

**Model Program**

**Program title:** Learn to Earn

**Program summary:** As kids start to think about what they want to do when they grow up, they might not know the amount of education and training required for a particular career or the amount of money they might earn. This program helps young people find answers to these questions. Some of those answers may be surprising, even for parents.

**Duration:** About one hour

**Suggested venue:**  ☑ In Library ☐ At Home ☐ Either

**Instructor led:**  ☑ Yes ☐ No ☐ Either **Facilitation required:** ☐ Yes ☑ No

**Target audience:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ☐ | Kids (ages 3–7) |
| ☑ | Tweens (ages 8–12) |
| ☑ | Young adults (ages 13–18) |
| ☐ | Adults |
| ☐ | All ages |
| ☐ | Other: |

**Program budget:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ☐ | $0 |
| ☐ | $1–$50 |
| ☐ | $51–$100 |
| ☑ | $101–$250 |
| ☐ | $251–$500 |
| ☐ | More than $500 |

**This activity is adapted from resources developed by the Federal Reserve Banks of Richmond and San Francisco. Library staff are encouraged to explore:**

[**www.investinwhatsnext.org**](http://www.investinwhatsnext.org)

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

**Advance planning:**

This instructor-led activity can be prepared and presented by library staff or a teacher or guidance counselor from a local school district. First, occupations should be researched and selections made that show a variety of levels of education needed to be successful in that profession. Salaries should be matched to the occupations. It is important to include among the selections one or more careers not requiring a college degree. Information can be obtained through the [Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/). In the [Students section](https://www.bls.gov/k12/), there is extensive information about many careers and how to prepare for them.

**Partnerships/Collaborations:**

If the library would like to have a teacher present for this program, they should determine if that person would need to be paid. The local Chamber of Commerce or a neighborhood Workforce Development program could also provide speakers. If they charge speaking fees that exceed the budget for the program, a librarian could also present this lesson.

**Budget:**

Other than paying a potential outside speaker, the costs should be minimal. Making cards for each of the occupations is the only other expense.

**Day of activity:**

The meeting room should be set up with rows of chairs for program attendees. Allow extra room in front for participants in the activity to line up according to the occupation card chosen. The speaker may need projection equipment for a PowerPoint presentation and will probably need a table for handouts and possibly giveaways for the attendees.

**Program execution:**

The program will begin with a speaker encouraging kids to think about the future and how their interests could lead them to various careers.

The instructor will explain that some occupations need a substantial amount of education, while others may require a high school diploma. Kids should be encouraged to ask questions and learn what it’s like to be a doctor, teacher, or photographer, for example.

After this introductory portion of the program, the instructor will ask for volunteers from the audience to participate in a career awareness activity. The instructor will hand up to six kids a card with an occupation printed on it. These should cover a range of careers that kids will recognize and can be obtained from the Occupational Outlook Handbook (follow the link above).

For the first activity, the kids will line up according to what level of education they think is needed for each occupation, from the least amount to the most. When they have agreed on where everyone should stand, they will let the instructor know. The instructor will then move them to the correct positions as to the education level needed for each occupation. In all likelihood there will be some changes made in the line-up.

Once this is done, the instructor will have the kids line up according to the salary paid to each profession, again from the least to the most. When they are done, the instructor will put them in the correct order. This gives kids insight into the amount of education needed for various professions. Sometimes the amount of education doesn’t correlate with the level of pay for that job. This can lead to a discussion of these principles by the instructor.

The exercise can then be repeated with a different set of occupational cards. The instructor may choose to add cards based on occupations suggested by the participants themselves.

**Advice:**

This activity is probably best for older kids who may be starting to think about what they want to do when they grow up. You can prepare more than six cards just in case there is a big group and many kids want to participate.