



CAREER EXPLORATION AND INTRODUCTION TO EARLY CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION GRADES 6-8



The **Arizona Career Literacy Standards** were created in 2019 and updated and renamed **Career Exploration and Introduction to Early (eCTE) Career and Technical Education for Grades 6-8** in July 2024. This update includes the investigation of career clusters, occupations, jobs, employability skills, as well, the introduction to high school CTE programs.

Career-related terms used in this document are defined at the end of this document.

i.e. explains or clarifies the content and e.g. provides examples of the content that should be taught.

This content will be reviewed and updated as appropriate – the last update was **July 9, 2024**.

1.0 INVESTIGATE CAREERS AND CAREER PATHWAYS

- 1.1 Distinguish among occupations, jobs, careers, and career pathways
- 1.2 Identify nationally recognized career clusters and examples of occupations and jobs for each cluster (e.g., careertech.org/career-clusters)
- 1.3 Research knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for employment in each career cluster
- 1.4 Evaluate personal values, aptitudes, and interests, and explain how they influence career decisions
- 1.5 Identify two or three career areas of interest using a career interest assessment platform
- 1.6 Acquire labor market information for jobs of interest including education and skills requirements, job responsibilities, and salaries
- 1.7 Evaluate academic studies and course planning for industry-specific training, certifications, and secondary/post-secondary education
- 1.8 Develop a career plan that includes academic studies and career-related education and training

2.0 DEMONSTRATE FINANCIAL LITERACY

- 2.1 Describe personal financial literacy with emphasis on financial management, budgeting, and investing
- 2.2 Describe business financial literacy with emphasis on accounting, finance, and conducting business
- 2.3 Discuss the effect of personal values and lifestyle expectations on career choices (i.e., personal health, work content, work environment, work-life balance, etc.)
- 2.4 Analyze the relationship among education, financial needs, and job opportunities (i.e., education/training needed, short- and long-term career goals, availability and location of jobs, salaries vs. wages, etc.)
- 2.5 Investigate financial benefits that come with having a job/career (i.e., life insurance, health insurance, retirement plans, career development opportunities, college assistance, better salaries, etc.)

3.0 APPLY CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

- 3.1 Give examples of critical thinking strategies/techniques (e.g., self-evaluation, self-reflection, asking questions, making informed decisions, using time wisely)
- 3.2 Identify the steps in problem-solving (e.g., define the problem; determine the cause of the problem; identify, prioritize, and select alternative solutions; and implement a solution)
- 3.3 Investigate problem-solving and critical-thinking processes and techniques to meet real-world challenges and personal decisions
- 3.4 Explain how problem-solving and critical-thinking skills are related to academic success (i.e., making good decisions, creative thinking, managing time and resources, etc.)
- 3.5 Determine the most effective personal problem-solving and critical thinking model and understand how this relates to career opportunities

4.0 USE COLLABORATIVE AND TEAMBUILDING SKILLS

- 4.1 Identify collaborative skills needed to achieve a common goal (i.e., open-mindedness, conflict resolution, active listening, emotional intelligence, delegation, understanding a variety of perspectives, managing priorities, meeting expectations, and having a cooperative spirit and mutual respect, etc.)
- 4.2 Identify skills that promote teamwork (i.e., leadership, motivation, problem-solving, reliability, etc.)
- 4.3 Practice behaviors that facilitate collaboration with peers (i.e., active listening, providing feedback, respecting the differences of others, taking personal responsibility, etc.)
- 4.4 Compare and contrast tools and skills used for in-person, hybrid, and virtual collaborative team settings
- 4.5 Employ digital and in-person tools and strategies to collaborate with individuals from diverse populations, including peers, experts, and community members

5.0 PRACTICE INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- 5.1 Differentiate between interpersonal skills and communication skills (e.g., Interpersonal skills include the ability to listen, interact, and build strong relationships, whereas communication skills cover the ability to transmit and articulate information.)
- 5.2 Identify and demonstrate various communication methods (i.e., verbal, nonverbal, written, visual, etc.)
- 5.3 Compare and contrast communication styles based on different audiences and purposes (i.e., talking to friends vs. adults, giving instructions or sharing a story, asking for help or giving information, etc.)
- 5.4 Discuss the impact of cultural, generational, and geographical differences on communication (i.e., preferences, misunderstandings, language barriers, etc.)
- 5.5 Use effective cross-cultural communication skills in person and virtually with diverse groups (i.e., avoid slang, speak slowly, keep it simple, write instructions, etc.)
- 5.6 Practice professional workplace communication across various mediums to embrace effectiveness and professionalism (e.g., emails, business letters, resumes, texts, and social media)

6.0 RECOGNIZE THE BENEFITS OF TECHNOLOGY TO CAREERS AND WORK

- 6.1 Explore the types and roles of technology in a variety of career clusters of interest
- 6.2 Examine how technology advancements have impacted the workplace (i.e., quicker and more efficient productivity, job flexibility in what workers can do, changes in how work gets done, etc.)
- 6.3 Demonstrate computer technology skills used in the workplace (i.e., emails, word processing to create a report, presentation software, and spreadsheet programs to gather data for analysis, etc.)
- 6.4 Utilize industry-recognized technology tools to complete a career-related project (i.e., Microsoft Office, Google, Canva, AI, TinkerCAD, Scratch, etc.)
- 6.5 Identify ethical issues in technology (i.e., misuse of data, misinformation, artificial intelligence, etc.)

7.0 EXPLORE ACCOUNTABILITY AND ETHICAL BEHAVIORS RELATIVE TO WORK

- 7.1 Define accountability and ethical behaviors and discuss their importance in the workplace
- 7.2 Explore the influence of personal behaviors and communication styles on workplace dynamics and outcomes
- 7.3 Identify ethical and unethical behavior in workplace scenarios (i.e., confidentiality, race and ethnicity, employment discrimination, etc.)
- 7.4 Demonstrate and describe appropriate work habits to obtain and retain employment (i.e., attendance, attitude, dress, performance, time management, cleanliness, etc.)
- 7.5 Engage in professional, positive, safe, legal, and ethical behavior when using technology including social media interactions (i.e., digital citizenship, commonsense.org, be internet awesome, etc.)

Career Exploration Teaching Strategies

1.0 INVESTIGATE CAREERS AND CAREER PATHWAYS

Investigation of career clusters and pathways through self-reflection, identification of interests and values, and exposure to the knowledge and skills required for careers.

- Use career conversation prompts - [American School Counselor Association \(ASCA\)](#) [English](#) ~ [Spanish](#)
- Take personality inventories - before jumping into career exploration, take time out for students to do self-exploration and to learn that personality type can influence career selections. True Colors: [my-personality-test.com/true-colors](#) and/or 16 Personalities: [16personalities.com/free-personality-test](#)
- Create an “All About Me” collage with images that reflect personality inventory results
- Investigate Personality/Preferences Assessment to find matches to careers - Career Preferences Quiz: [Photo Career Quiz | Truity](#) and RIASEC Assessment: [Onlinepersonalitytests.org/riasec/](#)
- Investigate career literacy lessons and activities
- Research career interest assessment platforms
- Create a “My Future Career” collage using images that reflect top career selection as determined career interest assessments
- Develop an early ADE Education and Career Action Plan ([ECAP](#))
- Identify high school and CTE courses and programs that support career or occupational areas of interest

2.0 DEMONSTRATE FINANCIAL LITERACY

Investigate financial (money) skills needed to develop personal and business interactions.

- Create and examine the benefits of a budget (i.e., manage money wisely, avoid overspending, save money, and meet financial goals, etc.)
- Investigate Arizona cost of living and livable wages
- Investigate financial literacy lessons
- Encourage students to seek work for pay and save for the future (i.e., chores, babysitting, entry-level work, etc.)
- Check with local banks for financial literacy curriculum
- Investigate high school CTE classes that offer workplace learning credit

3.0 APPLY CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Develop and practice strategies for understanding, solving, and testing solutions.

- Use problem-solving and critical-thinking processes and techniques to meet real-world challenges and personal situations
- Apply problem-solving and critical-thinking models to find the best solution to real-world challenges (i.e., [schoolsup.org/solveit, etc.](#))
- Engage students in project-based learning activities

4.0 USE COLLABORATIVE AND TEAMBUILDING SKILLS

Evaluate how collaboration and teamwork enable individuals or groups to achieve collective goals. Practice team roles including personal contributions to the team while developing leadership skills in virtual and in-person situations

- Practice collaborative skills (i.e., compromise, negotiation, and community-building strategies for carrying out tasks, assignments, and projects)
- Identify roles and responsibilities that facilitate collaboration in a variety of settings (i.e., leader, facilitator, team member, recorder, etc.)
- Evaluate student communication, collaboration, and leadership skills, and how they might be further developed in preparation for a future career through involvement in school, home, work, and extracurricular activities

5.0 PRACTICE INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Differentiate between formal and informal communication styles and express themselves creatively according to the communication goal.

- Practice professional workplace communication across various mediums (i.e., emails, business letters, resumes, texts, and social media) to enhance effectiveness and professionalism
- Demonstrate receptive and expressive communication strategies
- Review high school [CTE Professional Skills](#) to determine current communication skills and resources to improve skills

6.0 BUILD TECHNOLOGY SKILLS AS RELATED TO CAREERS

Develop and practice technology skills as related to career requirements, understand the impact of digital footprints, and safe internet usage.

- Develop and demonstrate typing speed and accuracy, and writing professional emails
- Investigate technology clubs (i.e., Code.org, Robotics, Girls Who Code, etc.)

7.0 EXPLORE PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND ETHICS

Individual accountability and ethical behaviors are expected in the workplace.

- Explore accountability and ethical behaviors expected in the workplace.
- Explore what it means to build a competitive advantage (i.e., academics, passions, professional skills, education level, experiences, etc.)
- Discuss standard entry-level hiring screening practices (application, references, resume, interviews, background check, testing for substance abuse, identification, etc.)
- Describe interpersonal skills needed to be successful in the workplace (i.e., verbal and nonverbal communication, cultural and gender awareness, kindness, compromise, etc.)

eCTE DEFINITIONS

Career Literacy, Career education in the areas of Career Awareness (K-5), Career Exploration (6-8), and Career Preparation (9-12).

Career Exploration Skills, Opportunities for middle school students to discover work environments, to understand and appreciate their strengths and interests, and to plan short- and long-term goals.

Career, An occupation selected based on individual preferences that requires education, training, professional memberships, and volunteer work. A career is the history of work for a significant period of a person's life that often has growth opportunities.

- Occupation - a specific type of work or field (e.g., lawyer, musician, or contractor).
- Jobs - work done for pay that may or may not relate to a desired career.

Career Clusters, The national career clusters framework is an organizing tool for occupations. (e.g., careertech.org/what-we-do/career-clusters)

Career Pathways, A smaller group of jobs within a career cluster that uses similar skills.

Teacher → curriculum coordinator → assistant principal → principal.

Retail Sales associate → cashier → assistant manager → store manager → regional manager

Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO), CTSO's are an integral requirement for high school CTE programs that encourage excellence in scholarship, build character, promote citizenship, volunteerism, and patriotism, endorse cooperation and cooperative attitudes and provide opportunities through internships, camps, and leadership conferences. The six Arizona CTOS are DECA, FBLA, FCCLA, FFA, HOSA, and SkillsUSA.

Early Career and Technical Education (eCTE) K-8, Preparation for high school CTE programs that contain academic and employability skills.

Industry, Businesses within a similar group that manufacture goods or share a business focus or service.