



Lesson Plan

The Agriculture Career Matchmaker

Created: 04/2024 by the National FFA Organization

Description of Lesson: Introduce agriculture careers to students by giving them the role of a career matchmaker, making career recommendations based on a given profile. Students will also explore and define characteristics they are looking for in a future career.

Student Learning Objectives:

After completing these activities, students will ...

- 1. Research and recommend agriculture careers based on given criteria.
- 2. Evaluate what aspects of a future career are important to them.

Suggested Grade Level:

Grades 9 and 10 (This lesson is written so instructors can scale up or down based on class needs.)

Suggested Time: 65 minutes (*Time requirements may vary based upon student understanding and class schedule.)

Resources/References:

- 1. Website: AgExplorer (2023), AgExplorer.FFA.org

Related Resources:

- 1. Discover Careers in Agriculture, <https://FFA.box.com/s/dduzvd0ksmj2bmway6bihx81jdkxv2ni>
- 2. AgExplorer Exploration, <https://FFA.box.com/s/trf5hd7v2zhp83ynh3ringgl9swph3s4>

Equipment and Supplies Needed:

- 1. A copy of the “The Agriculture Career Matchmaker” worksheet for each student
- 2. Student devices with internet access

Cross-Curricular Connections:

Science	English/Language Arts	Technology
Identify and describe careers in the agriculture industry.	Synthesize criteria for selecting a career and explain why they are important.	Use career websites to aid in a job search.

SAE and FFA Connections:

- 1. Next Gen Conferences, <https://www.FFA.org/participate/next-generation-conference/>
- 2. AgExplorer Website, AgExplorer.FFA.org
- 3. Foundational SAE Connections: Career Exploration and Planning, Employability Skills for College and Career Readiness, Agricultural Literacy

Student Activity Sheets:

Direct access to student activity sheets without lesson plan or answer key for easy upload to a learning management system or printing for classwork.

<https://ffa.box.com/s/cl6t9u6q6hr85k742lrbv9tref9w76v> (Word)

<https://ffa.box.com/s/r8o6jya020grx0lqxf7e8itwo5es4m13> (PDF)

<https://ffa.box.com/s/dmka07fshpcxkd7m2w9akp9x9vf5lyr3> (Non-Designed Word)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qTOLxHvhREhI7hZ2UhKCZZ0k0NUJe1UKN0P7-a0Atns/copy> (Google)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/13ccnURaUyvPL3pNRxP-nhK6Tjt81VIQwI2een6-regw/copy> (Non-Designed Google)

These Activities Are Aligned to the Following Standards:

AFNR Performance Element

- CS.05. Describe career opportunities and means to achieve those opportunities in each of the Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources career pathways.

FFA Precept

- FFA.PL-A.Action: Assume responsibility and take the necessary steps to achieve the desired results, no matter what the goal or task at hand.
- FFA.PL-C.Vision: Visualize the future and how to get there.
- FFA.PL-E.Awareness: Understand personal vision, mission and goals.
- FFA.PL-F.Continuous Improvement: Accept responsibility for learning and personal growth.
- FFA.PG-I.Professional Growth: Assume responsibility for attaining and improving upon the skills needed for career success.
- FFA.PG-J.Mental Growth: Embrace cognitive and intellectual development relative to reasoning, thinking and coping.
- FFA.CS-M.Communication: Effectively interact with others in personal and professional settings.
- FFA.CS-N.Decision Making: Analyze a situation and execute an appropriate course of action.

Common Career Technical Core

- AG5 Describe career opportunities and means to achieve those opportunities in each of the Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources Career Pathways.

NASDCTEc

- AGC09.02 Select, research and examine critical aspects of career opportunities in one or more AFNR career pathways in order to gain an understanding of the breadth of occupations within this cluster.

Common Core – Reading: Informational Text

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

Common Core – Writing

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

Common Core – Speaking and Listening

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

AFNR Career Ready Practices

- CRP.02. Apply appropriate academic and technical skills. Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive.

- CRP.04. Communicate clearly, effectively, and with reason. Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal and/or visual methods.
- CRP.07. Employ valid and reliable research strategies. Career-ready individuals are discerning in accepting and using new information to make decisions, change practices or inform strategies.
- CRP.08. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. Career-ready individuals readily recognize problems in the workplace, understand the nature of the problem, and devise effective plans to solve the problem.
- CRP.10. Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals. Career-ready individuals take personal ownership of their own educational and career goals, and they regularly act on a plan to attain these goals.
- CRP.11. Use technology to enhance productivity. Career-ready individuals find and maximize the productive value of existing and new technology to accomplish workplace tasks and solve workplace problems.

Partnership for 21st Century Skills

- Communication
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Flexibility and Adaptability
- Information, Communications and Technology Literacy
- Initiative and Self-direction
- Leadership and Responsibility

Lesson Plan:

1. **Bell Ringer:** What do you think is the most important thing to consider when looking for a career or job? Why?
2. **Introduction:** Choosing a career path can seem daunting or overwhelming, especially for those who are just starting out. There are many different aspects to consider when selecting the right career path. A person may consider what their interests and passions are, how much schooling or training they want to complete, what they value in a company or coworkers and what kind of impact they want to have on society. It can help to prioritize what is most important to each person in a career. It can also help to ask others for help and advice when making such a big decision.

Today, you will be acting as an agriculture career matchmaker. You will “meet” with several “clients” to hear what is important to them in their future careers and provide them with a few different options to consider. Take into consideration everything that they think is important to them and make recommendations that match those criteria.

3. **Activity:** Each student needs a copy of the worksheet “The Agriculture Career Matchmaker.”
 - a. **Part 1:** Students will read four profiles of individuals who are looking for career help. They will use AgExplorer to find careers they believe would match well with each individual based on the information in their profiles and then answer the additional questions for each person.
 - b. **Part 2:** Students will consider what characteristics they themselves are looking for in a future career. They will complete a short survey that asks them about themselves in a variety of ways and also challenges them to list their top five characteristics for a future career.
 - i. Depending on the level of your class/students, it may be beneficial to conduct a class-wide brainstorming/idea session of what kinds of things people look for in careers (i.e., amount of travel, work environment, kinds of coworkers/managers, interaction with the public/stakeholders, etc.). There are no right or wrong answers here, but students may need help to get started. You may also point to the profiles from Part 1 as examples of characteristics they could include.
 - c. **Part 3:** Students will now meet with their final “client” for this activity — one of their classmates. Students will pair up and share their results from Part 2 with each other. They will then come up with two interview questions to gain further information about what their classmate is looking for in a career and take notes on their answer. Students will then use AgExplorer and/or other career sites to match their classmate with a career. They will share their selected career and their reasoning with their classmate. Finally, students will answer reflection questions about the career their classmate selected.
4. **Follow-up:** Have students learn more about careers that could potentially be good fits for them by completing the MyCareer Quiz on AgExplorer. Have students complete the “[MyCareer Quiz: Matching My Interests](#)” worksheet as they do.
5. **Exit Ticket:** What is the most important thing you are looking for in your future career? Why?

Name: _____

The Agriculture Career Matchmak

Aligned to the following standards:

CS.05; FFAPL-A; FFAPL-E; FFAPL-F; FFAPG-I;
FFAPG-J; FFACS-M; FFACS-N; AG5; AGC09.02;
CCSS.ELA.RI.9-10.2; CCSS.ELA.RI.9-10.4;
CCSS.ELA.W.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA.W.9-10.2;
CCSS.ELA.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA.SL.9-10.4; CRP.02;
CRP.04; CRP.07; CRP.08; CRP.10; CRP.11

Part 1

Directions:

You are the agriculture career matchmaker. People come to you looking for advice on what their next career move should be. Read each scenario below to learn more about your clients and what they are looking for in a career. As you read, highlight or underline keywords or phrases that will help you match the right career with each person. Then use AgExplorer to find a career to match them with and answer the questions under each scenario.



Paige Planterman

Paige is a high school senior who is looking forward to working in the agriculture industry but needs help deciding what to do. Paige has been in FFA for the last four years and has really enjoyed competing in career development events like nursery/landscape and agronomy. She is interested in going to either community college or university before entering her career and her best subjects in school are math and science. Ideally, she sees herself working in a hands-on environment, partially outside and partially inside. She would like to eventually work her way up to leading a team of some sort and having a real impact on making decisions in her workplace.

- What are two careers you think Paige should consider?
 -
 -
- Explain at least three reasons why you are recommending these careers. What aspects of Paige's profile led you to select these careers for her?
 -
 -
 -
- What additional kinds of classroom, FFA or SAE activities could Paige take advantage of to help prepare her for these careers? (Name at least three.)
 -
 -
 -
- What is one additional piece of advice you would give to Paige as she explores her career options?

Name: _____

Skyler Steele

Skyler is entering his junior year of high school, and his parents are encouraging him to explore what he would like to do for his career. He is unsure exactly what he wants to do but enjoys working with his hands, and he enjoyed the mechanics unit in his introduction to agriculture class. He doesn't necessarily see himself getting a four-year degree but is interested in more training after high school to help him in his future career. He is creative and enjoys making drawings of things he could build. He loves to follow a plan that makes sense and suggest design improvements.



1. What are two careers you think Skyler should consider?
 - a.
 - b.
2. Explain at least three reasons why you are recommending these careers. What aspects of Skyler's profile led you to select these careers for him?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
3. What additional kinds of classroom, FFA or SAE activities could Skyler take advantage of to help prepare him for these careers? (Name at least three.)
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
4. What is one additional piece of advice you would give to Skyler as he explores his career options?

Name: _____



Nate Urehelper

Nate can be found outdoors more often than indoors. He is only a freshman but has already founded a camping and hiking club at his high school. In addition to going on recreational outings, Nate leads this club in cleanup and conservation efforts in their local parks and forests. Nate is very interested in learning about all things outdoors and could see himself studying anything related to the outdoors in college someday. While he loves working with people, he sees himself working mostly independently, just him and the great outdoors. He also wants to contribute to others better knowing and appreciating our natural world.

1. What are two careers you think Nate should consider?
 - a.
 - b.
2. Explain at least three reasons why you are recommending these careers. What aspects of Nate's profile led you to select these careers for him?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
3. What additional kinds of classroom, FFA or SAE activities could Nate take advantage of to help prepare him for these careers? (Name at least three.)
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
4. What is one additional piece of advice you would give to Nate as he explores his career options?

Name: _____

Andie Ann Imallover

Andie Ann is entering her sophomore year and just went to a two-week camp over the summer where she learned she has a passion for animals. She enjoyed every aspect of the camp from learning about the animals' health and nutrition needs to caring for them and working with them one-on-one. While she knows she wants to do something with animals, she is not sure what to pursue. She believes she would like to pursue advanced education and degrees to know everything she can about animals. Andie Ann primarily sees herself working directly with animals rather than just around them. She hopes to make a difference in the lives of both people and animals and would like to help others better understand and care for animals as well.



1. What are two careers you think Andie Ann should consider?
 - a.
 - b.
2. Explain at least three reasons why you are recommending these careers. What aspects of Andie Ann's profile led you to select these careers for her?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
3. What additional kinds of classroom, FFA or SAE activities could Andie Ann take advantage of to help prepare her for these careers? (Name at least three.)
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
4. What is one additional piece of advice you would give to Andie as she explores her career options?

Concluding Questions:

1. What kinds of details were the most helpful in the process of matching careers with people?
2. What is one piece of advice you would give to anyone who is unsure of what to do for a career?

Name: _____

Part 2

Directions:

There are many things that may help you select a career that is a great fit for you. Everything from your hobbies to your values to what kind of lifestyle you see yourself living can contribute to what career may fit you best. On this sheet, fill out all the questions and determine what is most important for you in a career.

What is your favorite subject in school?	Name at least two hobbies/activities you enjoy.
	1. 2.
What are two causes/issues you care a lot about?	If I could live anywhere, I would live in ...
1. 2.	
Would you identify yourself as an introvert or an extrovert?	List three personality traits that you believe best describe you:
Circle one: Introvert Extrovert	1. 2. 3.
My three favorite things in the world are ...	I learn best when I am ...
1. 2. 3.	Circle one: Seeing Hearing Doing

Next, consider your top five characteristics of a future career. Explain why each characteristic matters to you. (See the example in the first row.)

Career Characteristic	Why This Matters to Me
Ex: Working both indoors and outdoors	I don't want to be at a desk all the time because that would be boring and repetitive, but I do want a "home base" to be able to work from and collaborate in.
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Name: _____

Part 3

Directions:

You are now about to meet with your final client for this activity — one of your classmates! Trade papers from Part 2 with one of your classmates as directed by your teacher. Then, complete the following tasks in the spaces provided below:

- Read your classmate's profile from Part 2.
- Develop two questions to ask your classmate to gain additional information to help you in your matchmaking.
- Interview your classmate and record their answers to your questions in the space provided.
- Use AgExplorer and/or other career sites to find a career to match your classmate with and provide an explanation in the space provided.
- Share your findings with your classmate and discuss why you selected the career you did for them.

Interview Questions for Your Classmate:

1.

Notes from their answer:

2.

Notes from their answer:

Classmate Career Selection:

3. What career would you recommend for your classmate to consider?
4. Why did you select this particular career for them? (Give at least three reasons.)
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

Personal Reflection:

5. What career did your classmate recommend for you?
6. What were their reasons for their recommendation?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
7. Do you feel the career they recommended could be a good fit for you? Why or why not?

Name: _____

KEY: The Agriculture Career Matchmaker

Part 1

Directions:

You are the agriculture career matchmaker. People come to you looking for advice on what their next career move should be. Read each scenario below to learn more about your clients and what they are looking for in a career. As you read, highlight or underline keywords or phrases that will help you match the right career with each person. Then use AgExplorer to find a career to match them with and answer the questions under each scenario.



Paige Planterman

Paige is a high school senior who is looking forward to working in the agriculture industry but needs help deciding what to do. Paige has been in FFA for the last four years and has really enjoyed competing in career development events like nursery/landscape and agronomy. She is interested in going either to community college or university before entering her career, and her best subjects in school are math and science. Ideally, she sees herself working in a hands-on environment, partially outside and partially inside. She would like to eventually work her way up to leading a team of some sort and having a real impact on making decisions in her workplace.

1. What are two careers you think Paige should consider?
 - a. Answers will vary but could include agronomist, athletic turf manager, extension agent, farm operations/production manager, golf course superintendent, greenhouse manager and more.
 - b.
2. Explain at least three reasons why you are recommending these careers. What aspects of Paige's profile led you to select these careers for her?
 - a. Answers will vary.
 - b.
 - c.
3. What additional kinds of classroom, FFA or SAE activities could Paige take advantage of to help prepare her for these careers? (Name at least three.)
 - a. Answers will vary but could include plant science courses, business courses, farm and agribusiness management CDE, nursery/landscape CDE, agronomy CDE, diversified horticulture SAE, landscape management SAE, turf grass management SAE and more.
 - b.
 - c.
4. What is one additional piece of advice you would give to Paige as she explores her career options?

Answers will vary.

Name: _____

Skyler Steele

Skyler is entering his junior year of high school, and his parents are encouraging him to explore what he would like to do for his career. He is unsure exactly what he wants to do but enjoys working with his hands, and he enjoyed the mechanics unit in his introduction to agriculture class. He doesn't necessarily see himself getting a four-year degree but is interested in more training after high school to help him in his future career. He is creative and enjoys making drawings of things he could build. He loves to follow a plan that makes sense and suggest design improvements.



1. What are two careers you think Skyler should consider?
 - a. Answers will vary but could include assembly technician, maintenance/service technician, sheet metal worker, welder and more.
 - b.
2. Explain at least three reasons why you are recommending these careers. What aspects of Skyler's profile led you to select these careers for him?
 - a. Answers will vary.
 - b.
 - c.
3. What additional kinds of classroom, FFA or SAE activities could Skyler take advantage of to help prepare him for these careers? (Name at least three.)
 - a. Answers will vary but could include agricultural mechanics courses, welding courses, design courses, agricultural technology and mechanical systems CDE, agricultural mechanics design and fabrication SAE, agricultural mechanics repair and maintenance SAE and more.
 - b.
 - c.
4. What is one additional piece of advice you would give to Skyler as he explores his career options?

Answers will vary.

Name: _____



Nate Urehelper

Nate can be found outdoors more often than indoors. He is only a freshman but has already founded a camping and hiking club at his high school. In addition to going on recreational outings, Nate leads this club in cleanup and conservation efforts in their local parks and forests. Nate is very interested in learning about all things outdoors and could see himself studying anything related to the outdoors in college someday. While he loves working with people, he sees himself working mostly independently, just him and the great outdoors. He also wants to contribute to others better knowing and appreciating our natural world.

1. What are two careers you think Nate should consider?
 - a. Answers will vary but could include conservation officer, conservationist, environmental compliance officer, game warden, wildland firefighter, wildlife biologist and more.
 - b.
2. Explain at least three reasons why you are recommending these careers. What aspects of Nate's profile led you to select these careers for him?
 - a. Answers will vary.
 - b.
 - c.
3. What additional kinds of classroom, FFA or SAE activities could Nate take advantage of to help prepare him for these careers? (Name at least three.)
 - a. Answers will vary but could include environmental science courses, biology courses, agriculture courses, environmental and natural resources CDE, forestry CDE, environmental science and natural resources management SAE, forest management and products SAE and more.
 - b.
 - c.
4. What is one additional piece of advice you would give to Nate as he explores his career options?

Answers will vary.

Name: _____

Andie Ann Imallover

Andie Ann is entering her sophomore year and just went to a two-week camp over the summer where she learned she has a passion for animals. She enjoyed every aspect of the camp from learning about the animals' health and nutrition needs to caring for them and working with them one-on-one. While she knows she wants to do something with animals, she is not sure what to pursue. She believes she would like to pursue advanced education and degrees to know everything she can about animals. Andie Ann primarily sees herself working directly with animals rather than just around them. She hopes to make a difference in the lives of both people and animals and would like to help others better understand and care for animals as well.



1. What are two careers you think Andie Ann should consider?
 - a. Answers will vary but could include animal breeder, animal caretaker, animal physical therapist, animal trainer, herd nutritionist, small animal veterinarian, zoologist and more.
 - b.
2. Explain at least three reasons why you are recommending these careers. What aspects of Andie Ann's profile led you to select these careers for her?
 - a. Answers will vary.
 - b.
 - c.
3. What additional kinds of classroom, FFA or SAE activities could Andie Ann take advantage of to help prepare her for these careers? (Name at least three.)
 - a. Answers will vary but could include animal science courses, anatomy and physiology, biology, livestock evaluation CDE, horse evaluation CDE, veterinary science CDE, diversified livestock production SAE, equine science SAE, small animal production and care SAE, veterinary science SAE and more.
 - b.
 - c.
4. What is one additional piece of advice you would give to Andie as she explores her career options?

Answers will vary.

Concluding Questions:

1. What kinds of details were the most helpful in the process of matching careers with people?

Answers will vary.
2. What is one piece of advice you would give to anyone who is unsure of what to do for a career?

Answers will vary.

Name: _____

Part 2

Directions:

There are many things that may help you select a career that is a great fit for you. Everything from your hobbies to your values to what kind of lifestyle you see yourself living can contribute to what career may fit you best. On this sheet, fill out all the questions and determine what is most important for you in a career.

What is your favorite subject in school?	Name at least two hobbies/activities you enjoy.
Answers will vary.	1. Answers will vary. 2. Answers will vary.
What are two causes/issues you care a lot about?	If I could live anywhere, I would live in ...
1. Answers will vary. 2. Answers will vary.	Answers will vary.
Would you identify yourself as an introvert or an extrovert?	List three personality traits that you believe best describe you.
Circle one: Introvert Extrovert	1. Answers will vary. 2. Answers will vary. 3. Answers will vary.
My three favorite things in the world are ...	I learn best when I am ...
1. Answers will vary. 2. Answers will vary. 3. Answers will vary.	Circle one: Seeing Hearing Doing

Next, consider your top five characteristics of a future career. Explain why each characteristic matters to you. (See the example in the first row.)

Career Characteristic	Why This Matters to Me
Ex: Working both indoors and outdoors	I don't want to be at a desk all the time because that would be boring and repetitive, but I do want a "home base" to be able to work from and collaborate in.
1. Answers will vary.	Answers will vary.
2. Answers will vary.	Answers will vary.
3. Answers will vary.	Answers will vary.
4. Answers will vary.	Answers will vary.
5. Answers will vary.	Answers will vary.

Name: _____

Part 3

Directions:

You are now about to meet with your final client for this activity — one of your classmates! Trade papers from Part 2 with one of your classmates as directed by your teacher. Then, complete the following tasks in the spaces provided below:

- Read your classmate's profile from Part 2.
- Develop two questions to ask your classmate to gain additional information to help you in your matchmaking.
- Interview your classmate and record their answers to your questions in the space provided.
- Use AgExplorer and/or other career sites to find a career to match your classmate with and provide an explanation in the space provided.
- Share your findings with your classmate and discuss why you selected the career you did for them.

Interview Questions for Your Classmate:

1. **Answers will vary.**

Notes from their answer:

Answers will vary.

2. **Answers will vary.**

Notes from their answer:

Answers will vary.

Classmate Career Selection:

3. What career would you recommend for your classmate to consider?

Answers will vary.

4. Why did you select this particular career for them? (Give at least three reasons.)

- a. **Answers will vary.**

- b. **Answers will vary.**

- c. **Answers will vary.**

Personal Reflection:

5. What career did your classmate recommend for you?

Answers will vary.

6. What were their reasons for their recommendation?

- a. **Answers will vary.**

- b. **Answers will vary.**

- c. **Answers will vary.**

7. Do you feel the career they recommended could be a good fit for you? Why or why not?

Answers will vary.