces info, [www.military.com/join-armed-forces](http://www.military.com/join-armed-forces)

Feature	Option A	Option B
College or Program Name		
Location (City, State)		
Internship opportunities		
Work-study opportunities		
Study abroad opportunities		
Job placement rate		
Cost per year		
Cost for degree or program (if tuition rates and fees remain stable)		
Potential cost of 15-year student loan (assume four years of college and a loan with 8 percent interest)		
Monthly student loan payment		
Potential career(s) with this degree or certificate		
Average annual salary		
Monthly salary		
Percent of monthly salary required to pay back student loan (if applicable)		



## Challenge 3-A: My Education Options

**NAME:**

**DATE:**

For this challenge task, use what you have learned in **Lesson 3-1: Invest in Yourself** and other career-related study to make a thoughtful decision about training for a future career. Select the best type of education or training program for you as you prepare for a career that interests you now. For future reference as your life circumstances and interests change, add this decision summary to your personal financial planning portfolio.

### Directions:

- ☐ 1. Apply what you have learned about criterion-based decision making as you complete this challenge. Review the six DECIDE action steps to guide your work (Page 40 Appendix or Module 1 Student Guide, page 20). Preview the criteria listed in the Scoring Guide to plan for your assessment.
- ☐ 2. Use the chart below or create a separate document to summarize your decision-making process. Take into consideration your current circumstances and values. Ask for input from someone who knows you well enough to help you explore realistic options that are most suitable to your circumstances, values, and preferences.
- ☐ 3. Using the Scoring Guide, self-assess your work, and also ask a classmate to peer assess your work.

	DECIDE Steps	My Situation		
1	Define your goal.			
2	Establish your criteria.			
3	Choose three good options.			
4	Identify the pros and cons of the options.			
5	Decide what's best.			
6	Evaluate the results.			

## Challenge 3-A: My Education Options

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Required Criteria		Status		
<b>Content</b>				
1.	In one sentence you state what you want to achieve as a result of the decision-making process.	acceptable	not acceptable	
2.	Outcome involves a major decision related to skill training beyond high school.	acceptable	not acceptable	
3.	You justify how the decision and outcome relates to your current circumstances and values.	acceptable	not acceptable	
4.	Summary lists at least six criteria for an acceptable outcome, including the features or circumstances you absolutely must have as well as those you would like to have or will not accept.	acceptable	not acceptable	
<b>Option Status Rating Key: "A" = Acceptable / "NA" = Not Acceptable</b>		<b>Option A</b>	<b>Option B</b>	<b>Option C</b>
5.	Summary includes details about three possible options.			
6.	You devise a way to illustrate how well each option matches your criteria.			
7.	You point out the option that you have chosen.	acceptable	not acceptable	
8.	You justify why the chosen option was selected.	acceptable	not acceptable	
9.	Your choice is logical based on the known circumstances, stated criteria, and potential to achieve the desired outcome.	acceptable	not acceptable	
10.	You summarize what you do and don't like about your choice and justify any modifications that were made in the purpose, criteria, or options.	acceptable	not acceptable	
<b>General</b>				
11.	Content is clearly stated with distinct detail.	acceptable	not acceptable	
12.	Documentation is neat and easy to read.	acceptable	not acceptable	
13.	Information about the options is accurate or can be verified.	acceptable	not acceptable	

Feedback: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_