

Career Clusters

The **BIG** Idea

- What are “related careers” (career clusters), and how can they expand my career choices?

AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up: Buried Treasures (10 minutes)
- II. Career Cluster Game (10 minutes)
- III. Comparing & Contrasting Related Careers (20 minutes)
- IV. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

MATERIALS

STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:

- Student Handbook page 88, Related Career Comparison Chart
- Student Handbook page 89, RUPrepareND.com Directions: Related Careers and Career Clusters

FACILITATOR PAGES:

- Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW, Careers 5: Career Clusters
- Facilitator Resource 2, Buried Treasures
- Facilitator Resource 3, Career Cluster Game Sentence Strips

- Overhead projector and transparency paper

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Recognize that many careers can stem from a single interest.
- Use the Related Careers and Career Clusters features of RUPrepareND.com to identify and explore related careers.

OVERVIEW

This lesson, conducted in the computer lab, guides students to discover that a single interest can lead to multiple career opportunities. Using RUPrepareND.com, students explore the connections between different but related careers, known as “career clusters.” Using the site’s related careers and career clusters features, students identify alternative careers that suit their interests, strengths, and skills, and recognize that similar types of careers may require different levels of education.

PREPARATION

- Make arrangements for the class to use the computer lab, and make sure RUPrepareND.com is accessible from students’ computers.
- List the day’s **BIG IDEA** and activities on the board.
- Write the day’s vocabulary word and definition on the board.
- Write the web address RUPrepareND.com on the board.
- The following handouts need to be made into overhead transparencies or copied onto chart paper:
 - **Student Handbook page 88, Related Career Comparison Chart**
 - **Student Handbook page 89, RUPrepareND.com Directions: Related Careers and Career Clusters**
 - **Facilitator Resource 2, Buried Treasures**
- Copy **Facilitator Resource 3, Career Cluster Game Sentence Strips**, and cut into strips along the dotted lines, (one strip per pair).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

One of the essential tasks of career development is identifying careers that correspond to one’s skills and interests. During middle school, students may still be highly unrealistic in their career aspirations. (In one urban eighth-grade classroom, students were asked mid-year to identify careers of interest. Only two out of 30 failed to include actor, model, professional athlete, or rapper/singer on their lists.) As students become more sophisticated in comparing their aspirations and skills, they may be at a loss in locating careers that excite them.

Finding a “good fit” career is a challenge that may continue into adulthood. Experts predict that the average adult will have 10 to 12 jobs spanning three to five different careers during his or her working life. As adults move from job to job and career to career, it’s helpful to be able to look at a broader picture — identifying transferable skills and interests. Considering clusters of related careers is one way of making the search easier.

Career resources are often organized around career clusters—broad groups of related careers within an occupational interest area. RUPrepareND.com is one such resource. By organizing careers into categories such as Health Science, Education and Training, Manufacturing, etc., the career clusters navigation tool enables students to explore how a single industry or interest encompasses a wide variety of very different career paths. In particular, career clusters help students recognize that there are many potential opportunities within any given industry, and that even if they don’t possess the skills they believe are required to work at one specific job, there may be alternatives.

VOCABULARY

Career Cluster: A group of occupations that are in the same industry, but are different in a variety of ways, such as skills needed, education required, personality traits, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

DO NOW:

*(You may choose to present the Warm Up activity as a written Do Now. Present the questions on the board or overhead, and have students write only their answers on index cards. You could also choose to give the students a handout by copying **Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW.**)*

Questions:

1. Last class you researched the working conditions, education, and earnings for your three careers. Was there any information that was surprising or made you unsure about a career? Explain.
2. How many careers do you think you'll have in your lifetime? Explain your answer.
3. Imagine you are a high school English teacher who has been teaching for 10 years. You are ready for a change and want to pursue a new career. List two other jobs that are in the same field (education), but that do not involve working as a classroom teacher.

[Then call on students to read their answers and continue with the **Warm Up** as written.]

For **Activity II, Career Cluster Game**, be sure one student in each pair is experienced and comfortable navigating the **RUReadyND.com** website.

As an extra challenge, encourage students to continue using RUReadyND.com at home to explore career clusters for additional interests. Remind them that to access the site, they need their account name and password.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. WARM UP: Buried Treasures (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Over the last several weeks, you've been investigating careers that really interest you. Your research has included reading job descriptions and education requirements, researching whether opportunities in the careers are growing or not, and learning about working conditions and earnings. At this point, you may have discovered some things about one or more of the careers that are causing you to wonder if they are indeed as good of a fit as you had hoped. If this sounds like you, don't worry! Sometimes an interest in one career can lead you to many similar careers that for one reason or another make for a better fit. A group of related careers is called a **Career Cluster**.

2. [Project **Facilitator Resource 2, Buried Treasures** transparency on an overhead projector and direct students' attention to it.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Discovering careers that are similar to a career that interests you is like uncovering a buried treasure! Let me show you why. Suppose you are interested in carpentry because you really like the idea of working with your hands, and you love to build things. However, as you research this career, you come across a few things you don't like so much. For example, you don't really want to work outdoors in the heat of the summer, which is the busiest time for carpenters. Because the summer is so busy, taking a summertime vacation is out of the question. So, now you wonder what other careers you would be interested in that require the same or similar skills as carpentry.

3. [Using the LCD projector and RUPrepareND.com, model how to find "Related Careers." Type "Carpenter" in the **Search** box and click **Go**. When the link appears, click it. Point out that they can also search for careers alphabetically, by clicking a letter on the **Explore Careers** page in the Career Planning section.]

When you reach the carpenter page, review the Related Careers box on the right side of the screen. Only one is listed—Carpenter Helper. Explain to students that they can find a larger number of related careers by clicking on the **Architecture and Construction Cluster** or the **Construction Pathway** at the top of the page. A cluster is a broad career category that groups careers together that are a good match for similar interests and skills. By clicking on the **Architecture and Construction Cluster**,

then selecting the **Careers** tab on the left, students will be able to find careers that are similar to carpenter in terms of interests and skills.

Each cluster includes several different pathways. A pathway is a sub-division of the larger cluster. Explain to students that by clicking on the **Construction Pathway**, they will be able to find a more focused list of careers that are similar to carpenter.

4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** What careers do you see listed here? [Write down a few of the students' responses in the spaces on the projected **Facilitator Resource 2, Buried Treasures**.]

What do all of these careers have in common?

5. [Point out the name of the cluster listed at the top of the page. Read aloud the name of the cluster and write it on the chalkboard: "Architecture and Construction."]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Note that the name of the cluster (**Architecture and Construction**) appears at the top. All of the pathways within this career cluster are listed in the box on the right side of the page.

[Model how to search. Click on the **Career Planning** tab then **Explore Careers**. Then point out the **Browse Career Clusters** option. Click on a career cluster that you think would be interesting to your students. Have volunteers read aloud some of the careers that come up, and add a few to the **Facilitator Resource 2, Buried Treasures** overhead. Guide them to notice that the careers can be sorted by educational level by clicking the **Sort By Education Level** button above the list.]

6. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Career clusters can be very helpful in your job search. As you get older, your interests grow and change. You may graduate from college and plan on spending the rest of your life teaching high school English. Ten years into your career, you may decide that you want to make a career change. You may love working in education, but want to work outside of a classroom. Experts predict that the average adult will have 10 to 12 jobs spanning three to five different careers during his or her working life. Identifying careers in similar fields with transferable skills and interests can make transitioning into a new career much easier.

As you search today in RUPrepareND.com, remember, viewing the *Related Careers* tool or clicking on the pathway reveals a few tightly connected careers, while searching by *Career Clusters* results in a larger pool of similar careers. Either way, you're likely to discover some careers you've never considered before.

[Explain to the students that if they are confused about what career cluster a job appears in, they can find it at the top of the **What They Do** page.]

II. Career Cluster Game (10 minutes)

1. [Divide the class into pairs and distribute one statement from **Facilitator Resource 3, Career Cluster Game Sentence Strips** to each pair.]
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Navigating a career cluster is a bit like being a detective. In this game, you and your partner will use RUPrepareND.com to find a career that best meets the needs described on the statement I've given you. Remember, there are different ways to go about finding the right career match. You can search by career cluster. Or, with your partner, you can figure out what career is being rejected, and find "related careers" by pathway or by viewing the related careers box on the **What They Do** page. When you find a career that is a good match, write it down and be prepared to explain your reasoning. Have fun!
3. [Circulate as pairs are working. When everyone is finished, invite each pair to share their findings. Instruct them to read aloud their statement, and then say which career they've identified as a good match and why they think it's a good match.]

III. Comparing & Contrasting Related Careers (20 minutes)

1. [Project **Student Handbook page 88, Related Career Comparison Chart** on the overhead and have students refer to their copies.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: To identify similarities and differences between two careers in the same career cluster, you need to do a little investigating. The purpose of the **Student Handbook page 88, Related Career Comparison Chart** is to help you compare and contrast two careers in the same cluster, and guide you to figure out if an alternate career is a possibility for you. Let me show you how. First, write the name of the career you've been investigating —Carpenter—in "Career Option 1." Now search for a related career by searching by career cluster in RUPrepareND.com.

2. [Instruct students to turn to **Student Handbook page 89, RUPrepareND.com Instructions: Related Careers and Career Clusters**. Display the **What They Do** page for "Carpenter," using a laptop and LCD projector. You may talk through the

steps you take to get to this page to reinforce how to navigate the website. (See step 3 in **Warm Up** activity.) On the **What They Do** page, click the cluster listed at the top—“Architecture and Construction”.] Then, click on **Careers** on the left-hand side of the page.

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: I see that architect is in the same career cluster as carpenter. I don't know much about this career, so I'd like to learn more. Perhaps this job will be a better match for me. I will write “Architect” in Career Option 2 on **Student Handbook page 88, Related Career Comparison Chart**.

3. [Have a volunteer click on **Architect** and read the first paragraph aloud. Then they should click on the **Architecture and Construction** cluster link, then **Careers**, to return to the list and select **Carpenter** and read the first paragraph aloud. Ask the students how the two careers are alike. Jot their responses in the first row on the **Related Career Comparison Chart**.]
4. Read aloud question 2 (“List two things a person with this career has to do.”) on **Student Handbook page 88, Related Career Comparison Chart**. Read the bulleted tasks under the heading: **A Person in This Career**.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Carpenters construct, erect, install, and repair structures made of wood, plywood, and wallboard—like a staircase.

[Click **Architect** and read aloud the bulleted tasks. Then ask for volunteers to explain some of the job responsibilities of an architect. Write this in the third row under Career Option 2 on the projected chart.]

Next, model how to find the education level by clicking **What to Learn**. Have a volunteer identify the education level required. Show where to record this on the chart.

5. Read aloud the rest of the questions on **Student Handbook page 88, Related Career Comparison Chart**. Explain that to answer the questions, students will need to consider what they learned about both careers on the **What They Do** page. Remind them they can also review **Working Conditions** on this page to find out more about the jobs, as well as read the interviews of real people in those jobs, if time allows. Depending on your class and time, you can model how to fill in answers to these questions as follows:

1. What part of this job would I like most?	Building houses from nothing at all.	Designing and drawing sketches of new homes.
2. What part of this job would I like least?	Working in the summer without a break.	Working on tight deadlines.
3. Is this career a possibility for me? Why or why not?	No. I really want to have summertime off.	Yes. I love designing buildings enough to work even if there are tight deadlines.

6. [Have students select one of the three careers they have been researching, and write it next to Career Option 1 on **Student Handbook page 88, Related Career Comparison Chart**. They should select a career they have misgivings about, as they're searching for an alternative that addresses their concerns. Instruct them to find a career in the same cluster and write it next to Career Option 2. Then give them time to respond to each question on the chart. Walk around, helping students as needed.]

IV. WRAP UP (5 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** How does knowing about related jobs, or career clusters, help you with your career search? *(It uncovers possibilities I may not have known about and it might help me find a job that's an even better fit than ones I have been investigating.)*
2. [Assign pairs. In pairs, give students a couple of minutes to discuss their answers on **Student Handbook page 88, Related Career Comparison Chart** with their partners. Then bring the class back together as a group and have a few volunteers share their answers with the class. Let students know that next week they will examine how their values influence their career choices and decide which career they are most interested in pursuing.]

DO NOW

Careers 5: Career Clusters

Directions: You will have three minutes to read the questions and write your answers.

Questions:

1. Last class you researched the working conditions, education, and earnings for your three careers. Was there any information that was surprising or made you unsure about a career? Explain.

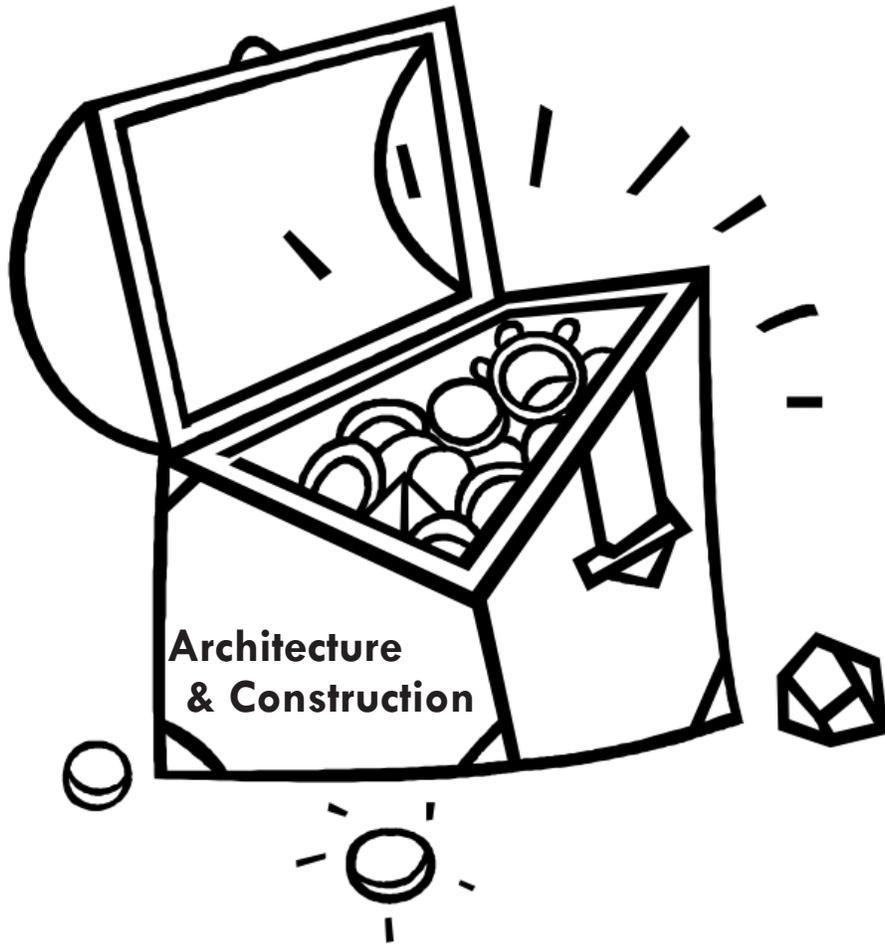
2. How many careers do you think you'll have in your lifetime? Explain your answer.

3. Imagine you are a high school English teacher who has been teaching for 10 years. You are ready for a change and want to pursue a new career. List two other jobs that are in the same field (Education), but that do not involve working as a classroom teacher.

Buried Treasures



Carpenter _____



Career Cluster Game Sentence Strips

I love baseball, but I don't have the skills to go pro.

I'm interested in healing people, but don't want to spend 12 years studying to be a doctor.

I enjoy working with animals, but I don't feel comfortable around sick or hurt animals.

I know a ton about music, but can't carry a tune.

Sports are great, but competing is not my thing.

I have an interest in fashion, but I'm not artistic.

I love history, but I don't think teaching is for me.

I love visiting new places, but don't want to spend my career helping other people plan their vacations.

I love the theater, but I get stage fright!

I'm very interested in looking for ways to cure diseases, but I don't want to spend all my time in a lab.

Cars are my passion, but I want to do more than just repair them.

I'm good with numbers, but would like to combine my interest in accounting and business with something more creative.

I am a bookworm and want to be around books and writers, but I don't have the patience or interest to write one myself.

I would like to work in government, but don't want to be a politician or be elected to my position.

I have been dancing since I was very young and I like it, but I don't want to spend my life rehearsing and performing.

Related Career Comparison Chart

Compare one of your top career choices with a career in the same cluster by answering the questions in this chart.

QUESTIONS	Career Option 1: (Career You Have Researched)	Career Option 2: _____
1. How are these careers alike?		
2. List two things a person with this career has to do.		
3. What level of education is required?		
4. What part of the job would I like most?		
5. What part of the job would I like least?		
6. Is this career a possibility for me? Why or why not?		

RUPrepareND.com Directions

Related Careers and Career Clusters

I. Connecting to RUPrepareND.com

- Turn on the computer.
- Click on the icon that connects to the Internet (Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, etc.).
- Type the web address into the dialog box (**RUPrepareND.com**).
- When the RUPrepareND.com home page appears enter your account name and password.

II. Related Careers/Career Pathways

- Click on the **Career Planning** tab at the top of the page.
- Click on the **Explore Careers** section.
- Type the name of the career you want to search for in the Search Careers box and click **Go**. (As an example, type in Carpenter, and click **Go**).
- When the link appears, click it. If more than one career appears, choose the career that you are the most interested in.
- Select the What to Learn tab on the left. At the top, you will see the name of the Career Cluster that the career you are reading about belongs to. (As an example, the career cluster that Carpenter belongs to is **Architecture and Construction**.) The Career Pathway - a narrower grouping of careers- appears right after that.
- Click on the **Career Cluster** or **Career Pathway** to see a longer list of related careers.

III. Career Clusters

- Click on the **Career Planning** tab at the top of the page.
- Click on the **Explore Careers** section.
- Review the Browse Career Clusters list.
- Click on the name of the Career Cluster that you are interested in.