

Graphic Communications Careers

Unit: The Graphic Communications Industry

Problem Area: Manual Drafting

Lesson: Graphic Communications Careers

Student Learning Objectives. Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

- 1 Identify career pathways.**
- 2 Determine the educational and training requirements for graphic communications.**
- 3 Identify professional associations and trade shows.**

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

E-unit(s) corresponding to this lesson plan. CAERT, Inc. <http://www.mycart.com>.

AIGA. Accessed July 19, 2014. <http://www.aiga.org/>.

"Careers in Graphic Communications," *Print and Graphics Scholarship Foundation*. Accessed July 19, 2014. <http://www.thegcef.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/PGSFCareerGuide.pdf>.

Federal Student Aid. Accessed July 19, 2014. <http://fafsa.ed.gov>.

The GASC Channel. Accessed July 19, 2014. <http://www.gasc.org/graphexpo14.aspx>.

Illinois Career Information System. Accessed July 19, 2014. <https://ilcis.intocareers.org/materials/portal/home.html>.

"PGSF Directory of Schools," *Print and Graphics Scholarship Foundation*. Accessed July 19, 2014. http://efiles.printing.org/eweb/docs/pgsf/2013-2014_DirectoryOfSchools.pdf.



“Printing Workers,” *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. Accessed July 19, 2014.

<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Production/Printing-workers.htm#tab-7>.

SGIA. Accessed July 19, 2014. <http://www.sgia.org>.

“Technical Association of the Graphic Arts,” *Printing Industries of America*. Accessed July 19, 2014. <http://www.printing.org/taga>.

■ **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):

- ▶ copy
- ▶ duotone
- ▶ freelance
- ▶ gigabyte
- ▶ halftone
- ▶ internship
- ▶ layout
- ▶ logo
- ▶ preflighting
- ▶ RAM
- ▶ stock photography
- ▶ terabyte

■ **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.

Ask students to list products, packaging, and anything else that has graphics representing consumer products, including television commercials. Ask them to discuss how they think graphic identity for a product evolves. For instance, ask how many people are involved in the process of bringing a product from the idea phase to a printed package in a consumer's hand. Ask them to brainstorm possible career pathways involved in the process for image concept creation and printing the physical packaging and advertising.

CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Identify career pathways.

Anticipated Problem: What career pathways exist in the graphic communications industry?

- I. Visual communications careers can be divided into two major pathways: printing industry roles and creative media positions.
 - A. Printing plants divide responsibilities by job title.
 1. Customer service representative
 - a. This person acts as a liaison between the printer and customer.
 - b. The position requires technical knowledge of the print production process.
 - c. A customer service representative must have good communication skills.
 2. Sales representative
 - a. This employee solicits business for the printing firm.
 - b. He or she advises customers regarding how to receive the most from the printing budget.
 3. Production manager
 - a. This employee coordinates materials needed to complete multiple print jobs from inception to product delivery to the client.
 - b. He or she needs to be able to plan ahead, foresee, and troubleshoot problems.
 4. Estimator
 - a. This employee calculates costs and submits estimates to bid on a printing job.
 - b. He or she looks for ways to decrease costs to increase profits on each contract.
 5. Pre-press technician
 - a. This employee works with a variety of graphics software applications to input design components. He or she executes **preflighting**—a print industry term for the process of confirming the digital files are present and formatted properly.
 - b. He or she creates films, plates, and proofs using **halftone** or film separations that use dots varying in size, shape, and spacing to create continuous images. Another option is to use **duotone** or films that superimpose one color halftone over another to bring out middle tones and highlights of an image in a second color combined with black.

- c. The pre-press technician uses computers with a **gigabyte** (one billion byte capacity) of random access memory. **RAM** is a device that allows the computer to access stored data from several terabyte hard drives. A **terabyte** is one trillion byte capacity.
 - 6. Press operator
 - a. A press operator runs the printing press.
 - b. He or she must know the mechanics of the press and must manage the computerized press functions.
 - 7. Bindery worker
 - a. A bindery worker performs one or more of the following: cutting, folding, gathering, trimming, and binding the final product.
 - b. Large printing companies have computerized bindery systems.
 - 8. A material handler loads and unloads trucks and moves material.
- B. Creative media positions in graphic communication are as staff for an advertising agency, marketing, or design firm or on a freelance basis. A **freelance** position is a job in which a self-employed professional works under contract for a larger firm.
- 1. Art director
 - a. This employee determines how best to represent a concept visually.
 - b. He or she develops the overall look or style of a publication; an advertising campaign; or a theater, television, or film set.
 - c. An art director supervises the design staff.
 - d. He or she reviews and approves designs, artwork, photography, and graphics developed by staff members.
 - e. An art director talks to clients to develop an artistic approach and style.
 - f. He or she coordinates activities with other artistic or creative departments.
 - g. The art director develops detailed budgets and timelines.
 - 2. Copy writer
 - a. This employee initiates the graphic arts process by writing text for the piece to be printed.
 - b. The copy writer writes technical, creative, or journalistic **copy**—a trade name for text used in an advertisement, newspaper, or editorial article.
 - c. This job requires a good command of language and the ability to be concise and accurate.
 - 3. Print buyer
 - a. This employee contracts vendors—designers, writers, photographers, and printers—to competitively bid on a job for the advertising agency’s client.
 - b. He or she works with the winning bid vendors to complete the job.
 - 4. Creative / art designer
 - a. This employee formulates the **layout**—arrangement of copy and artwork in an advertisement specifying details (e.g., style, size, font, photographs, animation, video, and sound).

- b. He or she conceptualizes the **logo** or a design graphic created for the instant recognition of a company's product. This employee helps design interfaces for multimedia games, products, and devices.
- 5. Illustrator
 - a. This employee creates illustrations, drawings, charts, graphs, or full-color artwork to complement the written words.
 - b. He or she uses programs such as Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator as well as traditional drawing instruments.
- 6. Photo editor
 - a. This employee works with writers and editors to coordinate photo assignments.
 - b. He or she establishes a photo budget for commissioned and **stock photography**—a supply of ready-made photographs licensed for a fee for specific use.

Teaching Strategy: Give students examples of graphic communications products seen in every day life. Begin a discussion about how teams of people create and produce graphics for the products they experience. Ask them to brainstorm possible career pathways. Outline different roles in the graphic communications industry, and suggest resources for a Web quest. Have them divide up the roles, and research available career paths as well as professional associations. Tell them to determine what education and training is needed to enter the field. Assign students to groups of four or five. Have each group present its findings to the class in a PowerPoint.

Objective 2: Determine the educational and training requirements for graphic communications.

Anticipated Problem: How does an individual prepare for a career in graphic communications?

- II. As graphic communications becomes increasingly computerized, students need training resources to sharpen their technical and communication skills.
 - A. Conceptual skills are important to market an idea about a product to consumers through media.
 - 1. Conceptual skills involve creative problem solving, strong writing skills, and technical precision.
 - 2. Daily tasks involve an emphasis on working with and communicating with teams.
 - 3. The ability to write conceptual descriptions of client products with technical proficiency is essential.

- B. Hundreds of universities, community colleges, and technical schools are available in the United States.
 - 1. A technical associate degree or bachelor's degree will be tailored for the specific career path.
 - a. Degree programs equip students to be well-rounded industry professionals.
 - b. Typically technical schools focus on industry practice and intercompany communications.
 - 2. An **internship** is a job opportunity, similar to an apprenticeship, in which students receive on-the-job training.
 - a. It can be paid or unpaid.
 - b. Generally an internship is a temporary position. However, an internship may result in a full-time job offer based on performance and job openings.
 - 3. Financial aid and scholarships are available for schools and universities.
 - a. FASFA student loans are available through the government.
 - b. Graphic communications scholarships are available through the Print and Graphics Scholarship Foundation.

Teaching Strategy: Give students research links for education and training for careers in graphic communications. Have each group develop a five-year plan detailing high school, trade school, and university options for training. Have them include possible internships and scholarships available to prepare for entry into the industry.

Objective 3: Identify professional associations and trade shows.

Anticipated Problem: What professional associations and trade shows exist?

- III. Professional organizations set standards and foster growth within the graphic communications industry while trade shows make business aware of cutting-edge products and available services.
 - A. The American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) advances design as a professional craft.
 - 1. It advocates the value of designers to government, business, media, and the public.
 - 2. AIGA defines global standards and ethical practices.
 - 3. It establishes standards for design education.
 - B. Printing Industries of America offers printing industry support.
 - 1. It has professional resources for pre-press, press, management, education, sales, and human relations.
 - 2. Printing Industries of America provides information on technology and research on industry trends.
 - 3. It is involved in government advocacy.
 - 4. In addition, it is involved in environmental and safety advocacy.

- C. Trade shows demonstrate the latest products, services, market trends, and opportunities for the visual graphic communications industry.
 - 1. Graph Expo
 - a. It helps printing companies align their services by seeing their competition.
 - b. The Graph Expo provides a venue to demonstrate new products and services.
 - c. It promotes sales to businesses attending the Graph Expo.
 - 2. Trade shows provide exposure to international businesses.
 - a. They align companies with the needs and goals of international businesses.
 - b. Trade shows provide exposure to industry trends in other countries.

Teaching Strategy: *Begin a group discussion on the objectives of professional associations and the importance of any industry to showcase their capabilities to businesses that utilize their services. Have student groups research associations and trade shows specific to graphic communications and present their findings in PowerPoint presentations. Assign LS-A. Use VM-A through VM-C in the lab.*

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. If a textbook is being used, questions at the ends of chapters may be included in the Review/Summary.

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: Matching

- 1. c
- 2. a
- 3. d
- 4. e
- 5. f
- 6. b

Part Two: Completion

- 1. layout

2. halftone
3. art director
4. production manager
5. pre-press technician
6. copy writer

Part Three: True/False

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

Graphic Communications Careers

► Part One: Matching

Instructions: Match the term with the correct definition.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| a. stock photography | d. internship |
| b. freelance | e. preflighting |
| c. copy | f. logo |

- _____ 1. A trade name for text used in an advertisement, newspaper, or editorial article
- _____ 2. A supply of ready-made photographs licensed for a fee for specific use
- _____ 3. A job opportunity similar to an apprenticeship in which students receive on-the-job training
- _____ 4. A print industry term for the process of confirming the digital files are present and formatted properly
- _____ 5. A design graphic created for the instant recognition of a company's product
- _____ 6. A job in which a self-employed professional works under contract for a larger firm

► Part Two: Completion

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

1. A designer formulates the _____ or arrangement of copy and artwork in an advertisement and specifies details such as style, size, font, photographs, animation, video, and sound.
2. Films, plates, and proofs use _____ film separations that use dots varying in size, shape, and spacing to create continuous images.



3. In an advertising agency, the _____ develops the overall look or style of a publication; an advertising campaign; or a theater, television, or film set.
4. In a printing company, the _____ coordinates materials needed to complete multiple print jobs from inception to product delivery to client.
5. A/an _____ works with a variety of graphic software applications to input design concepts.
6. A/an _____ initiates the graphic arts process by writing text for a piece to be printed.

► Part Three: True/False

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

- _____ 1. Graphic communications industry professional organizations such as the Printing Industries of America define standards and ethical practices for the industry.
- _____ 2. An art buyer purchases works of art to decorate an ad agency.
- _____ 3. The ability to conceptualize visuals is important in marketing an idea about a product to consumers through media.
- _____ 4. Technical schools focus on industry practice and intercompany communication.
- _____ 5. The federal government does not back student loans for pursuing training and/or education in the print industry.
- _____ 6. Printing industry trade shows allow companies to barter products and services.

CAREER PATHWAYS IN GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION

While creating PowerPoint slides, individual members of each group must answer the following questions about career pathways in graphic communication:

- ◆ What are the skills required to perform a particular job duty?
- ◆ What kind of software must an individual be versed in?
- ◆ Is there opportunity to advance in this position?
- ◆ How can I condense the information I research to create a PowerPoint presentation that works well with slides produced by others in my group?



EDUCATION AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR CAREERS IN GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS

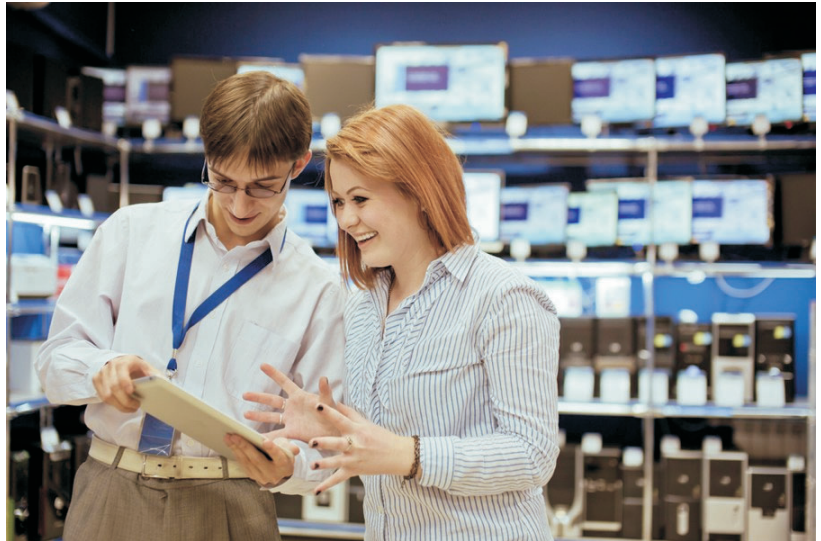
While creating PowerPoint slides, individual members of each group must answer the following questions about education and training to prepare for careers in graphic communication:



- ◆ What resources are available to find universities, community colleges, and trade schools?
- ◆ What classes should a high school student take to prepare for entry into a graphic communications school or training program?
- ◆ How can a student improve on writing, computer software, and verbal communication skills?
- ◆ What scholarships, grants, and financial aid are available?

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND TRADE SHOW OPPORTUNITIES

While creating PowerPoint slides, individual members of each group must answer the following questions about professional organizations and trade show opportunities:



- ◆ What are professional associations for graphic communications? In addition, what roles do they perform, and how important are they in shaping the industry?
- ◆ How would a graphic communications professional benefit from participating in a trade show as an individual or as part of a company?

Career Pathways: Training and Professional Support for Careers in Graphic Communication

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to examine the evolution and significance of visual communications from a historical perspective and based on modern trends.

Objective

Create a PowerPoint presentation of graphic communications training, careers, and professional associations.

Materials

- ◆ computer lab with Internet access
- ◆ PowerPoint or equivalent presentation software
- ◆ VM-A, VM-B, and VM-C

Procedure

1. Your teacher will divide the class into two groups.
2. One group will be assigned to print industry careers and the other group to creative careers.
3. Divide the career job titles for each group and assign them to individuals.
4. As a group, create a PowerPoint that provides information on each job title as well as the training, education, and scholarships available. Include the professional associations and trade show opportunities available in the chosen field.
5. Show your findings, and discuss various career path options.

