

Name: _____

Beyond the Paycheck

Aligned to the following standards:

CS.05, FFA.PL-A1, FFA.PL-A3, FFA.PL-A5, FFA.PL-A8, FFA.PL-C1, FFA.PL-D2, FFA.PL-D3, FFA.PL-E3, FFA.PL-F1, FFA.PL-F2, FFA.PL-F3, FFA.PG-I1, FFA.PG-I2, FFA.PG-I5, FFA.PG-J1, FFA.PG-J2, FFA.PG-J3, FFA.PG-J4, FFA.PG-K3, FFA.CS-M1, FFA.CS-M2, FFA.CS-N4, FFA.CS-O2, FFA.CS-O3, AG5, AGC08.01, AGC09.01, AGC09.02, CCSS.RI.9-10.1, CCSS.RI.9-10.2, CCSS.RI.9-10.4, CCSS.W.9-10.1, CCSS.W.9-10.2, CCSS.W.9-10.4, CCSS.W.9-10.7, CCSS.W.9-10.8, CCSS.W.9-12.9, CCSS.SL.9-10.1, CCSS.RST.9-10.8, CCSS.RST.9-10.9, CCSS.WHST.9-10.1, CCSS.WHST.9-10.2, CCSS.WHST.9-10.4, CCSS.WHST.9-10.6, CRP.02, CRP.04, CRP.07, CRP.08, CRP.10, CRP.11

Directions:

Using the article “Evaluating Job Offers: Let’s Talk Money (and more!)” (<https://www.agcareers.com/ag-and-food-career-guide/2025/US/15/>), complete the activity below.

Pre-Reading

Answer these questions before reading the article.

- Circle all the benefits below that you would expect from a career.

☐ High Base Salary	☐ Annual Bonuses	☐ Performance Commissions or Increases	☐ Overtime Pay
☐ Health Insurance	☐ Life and Disability Insurance	☐ Employer Contributed Retirement Plans	☐ Paid Time Off
☐ Sick Leave	☐ Tuition Assistance	☐ Family Medical Leave (Maternity/Paternity Leave)	☐ Stock Options
☐ Fitness Incentives/Membership	☐ Childcare Assistance	☐ Transportation or House Allowances	☐ Professional Development

- What are your top two expectations for a job offer? Explain why.

- _____
- _____

Post-Reading

Answer these questions after reading the article.

- When you receive a job offer, what is the first thing you should do?

- Complete this T-chart by listing all items from the text that fall into each category. Then place a star next to the ones that matter most to you.

TOTAL COMPENSATION PACKAGE	TOTAL REWARDS

Name:

3. Explain the difference between a “total compensation package” and “total rewards” in your own words.

4. Name the three common types of paid leave that companies can offer.

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5. Next to each benefit category below, write a question you would want to ask related to that benefit.

- Health, dental and vision insurance:

- Retirement plans:

- Disability and life insurance:

- Other perks:

6. Explain how mentorship or network exposure could be a stepping stone to a specific role.

7. What are two opportunities that you can use to advocate for a raise or promotion?

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8. The author of the article says to assess the full value of an offer. List five elements she says to consider.

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9. Now, circle one of the elements listed in the previous question that would most affect your well-being and write why below.

Name:

Dig Deeper

Read through the two horticulture-related job offers carefully. Use the comparison chart to understand each offer by filling in the details. Then, answer the reflection questions. Be honest about your priorities; there are no right or wrong answers when choosing a job position.

Job Offer 1: Green Thumb Horticulture Specialist Green Thumb Horticulture is a small greenhouse company with just fifteen employees. They are offering you a full-time position as a horticulture specialist with a starting salary of \$39,500 per year. In addition to salary, you are eligible for an annual performance bonus of up to \$3,000. The company provides eight vacation days, five sick days and seven paid holidays each year. Health insurance is offered, though employees must pay \$150 per month, and there are no dental, vision or retirement benefits included. Green Thumb is known for its friendly, close-knit work environment and offers flexible scheduling during the off-season. Employees also enjoy the perk of taking home greenhouse plants at reduced cost. Advancement is possible, with the opportunity to become a lead grower after about two years with the company.	Job Offer 2: True Bloom Greenhouse Technician True Bloom is a large greenhouse operation with about 120 employees. They are hiring a greenhouse technician at a starting salary of \$37,000 per year. This position includes the possibility of earning an annual performance bonus of up to \$1,500. Employees receive 10 vacation days, five sick days and seven paid holidays each year. True Bloom provides health, dental and vision insurance, covering about 50% of the cost for employees. They also offer a 401(k) retirement plan with a 3% employer match. True Bloom is a structured company with a strong training program, and each year employees attend a state horticulture conference at the company's expense. Growth opportunities are clear, with the chance to move into a greenhouse operations manager role within three years.
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Complete the comparison chart.

Category	Green Thumb Horticulture Specialist	True Bloom Greenhouse Technician	Which appeals more to you?
Salary and Bonuses			
Paid Leave			
Benefits (health, dental and vision insurances)			
Retirement			
Intangibles (other perks)			
Growth Potential			

Name:

1. Which position would you accept and why?

2. Which factor had the biggest influence on your decision? Explain why.

3. What is one part of the position you didn't choose that was a deal breaker? Explain why.

4. What is one question you would ask the employer before making a final choice?

5. Which benefits or perks would you value most in your first job after high school or college? Why?

6. Describe how your priorities in a position might change over time.

7. If you could design your perfect job offer, what are three things it would include?

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