

Essential Skills

Activities To Explore Skilled Trades And Technology Careers

There are many interesting ways to explore skilled trades and apprenticeship with your students. This section includes a number of classroom activities to get your students thinking about the skills and knowledge required to perform a trade.

Quick Tips

- Invite a skilled tradesperson to your classroom to talk about their profession. Tradespeople can be found through:
 - local businesses
 - trade associations
 - labor groups
 - community colleges
- Contact [Skills BC](#). Their staff would be happy to help you organize a classroom presentation about skilled trades for your students.
- Organize a field trip for your students to a regional or provincial skills competition. These exciting Olympic-style skills competitions showcase students' technical and leadership skills. Students participate in practical challenges designed to test skills required in technology and trade occupations. For more information, contact [Skills BC](#).
- Assign a research project on a skilled trade. Start by dividing your class into groups. Have each group select a trade they are most interested in. Have them write down their initial perceptions and knowledge of their chosen trade. Then have each group research their trade to identify:
 - the duties involved.
 - the education and skills needed to perform the trade.
 - the wage and the number of hours generally worked.
 - the work environment.
- Finally, have each group make a presentation on their trade to the class. Make sure they talk about their initial perceptions and how they are different from the reality of the trade.

Note: This information has been adapted/modified from the “Skilled Trades: A Career You Can Build On” Educators Toolkit. This toolkit is available [online](#).



What is an Essential Skill?

An essential skill is a necessary developed ability or capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and sustained efforts to smoothly and adaptively carry out complex activities or job functions involving ideas, things, and/or people.

The Government of Canada and other national and international agencies have identified and validated 9 key essential skills for the workplace.

What are the 9 Essential Skills?

1. Numeracy
2. Oral Communication
3. Working with Others
4. Continuous Learning
5. Reading Text
6. Writing
7. Thinking
8. Document Use
9. Digital

Why Do We Need Essential Skills?

Essential Skills are the skills that people need for work, learning and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills.

Essential Skills and The Trades

Good Essential Skills means you will understand and remember concepts introduced in technical training. The level of Essential Skills required for most trades is as high or higher that it is for many office jobs.

How Do We Get to Know our Essential Skills?

There are many fun ways to test your students' Essential Skills. Download the Essential Skills lesson plans found on **Discover Skills BC** to use in your classroom. These activities work best with teams of 4. Create your own point system or make it a race against time!

May the best Essential Skill win!