

Curriculum Resource

Activities to Explore the Skilled Trades

OALCF Alignment

Competency	Task Group	Level
Competency A -Find and Use Information	A1. Read continuous text	1
Competency A -Find and Use Information	A1. Read continuous text	2
Competency A -Find and Use Information	A2. Interpret documents	2
Competency A -Find and Use Information	A3. Extract information from films, broadcasts and presentations	N/A
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B2. Write continuous text	1
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B2. Write continuous text	2
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B3. Complete and create documents	1
Competency D - Use Digital Technology	N/A	1
Competency D - Use Digital Technology	N/A	2

Goal Paths (check all that apply)

- Employment
- Apprenticeship
- Secondary School Credit
- Postsecondary
- Independence

Embedded Skills for Success (check all that apply)

- Adaptability
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creativity and innovation
- Digital
- Numeracy
- Problem Solving
- Reading
- Writing

Notes:

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“Activities to Explore the Skilled Trades” is a compilation of six task-based activities for learners on the apprenticeship goal path that were originally housed on QUILL’s [Task Based Activities for LBS](#) portal.

As part of Community Literacy of Ontario’s Skills for Success initiative, these task-based activities were updated and revised to reflect the apprenticeship system in Ontario as of February 2023. The tasks included:

1. Read and comprehend the article “Trades Overview”
2. Interpret a Sectors and Trades Chart
3. Trade Exploration
4. Watch a short video to learn the truth about the myths of apprenticeship
5. Find websites related to apprenticeship
6. Find information about apprenticeship, apprenticeship grants and the Red Seal Program (updated with the new name “Find information about Financial Support for Apprentices”)

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Activities to Explore the Skilled Trades

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The Skilled Trades

Do you enjoy working with your hands, helping other people, building or fixing things? A career in the skilled trades may be a great fit for you! Working in the skilled trades is very rewarding and can lead to a long career with very good pay. It's a career to be proud of – actually, 144 different careers. That's how many skilled trades there are in Ontario. They range from carpenters and plumbers to hairstylists, landscape horticulturists and more.

There are so many interesting things to know about working in the skilled trades in Ontario. Let's explore the skilled trades by doing five different activities to learn more about this exciting career path.

Trades Overview

If you are interested in a career in the skilled trades, there are some important facts for you to know. Read the information below and answer the three questions that follow.

Part 1: How are the trades organized?

Ontario has apprenticeship programs for more than 140 trades and occupations. The trades are organized into four sectors:

- Construction
- Industrial
- Motive
- Service

Construction Trades involve building, inspecting and maintaining structures and related properties. Some examples of construction trades are carpenters and electricians.

Industrial Trades involve the production of goods used in manufacturing and construction. Some examples of industrial trades are machinists and metal fabricators.

Motive Trades involve working with moving machines. Some examples of motive power trades are automotive and truck technicians.

Service Trades involve the sale and delivery of a product between a producer and a consumer. Some examples of service trades are hairstylists and bakers.

There are many different trades within each sector.

Part 2: What is a compulsory vs. a non-compulsory trade?

A compulsory trade is one for which you must complete an apprenticeship program and pass a certifying exam to legally work in the trade. Not all trades are compulsory. You can work in some trades without completing an apprenticeship and getting a Certificate of Qualification. These are considered non-compulsory trades. However, apprenticeship programs are still available for many non-compulsory trades.

Twenty-three of the trades are currently compulsory in Ontario. In order to work in these 23 trades, an individual must either be registered as an apprentice or be a licensed journeyman with a Certificate of Qualification. A Certificate of Qualification is available in many of the non-compulsory trades as well. It's beneficial to earn this certification even if the trade is non-compulsory because:

- You have a better chance of getting a job in your field. It proves you have the skills to do the job. Some employers looking for workers in non-compulsory trades will only interview people with a Certificate of Qualification.
- You have a better chance of promotion or a better job. Certified journeymen in non-compulsory trades are generally higher in demand and paid better than uncertified workers.

Activity #1

1. List the four different apprenticeship trade sectors.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

2. Which sector do hairstylists belong to? _____

3. Write a short paragraph describing the difference between a compulsory trade and a non-compulsory trade.

Sectors and Trades

Now you know that the skilled trades in Ontario are divided into four sectors, and that some trades are compulsory while others are non-compulsory. Now, look at the Sectors and Trades chart that starts below and continues on the following pages. It lists all 144 skilled trades broken down by sector.

If you see the letter **C** next to a trade name, that is a compulsory trade.

Sector: Construction	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architectural Glass and Metal Technician • Brick and Stone Mason • Carpenter (general) • Cement Mason • Cement or Precast (Concrete) Finisher • Concrete Pump Operator • Construction Boilermaker • Construction Craft Worker • Construction Millwright • Drywall Acoustic & Lathing Applicator • Drywall Finisher and Plasterer • Electrician (Construction & Maintenance) C • Electrician (Domestic & Rural) C • Exterior Insulated Finishing Systems Mechanic • Floor Covering Installer • Hazardous Materials Worker • Heat and Frost Insulator • Heavy Equipment Operator • Hoisting Engineer C 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ironworker Native Residential Construction Worker • Painter/Decorator • Plumber C • Powerline Technician • Precast Concrete Erector • Refractory Mason • Refrigeration and AC Mechanic C • Reinforcing Rodworker • Residential Air Conditioning System Mechanic (Branch 2) C • Residential (Low Rise) Sheet Metal Installer C • Restoration Mason • Roofer • Sheet Metal Worker C • Sprinkler and Fire Protection Installer C • Steamfitter C • Terrazzo Tile and Marble Setter

Sector: Service

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Child Development Practitioner • Agriculture - Dairy Herdsperson • Agriculture - Fruit Grower • Agriculture - Swine Herdsperson • Appliance Service Technician • Arborist • Baker • Baker-Patisserie • Bicycle Mechanic • Chef • Child Development Practitioner • Child & Youth Worker • Cook • Cook Assistant • Developmental Services Worker • Educational Assistant • Electronics Service Technician • Gemsetter-Goldsmith • Hairstylist C • Horse Groomer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horse Harness Maker • Horticultural Technician • Information Technology - Contact Centre Customer Care Agent • Information Technology - Contact Centre Inside Sales Agent • Information Technology - Contact Centre Technical Support Agent • Information Technology Hardware Technician • Information Technology Network Technician • Institutional Cook • Microelectronics Manufacturer • Native Clothing & Craft Artisan • Network Cabling Specialist • Parts Technician • Retail Meat Cutter • Saddlery • Special Events Coordinator • Utility Arborist |
|--|--|

Sector: Motive

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Equipment Technician • Alignment and Brakes Technician C • Auto Body and Collision Damage Repairer C • Automotive Electronic Accessory Technician C • Automotive Glass Technician • Automotive Painter • Automotive Service Technician C • Fuel, Electrical Systems Technician C • Heavy-Duty Equipment Technician | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine Engine Technician • Motive Power Machinist • Motorcycle Technician C • Powered Lift Truck Technician • Recreational Vehicle Technician • Small Engine Technician • Transmission Technician C • Truck and Coach Technician C • Truck Trailer Service Technician C • Turf Equipment Technician |
|--|--|

Sector: Industrial

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bearings Mechanic • Blacksmith • Cabinetmaker • CNC Programmer • Die Designer • Draftsperson - Mechanical • Draftsperson - Plastic Mould Designer • Draftsperson - Tooling and Die Design • Electrician (Signal Maintenance) • Electric Motor Systems Technician • Elevating Devices Mechanic • Entertainment Industry Power Technician • Facilities Maintenance Mechanic • Facilities Technician • Gas Technician • General Machinist • Hydraulic/Pneumatic Mechanic • Industrial Electrician • Industrial Mechanic Millwright • Instrumentation & Control Technician • Light Rail Overhead Contact Systems Lineperson • Locksmith • Machine Tool Builder & Integrator • Metal Fabricator (Fitters) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mould Designer • Mould Maker • Mould or Die Finisher • Optics Technician (Lens and Prism Maker) • Packaging Machine Mechanic • Pattern Maker • Pressure System Welder • Process Operator: Food Manufacturing • Process Operator: Power • Process Operator: Refinery Chemical & Liquid • Process Operator: Wood Products • Railway Car Technician • Relay & Instrumentation Technician • Saw Filer/Fitter • Surface Blaster • Surface Mount Assembler • Tool and Gauge Inspector • Tool & Cutter Grinder • Tool & Die Maker • Tool/Tooling Maker • Tractor-Trailer Commercial Driver • Water Well Driller • Welder |
|---|---|

Activity #2

1. Which sector does an institutional cook belong to?

2. Which one of the following trades is compulsory?

- Construction Millwright
- Pattern Maker
- Automotive Service Technician
- Cook

3. Which one of the four sectors does not have any compulsory trades?

4. Review the chart and list one compulsory trade for each of the other three trade sectors.

Sector	Compulsory Trade

Trades Exploration

The Sectors and Trades chart listed all the skilled trades in Ontario – 144 of them. Choosing which trade is right for you is a big decision, and it involves doing research so that you have all the information you need to make the right choice for yourself. The website called **Apprenticesearch.com** can be a great place to do research!

Activity #3

Visit the website www.apprenticesearch.com and follow the instructions below.

1. Select a trade that you’re interested in on the “About Trades” tab and complete the following chart:

Name of the trade	
Minimum grade required to enter this trade	
Total number of training hours	
Wage range	
What types of employers hire for this trade?	

2. Find a trade that you’re interested in on the About Trades tab. Complete the self-rating quiz related to that trade found at the bottom of the page. Did you check YES to the majority of these questions? If you did, this might be a great trade for you!

Yes No

Watch a short video to learn the truth about the myths of apprenticeship

There are many myths about the skilled trades – things that people think are true but are not. Watch the YouTube video “Debunking Skilled Trades Myths” by the York Builders Association using the link below, and then answer the following questions.

Link: <https://youtu.be/mluygtkIXQI>

Activity #4

1. What are the four myths in the video? Choose two of the myths and explain why they aren't true.

2. Write down any other myths you may have heard about the skilled trades. Decide if you think they are true or not and explain why.

Myth: _____

Is it true? Why or why not? _____

Where do I learn more about apprenticeship?

If what you've learned so far makes you think a career in the skilled trades might be for you, then read on to learn more! Apprentices learn how to do a job in the skilled trades by spending about 80% of their training working on-the-job under the supervision of a certified journey person. That's someone who has already completed their apprenticeship, taken certification exams, and is an expert in their trade. For the other 20% of their training, apprentices go to school and learn their trade in a college-level program.

There are many online resources that can help you learn more about apprenticeship training. You visited one of them (apprenticesearch.com) when you completed activity #3.

Read about it and two other websites below, and then answer the questions that follow.

apprenticesearch.com is a free service operated by not-for-profit organizations and community agency partners in Ontario. They:

- offer an online platform that connects employers and job seekers in the skilled trades
- provide free resources on the skilled trades
- promote the skilled trades as a worthwhile career
- educate people on the skilled trades as a career
- provide personal support to employers and job seekers in the skilled trades

Website: <https://apprenticesearch.com/>

Skilled Trades Ontario is responsible for skilled trades certification in Ontario, including:

- starting apprenticeship training programs
- measuring whether people who were trained in the skilled trades outside of Ontario are qualified to work here
- issuing Certificates of Qualification
- maintaining a record of people authorized to work in compulsory trades
- conducting research about apprenticeship and the trades

Website: <https://www.skilledtradesontario.ca/>

The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum / Forum canadien sur l'apprentissage (CAF-FCA) is a non-profit organization that connects Canada's apprenticeship community. Members include employers, unions, equity-seeking groups, and educational institutions. They work together to help support and develop a highly skilled workforce.

Website: <https://caf-fca.org/>

CAF-FCA Media Page: <https://caf-fca.org/media/>

Activity #5

1. Go back to the apprenticesearch.com website. What phone number(s) can you use to contact apprenticesearch.com?

2. Go to the Skilled Trades Ontario website. Hold your cursor over each of the menu items (About us, About trades, Apprenticeship, Experienced workers, and Certification) and look at the sub-menus that appear. Write down the names of three sub-menus that you would like to learn more about.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. Visit the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum's Media page. Which story sounds most interesting to you?

Find information about Financial Support for Apprentices from the Ontario Government

When you become an apprentice and study a skilled trade, you will earn money while you're doing your on-the-job training. You will pay tuition for your in-class training, but at a reduced fee. You may still find that you could use some extra financial support while you train for your future career.

The Government of Ontario offers grants and loans to help apprentices while they are training. Read the article called "Financial Supports for Apprentices" to learn about the financial supports the Ontario Government offers for apprentices, find out if you qualify and how to apply. When you are done, answer the questions that follow.

Ontario Financial Supports for Apprentices

The Ontario government provides financial support to apprentices through the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD). During your time working and studying, you can get money:

- to help you buy tools you need for your trade
- once you complete your apprenticeship and receive your certificate
- if you are studying full-time
- if you have a disability

Here are **four** financial supports available to apprentices.

1. Tools grant

A non-repayable tools grant is available for apprentices. As an apprentice, this grant will help you pay for tools and equipment for your trade. The amount of the grant depends on the type of trade you're apprenticing in. You can get up to:

- \$1,000 for motive trades
- \$600 for construction trades
- \$600 for industrial trades
- \$400 for service trades

Eligibility

To qualify for the grant, you must have:

- completed, or been exempted from, level one in-class training, on or after April 1, 2020
- a registered training agreement
- been registered as an apprentice for at least 12 months

How to apply

MLITSD will send an email with an application link to all apprentices who are eligible to apply for this provincial grant. You can also [apply online](#) if you think you qualify for the grant. For any questions about the Tools Grant, please [contact Employment Ontario](#).

2. Apprentice Development Benefit

The Apprentice Development Benefit provides financial assistance for apprentices while they are attending full-time, in-class training. These costs can include:

- basic living expenses
- dependent care
- commuting and travel
- expenses for living away from home
- special assistance for persons with disabilities

Eligibility

To qualify for the benefit, you must have:

- attended class on a full-time basis
- registered as an apprentice with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD)

How to apply

When you begin your in-class training, you will be provided with an application package that includes instructions about how to apply, and the application form. If you have started your in-class training and did not receive the package, please contact your local [Employment Ontario apprenticeship office](#) to speak with an Employment Training Consultant.

3. Apprenticeship Completion Bonus

This \$2,000 taxable cash grant is available to those who are out of high school and have completed their training in a non-Red Seal trade.

Eligibility

To qualify, you must have:

- gotten your Certificate of Apprenticeship in a trade that either:
 - does not have a Certificate of Qualification exam, or
 - has only a provincial (non-Red Seal) Certificate of Qualification exam
- been issued a Certificate of Apprenticeship or Certificate of Qualification no more than 180 days prior to the date you are applying.

How to apply

You can apply for the bonus year-round. MLITSD will send you an application when you are eligible to apply for this provincial bonus. For more information, [contact your local apprenticeship office](#).

4. Support for apprentices with disabilities

This program is offered through Ontario's 24 Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology to help people with disabilities participate in:

- apprenticeship programs
- pre-apprenticeship programs
- Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Programs

The program is used for accommodation and accessibility needs of apprentices with disabilities attending colleges across Ontario and aims to:

- improve access for apprentices with disabilities
- ensure apprentices with disabilities receive individualized services and have access to tools and technologies, such as interpreters, note-takers, offices for apprentices with disabilities, transcription of educational materials
- help apprentices with disabilities make a successful transition to postsecondary education and employment

Eligibility

To be eligible, apprentices (part-time or full-time) seeking assistance must contact the office that provides services for students with disabilities at their local college offering their training. Disability eligibility is defined by the Ontario Human Rights Commission's [Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate \(2001\)](#) and [Guidelines on Accessible Education \(2004\)](#), which are permanent or temporary in nature.

How to apply

This funding is provided directly to college training delivery agents. Please reach out to the office that provides services to students with disabilities at your college for information on supports that may be available as part of your training.

Activity #6

1. The Government of Ontario offers four types of apprenticeship grants. Circle or highlight all four of them on the “Financial Supports for Apprentices” article.
2. Write the maximum amount of a tool grant for an apprentice in the motive trades below.

3. Find the name of the Ontario Government benefit apprentices can apply for while they are attending full-time, in-class training. Write it below.

4. How much is the taxable cash grant available to those who are out of high school and have completed their training in a non-Red Seal trade?

5. Who should an apprentice with disabilities reach out to for information about supports that may be available to them?

Conclusion

You have done a lot of research and have completed six activities to help you learn more about the skilled trades. Now that you are done:

What did you learn that was surprising? _____

What would you like to know more about? _____

Have you found a skilled trade that you would like to work in? Yes No

If so, what is the trade? _____

What will your next steps towards a job in the skilled trades be? _____

Use what you've learned and these resources as you continue your journey towards an exciting career in the skilled trades!