

## REALITY CHECK

### CAREER EXPLORATION AND PORTALS TEKS OBJECTIVES

§127.3.c	<p>2. The student analyzes personal interests and aptitudes regarding education and career planning. The student is expected to: (B) make oral presentations that fulfill specific purposes using appropriate technology; (C) develop and analyze tables, charts, and graphs related to career interests; (D) determine the impact of technology on careers of personal interest; (E) identify entrepreneurial opportunities within a field of personal interest.</p> <p>3. The student analyzes college and career opportunities. The student is expected to: (A) determine academic requirements for transition from one learning level to the next; (B) explore opportunities for earning college credit in high school such as Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses, dual credit, and local and statewide articulated credit.</p> <p>5. The student recognizes the impact of career choice on personal lifestyle. The student is expected to: (A) prepare a personal budget reflecting the student's desired lifestyle; (B) use appropriate resources to compare and contrast salaries and educational requirements of at least three careers in the student's interest area; (C) evaluate at least three career interests based on budget and salary expectations.</p>
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**Instructional Directions** This activity is designed to take 30 minutes – 2 hours as presented below. Additional time can be allotted if a project-based demonstration of learning is chosen as the students' deliverable.

This lesson can be completed in a number of different ways depending on technological resources available. Please consider the appropriate direction for:

- A. a classroom with one internet-accessible computer;
- B. a classroom (lab) with multiple computers so that students could work individually or in pairs; or,
- C. a classroom with no computers.

**Blackline Masters C3a and C3b** are used for all three options and are necessary to complete option C, as it replaces the online interface.

*Please note: It is advisable that teachers check for accessibility and use of the Web site [www.texasrealitycheck.com](http://www.texasrealitycheck.com) prior to beginning this lesson. The website has three activity options. We will be using the activity titled "Reality Check," or option 1 using the free download Apple app.*

1. Student should now complete the appropriate Reality Check:

- A. One computer
  - a. One person (teacher or student) operates the program depending upon time limitation. Students can call out their selections as the person running the program makes the chosen selections on the Web site.
  - b. Each student completes a Reality Check worksheet (**Blackline Master C3a**) reflecting their individual choice. This should not match what is being done collectively as a class (unless their answers are identical) as each student's complete worksheet will yield an individual result about their lifestyle choices.
- B. Multiple computers
  - a. Each student completes the online activity and records their answers on the Reality Check worksheet (**Blackline Master C3a**) reflecting their choice.
  - b. Have students write their expected annual salary on their worksheet.
- C. No computers
  - a. Each student completes a worksheet (**Blackline Master C3a**) reflecting their choices.
  - b. Determine the total number of points for their choices.



## REALITY CHECK

2. Students should then write down the salary (range) they must achieve to afford the lifestyle they have selected. The website provides a salary range and a link to consider careers that might provide this salary. For students doing the paper activity, they will need to reference the Reality Check Results Grid (**Blackline Master C3b**). All occupations on the grid are from the Workforce Solutions High-Skill, High-Growth Jobs List ([wrksolutions.com/jobs/doc/WFS-HSHG.pdf](http://wrksolutions.com/jobs/doc/WFS-HSHG.pdf)), which should be introduced to students as a reference in their decision making.

In either case, this is a good time to open a discussion about how the students' lifestyle choices affected the available careers and salaries. Depending on the teacher's discretion and time allotted for the lesson, students might be allowed to change choices to allow different career options.

— The lesson can be broken into two smaller units by stopping at this point —

3. Students should now research the occupation (using Focus On Profiles – [wrksolutions.com/jobs/focuson.html](http://wrksolutions.com/jobs/focuson.html))
- A. Multiple computers
    1. Have student find their occupation from the list of Focus On Profiles
    2. Complete the Focus on Profile Worksheet (**Blackline Master C3c**)
  - B. One computer or none
    1. Provide hard copies of Focus On Profiles for each student to choose from, or
    2. Break into groups and work on an occupation as a team
    3. Complete the Focus on Profile Worksheet (**Blackline Master C3c**)
4. Summarize – Using all completed worksheets, the students should summarize their findings:
- A. Review Focus On Profile worksheet as a class and direct a discussion on choices and outcomes regarding money, education, and career decisions; or,
  - B. Have students create presentations on their chosen occupations. These can be oral, essays, group presentations, posters, or any deliverable deemed appropriate by the teacher. Students should include information on:
    1. how they chose the profession they researched
    2. what mattered most in choosing their career
    3. how influential were salary and expenses in considering their options
    4. what educational steps should they take next
    5. where might they look for a job (include specific companies and industries) when they have completed their education.

**Learning Outcome(s)** Students will calculate their cost of living, determine a high-skill, high-growth job that would meet their cost of living, and investigate their determined occupation.

**Deliverables**

- Completed Blackline Masters C3a-c
- Occupation presentation or paper

**Resources Needed** IDEAL: One computer for each student with access to Internet, Blackline Master C3a, materials for creating presentations (poster boards, markers, etc.)

LIMITED: Reality Check Worksheet and Results Grid (Blackline Masters C3a and b), “Focus On Profiles” from Workforce Solutions Web site, Focus On Profile worksheet (Blackline Master C3c)

**Vocabulary or Concepts**  
(New and/or Challenging)

- Cost of living
- High-skill, high-growth occupation
- Post-secondary education
- Student loans
- Public school
- Private school
- For-profit (proprietary) school



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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## REALITY CHECK WORKSHEET

**Directions:**

1. For each box above you are going to choose one or more options for lifestyle expenses you might choose to have when you have your first full-time job after high school or college.
2. If the box says "Choose 1," then you would only choose one option. For example: for housing, choose the line that matches the type of housing you would like to have. If you want to rent a one-bedroom apartment, you would circle 5 next to this choice.
3. For boxes where you can choose more than one option, feel free to choose as many as you think you need or want. For example, for entertainment, if you plan to go out with friends in town and also take short vacations, you should circle the corresponding number next to both of these options for a total of five.
4. Total the number of circled points and write the answer in the final space. Using the Reality Check Results Grid, find the column that matches your number of points and write down the salary range for that column in the box above. Next, choose one or more occupations you might consider to achieve this salary.

*Reality Check may be found at [www.texasrealitycheck.com](http://www.texasrealitycheck.com) or as an application for Apple products (Android coming soon).*

<b>Housing</b> <i>(choose 1)</i>	
Living at home .....	0
None .....	0
Efficiency apartment .....	4
One-bedroom apartment .....	5
Two-bedroom apartment .....	6
House .....	6

<b>Utilities</b> <i>(may choose more than 1)</i>	
Phone .....	1
Internet .....	2
Mobile phone .....	2
Cable .....	2
Electricity .....	3
Water & gas .....	4

<b>Food</b> <i>(choose 1)</i>	
Eat at home .....	3
Home and fast food .....	4
Home and fine dining .....	4
Restaurants mostly .....	5

<b>Transportation</b> <i>(choose 1)</i>	
Walking .....	0
None .....	0
Public bus .....	1
Used auto .....	3
Basic auto .....	5
Average auto .....	6
Luxury auto .....	8

<b>Clothing</b> <i>(may choose more than 1, but only 1 option from choices 3-6)</i>	
Accessories .....	1
Shoes .....	1
\$50-75/month .....	2
\$76-125/month .....	2
\$126-250/month .....	3
\$250+/month .....	4

<b>Health Care</b> <i>(choose 1)</i>	
No insurance .....	1
Basic insurance (I) .....	2
Premium insurance (II) .....	4
<i>No insurance means no paycheck deduction but you will pay full price for each medical visit or service. Basic insurance may be less from your paycheck, but you will pay more per visit than premium insurance.</i>	



Name \_\_\_\_\_

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<b>Personal</b> <i>(may choose more than 1)</i>	
Basics (toiletries, etc.) .....	1
Gym/sports recreation .....	2
Hair and skin services.....	2
Extras (makeup, cologne) .....	3
Luxuries (designer brands) .....	4

<b>Entertainment</b> <i>(may choose more than 1)</i>	
Stay home .....	1
Go out on the town at least once a week .....	2
Spend money on concert tickets, short out-of-town trips, and other items that cost more than a night on the town .....	3
Longer vacations and premium adventures that might require hotel and travel expenses .....	3

<b>Miscellaneous</b> <i>(may choose more than 1)</i>	
Misc. (small purchases) .....	1
Pet care .....	2
Vacation spending (aside from the cost of booking hotels and travel) .....	3
Gadgets (electronics) .....	4
Home furnishings (decorations, sheets, tables, etc.) .....	5

<b>Savings per Check</b> <i>(choose 1)</i>	
2% .....	1
5% .....	2
7% .....	2
10% .....	3

<b>Student Loan</b> <i>(choose 1)</i>	
Certificate .....	1
Associates .....	1
Bachelor's .....	2
Master's .....	4
Professional .....	5

<b>Total Points</b>
<b>Salary Range</b>
<b>Possible occupations for my chosen lifestyle</b>

## REALITY CHECK RESULTS GRID

Based on your total from the Reality Check Worksheet, review the occupations which would allow you to live that lifestyle.

Total points from Reality Check Worksheet									
29 or less \$30-40k	30-39 \$41-50k	40-49 \$51-60k	50-59 \$61-79k	60-69 \$71-80k	70-79 \$81-90k	80-89 \$91-100k	90 or more \$101k+		
Machinist	Boilermaker	Accountant and Auditor	Cost Estimator	Financial Analyst	Computer Systems Analyst	Software Developer, Applications	Pharmacist		
Medical Records Technician	Electrician	Educational, Vocational and School Counselor	Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technician	Computer Systems Administrator	Environmental Engineer		Dentist		
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanic	Geological Technologist	Electrical Power-line Installer and Repairer	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologist	Registered Nurse (RN)	Physical Therapist		Doctor		
Rig Operator	HVAC Mechanic and Installer	Market Research Analyst	Chemical Plant Operator	Occupational Therapist	Software Developer, System Software		Geoscientist		
Weilder, Cutter, Solderer & Brazier	Industrial Machinery Mechanic	Paralegal	Speech Therapist	Nursing Instructor			Petroleum Engineer		
	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurse (LPN & LVN)	Radiologic Technologist	Petroleum Pump System Operator, Refinery Operator, & Gauger				Mining / Geological Engineer		
	Plumber, Pipefitter, Steamfitter	Respiratory Therapist							
	Bilingual Teacher								

Read the "Focus On" profile to get more information on occupations that may interest you. Profiles can be found at <http://www.wrksolutions.com/jobs/focuson.html>.



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## FOCUS ON YOUR CAREER

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### YOUR CAREER CHOICE FOR TODAY

1. What will you do in this occupation? (Summarize the duties and day-to-day activities in this job.)

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2. What percent of increase do they expect in the field by 2018?

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3. How many new workers do we need in this occupation each year?

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4. What is the stated salary or salary range for this position?

(If none is stated, you will have to do some research to get a salary range to complete this question.)

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5. How much education or training is needed for the position?

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6. According to this handout how many places offer this training? Name two.

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7. How many major employers are listed as needing this position? Name two.

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8. What courses could help prepare you for this career?

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