

Culinary Career Paths

Unit: Culinary Arts

Problem Area: Career Opportunities in Culinary Arts

Lesson: Culinary Career Paths

- **Student Learning Objective.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objective:

Describe the variety of available career paths in culinary arts.

- **Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

“Chefs and Head Cooks,” *O*net*. Accessed May 1, 2011.

<<http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/35-1011.00>>.

“Cooks and Food Preparation Workers,” *Occupational Outlook Handbook*.

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Accessed May 1, 2011. <<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos331.htm>>.

“Jobs for Chef School Graduates,” *AllCulinarySchools*. Accessed May 1,

2011. <<http://www.allculinaryschools.com/culinary-careers/guide/culinary-arts/jobs-for-chef-school-grads>>.

- **Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities**

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials



■ **Key Terms.** The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ▶ career paths
- ▶ dieticians
- ▶ executive chefs
- ▶ food stylists
- ▶ garde-mangers
- ▶ institutional catering
- ▶ line cooks
- ▶ pastry chefs
- ▶ prep cooks
- ▶ sous-chefs

■ **Interest Approach.** Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

Bring in a selection of travel materials, such as information about cruises and a few travel magazines. Pass them around the class, and ask students what those materials have to do with culinary arts. Discuss how many chefs work in the travel industry.

CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Describe the variety of available career paths in culinary arts.

Anticipated Problem: What are some available career paths in culinary arts?

- I. **Career paths** are ways to advance to a desired position within a field. For example, a baker has a career. However, his or her career path may have started as a baker's helper. The next step on the career path for a baker may be a pastry chef, followed by a sous-chef, and then an executive chef position.
- A. The travel industry has a need for people trained and/or experienced in culinary arts to work in kitchens for:
 1. Cruise lines, such as:
 - a. Carnival
 - b. Royal Caribbean International
 - c. Princess Cruises
 - d. Disney

2. Resorts, such as:
 - a. Four Seasons in Jackson Hole, Wyoming
 - b. Wheatleigh in Lenox, Massachusetts
 - c. The Breakers in Palm Beach, Florida
 - d. Montage in Laguna Beach, California
 - e. The Four Seasons in Chicago, Illinois
 3. Hotels, such as:
 - a. Ritz-Carlton
 - b. W hotels and resorts
 - c. Holiday Inn
- B. The restaurant industry includes a wide range of establishments from fine-dining to grocery stores. The demands of the job will vary based on the location of the restaurant, the number of seats, and the available menu. The pay scale will vary because of these factors and as a result of experience and education.
1. Fine-dining establishments have people working in a variety of specialized positions.
 - a. **Executive chefs** are the people in charge of tasks such as working with vendors, creating the menu, preparing food, managing employees, and interacting with customers. They need to be organized and hardworking. In addition, they must have people skills, be creative, and possess a sensitive palate.
 - b. **Sous-chefs** are the people who are second in command in a kitchen. They may assist line cooks, and they fill in when the executive chef is unavailable. *Sous* is pronounced “soo.”
 - c. **Line cooks** are the people who work in certain stations (e.g., appetizers, side dishes, and meat).
 - d. **Pastry chefs** are the people who create certain dishes, make specialty desserts, and often coordinate events.
 - e. **Prep cooks** are the people who assemble, decorate, and garnish prepared food.
 - f. **Garde-mangers** are the people responsible for producing or supervising the production of cold food items (e.g., sandwiches, garnishes, salads, and dressings). *Garde-manger* is pronounced “gARd-mahN-zhey.”
 2. Chain restaurants basically have a set menu, with a variance in “specials of the day.” Seasonal items may also appear on the menu, such as strawberry shortcake in the summer months. Creativity is not as mandatory for work in this setting. Yet being quick and paying attention are important to prevent accidents in the kitchen and to avoid burning dishes.
 - a. T.G.I. Friday’s®
 - b. Applebee’s® Neighborhood Grill and Bar
 - c. Olive Garden®
 - d. Red Lobster
 - e. LongHorn Steakhouse®

3. Fast-food restaurants often require no more than a high school diploma or GED for employment. However, listening, working quickly, paying attention to orders, and working well with others can help someone advance to the next level. A person may begin his or her career path as a cashier, progress to line cook, transition to shift supervisor, and then enter management.
 - a. McDonald's
 - b. Wendy's®
 - c. KFC
 4. Diners are generally small dining establishments that serve food 24 hours a day 7 days a week, though this is not always the case. Also, diners are known for serving comfort food, such as grilled cheese, macaroni and cheese, biscuits and gravy, and other carbohydrate-laden foods that people should try to limit in their diets. Some serve breakfast all day.
 5. Banquet halls are used exclusively for special events, such as wedding receptions and corporate gatherings. Preparing meals for these places involves a lot of organization, time management, and facilitation of responsibilities among staff. In addition to the food being served in a timely manner, it must have an excellent appearance and taste. Also, the service must be professional. So the chef must coordinate with many people to make the event a success.
 6. Delicatessens (delis) typically serve sandwiches and chips. Traditionally, the sandwiches are simply cold cuts and cheese with a garnish. With more of a demand for food to carry out, now delis are offering more side dishes and salads.
 - a. McAlister's Deli
 - b. Jason's Deli
 7. Cafeterias have **institutional catering**, which is a single menu from which customers choose their selections usually while walking through a line with a tray. This dining method is used in:
 - a. Schools
 - b. Hospitals
 - c. Corporations
 8. Grocery stores have their own deli areas. With the increased demand for on-the-go eating, selections have increased from cold cuts and cheese to items such as fried foods, roasted chicken, and side salads.
- C. Special occasion positions are jobs that require a high level of professionalism and attention to detail. These positions may be for catering facilities, for bakeries, or on the side as home businesses.
1. Caterers must be organized individuals who love and excel at planning. They create a menu based on the budget and desires of the client. In addition, they coordinate tablecloths, centerpieces, napkins, and more to make an event memorable.
 2. Wedding cake bakers and decorators must be creative and must work well under pressure. These people have tight deadlines and only one chance to get things right.

- D. The healthcare industry has a need for chefs who are not heavy handed with spices, as food may need to be rather bland to meet the dietary restrictions of many. Having experience in creating low-fat, reduced-sodium, and low-calorie items will assist in this job.
1. **Dieticians** are people who plan nutritional programs to promote healthy choices and, therefore, minimize diseases related to poor nutrition. They may work with cafeteria chefs, doctors who have patients with dietary restrictions, and patients in weight loss management programs.
 2. Chefs in hospital cafeterias
 - a. Usually have a set menu for each day of the week
 - b. Must be focused on feeding people quickly
 3. Chefs in nursing homes or residential care facilities must be sensitive to the special needs of their populations
- E. Media opportunities
1. **Food stylists** are people who market food by arranging items in a manner that will photograph well for commercials, magazines, and videos.
 2. Food photographers are the people who shoot images of culinary creations for various media outlets. Knowledge of food as well as photography skills will assist tremendously in this position.
 3. Food writers are people who may create their own blogs, how-to books, or recipe books. These writers may also find positions as restaurant reviewers for local or national publications.
- F. Sales representatives are needed to sell professional kitchen equipment. Trained culinary arts students would have an advantage over other applicants for such jobs. Speaking skills, professionalism, and enthusiasm are important factors in sales positions. Traveling within a certain area is typically required.
- G. Consultants and design specialists work with owners of independent restaurants to discuss kitchen and dining room layout as well as décor. In addition, they help plan menus that coordinate with the themes of the establishments.

Teaching Strategy: *To prepare the class for the lab activity, you may want to assign students to small groups and have them research people in the area who work in various parts of the culinary arts industry. Display and discuss VM–A through VM–E. Assign LS–A.*

- **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle.
- **Application.** Use the included visual master(s) and lab sheet(s) to apply the information presented in the lesson.

- **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

- **Answers to Sample Test:**

Part One: Completion

1. executive chefs
2. pastry chefs
3. garde-mangers
4. diners
5. institutional catering
6. food stylists

Part Two: True/False

1. T
2. F
3. T
4. T
5. T
6. F

Part Three: Short Answer

1. In the travel industry, chefs may find jobs working for cruise lines, resorts, or hotels.
2. Answers may vary but should include three of the following: fine-dining establishments, chain restaurants, fast-food restaurants, diners, banquet halls, delicatessens, cafeterias, grocery stores.

Culinary Career Paths

► Part One: Completion

Instructions: Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.

1. The people in charge of tasks such as working with vendors, creating the menu, preparing food, managing employees, and interacting with customers are _____.
2. The people who create certain dishes, make specialty desserts, and often coordinate events are _____.
3. The people responsible for producing or supervising the production of cold food items (e.g., sandwiches, garnishes, salads, and dressings) are _____.
4. Small dining establishments that generally serve food 24 hours a day 7 days a week are _____.
5. Cafeterias have _____, which is a single menu from which customers choose their selections usually while walking through a line with a tray.
6. The people who market food by arranging items in a manner that will photograph well for commercials, magazines, and videos are _____.

► Part Two: True/False

Instructions: Write *T* for true or *F* for false.

- _____ 1. Line cooks are the people who work in certain stations (e.g., appetizers, side dishes, or meat).
- _____ 2. Fine-dining establishments are known for serving comfort food, such as grilled cheese, macaroni and cheese, and biscuits and gravy.
- _____ 3. The people who assemble, decorate, and garnish prepared food are prep cooks.



TRAVEL INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES



RESTAURANT INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES



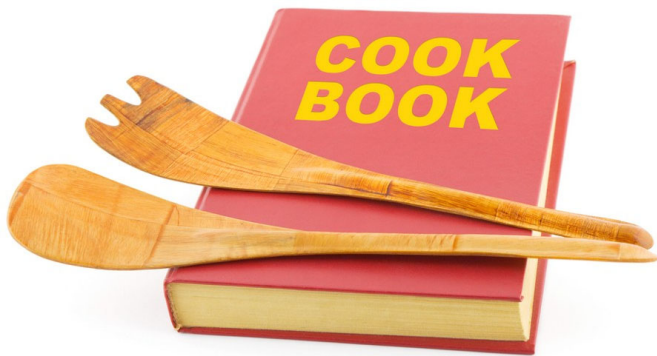
SPECIAL OCCASION OPPORTUNITIES



HEALTHCARE OPPORTUNITIES



MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES



Job Shadowing Experience

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to gain first-hand knowledge of a career path in culinary arts.

Objectives

1. Job shadow a professional.
2. Interview the professional.
3. Give a brief speech to the class.

Materials

- ◆ lab sheet
- ◆ writing utensil
- ◆ paper
- ◆ recording device (if possible)
- ◆ thank-you note

Procedure

1. Contact someone in the culinary arts field to request an opportunity to watch what he or she does for two or three hours during a day at work. (Run the person's name by your instructor to ensure that the same person is not being contacted by everyone in your class.)
2. Conduct a brief interview with the professional after the job shadowing experience.
3. Send a thank-you note to the professional.
4. Create a speech to share with the class regarding what you learned about the position. If you would prefer creating a video or PowerPoint, that is fine. However, you must receive permission in advance from the interviewee if you plan to record anything while conducting the job shadowing and/or interview.

