Lesson 5: Great Lakes, Great Careers

**Activity:** Students review a selection of career profiles and play a lively classroom game to find out more about marine and aquatic science professionals.

**Grade level:** 4-8  
**Subjects:** Science, social studies  
**Setting:** Classroom  
**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Key terms:** Career, Profile

**Objectives**
Following this lesson, students will be able to:
• Name at least five careers in marine and aquatic science, including both the oceans and Great Lakes.
• Identify several recent contributions that people have made in marine and aquatic science fields.
• Describe a marine or Great Lakes science career that interests them.

**Summary**
A variety of people make their living studying the oceans and Great Lakes or educating others about these valuable natural resources. Yet for many students in the U.S., these careers may seem relatively remote or unattainable, until they learn about the actual people who do them. This activity will help students become familiar with possible and exciting careers.

**Background**
"I have always loved the water. Since junior high school, I was certain I wanted a career that would involve the ocean," says Ocean Engineer Dianna Bo. For some young people, that’s all it takes—an early fascination that leads to a lifelong passion. Others, however, may not realize that related careers even exist, much less that they would enjoy the work!

Bo is one of more than 50 people profiled on web pages created by WHOI and NH Sea Grant programs (see: Marine Careers website) The pages provide an excellent introduction to a wide range of marine career fields and to people working in those fields.
fields. The featured men and women tell how they got started in their careers, what they like and dislike, and give advice for young people. Fields covered include marine biology, oceanography, ocean engineering, and related fields such as marine law, education, and economics.

**Materials and Preparation**

- Select approximately 15 career profiles, available online, see www.whoi.edu/science/marinecareers. It is best to select a wide range of careers and a diversity of men and women.
- Make multiple copies, so that each student has a stapled packet of all 15 profiles.
- Create stickers or labels with the name of each person profiled.
- Note: Many Great Lakes career profiles are currently available online in a variety of formats.

**Procedure**

1. Begin by introducing the topic of marine and aquatic science careers. Point out that for each of the prior lessons in FLOW, people are employed in related fields—as ecologists, wetland biologists, water quality experts, fisheries researchers, natural resource educators, science writers and a host of others. Ask students if they know of family members or friends who make a living by studying or educating others about the oceans and Great Lakes.
2. Distribute the packet of career profiles to each student. Explain that each of the profiles describes a real person whose career involves the oceans or Great Lakes. Explain that they’ll be playing a game using these profiles.
3. Next, place a sticker on the back of each student, identifying a person in one of the profiles. Students are not allowed to see their own stickers. The goal of the game is for each student to figure out whose name is on their backs, by asking other students questions.
4. Start the game. Allow the students to mingle, while carrying the profiles. When two students meet, they should first look at the name on the other person’s back and consult the appropriate profile for information. They then ask each other a yes-no question about their own identity. (For example: Am I a fisheries biologist? Am I female?) They are only allowed to ask one question per pairing and then must move on to mingle with others.
5. Once they have gathered enough answers to guess their own identity (the name on their back), they can remove the sticker, sit down, and read about that professional. They then become the “expert” on this person. After everyone is sitting and has had a chance to read about their person, ask each student to “introduce” the person to the class. They can talk about what the profiled professional does in relation to the oceans or Great Lakes, what he or she enjoys most, and what skills or education are needed to do this kind of job, etc.

**Extension**

If students have Internet access, have them spend 15 minutes reviewing a variety of the profiles online. Ask students if they had to choose a career involving the oceans or Great Lakes, which one most interests them? Students will write a short essay explaining why
they like this career, why they would be good at it, what kind of education they would need, and where—if they could choose anywhere in the world—they would like to work.

**Source**
FLOW Development Team and Anna Switzer.

**Assessment & Standards**
See separate document: FLOW_Assessment_GLCE.pdf

**FLOW Feedback**
Please take 10 minutes to provide us with your feedback.
Go to: [http://www.miseagrant.umich.edu/flow/flow-feedback.html](http://www.miseagrant.umich.edu/flow/flow-feedback.html)

**Supplemental Materials: FLOW Unit 3, Fish**

**Lesson 5 - Great Lakes, Great Careers Documents:**
- Print: 15 career profiles, multiple copies, diversity of men and women
  Reminder: Stickers or labels with the name of each person profiled.