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PREVIEW | Workplace Readiness

- How much do you already know about the material in this unit? Circle letters or words to correctly complete the sentences. Answers are upside down at the bottom of the page.

1. There are (hundreds / thousands) of different job possibilities for people in this country.
2. (A history / An aptitude) test can help you set an appropriate job goal.
3. Retail (merchandise / services) includes clothing, television, furniture, and other things sold in stores.
4. If you're interested in a job, find out what kind of education or (preparation / category) it requires.
5. Sometimes, (uniforms / benefits) can make up for a lower salary.
6. A (flight attendant / firefighter) works for the government.
7. You could train to be a police officer at
 - a. a union hall.
 - b. a police academy.
 - c. city hall.
8. A retail salesperson might sell
 - a. ideas.
 - b. shoes.
 - c. buildings.
9. A real estate salesperson sells
 - a. houses and land.
 - b. farm equipment.
 - c. social services.
10. The most education is required for
 - a. factory work.
 - b. professional jobs.
 - c. sales work.

Answers: 1. thousands 2. An aptitude 3. merchandise 4. preparation 5. benefits 6. firefighter 7. b 8. b 9. a 10. b

LESSON

1 Aptitudes/Interests Inventory

In the world of work, there are *many* different job choices. What kind of work would suit you best? Which trade or profession will give you the most satisfaction? Which occupation best matches your skills and interests?

An aptitude test can help you figure that out. *Aptitude* means what you're good at, what your talents are. This test is not like a math or history exam. It's often given on a computer, with special software or on a special Web site. The questions are designed to discover your natural abilities and what kinds of activities most appeal to you.

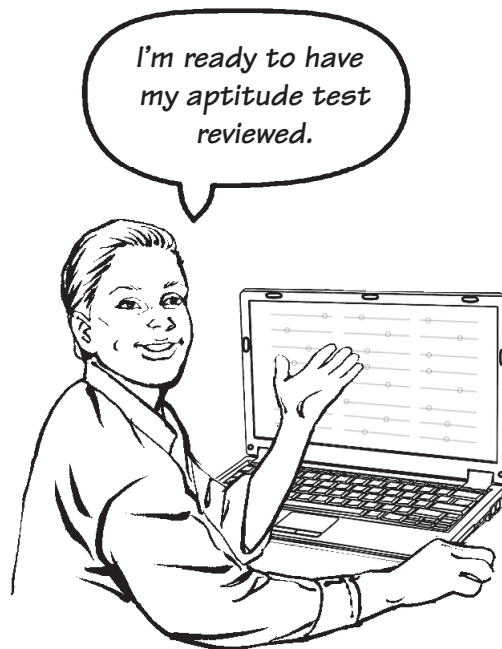
Here are some questions similar to those you might find on an aptitude test:

1. DeShawn is shorter than Dan. Devon is shorter than DeShawn.

Who is tallest? _____

Who is shortest? _____

2. What number comes next in this series: 1 1 2 3 5 ?
a. 7 b. 10 c. 8 d. 9
3. *Lake* is to *puddle* as *wide* is to
a. river b. short
c. narrow d. tiny
4. Which word is first alphabetically?
a. bland b. blame c. bran
5. Which would you prefer?
a. working with people
b. working with machines
c. working outdoors
6. Which would you most enjoy?
a. talking on the phone



- b. making up riddles
c. riding a horse

School guidance counselors give various kinds of aptitude tests too. Your counselor can interpret your answers to help you decide which choices you might make when preparing for employment.

At the library, there are also books of aptitude tests and explanations of how they work. If you want to, you can test yourself. Then you can match your test results with different job types and career categories.

Employment agencies can also help you evaluate your skills and work preferences.

No matter how you go about it, exploring your aptitudes is an important step in a job search.

■ **Thinking It Over**

1. Aptitude tests identify your
 - a. height, weight, and age.
 - b. abilities and talents.
 - c. altitude and attitude.
2. Aptitude tests are sometimes given on a
 - a. computer.
 - b. radio.
 - c. microphone.
3. School guidance counselors can
 - a. take the test for you.
 - b. help you understand your test results.
 - c. tell what your aptitudes are without talking to you or testing you.
4. Activities that *appeal* to you are
 - a. activities you like.
 - b. activities you don't like.
 - c. activities you know nothing about.

■ **Key Vocabulary:** Write a letter to match each **boldface** word with its meaning.

1. ____ **aptitudes**
2. ____ **interpret**
3. ____ **employment agency**
4. ____ **evaluate**
 - a. explain
 - b. natural talents
 - c. determine the worth of something
 - d. business that assists people in finding jobs

■ **Recalling Details:** Write **T** for *true* or **F** for *false*.

1. ____ Aptitude tests can be found in the library or on special Web sites.
2. ____ You can match results of a test to career categories.
3. ____ A math test is no different from an aptitude test.
4. ____ The number of professions and trades gets smaller every day.

■ **Everyday Math/Critical Thinking**

Students in a career class wanted to find out how many available jobs there are in their city. John read the classified section of the local newspaper and counted 218 different jobs listed. Lynn used the Internet and found 5,683 jobs in their area.

1. How many more did Lynn find than John? _____
2. Do you think Lynn had found all the possible jobs in their area? _____

■ **On Your Own**

Think about the activities that *interest* you most. Now think about things you're especially *good* at doing. How many of them are the same? (For example, you might be interested in being a lifeguard, but you're not a good swimmer. Or you might be interested in studying foreign languages and also be very good at speaking Spanish.) List the ones that you both *like* to do and *can* do well.

LESSON

2 Career Categories and Preparation

What type of career looks good to you? Knowing your aptitudes can be very helpful. What interests you most? What are you good at doing?

Listed below are some popular career categories.

Sales (computer industry salespeople sell hardware or software; real estate agents sell buildings or land; store clerks sell retail merchandise such as clothing or auto parts)

Professional service (teacher, nurse, social worker, lawyer)

Construction work (carpenter, sheet metal worker, electrician, mason, plumber)

Factory work (auto assembly, clothing manufacturing)

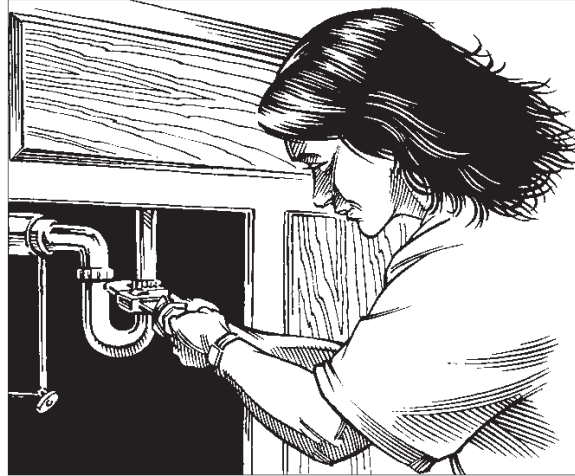
Clerical work (office or administrative assistant, court reporter, customer service representative)

Government jobs (firefighter, police officer, postal worker, urban planner)

“Green” jobs (sustainable farmer, solar power installer)

Of course, there are *many* more job categories and jobs than are listed here. Check out Web sites, like this one from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, that can help you match your interests with job ideas.

Suppose you’ve picked a job that matches your talents and interests. Now you need to find out what kind of education or preparation you need for



the job. For example, for certain sales jobs, you may not need anything more than a high school diploma.

But what if you want to be an electrician? You need to attend trade school or train as a union apprentice. (An *apprentice* is someone who learns from a person who is skilled and experienced in a certain job.)

Postal workers must earn a GED or high school diploma and pass an exam. Police officers must graduate from high school, take criminal justice classes at a community college, and then go to the police academy.

If you want to be a biologist or an air-traffic controller, you’ll need to go to college and earn a degree.

Sometimes the first career idea you have is not the right one for you. So you’ll want to explore several possibilities. But you’re off to a very good start if you stay in school and build your skills. Soon you’ll be looking forward to your first day on the job!

■ **Thinking It Over**

1. How many career choices are there?
 - a. ten
 - b. one hundred
 - c. thousands
2. *Retail merchandise* is
 - a. products sold in stores.
 - b. items sold to dealers.
 - c. schools and vacant lots for sale.
3. Real estate agents sell
 - a. clothing.
 - b. buildings and land.
 - c. computer services.
4. To be a police officer, you'd need to
 - a. enroll in a police academy.
 - b. get a master's degree.
 - c. attend a trade school.
5. A professional service career might be
 - a. painting houses.
 - b. selling lumber and building materials.
 - c. teaching or nursing.

■ **Recalling Main Ideas:** Write **T** for *true* or **F** for *false*.

1. ____ If you prepare for something, you get ready for it.
2. ____ Many jobs require special education or training.
3. ____ Once you choose a career, you cannot change your mind.
4. ____ It's best if you have an aptitude for the career you select.

■ **Key Vocabulary**

1. An *apprentice* is someone who works with and learns from _____
_____.
2. *Merchandise* means _____
_____.
3. *Clerical work* is usually done in _____
_____.

■ **Categories**

1. Name three career categories:

2. List four kinds of workers needed to build a home.
_____ _____
_____ _____

■ **Everyday Math**

Alejandro needs a car to drive to the police training academy. The used car he wants sells for \$6,700. Alejandro's Uncle Theo will loan him the money. He said that Alejandro could pay him back after he starts working as a police officer. Suppose Alejandro pays Uncle Theo an equal amount every month for two years. How much will each monthly payment be? \$_____

■ **On Your Own**

Name two jobs you like that are *not* mentioned in this lesson.
