



The Trades Activity

Setup:

- The students' desks should be arranged into five groups.
 - As students enter the classroom, keep equal numbers in each group.
- Hang the community poster in front of the room using tape.
- Keep the student buttons up front for now.

Goal: Students will be able to:

- Define high-growth careers – Careers that have more jobs than qualified employees.
- Define skilled trade jobs - Jobs that involves mastering a specific skill set, doing hands-on work
- Gain an understanding of the importance of skilled trade jobs in daily life
- Understand the different types of education required for trade careers

Introduce yourself and briefly share your career/education background.

Preface to Activity: (5-10 minutes)

“Today we will be learning about skilled trade jobs and why they are important to our community.”

Use the flashcards to define:

- **Skills** –the ability to do something well; expertise.
 - Ask for examples. Possible answers: math, music, writing, soccer, problem solving and communication.
- **High-Growth Careers** – Careers that have more jobs than qualified employees.
 - Explain that many high-growth careers are in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) field; however, skilled/trade school jobs are now considered high-growth jobs.
 - The federal government does research to determine which jobs will be high-demand, high growth jobs.
 - Ask students why it's important to know which careers are high-growth.
 - This information helps schools, colleges, and young people prepare for career opportunities in professions where there is a need for certain skills.
 - It is important for young people to focus on skills that are in demand rather than concentrate on a specific job.

- **Trade Jobs** – Careers that require specific education/training less than a four-year bachelor’s degree. Currently, there are 30 million jobs in the US that pay an average of \$55,000 a year and do not require a four-year degree.
 - Types of “specific education/training” are beyond a high school diploma and include:
 - a two-year associate degree
 - an apprenticeship (on the job training)
 - a certification (a document attesting to a level of achievement obtained by classroom learning/testing)

Activity – Who Do You Call? (15-20 minutes)

This is a Family-Feud style game.

Supplies:

- Community Poster
- Buzzer System (5 student answer buttons)
- Tradespeople Playing Pieces (five sets in different colors that match the buzzer)
- Who Do You Call? Question and Answer Sheet

Tell students that the object of the game is to get as many of their team’s tradespeople playing pieces onto the poster as possible by correctly answering questions.

Instructions:

- Pass out the tradespeople playing pieces and matching student buzzer button; each group gets a different color.
- Give students **3 minutes** to look over and discuss the occupations listed on the playing pieces.
- Check to see if they have questions about any of the occupations (they should)!**
- The buzzer should be placed in the middle of the group so that anyone can reach it.
 - The JA volunteer will ask a question from the laminated “Who Do You Call?” question and answer sheet.
 - **Students must wait until the question is read in its entirety before pressing their buzzer.**
 - The first student to press the buzzer gets the opportunity to answer the question; they may check with group members for help/confirmation, but they only have 5 seconds to answer and get 1 guess.
 - If the answer is correct:
 - He or she will find the matching tradesperson playing piece and place it on the poster.
 - If the answer is incorrect:
 - Ask the question again to the 4 remaining groups.

*Note: It is not important for the students to use the exact terminology. For example, “mechanic” may be used instead of “auto technician”, etc.

- **If a fun fact is available, read it to the students as the playing piece is added to the poster.**

- Play continues until all questions (or as many as time allows) have been read and the corresponding playing pieces have been added to the poster.
- Calculate the score by counting the number of playing pieces each team has on the poster. The highest number is the winner.
- At the end of the game, all 18 tradesperson playing pieces should be back in the baggies and placed up front along with the student buzzer buttons.

Closing/Talking Points (as time permits):

- ****What are High-Growth Careers – Careers that have more jobs than qualified employees.**
- Were you aware that trade jobs are in high demand?
 - Trades (jobs are available in a national and global market.)
- What is one benefit of learning a skilled trade?
 - Possible answers:
 - Students can start their education/training as early as high school. That allows them to start making money earlier.
 - Less educational debt.
 - Many trade careers are high-growth and high-demand.
 - Many careers do not require workers to be in an office and are great for those that love the outdoors or do not want to sit at a desk.
- What most surprised you about skilled jobs?
 - Possible answers:
 - The various educational requirements.
 - The pay of many jobs.
 - The number of skilled workers that are needed in our community and homes.
- Where could you learn more about trades jobs?
 - Possible answers:
 - Research online
 - Look for apprenticeships
 - PA Dept. of Labor and Industry

End of Day Clean-Up Checklist – Place the following back in the bin:

- 5 distinct-colored sets of playing cards, 18 cards in each set
- 5 buzzers with corresponding colors to cards above
- Community Poster (1)
- Tape
- Pencils
- Scratch Paper
- Buzzer System (5 student answer buttons)
- Extra batteries

- Volunteer Instructions Folder
 - Who Do You Call? Q&A sheet (1)
 - Definition Cards – skills, high growth, trade jobs (3)
 - Recap Question Card (1)

- Thank the teacher for allowing JA in their classroom today.
- Return Bin to JA staff in hospitality area.

Smile. You made a difference today!

Revised July 2025

Who Do You Call?

(Please read the fun facts as students are hanging their people on the poster.)

1. Who do you call when a hailstorm has damaged your roof and caused a leak?

ROOFER

Fun fact: The only education/training needed for a roofer is on-the-job training.

2. Who do you call when the stair railing is rotting away in your house, and you want to replace it?

CARPENTER

Fun fact: Carpenters possess mechanical skills (they work with many types of tools/machines), math skills (they use math to measure and cut materials), they are detail oriented (for measuring), they use critical thinking (problem solving and the ability to foresee possible problems), and they have physical strength (carrying/lifting materials).

3. Who do you call when you need to make an appointment for an oil change for your car?

AUTO TECHNICIAN

Fun Fact: Benefits of many skilled jobs are less education expense, not an office job, job is different day to day, you can start your education/training in high school (which means you can get to work and start earning money sooner), many jobs are high-growth.

4. Who do you call when your bathroom floods from a broken pipe under the sink?

PLUMBER

5. Who do you call when you need your teeth cleaned?

DENTAL HYGIENIST

Fun Fact: Dental hygienist jobs are one of the highest-paid skilled jobs. They earn approximately \$73,000 per year and are only required to have a two-year associate's degree.

6. Who do a pilot call when a flight to Disney World was delayed due to an issue with the plane's engine?

AIRCRAFT MECHANIC

Fun Fact: In the Air Force, aircraft mechanics with 10 years of experience earn approximately \$63,000/yr. Aircraft mechanics work in hangars, repair stations and airfields. The work environment is often loud.

7. Who do you call when every time you use your microwave, the power in the kitchen goes out?

ELECTRICIAN

Fun Fact: Electricians can either go to school or take part in an apprenticeship. An apprenticeship is on-the-job training and some classroom learning.

8. Who do you call when you need a haircut?

HAIRSTYLIST (Barber)

Fun Fact: Pennsylvania has the highest concentration of hairstylist jobs in the US. Projected job growth is 10% (higher than the average of 7%).

9. Who do you call when lightening hits a tall tree in your yard during a thunderstorm, it collapses and needs to be removed?

TREE REMOVAL BUSINESS (ARBORIST)

Fun Fact: Arborists can perform tree removal services or can maintain professional grounds like Acrisure Stadium (home of the Pittsburgh Steelers).

10. Who do you see when you are not feeling well at school?

NURSE

Fun Fact: Entry-level annual salary for nurses with an associate's degree is \$53,000.

11. Who do you call when your car is hit and dented in a minor accident?

AUTOBODY REPAIRER

12. Who do you call when it is the first winter in your home and you need your chimney cleaned?

CHIMNEY TECHNICIAN

Fun Fact: Chimney sweeps are usually self-employed, have summers off, and meet many new people, and are often self-taught or learn the trade on -the-job.

13. Who do you call when your A/C stops working during a summer heatwave?

HVAC TECHNICIAN

Fun Fact: Four-year degrees cost approximately \$127,000. Associate/trades education costs approximately \$33,000.

14. Who do you call when you want to change the look of your front yard by adding trees and bushes and removing dead plants?

LANDSCAPER

Fun Fact: Currently, there are 30 million jobs in the US, which do not require a four-year degree and pay an average of \$55,000/year.

15. Who do you call when the brick on the outside of your house is old, falling apart, and needs to be fixed?

BRICKLAYER

16. Who do you call when you have rapid or shallow breathing or are having trouble catching your breath?

RESPIRATORY THERAPIST

Fun Fact: Respiratory Therapists are certified medical professionals who treat problems with your lungs or breathing. They're not doctors, but they work closely with your doctors to diagnose and monitor your condition.

17. Who do you call if you are a movie producer, and you need to create a scene that makes it look like objects are moving?

ANIMATOR

18. Who do you call if you are a lawyer, and you need someone to write a legal document like a brief or contract or to collect and review evidence in a case?

PARALEGAL