

Name: _____

Rookie But Ready!

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 “Leveling the Playing Field: How Students Can Stand Out Among Experienced Candidates” (<https://www.aqcareers.com/aq-and-food-career-guide/2025/US/5/>), complete the activity below.

Pre-Reading

Answer these questions before reading the article. Circle “myth” or “fact” for each statement.

- Myth or Fact:** All entry-level jobs require at least five years of work experience.
- Myth or Fact:** Employers see value in hiring recent graduates because of their fresh ideas and long-term potential.
- Myth or Fact:** Most agricultural and food employers are not interested in hiring new graduates.
- Myth or Fact:** Job postings always list qualifications that are absolutely required, and you should never apply unless you meet every single one of them.
- Myth or Fact:** Companies invest in student internships and recruitment programs to connect with emerging talent.

Post-Reading

Answer these questions after reading the article.

1. Many organizations have dedicated programs and departments for what?	2. What percentage of U.S. agricultural and food employers plan to hire new graduates?	3. What is the main reason employers recruit recent grads?

FRESH PERSPECTIVES AND OPEN MIND

4. Write the definition or example for this advantage from the article.

5. Give a personal example of how you can demonstrate this advantage (either currently or in the future).

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TECH SAVVINESS

6. Write the definition or example for this advantage from the article.

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7. Give a personal example of how you can demonstrate this advantage (either currently or in the future).

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GROWTH MINDSET FOR THE LONG-TERM

8. Write the definition or example for this advantage from the article.

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9. Give a personal example of how you can demonstrate this advantage (either currently or in the future).

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RELOCATION FLEXIBILITY

10. Write the definition or example for this advantage from the article.

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11. Give a personal example of how you can demonstrate this advantage (either currently or in the future).

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REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS

12. Write the definition or example for this advantage from the article.

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13. Give a personal example of how you can demonstrate this advantage (either currently or in the future).

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14. Define “transferable skills” in your own words.

15. List three transferable skills referenced in the article.

- a.
b.
c.

16. In the last section of the article, what advice is given to someone who does not meet all the qualifications and criteria for a job?

Dig Deeper

Let’s create a 30-second “Hire Me” elevator pitch about yourself that highlights your unique student advantages and transferable skills.

Step 1: Think about your experiences from part-time jobs, FFA, SAEs, sports, volunteering, other clubs or school projects. List eight transferable skills you already have and where you developed those skills. Examples could include teamwork, customer service, time management, problem solving, leadership, communication, etc.

Transferable Skill	Where did you develop this skill?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

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Step 2: Connect those transferable skills to one of the advantages of hiring new graduates from the article. List each skill in the correct advantage category below.

FRESH PERSPECTIVE AND OPEN MIND	
TECH SAVVINESS	
GROWTH MINDSET FOR THE LONG-TERM	
RELOCATION FLEXIBILITY	
REASONABLE SALARY EXPECTATIONS	

Step 3: Using your lists above, create a 30-second “Hire Me” elevator pitch that highlights at least two transferable skills and one advantage (from the article) that you bring.

Examples:

“Through my FFA officer role, I learned strong communication and teamwork skills. As a Gen Z student, I also bring tech savviness to social media and digital outreach. I’m eager to grow long-term with an organization.”

“Working part-time at a feed store taught me dependability and customer service, and through my SAE program, I gained problem-solving skills. I bring a fresh perspective as a recent ag student, and I’m excited to learn and grow with a company for the long-term.”

“Playing on my school’s basketball team helped me develop teamwork and time management, while completing a research project in my agriculture class strengthened my problem-solving skills. As a student, I bring tech savviness and a growth mindset that will help me contribute new ideas and adapt quickly in the workplace.”

Your “Hire Me” Elevator Pitch:

Name:

Step 4: Pair up with a classmate and take turns giving your pitch. In the space below, provide each other with feedback on clarity, confidence and how well the skills are connected to the advantages.

Step 5: Reflect by answering the questions below.

1. What would you do if you saw a job that wanted “three years’ experience” but you met most of the qualifications?

2. Why is it still worth applying for this job?

3. In the hiring process, where/when do you think using your elevator pitch would be most beneficial and why? (Ex. application, resume, cover letter, interview)