

Who's Working in My Community

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By taking pictures of persons working, students learn about careers that exist within their own community. This is a great way of creating career awareness or encouraging a more in-depth study of careers. It can be used as way for students to hone communication skills; become more familiar with different kinds of jobs, and expose them to a wealth of career possibilities. This activity can also be used to foster business/community partnerships. It can be used a formative activity or one that is summative.

Supplies:

- Digital cameras
- Pre-planned interview questions
- Paper/pen or pencil and a clip board (optional)

Description of Activity

- Activity lends itself to teams or can be done individually
- Students visit an area business and photograph a person in his/her work environment.
- To the extent possible, encourage that the pictures show the worker doing his/her job – whether this be behind a desk, working on a machine, interacting with a customer, or climbing a pole. The pictures are to be a visual illustration of the types of careers that exist within a community.
- In addition to taking a picture of someone working, the student should interview the worker to learn about his/her job.
- Have students share their pictures and discoveries about the workers through classroom presentation (slide show and oral presentation, for example).

Necessary Preparations

For this activity to be worthwhile (to the student) and a positive experience for the worker, preparation is critical. Here are some thoughts about how to prepare (this is not an all-inclusive list, you'll think of others, I'm sure!).

- Introduce this activity in class and explain – thoroughly – what and why you're doing this activity.
- Identify and contact businesses before showing up on the doorstep.
- If necessary, set an appointment to take pictures and conduct the interview. This approach may help a student be more comfortable and confident.
- Consider conducting a pre-interview via phone or email prior to the face-to-face meeting
- Generate a list of possible interview questions. Have students decide, ahead of time, which questions they will ask.
- Provide students opportunity to practice interview techniques before venturing out to interview someone they don't know.
- Talk with students about appropriate appearance and conduct in a place of business. Caution them to be mindful of the amount of time they will be at the business and remind them to be on time.
- Remind students to thank the person for the time given.
- Consider sharing the pictures through email, school newspaper, a thank you letter, or some other mechanism.
- Be certain that students are confident operating the camera they will use. Practice by taking pictures of other students, or school staff. Review their practice photos.

