

Name _____

Date _____

It's the Law: Law Related Careers that are Not Necessarily Related to Lawyers

Overview

Television law is making a significant impact upon the career aspirations of our youth. While entering the legal field as a lawyer may be a viable choice for many students, most of those who are dreaming of a lawyer's salary will never realize that goal. There are, however, numerous law-related careers that are much more accessible to the vast majority of our students.

In this lesson, students will have a chance to explore some of these "other" law-related careers. Of course, students choosing to set their sights on the careers of attorneys and judges in this activity should do so. But rather than focusing on the generic "lawyer," specialty areas such as environmental, entertainment or criminal law would make their lesson more interesting.

Materials

- Access to www.cfnc.org
- A copy of the It's the Law worksheet for each student

Teacher Preparation

Some of the careers listed on the worksheet are specialized areas and may not be accessible in www.cfnc.org by keying in these exact titles. With a little creative searching, however, students will be able to find information on them. For information on some of the forensic careers in art, psychology and science, a background in each of these disciplines (without forensics) is required. This information is available in www.cfnc.org.

Part of your preparation for this activity will be to seek alternative reference sources for students to use. If your school has a career center, the coordinator of that department can be a valuable resource.

As many of the careers listed on the worksheet are closely aligned with the law enforcement field, inviting a panel of local police officers with different roles would be an interesting way to approach this activity. If that is not an option, students might receive permission to set up interviews with them on their own. Encourage each student to choose a different career and allow time for them to share their findings with the rest of the class.

Suggested Strategy

- Distribute the worksheet and initiate a discussion using the Information portion of the worksheet.
- Ask students to choose one of the areas to explore and complete as much of the worksheet as they can.
- Note that www.cfnc.org holds all of the requested information for the more traditional occupations, but students may have to use other sources for a complete picture of the specialty areas. You might consider allowing students additional time outside of your classroom to complete the activity.
- Once students have completed the worksheet, ask them to present a short summary of their career research to the class.

It's the Law: Student Worksheet

We associate lawyers with intelligence, plush offices, high salaries, fancy cars, yachts, expensive vacations and all the good things that money can buy. Who wouldn't like to live this "dream come true"?

However, if the legal field appeals to you but you don't see yourself becoming a lawyer, there are many other careers that might present a more realistic opportunity for you. As you think about your choice and explore various careers, it would be a good idea to ask yourself some of these questions:

How much time are you willing to give to your education? How are your grades right now? How many student loans can you or your family handle? How well do you perform under stress? Can you deal with an occupation where your hours are different every week? How about working throughout the evening hours? How do you think you'd like preparing reports -- how about preparing volumes of reports? These are just a few of the things you should be taking into account as you explore law-related careers.

Following is a list of some of the careers you may choose to explore. You may have your own to add to this list. Choose one to explore and share your findings with the rest of your class. You might not find the exact title of some of these careers in www.cfnc.org, but if you are a little creative, you'll probably discover them under other titles. You may also consider using other sources to find the information you seek.

Arson Investigator	FBI Special Agent	Parole Officer	Which career have you selected to explore? _____ _____ _____ _____
Attorney -- specialty areas	Fingerprint Expert	Police Detective	
Correctional Officer	Forensic Artist	Police Dog Handler	
Court Clerk	Forensic Psychologist	Police Officer	
Crime Scene Technician	Forensic Scientist	Secret Service Agent	
Criminal Profiler	Judge	Security Guard	
Criminologist	Legal Secretary		
DNA Specialist	Paralegal		

Name the source or sources you are using for this report. If you will be interviewing someone for information, please state his/her occupation.

Give a general description of this occupation.

List some of the related job tasks.

What are the educational requirements for this career? Include the number of years after high school and any other special qualifying factors.

Are there any special licenses or certification required in this position?

What is the approximate salary someone in this position is likely to earn?

How difficult is it to get a position in this career? What is the projected employment outlook for job openings in the next few years?

List a few of the special skills you would need in this occupation.

What are some courses you could take in high school to start preparing for this career?

Please record some of your personal thoughts regarding this career. (Use the other side of this paper.)