



Change, Challenges, and Careers

Argumentative Essay



Emma Hutson, Polly Base, Keiana Cross, MacKenzie Corrigan
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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	Time Frame	450 Minutes
Subject	English/Language Arts	Duration	8-10 periods
Course	A.P. Language and Composition, A.P. Literature and Composition		

Essential Question

How can researching and weighing the pros and cons of different careers help us make smarter decisions about our future jobs?

Summary

In this lesson, students will explore potential career paths by researching and writing argumentative essays. Students will select a career of interest and gather information on job responsibilities, salary prospects, educational requirements, and the industry's current and future outlook. They will identify and assess the positives and negatives of the chosen profession, analyzing aspects like job satisfaction, work-life balance, potential challenges, and the societal impacts of their selected career. Finally, students will present their findings through argumentative essays and by sharing them with a significant person in their lives. Through the lesson, students will sharpen their critical thinking skills and gain a deeper understanding of potential career choices.

Snapshot

Engage

Students use the Career Cluster survey to identify career clusters they are interested in pursuing after their postsecondary training or education.

Explore

Students explore careers of interest for their top three career clusters using a Mind Map.

Explain

Students research different careers and their requirements using a Note Catcher.

Extend

Students use Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER) to write an argumentative essay on one side of a controversy for their chosen career.

Evaluate

Students record themselves sharing their career discoveries with a significant person.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 12)

12.3.W.3: Compose argumentative essays, reviews, or op-eds that:

- introduce precise, informed claims
- include a defensible thesis
- acknowledge counterclaims or alternate perspectives
- organize claims, counterclaims, and evidence in a logical sequence
- provide the most relevant evidence to develop balanced arguments, using credible sources
- use sentence variety and word choice to create clarity and concision
- use style and tone that suits the audience and purpose

Attachments

- [Argument Outline—Change, Challenges, and Careers.docx](#)
- [Argument Outline—Change, Challenges, and Careers.pdf](#)
- [Argumentative Essay Evaluation Rubric—Change, Challenges, and Careers.docx](#)
- [Argumentative Essay Evaluation Rubric—Change, Challenges, and Careers.pdf](#)
- [Lesson Slides—Change, Challenges, and Careers.pptx](#)
- [Mind Map—Change, Challenges, and Careers.docx](#)
- [Mind Map—Change, Challenges, and Careers.pdf](#)
- [Note Catcher—Change, Challenges, and Careers.docx](#)
- [Note Catcher—Change, Challenges, and Careers.pdf](#)

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Mind Map (attached; one per student)
- Note Catcher (attached; one per student)
- Argument Outline (attached; one per student)
- Argumentative Essay Evaluation Rubric (attached; one per student)
- Student laptops or Chromebooks with internet access
- Audio or visual recording device (cell phone, laptop)

30 minutes

Engage

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to facilitate this lesson. Begin by showing **slides 2-4** to introduce the title of the lesson, the essential questions, and the learning objectives. Emphasize that the essential question will be addressed throughout the lesson.

Let students know they will be taking a survey that asks them to consider their interests, skills, and personality to identify which career clusters might be a good fit for them.

Display **slide 5** and have the students access the [Career Cluster Survey](#). They can either scan the QR code or use the link on the slide. The survey takes about 5 minutes to complete. Ask students to take a picture or screenshot of the results when they have finished the survey. Students should share their results with you. Next, group students up by their clusters. Ask students in their groups to discuss their cluster and generate 2-3 questions about that cluster.

Teacher's Note: Grouping

If you have big groups, consider breaking them up into smaller groups for discussion. For small groups, combine like clusters together or join the group for their discussion.

50 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 6**. Introduce students to the [Mind Maps](#) instructional strategy. Distribute the **Mind Map** handout (attached) to each student. Have students identify the top three career clusters from their survey results. Tell students to write those career clusters in the bubbles linked to the center “My Careers” bubble.

Model the strategy with the class by displaying the example on **slide 7**.

Next, ask students to brainstorm careers they think they may be interested in pursuing after high school that might fit in their Career Cluster. Students should write their brainstormed ideas on the back of their Mind Map. Now, direct students to the [Career Cluster Infogram](#) to learn more about specific careers in each of the three clusters they wrote on the front of their mind map. Allow students time to explore the Infogram and add two jobs from each cluster to the remaining circles on their mind maps. Now that the students have six career choices, have them rank the careers 1-6 based on their actual interest.

Optional Tech Integration:

Consider having students use an online mind mapping tool like [Popplet](#) or [Google Drawings](#).

50 minutes

Explain

Display **slide 8**. Instruct students to research salaries, schools, skills, certification requirements, and availability of their top three jobs. Keep slide 8 up or provide the links to the websites listed. Have students use the attached **Note Catcher** to record their findings. Transition to **slide 9** to show an example of the information they need to research for each job. Display **slide 10** to return to the list of resources while students research and add information to their Note Catchers.

Provide time for students to complete their research. Ask students to complete an [I Used to Think/But Now I Know](#) about any surprises they discovered during their research.

Teacher's Note: Prior Knowledge

Consider teaching the [Building Arguments with Evidence](#) lesson prior to this lesson. If needed, the [Making Sense of MLA](#) lesson is another excellent scaffold to this lesson.

250 minutes

Extend

Invite students to do a deeper dive by choosing one of their careers to research further. Tell students to focus on controversies related to their chosen career.

Display **slides 11-14** to show students examples of controversies in careers. Provide time for students to research a controversy within their own selected career. Let them know they need to investigate various sides of the controversy because they will make a claim and argue for one side of the controversy.

Display **slide 15** to provide an example of a [Claim, Evidence, Reasoning \(CER\)](#). Next, provide students time to write an argumentative essay in which they take a clear stance on one side of their chosen career controversy.

The format of the essay should include an introductory paragraph, thesis statement, three body paragraphs (with a CER in each), and a concluding paragraph. Students come up with three claims (each body paragraph) to back up their opinion/argument. Transition to **slide 16** and either provide a link to an uploaded version, or pass out a printed copy of the **Argument Outline** handout (attached), one per student, to help students organize their essays.

After the students have written a draft, display **slide 17** and provide each student a copy of the **Argumentative Essay Evaluation Rubric** (attached). Review the rubric with students.

Teacher's Note

Recommend that students use [Google Scholar](#) and similar websites to do research. Students complete the outline, rough draft, and final draft. It will need to be in MLA format.

20 minutes

Evaluate

After students have completed their argumentative essay, have them reflect on what they have learned. Display **slide 18** and ask them to share their new knowledge with a significant person in their life. They can do so with any of the following:

- Parent
- Grandparent
- Guardian
- Mentor/Coach
- Another teacher

During the discussion, have students share next steps for their future based on their research and details from their argumentative essay and Note Catcher. Before the discussion, remind students to ask for advice. This discussion will be audio or video recorded using a phone or [Padlet](#), and the student will share the video with the teacher.

After the discussion, invite students to use the back of their Note Catcher to complete this Sentence Stem:

Based on my research and discussion with a significant person in my life, my next steps towards a successful career are...

Optional Tech Integration

Give students the option to upload their [Video in Padlet](#) to share with you or the class.

Resources

K20 Center. (n.d.). Building arguments with evidence. 5E Lessons. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/lesson/268>

K20 Center. (n.d.). Claim, evidence, reasoning (CER). Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/156>

K20 Center. (n.d.). Google drawings. Tech Tools. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/629>

K20 Center. (n.d.). I used to think . . . but now I know. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/13>

K20 Center. (n.d.). Mind maps. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1277>

K20 Center. (n.d.). Making sense of MLA. 5E Lessons. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/lesson/2138>

K20 Center. (n.d.). Padlet. Tech Tools. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/1077>

K20 Center. (n.d.). Popplet. Tech Tools. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/663>

K20 Center. (n.d.). Video in Padlet. Tech Tools. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/4077>