

## LESSON PLAN — Grades 7–8

### Exploring Skilled Trades, Apprenticeship & Pathways Through OYAP

*Based on The Trades Report – November 2025*

**Time:** 1–2 class periods (40–75 min each)

**Curriculum:** Ontario Grades 7–8 – *Creating Pathways to Success*, Career/Life Planning Inquiry Process; Social Studies (Community Roles); Science & Technology (Engineering/Design Skills)

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#### 1. Learning Goals

Students will:

- Understand what the **skilled trades** are and why they are important in Ontario's labour market.
  - Explore the **four sectors of skilled trades**: Construction, Motive Power, Industrial, and Service (Trades Report, p. 2 & p. 10)
  - Learn how **OYAP** (Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program) allows students to start trade exploration in high school (p. 1–2)
  - Examine **career stories** from real tradespeople (Jo the Carpenter; Will the Electrical Apprentice) (pages 4–5, 8–9)
  - Identify personal **interests, strengths, and learning styles** that can link to a future trade (p. 9)
  - Understand what a **Skilled Trades Portfolio** is and why it matters (p. 6)
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#### 2. Ontario Curriculum Alignment

##### Creating Pathways to Success — Career/Life Planning

This lesson addresses:

##### Knowing Yourself

- Identify personal interests, strengths, and traits and see how they relate to future opportunities.

##### Exploring Opportunities

- Investigate changing work trends (e.g., demand for trades, women in trades).
- Explore diverse career pathways, including **apprenticeship** as a postsecondary option.

##### Making Decisions & Setting Goals

- Set short-term goals (e.g., skills to build before high school).
- Consider long-term possibilities and pathways.

##### Social Studies (Community Roles)

- Understanding the roles tradespeople play in society and communities.

## Science & Technology

- Hands-on, problem-solving nature of skilled trades (design, building, systems understanding).
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## 3. Materials

- *The Trades Report – November 2025* (pages referenced above)
  - Chart paper or digital workspace
  - Student worksheets
  - Video links (optional): OYAP Apprenticeship Pathway video (Referenced on p. 2)
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## 4. Lesson Sequence

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### Minds-On (10 minutes)

#### Hook Question:

“What careers do you think of when you hear the word *trade*?”

Ask students to brainstorm:

- Jobs they’ve seen in their community
- People they know who work with their hands
- What skills they think tradespeople need

Show the infographic/chart of the **four trade sectors** (pages 2 & 10) and ask:

- Which sectors are new to you?
  - Which sector seems most interesting? Why?
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### Action (45–60 minutes)

#### Activity 1: What is OYAP? How Does Apprenticeship Work?

Students read a short excerpt summarizing:

- Co-op experience (Trades Report, p. 1)
- OYAP eligibility (age, credits) (p. 2)
- Apprenticeship = 80% on-the-job + 20% in-class (p. 7)

- Certificates and exams (p. 7)

**Prompt:**

In groups, create a visual flowchart of “**The Apprenticeship Pathway**” based on the diagram on p. 7 (start → on-the-job → school → cycle → certification).

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**Activity 2: Spotlight Stories (Critical Thinking)**

Students rotate among excerpts from:

- **Jo the Carpenter** (pages 4–5)
- **Will the Electrical Apprentice** (pages 8–9)

**Guiding questions:**

1. What motivated Jo/Will to choose their trade?
2. What challenges did they face?
3. What skills or attitudes helped them succeed?
4. What surprised you about their career paths?
5. What stereotypes do their stories challenge?

Groups share one insight that changes the way they think about trades.

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**Activity 3: Match Your Interests to a Trade**

Using the chart on page 9 (e.g., “If you like building... you might enjoy Construction trades...”), students complete a self-reflection.

Worksheet includes:

- My interests
- Skills I enjoy using
- A trade that matches me
- Why it might be a good fit

(Optional extension: explore salary ranges from p. 10.)

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**Activity 4: Build a Mini Skilled Trades Portfolio**

Using p. 6 of the report, students create a starter portfolio page:

- Skills they already have
- Activities/experiences they can collect

- Certifications they could earn in high school (WHMIS, First Aid, etc.)
  - One goal they have for Grade 9 regarding exploration
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## 5. Consolidation (10 minutes)

### Exit Ticket Options:

- “One thing I learned today that surprised me...”
  - “One trade I want to learn more about is...”
  - “A skill I already have that could help me in the trades is...”
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## 6. Assessment (for Learning)

### Teachers assess:

- ✓ Participation in group tasks
- ✓ Accuracy of apprenticeship flowchart
- ✓ Reflection depth in interest-matching activity
- ✓ Clarity and completeness of portfolio starter page

Rubric aligned with:

- **Thinking** – making connections, critical reflection
  - **Communication** – clarity of ideas
  - **Application** – applying interests to real-world pathways
  - **Knowledge** – understanding trades and apprenticeship basics
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## 7. Differentiation

- Provide sentence starters for students who need language scaffolding
  - Allow oral responses instead of written where needed
  - Offer enrichment: explore SHSM programs or Trades Ontario career quizzes
  - Use visuals (infographics from the report) for visual learners
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## 8. Extensions

- Students design a poster encouraging young women in trades (link to p. 3–5 features).
- Create a “Day in the Life” storyboard of an apprentice.
- Research one trade of interest using Ontario Job Bank or Skilled Trades Ontario.