

Careers in Science

Objectives

- ▶ investigate careers in science
- ▶ practice interviewing skills

Vocabulary

ethnobiologist
taxonomist

environmental specialist
ecologist

Background

Due to greater ecological concern, there is a growing demand for environmentally-conscious professionals. Some professions, such as an ethnobiologist, ecologist, botanist, forester, or biologist, are in the field of science. Other careers include environmental protection specialist, toxicologist, and hazardous waste manager.

Successful practitioners in the careers SFS and classroom students may be considering are a source of information and advice.

Activity

1. Have students write to selected professionals and invite them to speak to the class. (Contact faculty members of a local university or employees of a government agency, such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or employees of organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund, the National Solid Waste Management Association, Greenpeace and the Cousteau Society.)
2. Divide the class into groups. Ask each group to do research about the profession of one invited guest speaker. Have students use this research to formulate interview questions.
3. After the guests have completed their presentations, have each group meet with the speaker who has the profession they studied. Have students use their questions to interview the speakers.
4. When the interviews are complete, invite each group to report their findings to the class.
5. You may wish to invite other classes to listen to the speakers and participate in the discussions.

Extend the Activity

Have students examine the role each professional would play in the study of the soil, forest, and land in the Australian rainforest. Suggest that they create an organizational flow chart that outlines the responsibilities of each professional.