

Animal Careers

Overview:

This activity highlights different Animal Careers at the BC SPCA, to engage students in further exploration of potential careers with animals. By thinking about their skills, talents, and interests, students will find a match to an appropriate animal career, and then complete a career path diagram to understand what education, training and skills are needed to achieve that career path.

Key Questions:

- What are my skills, talents and interests?
- What do I want from a future career?
- What are some possible animals careers that I can further explore?

Big Idea:

- Matching your skills, talents and interests with a career will lead to a fulfilling adult professional life.
- There are many diverse and rewarding careers working hands-on with animals, or in the service of animals.
- Every career path requires some combination of education and training.

**curriculum links are listed on the last page of this packet*

Activity:

- 1 Watch the BC SPCA staff interview [video](#). Alternatively, consider having a BC SPCA Animal Careers presentation for your class. We do virtual and in-class presentations (where available) and booking forms can be found on our website.
- 2 Lead students in a discussion about each animal career explored in the presentation. What skills does each career require? Education or training necessary? Any other requirements, such as a drivers license or certifications?
- 3 Have each student complete a careers matching survey. This will match them with one (or more) of the animal careers highlighted.

Activity Cont:

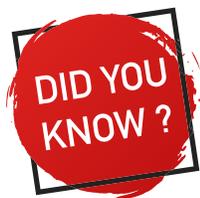
- Once matched with a potential animal career, have students complete the career path graphic organizer. Students should be encouraged to use the additional resource package to complete the career path, but may also need to search online to understand the option available for each career.

Modifications:

- Students may be matched with more than one career. They can choose to do an outline for each, or just one.
- Students may already know of a career they are interested in and will want to pursue this option instead of the ones listed. Allow choice when investigating careers as the intent is to help each student develop a career path that suites their talents, skills and interests.
- For students with text difficulties, read outloud the options and then send the selected skill to them to avoid overloading them with information.

Extension Activities:

- Investigate some other careers in fields related to animal welfare, such as Public Policy or Animal Welfare Sciences
- Have students research local animal services and find a professional in their area that they may be able to connect with as a mentor or job shadow opportunity.



The BC SPCA provides interactive, educational presentations and free, curriculum units. This activity is a great companion for [BC SPCA Animal Careers presentation](#).

Animal Career Self-Assessment

Check **ONE** option in each section that **BEST** matches your personal and professional preferences.

Check **ALL** options in each section that **BEST** match your talents and interests.

1) Attitudes:

- I love animals and want to work with them hands-on **E F**
- I love animals, but don't need to work with them directly **A C**
- I'm scared of or are allergic to animals **B D**

1) My School Interests:

- Sciences, Biology, Environment Studies **B E F**
- Education, Social Work, Criminal Justice, Law and Political Science **C F E**
- Project Management, Business, Finance **A B D**
- Communications, Public Relations, Information Technology **A C D**

2) Work Schedule:

- I prefer a predictable schedule; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. with consistent days off **A C**
- I prefer a flexible schedule; evenings, weekends and holidays are okay **B D E F**

2) My Skills & Abilities:

- customer service **A C F**
- attention to detail, organization **A B E F**
- physical fitness **E F**
- written and verbal communication **B C D F**
- public speaking **B C D**
- computer, information technology **A C D**
- problem solving, critical thinking **A D E F**
- creative thinking, innovation **A D E**
- interpersonal, leadership **A B C F**
- research, data management **B D E**

3) Work Teamwork:

- I prefer to work independently **C F**
- I prefer to work as part of a team **D E**
- I prefer to work independently, but also part of a team **A B**

4) Work Environment:

- I prefer to be active, and in the field **E F**
- I prefer to work at an office, or home **A D**
- I prefer a varied work environment (office, home, or in the field) **B C**

Now, count up all the **LETTERS** at the end of your responses and record the result:

A_____ B_____ C_____ D_____ E_____ F_____

Careers that match **YOUR** career profile: (SEE ANSWER SHEET)

Animal Career Self-Assessment Answer Key

Below are a few of the animal careers we investigated. The career that suits you is the one beside the letter you scored highest.

**If you got more A's, you could be an:
ANIMAL SHELTER MANAGER!**

An Animal Shelter Manager is responsible for day-to-day operations. You act as an information resource & ambassador to clients, the general public & staff. In this leadership role, you are responsible for the implementation & monitoring of programs to improve client service, animal care & profitability.

Required Skills and Training:

- Strong management and planning skills
- Forward thinker, and ability to innovate and improve systems
- Excellent interpersonal skills, tact & discretion
- Ability to deal with emotionally charged situations in a calm, professional manner.
- University degree in business management or relevant discipline, plus one year's experience

**If you got more B's, you could be a:
FARM ANIMAL CARE SPECIALIST!**

A Farm Animal Care Specialist is in charge of farm animal care at one of our rescue barns. They are responsible for the health and welfare of abused or neglected animals. They must have knowledge of housing standards, common health problems, and nutritional needs.

Required Skills and Training:

- Good reporting & observational skills
- Strong knowledge of farm animals, housing requirements and nutritional needs
- Problem-solving and critical thinking skills
- Excellent organizational skills coupled with the ability to multi-task and attention to details
- Post-secondary education in agriculture, agri-business, food science, animal sciences/ biology

Animal Career Self-Assessment Answer Key Cont.

If you got more **C's**, you could be a:

HUMANE EDUCATOR!

A Humane Educator works to improve the lives of animals through educational events and works collaboratively with a team of educators to create and plan BC SPCA programming for youth and adults.

Required Skills and Training:

- Adaptability and ability to multi-task, patience and professional
- Exemplary organizational skills, attention to detail
- Demonstrated customer-service skills
- Work in a positive and professional manner, independently and as part of a team
- Strong oral and written communication skills; able to speak confidently in public
- University degree in education, social work, or animal welfare

If you got more **D's**, you could be a:

FUNDRAISING DEVELOPMENT OFFICER!

As a Development Officer you need to be a motivated and innovative problem-solver, who will thrive in an open concept and fast-paced work environment. You will be responsible for building relationships with donors and stakeholders, and can demonstrate an understanding of the “big picture”.

Required Skills and Training:

- Adaptable, team player, and comfortable with change
- Clear and persuasive communication, both written and oral.
- Accurate record keeping, using data to support initiatives, and to demonstrate success, need or areas of concern.
- Drafting correspondence, responding to emails, forwarding information packages.
- Ordering supplies, filing, and research and planning for future events.
- University degree in relevant discipline plus one year's experience

Animal Career Self-Assessment Answer Key Cont.

If you got more **E's**, you could be a:

WILDLIFE REHABILITATOR!

As a Wildlife Rehabilitator you are responsible for the care of small to medium size mammals and birds. You must have an extensive knowledge of animal care and common medical treatments for wildlife. You must be familiar with provincial and federal government wildlife regulations and rehabilitation permit requirements.

Required Skills and Training:

- Comfortable working in in all types of outdoor and potentially hazardous conditions
- Requires substantial physical labour (must be able to lift 50 pounds)
- Must be able to work in emergency situations, on short notice
- Strong teamwork skills and work ethic
- Excellent communication skills
- University degree in Biological Sciences, Animal Health Care, or a relevant field; Canadian Veterinary Association accredited courses preferred.

If you got more **F's**, you could be an:

ANIMAL PROTECTION OFFICER!

This position requires a demonstrated knowledge of federal, provincial and municipal laws and regulations regarding animals, animal welfare and related activities.

Required Skills and Training:

- Excellent communication, negotiation and mediation skills
- Information gathering: determining what you'll need, sourcing it, analyzing, and reporting
- Ability to keep information confidential
- Strong customer service, interpersonal and presentation skills
- Flexible schedule, and able to work weekdays, weekends and statutory holidays
- Post-secondary coursework in social sciences, criminology/law; prior experience in a relevant field, such as law enforcement

BC SPCA Animal Career Path

My Animal Career Match:

Required Skills:

Education & Training:

Skills I Already Have:

High School Classes Needed:

Skills I Need to Develop:

Volunteer Experience Needed:

How will you develop these skills?

Curriculum Links

Curricular Competencies and Content:

Career Education:

- Examine the importance of service learning and the responsibility of individuals to contribute to the community and the world
- Recognize their personal preferences, skills, strengths, and abilities and connect them to possible career choices
- Self-assessment: includes inventories of preferences, skills, personal attitudes values, and interests
- Set and achieve realistic learning goals with perseverance and resilience
- Appreciate the value of a network of resources and mentors to assist with career exploration
- Apply a variety of research skills to expand their knowledge of diverse career possibilities and understand career clusters
- Explore volunteer and other new learning experiences that stimulate entrepreneurial and innovative thinking
- Life and Career Plans: graduation requirements

Core Competencies:

Social Awareness and Responsibility

- Contributing to community and caring for the environment

Positive Personal and Cultural Identity

- Identifying personal strengths and abilities
- Recognizing personal values and choices

Critical and Reflective Thinking

- Questions and investigating