

# Career and Lifestyle Costs

**10** Recommended  
10th grade

 Length  
Minutes

## About This Lesson

Students identify factors that may influence career choices by investigating their lifestyle goals and evaluating trade-offs they'd be willing to make in order to attain what they want.

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- identify some of their most important lifestyle goals
- assess whether or not they can achieve their lifestyle goals in a career that interests them

## Driving Question

What do I want my future to look like?

## Future-Ready Skills

Decision Making

Financial Literacy

Evaluating

## Lesson Breakdown

**25**  
Minutes

### Activity 1 - Take Home Pay

In this activity, students will learn about possible deductions on their gross income in order to better estimate costs that may impact their lifestyle goals.

**50**  
Minutes

### Activity 2 - Xello Lesson: Career and Lifestyle Costs

In this activity, students will complete the **Career and Lifestyle Costs** lesson to better understand their lifestyle goals and how they can achieve them in a career that interests them.

**30**  
Minutes

### Activity 3 - Lifestyle Goals

In this activity, students will evaluate three careers of interest based on important lifestyle goals they explored in the **Career and Lifestyle Costs** Xello lesson.

**15**  
Minutes

### Activity 4 - Trade-off Affinity Mapping

Using a physical or virtual board, ask each student to contribute 2-3 sticky notes stating trade-offs they'd be willing to make in order to attain the lifestyle they want. Once everyone has contributed, get students to work collaboratively to create groupings of ideas, which should prompt discussion about personal values and lifestyle choices.

## Xello Entry Point

Students will need to make sure they have saved three careers before starting this lesson. It's also recommended that students complete the **Matchmaker** assessment (phase 1) and the **Explore Career Matches** lesson.

## Vocabulary

- Lifestyle
- Values
- Trade-offs
- Compromise
- Work-life balance
- Salary
- Expenses
- Budget
- Gross & Net Income
- Income Taxes

# Activity 1 - Take Home Pay



Recommended  
10th grade



Length  
30 minutes

## Inquiry Prompts

- What is income tax?
- Why do we pay income tax?
- How much of your income will go to taxes?
- What other income deductions can I expect to pay?

## Teaching Strategies

In this activity, students will learn about possible deductions on their gross income in order to better estimate costs that may impact their lifestyle goals. Think back to when you received your first paycheck. Do you remember what you spent it on? Were you surprised about how little you actually made after deductions were taken?

- 1 Tell the story of your first paycheck to your students and ask a few of your students (if there are any) to share their first paycheck stories if they have their own. Consider explaining: What was different between earning a paycheck compared to earning allowance or being paid cash for babysitting or cutting lawns? What do you remember spending your first paycheck on?
- 2 Present these resources or share them in advance to the activity to introduce students to income tax and other deductions: [Anatomy of a Paycheck](#) (5:39) and [Basics of US Income Tax Rate Schedule](#) (4:07).
- 3 Working with a partner or individually, direct students to select one career to calculate the annual income tax deductions for. Find the career on Xello and use the **Median Salary** to determine the annual net pay.
- 4 Have students share their findings. Ask your students:
  - What did you find surprising?
  - How do you think income deductions will impact your lifestyle goals?
  - Should everyone pay income tax?

## Materials Required

- Computers or tablets with internet access

## Artifacts

None for this activity.

## Activity 3 - Lifestyle Goals



### Inquiry Prompts

- Do my career interests align with my lifestyle goals?
- Will I make enough money to support the lifestyle I want?

### Instructions

In this activity, students will evaluate three careers of interest based on important lifestyle goals they explored in the **Career and Lifestyle Costs** Xello lesson.

- 1 Provide the [instructions](#) on the next page to your students.

### Materials Required

- [Student Instructions](#) (also available in [Spanish](#))
- Computers or tablets with internet access

### Artifacts

For three career profiles, students will calculate lifestyle costs and rate **Important Factors: Money** based on a mid-level salary and their lifestyle goals.

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## Lifestyle Goals

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### Student Instructions

- 1 Review your answers from the **Career and Lifestyle Costs** lesson. Would you make any changes to your lifestyle budget from part 3 (**Average Town, USA**) of the lesson?
- 2 Navigate to the career profile for the career you selected for the **Average Town, USA** Xello Lesson activity.
- 3 At the top of the profile, choose an emoji to indicate how you feel about this career.
- 4 Under the section titled **Money**, within **Important Factors**, on a scale of 1-5 stars, evaluate the degree to which you will make enough money to support the lifestyle you want, 5 being very well.
- 5 Complete the following in a Google Doc or local file for two more careers of interest:
  - Review the salary earning section of the career profile to calculate the mid-level monthly net salary (taxes approximately 20%) for that career.
  - Use your list of expenses from the **Career and Lifestyle Cost** lesson to show and calculate the total money remaining each month.
  - Record your thoughts on these two questions:
    - How well do my career interests align with my lifestyle goals?
    - What three trade-offs would I be willing to make in order to support the lifestyle I want? Bring your trade-offs to the affinity mapping activity.
- 6 Add the document to the **Helpful Articles** section at the top of the career profiles. Then, evaluate **Important Factors: Money** on both careers.
- 7 Review your **Important Factors: Money** rating for the above three careers. Which career(s) best align with your lifestyle goals? Does this change how you feel about any of these careers?