Embedding career education in the Victorian Curriculum F–10

Design and Technologies – Food specialisations, Levels 9 and 10

An existing learning activity linked to a particular learning area or capability in the Victorian Curriculum F–10 can be easily adapted to incorporate career education, enriching students’ career-related learning and skill development.

1. Identify an existing learning activity

**Curriculum area, sub-strand and levels:** Design and Technologies – Food specialisations, Levels 9 and 10

**Relevant content description:** Explain how designed solutions evolve with consideration of preferred futures and the impact of emerging technologies on design decisions. ([VCDSTS055](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCDSTS055))

**Existing activity:** Researching a current food trend, including nutritional claims and marketing tactics. Developing a meme to summarise findings.

**Summary of adaptation, change, addition:** Analysing and researching case studies of high-profile individuals who have built careers as food and health experts.

2. Adapt the learning activity to include a career education focus

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| Existing learning activity | Adaptations, changes or extensions that can be made |
| Teacher introduces the topic of food trends and fads, with students contributing to a class list of current trends. Suggestions can include popular beliefs about ‘super foods’; foods to avoid; weight-loss regimens; and miracle cures. Also relevant are widespread changes to food consumption patterns. | Students extend their investigation by completing case studies of high-profile individuals who may fall into the category of ‘food and health expert/influencer’ (some might be associated with the food trends and fads examined in the existing activity). The individuals can be selected through class discussion or teacher could supply students with a list of individuals.  Regarding the identified experts/influencers, teacher asks the following questions:   * Why is this person believed as a source of food and health information? * Should they be trusted? What answers do you need before deciding?   The focus is on the public face of food information, and those who have professional roles in communicating that information. The tools for querying and evaluating the quality of food and health messaging should include scrutiny of educational qualifications, use of evidence-based information, and possible conflicts of interest.  Students can draw conclusions about whether each case study belongs in the category of ‘Food fraudster’ (consumers have been misled by false claims), ‘The jury is out’ (no law is broken but this person is no expert), or the ‘Food Education Hall of Fame’. The latter is for individuals who successfully disseminate evidence-based, rational food information to a wide audience.  Once case studies have been sorted into categories, students should examine each group, identifying common trends, such as education/training, other work experience, income sources (if known). Students will use critical thinking to identify what traits and skills the influencers have used to gain their position, as well as which pathways more ‘legitimate’ influencers have taken. |
| Students choose a topic from the list to research, with the aim of drawing a conclusion about whether the trend is beneficial to individuals, families, and/or communities. They focus on the evidence behind nutritional claims and analyse marketing factors such as target audience, appeals to emotion, and accuracy of information. They also consider the motives and funding of advertisers. |
| Students develop a meme to summarise their findings. (Oxford Dictionary: ‘An image, video, piece of text etc., typically humorous in nature, that is copied and spread rapidly by internet users, often with slight variations’.) |
| Assessment includes negotiated evaluation criteria for the success of the meme (for example, it should be clear, succinct, accurate, and have appeal for the intended purpose of internet sharing). The efficacy of the meme itself could be peer-assessed. | Nomination of individuals as either a food fraudster or a member of the hall of fame engages the same skill set required in the analysis of a current food trend (research and critical thinking). Students should be encouraged to reflect on how this activity has influenced their thinking with regard to their own future options, namely, identifying the career pathways of personalities and the skills/competencies used to achieve their influence. |

Considerations when adapting the learning activity

* Teacher may need to prepare a list of experts for students to study, to ensure a balance of potential ‘hall of famers’ and ‘food fraudsters’.
* The career-related learning focuses on the pathways to making a career as a food expert or influencer. Critically, it juxtaposes people who use education, research and experience in their work, and those who are motivated by factors such as sponsorship. Teacher may need to reinforce this distinction.

Benefits for students

Know yourself – self-development:

* The skills of critical thinking and discerning consumerism encourage independent decision-making and contribute to self-awareness and a positive self-concept.

Know your world – career exploration:

* The design and creation of an internet meme gives students experience of responding to a brief and embracing evolving styles of communication, which are expectations common to many workplaces.
* The ability to research and to distil an idea into a simple message (in this case a meme) are both skills that are highly valuable as lifelong learning strategies, both in formal education and in the workplace.
* Students examine and analyse professional roles, extending their understanding of work and society.

Manage your future – be proactive:

* By using tools to test whether sources of information are trustworthy, students build their awareness of how beliefs and values affect professional conduct, and begin to make informed decisions what career pathways will suit their own values.