

Career Exploration Activity: What Are H3 Jobs?

Objective: Students will learn about H3 (High Wage, High Skill, High Demand) career options in Nebraska, and be challenged to apply their knowledge to identify whether various jobs are H3 or Not H3, and why or why not.

Recommended Ages: Middle School & Up

Time Required: 45-60 Minutes

Required Materials:

- Occupation cards
- Answer Key
- Tape or other removable adhesive
- Whiteboard, chalkboard, large poster, or wall space
- H3 lesson materials (*optional*)

Before Activity Begins: Before beginning with the activity, students should be taught what H3 means and how it is determined. To receive a set of H3 lesson materials, including PowerPoint slides and a handout, please contact the Nebraska Department of Labor's Office of Labor Market Information at NDOL.LMI_NE@nebraska.gov.

You can download the full list of all H3 occupations from NDOL at networks.nebraska.gov/gsipub/index.asp?docid=1165. Listings are available for each Economic Development Region and Nebraska Statewide.

Activity Instructions:

1. Separate occupation cards into even piles, ideally with a diverse mixture of jobs in each pile.
2. Split students into small groups (one group per pile of occupation cards).
3. Students should be given 10-15 minutes to deliberate amongst themselves about whether the occupation cards in their pile represent jobs that are H3 or Not H3, and why.
4. On a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster, make 2 large columns labeled "H3" and "Not H3."
5. As they reach their conclusions, ask the students to stick each of their group's occupation cards to the board/poster/wall under the correct column label.
6. Once deliberations are complete, go through each occupation card with the whole class. The students in the group that had each card should explain why they made their decision. (It might be helpful to ask each group to designate a group spokesperson, if talking over one another is a problem.)
7. If the occupation card was placed in the incorrect column, provide the correct answer and explanation. The notes provided on the Answer Key can help offer insight into some of the trickier ones.
8. Once all of the occupation cards have been discussed, if time permits, ask which answers the students found most surprising and why.
9. Remind students that H3 jobs are considered especially good job options, and to keep wage levels, skills/training required, and expected demand in mind when doing their own career-planning. You may also want to point out that jobs that are Not H3 are not necessarily poor job prospects, but that workers who pursue them may encounter certain kinds of obstacles, such as low pay or difficulty finding open positions. For example, the world values surgeons very highly, but there are only a few hundred of them working in the entire state!
10. (*Optional Homework*) Ask students to review NDOL's [full list of H3 occupations](#), and come up with 3-5 they might be interested in pursuing.



Occupation	H3?	Why Not?	Notes
Accountant	✓	-	
Athletic Trainer	✗	Demand	
Automotive Mechanic	✓	-	
Barber	✗	Demand	Barbers are considered High Skill due to the training required to qualify for state licensure.
Butcher	✗	Skill, Wage	
Carpenter	✗	Wage	
Cashier	✗	Skill, Wage	
Computer Programmer	✓	-	
Chef	✗	Skill	Remember: 'High Skill' is determined by the level of formal training <i>required</i> to qualify for the job, not whether the activity requires some level of talent/ability, or whether it's <i>possible</i> (but not <i>required</i>) to go to school to learn relevant skills.
Dental Hygienist	✓	-	
Drywall Installer	✗	Skill, Wage	See above: Drywall installation requires a specific ability, but not a high level of formal training.
Economist	✗	Demand	Students are sometimes unsure what an economist does. To help clarify, you might tell them that some economists teach economics at universities, some consult with businesses or governments to make economic predictions, and some do other kinds of economic analysis—for example, the people who created this game would also be classified as economists!
Editor	✗	Demand	
Electrician	✓	-	Training for electricians often includes long-term on-the-job training, such as apprenticeships.
Event Planner	✓	-	Most professional event planners do not plan fancy parties, but rather things like corporate meetings & events.
Fashion Designer	✗	Demand	
Financial Advisor	✓	-	
Flight Attendant	✗	Demand, Skill	
Graphic Designer	✓	-	As many businesses employ graphic designers to create ads, public releases, digital media, etc., it is one of the few artistic positions that qualifies as H3.
Hair Stylist/Cosmetologist	✗	Wage	Stylists are considered High Skill due to the training required to qualify for state licensure. However, typical wages are too low to be High Wage.
Industrial Engineer	✓	-	
Interior Designer	✗	Demand	
Landscaper/Groundskeeper	✗	Skill, Wage	
Lawyer	✓	-	
Librarian	✓	-	Students are often surprised by this one, but librarians do more than check out books—they are library research specialists who often have master's degrees!
Marketing Specialist	✓	-	
Message Therapist	✓	-	
Mental Health Counselor	✓	-	
Musician	✗	Demand, Skill	
Pharmacist	✓	-	
Photographer	✗	Demand, Skill, Wage	
Physical Therapist	✓	-	
Plumber	✓	-	Plumbers are an example of a job that is High Skill due to long-term apprenticeship training, rather than traditional classroom coursework.
Police Officer	✗	Skill	While police do require special training (police academy), such training lasts only a few months and is therefore too short to meet the minimum requirements for High Skill.
Real Estate Agent	✗	Skill	While real estate agents in NE do require state licensure, which includes a formal training requirement, such training is too short to meet the minimum requirements for High Skill.
Registered Nurse	✓	-	
Surgeon	✗	Demand	While surgeons are certainly High Skill & High Wage, most communities only have enough residents requiring surgery to create the demand to employ 1 or 2 surgeons.
Teacher K-12	✓	-	All teachers K-12 are H3, however preschool teachers are not, they miss on high wage.
Truck Driver	✓	-	
Welder	✗	Skill	This one is controversial. Many employers do require welders they hire to have completed a formal welding education program, which would qualify as High Skill. However, some employers do not have this requirement, and would hire workers who knew how to weld even if they lacked a formal certification. For that reason, it is not considered High Skill.
Writer	✓	-	'Writer' includes ad copy, social media, website content, etc. and should not be mistaken for implying that novelists or poets would, by themselves, be considered H3 jobs.

Automotive Mechanic



Athletic Trainer



Accountant



Barber



Butcher



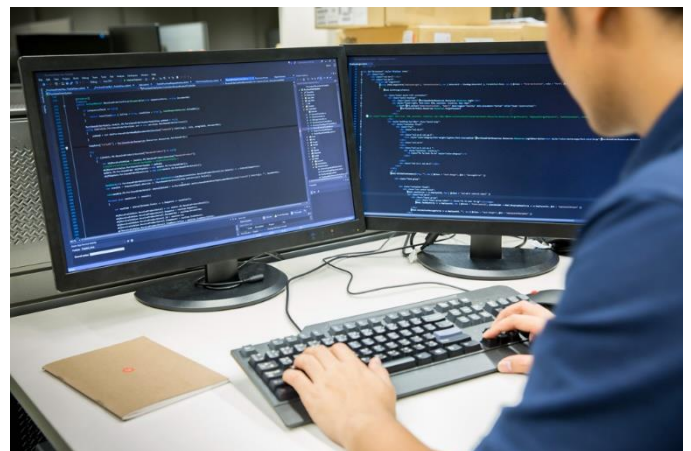
Cashier



CARPENTER



Computer Programmer



Chef



Drywall Installer



Dental Hygienist



Economist



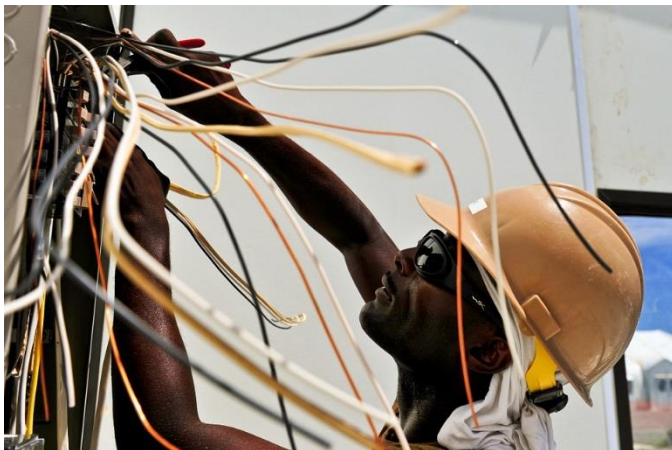
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Financial Advisor



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Industrial Engineer



Landscaper/ Groundskeeper



Interior Designer



Lawyer



Librarian



Massage Therapist



Marketing Specialist



Mental Health Counselor



Musician



Pharmacist



Photographer



Physical Therapist



Police Officer



Plumber



Real Estate Agent



Registered Nurse



K-12 Teacher



Surgeon



Truck Driver



Welder



Writer

