

What Can I Do With A Major In... English?

This is a list of job titles and job descriptions of entry-level positions for which graduates with a B.A. in English might be hired.

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For more information on these careers, use the Career Exploration Center library. See the University of Texas Department of English for more information about majoring in English.

DIRECT Career Options

The skills required for the jobs listed here are so similar to the skills acquired in studying English that a degree in the field will usually serve as a credential for getting the job.

ADVERTISING COPYWRITER

Writes advertising copy for display in all media: newspaper, magazine, billboard, packaging, television, radio.

COMPUTER INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER

Writes instructional and tutorial manuals and course materials for internal and customer training. Works for manufacturers of computer hardware and software. May require coursework or experience in teaching, as well as some technical background.

COMPUTER MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Writes brochures, data sheets, and other marketing materials to promote a computer product. May include video scripting. Works for manufacturers of computer hardware and software. Typically requires some technical knowledge.

CONTINUITY WRITER

Writes and edits scripts for broadcast announcers, noting the sequence and length of each segment and charting the inclusion of commercials. Works for radio and television producers.

COPY EDITOR/ COPY READER

Edits printed copy for grammatical and stylistic errors. Works in a variety of settings: book and magazine publishers, newspapers, advertising agencies, in-house publications of business and agency newsletters and releases.

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Writes press releases, speeches, annual reports, and other material to promote a corporation and its image. Works for all corporations in all fields.

CORRESPONDENT/STRINGER

Writes freelance reports for one or more publications. Usually has special knowledge of the subject or geographic area covered. Works as an independent contractor.

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Evaluates manuscripts; reviews and edits copy; coordinates photography, illustrations, and graphics; secures copyrights and permissions to quote copyrighted material. Works for book publishers.

EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Writes for and edits an employee newsletter. Works for employers in all fields. Requires skills in graphic design and layout.

FILM RESEARCHER/COPYWRITER

Reviews scripts, checks for factual and technical accuracy, rewrites copy, assists in creating storyboard representations of scenes. Relevant coursework or prior experience preferred. Works for entertainment, documentary, educational, and industrial film producers.

FREELANCE WRITER

Writes for publications on an assignment basis for a negotiated fee, usually after submittal of a query letter proposing ideas for articles or stories. Typically works as an independent contractor.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES ANALYST

Writes manuals on internal operating procedures and policies. Works for employers in all fields.

PUBLICATIONS RESEARCHER

Researches story and script ideas; maintains research files on topics and people, checks stories for accuracy. Works for newspaper, magazine, or book publishers.

RADIO/TELEVISION COPYWRITER

Writes and rewrites scripts for broadcast media. Entry-level posts are available in news departments.

RADIO/TELEVISION RESEARCHER

Researches story and script ideas for broadcast media. Maintains research files on topics and people; checks stories for accuracy. Works for radio and television producers.

REPORTER/STAFF WRITER

Works and writes for a publication on a regular basis. Usually works under pressure of deadlines on general assignments before specializing in a particular area. In addition to newspapers and magazines, employers include corporations and agencies with in-house newsletters.

SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Instructs high school and junior high school students in specialized subject areas. Most secondary school teachers teach several courses in a single subject area. Public schools generally require certification; private schools typically do not.

SPECIAL PROGRAM TEACHERS

Instructs students enrolled in special education programs. Settings (e.g., churches, social service agencies) and topics (e.g., vocational training, preschool Head Start, drug-abuse prevention) vary widely.

TECHNICAL EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Edits and proofreads material prepared by technical writers. Typically requires less technical expertise than technical writing does. Primarily employed by high-tech companies.

TECHNICAL WRITER

Researches, writes and edits publications that communicate scientific technical information to readers with no technical background. Employers include corporations, professional associations, and government agencies.

USER DOCUMENTATION WRITER

Writes instructional manuals for computer users. Works for manufacturers of computer hardware and software. May require limited technical background.

LESS DIRECT Career Options

The fit between the academic training in English and the job skills is still very close. However, knowledge of English may be less pertinent to these positions, and a degree in English itself may or may not serve as a credential for employment.

BIOMEDICAL/MEDICAL RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Follows detailed instructions and prescribed procedures to assist in laboratory research. Keeps records, writes reports, often conducts library research. Works in hospitals, clinics, colleges and universities, research institutes, and private industry.

CONSULTING OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATOR

Furnishes support services for consultants. Coordinates travel arrangements, proofreads and edits reports, develops charts and graphs to illustrate findings, maintains and operates audiovisual equipment for presentations, organizes resource libraries, etc. Works for consulting firms.

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

Handles customer relations, usually through direct contact with customers or clients. Researches and responds to complaints and informational inquiries, seeking both to meet the customers' needs and promote the image and reputation of the employer. Works for manufacturers, retailers, service industries, and social service organizations.

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER

Creates new educational methods and materials; assesses the effectiveness of existing methods and materials. Employers include school districts, private schools, manufacturers of educational equipment, educational publishers, and national testing organizations.

ENERGY COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Handles community relations and functions as liaison regarding work with six major types of energy: oil and gas, coal, hydroelectric, nuclear, solar, and "alternatives" such as wind, tide, and geothermal. Works for producers, government agencies, consulting firms, and lobbying groups.

ENERGY RESEARCHER

Researches a variety of issues involved in working with six major types of energy: oil and gas, coal, hydroelectric, nuclear, solar, and "alternatives" such as wind, tide, and geothermal. Works for producers, government agencies, consulting firms, and lobbying groups.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Conducts community relations and liaison work regarding environmental issues in fields such as: earth, marine, and atmospheric sciences; mining; forestry; public works; and parks, wildlife, and water management. Works for government agencies, consulting firms, citizens' groups, research laboratories, scientific associations, and industry.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCHER

Researches, develops, and presents information regarding environmental issues in fields such as: earth, marine, and atmospheric sciences; mining; forestry; public works; and parks, wildlife, and water management. Works for government agencies, consulting firms, citizens' groups, research laboratories, scientific associations, and industry.

FINANCIAL RESEARCHER

Compiles statistical reviews and forecasts. Maintains and reviews financial literature and records regarding departments, industries, and possible transactions. Works for corporations, financial institutions. Usually requires relevant coursework.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Does historical analysis; studies policy issues; prepares analytical reports; coordinates interdisciplinary studies. Works for "think tanks", universities, public research agencies.

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER/HISTORIAN

Writes institutional and policy histories; researches and reports on current issues, long-range trends; edits public records, manages archives. Works for executive, legislative, and judicial agencies, international institutions, military services, cultural agencies, planning agencies, public archives and libraries, private industries and corporations.

LABOR RELATIONS RESEARCHER

Assists labor relations specialists with detailed research required for contract negotiations. Prepares advisory reports on union-management agreements. Works for unions, unionized employers, and government arbitrators.

LEGISLATIVE AIDE

Performs research, writing and liaison functions for a state or U.S. senator or congressional representative or for a municipal officer holder. Positions typically secured through direct contact with officeholder.

LOBBYING RESEARCHER

Identifies information that can be used to support the positions and the efforts of lobbyists. Involves library research, attendance at conferences and committee meetings, and writing of reports. Employers include a diversity of special and public interest groups as well as professional lobbyists.

MARKET RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Undertakes the preliminary research for a market study, gathering data concerning competitors' products, organizing existing sales records, etc. Also assists in writing final project reports. Works for market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

PUBLIC RELATIONS/PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALIST

Assesses the public relations needs of an organization, and plans and implements programs to meet them. Distinct from advertising. Makes public appearances, produces special events, and prepares press releases and packets to generate favorable free publicity. Works for professional agencies, for businesses of all kinds, and for nonprofit and social service organizations.

PUBLICATIONS MARKETING REPRESENTATIVE

Conducts market research, advertises and sells books, and exposes authors to the public. Works for book publishers.

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Assists researchers in collecting and analyzing data, observing and interviewing people, surveying appropriate literature, and writing reports in order to advise or inform a client. Works for research and consulting firms.

SURVEY ASSISTANT

Assists in the design of survey interviews and questionnaires, the interviewing of subjects, the management of interviewers, collection and analysis of data, and documentation and presentation of findings. Works for government agencies and private surveying and market research organizations.

URBAN PLANNING RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Under the supervision of a city or regional planner, conducts research into the economic, environmental, and social consequences of development in order to support strategies for appropriate growth and renovation of rural, suburban, or urban areas. Typically works for a government agency. May work for a consulting or architectural firm.

INDIRECT Career Options

At first glance, the jobs listed may not appear to have much to do with the study of English. Yet there is a connection. The primary skills required in these jobs overlap substantially with some of the skills an English major normally acquires. For instance, a Public Affairs Coordinator will use communications skills to promote programs, and most advertising support functions require excellent writing.

ACADEMIC ADVISOR/ADVISOR COUNSELOR

Advises students at all levels on selection of courses and majors. Sometimes involves career counseling. Sometimes requires certification.

ACTOR

Numerous alternatives to paid work on stage and in film (which can be difficult to find): commercials, voice-overs, modeling, educational audio and video tapes, radio and television programming of all kinds, and performing arts administration.

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT ASSISTANT

Assists Account Executive in liaison between an ad agency and its clients. Helps to coordinate and manage advertising campaigns based on client needs.

ADVERTISING MEDIA PLANNER

Determines the most cost-effective means of reaching a target market via print and broadcast media. Researches demographics of different media outlets, and analyzes demographic and budgetary aspects of advertising proposals.

AIRLINE CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

Executes reservations, ticketing, telephone and direct ticket sales, passenger ticketing and boarding. Also responds to complaints and requests for information.

ARCHIVIST/HISTORIAN

Accesses and organizes records and documents; conducts historical research to verify authenticity and significance of historical material. Conducts tours, presents lectures on historical topics. Works for libraries, historical museums, historical sites.

ALUMNI AFFAIRS COORDINATOR

Produces educational programs, social events, and special tours for alumni; writes alumni publications; coordinates fund raising and reunion activities. Works for college and university alumni affairs offices.

ASSOCIATE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR

Assists Contract Administrators in preparation of proposals and in negotiation and administration of contracts with government agencies. Works for companies selling products or services to the government.

CAREER PLANNING AND PLACEMENT COUNSELOR

Assists individuals in setting and implementing career and job-search goals, teaches decision-making and job-search skills, networks among employers for interviewing opportunities and internships, develops related library resources. Employers include private firms and universities and colleges.

CIRCULATION ASSISTANT

Distributes publications through various means including subscriptions. Seeks to increase circulation through market studies, promotions, and ad campaigns. Works for newspapers and magazines.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER

Recruits and selects prospective students, creates promotional materials, makes presentations on and off campus, sets admissions criteria, reviews applications, and communicates with applicants.

COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

Creates and implements programs to raise funds for a college or university through corporate and alumni contributions.

COORDINATOR OF VOLUNTEERS

Recruits, trains, assigns, and directs volunteers to provide services to an employer's constituency or clientele. Acts as a liaison with professional staff to coordinate volunteer assignments, organizes programs for training and recognition of volunteers, carries out related administrative duties. Works primarily for service organizations such as hospitals, social service agencies, and cultural institutions.

CUSTOMER TRAINING SPECIALIST

Teaches customers to use a product. Assists in development of course materials and coordinates the use of training facilities and equipment. Works primarily for high-tech manufacturers and retailers.

EDUCATIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Sells books, audiovisual materials, special equipment, and computer hardware and software. May sell directly to teachers, administrators, and coaches or indirectly to purchasing offices or distributors. Works for schools and for manufacturers and distributors of educational materials.

FILM PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Under supervision of directors and producers, arranges and coordinates rehearsals and filming. Arranges for props and sets, book rehearsal space, schedules travel, edits and distributes scripts, etc. Relevant coursework or prior experience preferred. Works for entertainment, documentary, educational, and industrial film producers.

FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

Works in foreign service posts to represent and administer United States embassies and various foreign service programs. Requires testing and security clearance.

GENEALOGICAL SERVICES SPECIALIST

Researches genealogies, family and community histories. Writes, edits, publishes. Markets genealogical services. Works for private genealogical services firms.

GRAPHIC ARTS DESIGNER

Generates and supervises the execution of the overall design idea or "look" of advertisements or other graphic arts projects. May not personally draw or paint. Works for ad agencies, retailers, book, magazine, and newspaper publishers.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Organizational administration; analyzes, preserves, displays, and interprets historical material; publicizes programs; researches and produces presentations and exhibits. Works for museums of history and for historical exhibition projects.

HISTORICAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR

May perform diverse duties: editing, preservation, research, writing, media presentations. Often also manages and budgets for project activities, administers grants. Employers include universities, historical societies, foundations, government agencies, etc.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Assists in management of historical resources and personnel, provides services and information to the public and to scholars; promotes interest in history; edits publications; provides a forum for historical meetings and activities. Works for private historical societies, professional associations, and government historical commissions.

HOTEL HOSPITALITY REPRESENTATIVE

Solicits business and programs on behalf of a hotel or conference center, coordinates the catering and support services necessary to accommodate the particular needs of a client or program.

HOUSING AND STUDENT LIFE COORDINATOR

Administers housing services and produces special programs to promote positive interaction on campus. Works for universities and colleges.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

Researches and analyzes a diversity of geopolitical issues on behalf of the government. Employed by intelligence services such as the F.B.I., the C.I.A., the National Security Agency, and military intelligence agencies. Work requires testing and security clearance.

INVESTMENT BANKING ANALYST TRAINEE

Completes basic research required for investment banking transactions between institutions with long-term capital needs and major investors. Researches both broad industries and the specific financial status of particular institutions, and prepares documents and reports for staff and clients.

JUDICIAL CLERK

Performs clerical duties, schedules calendars, keeps records, and does research for federal, state, and local courts and judges.

LIBRARY AIDE

Administers school, corporate, or public library facilities. Jobs in technical and user services. Technical services deal with acquiring and preparing materials. User services deal directly with people using library facilities.

LOBBYING ORGANIZER

Distributes materials and disseminates information about a particular issue or organization, recruits volunteers, solicits funds, and organizes such efforts as rallies, letter-writing campaigns, and voter registration drives. Employers include special and public interest groups as well as professional lobbyists.

MANUFACTURER'S CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR

Administers contracts with suppliers of raw materials and parts required to manufacture products. May be involved in writing agreements, as well as coordinating timely delivery of materials.

MARKET RESEARCH ASSISTANT ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Assists Account Executive in liaison with clients and helps to coordinate studies. Studies include analysis of sales record, surveying attitudes and opinions, and test marketing. Positions exist in market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturing, and retailing.

MARKET RESEARCH PROJECT SUPERVISOR

Under direction of an Account Executive, coordinates the efforts of interviewers, tabulators, and coders in conducting a market research study. Employers include market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

PARALEGAL

Performs preparatory work required to research a case, develops documentation required to write a brief. May interview prospective witnesses. Works for private law offices, law firms, prosecutors, and public defenders.

POLITICAL CAMPAIGN WORKER

Assists in planning, fund raising, research, writing issue statements, canvassing, and assessing voter attitudes. Works for candidates or interest groups during political election campaigns. Frequently leads to permanent positions with political organizations or officeholders.

PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Teaches basic academic and social skills to young children. Often teaches a variety of subjects to a single class or grade level. Public schools generally require certification; private schools typically do not.

PUBLICATIONS ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE

Develops rate structures and campaigns to solicit advertising for newspapers and magazines. Assists advertisers in creation and placement of ads.

PRESS OPERATOR

Operates a printing press. Prints materials ranging from books and magazines to posters and brochures. Requires on-the-job technical training. Works for printers.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS COORDINATOR

Creates, implements, and coordinates a service to a community. May involve fund raising for a charity, overseeing a scholarship fund, operating a service-oriented program or facility, etc. Employers include nonprofit organizations, social service agencies, and the public affairs sections of commercial businesses.

PUBLICATIONS DESIGN AND LAYOUT ASSISTANT

Using graphic design and layout skills, produces visually appealing publications as economically as possible. Works for publishers of books, magazines, and newspapers.

RADIO/TELEVISION PROGRAM ASSISTANT

Works with directors and producers to arrange for props and sets, to distribute and edit scripts, to schedule and supervise rehearsals, and to carry out other support functions for broadcast productions. Works for radio and television producers.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES ADVISOR

Administers various activities for college students, usually extracurricular. Positions include fraternity/sorority advisor, disciplinary advisor, foreign student advisor, student publications advisor, and so forth.

STUDENT UNION COORDINATOR

Operates facilities and furnishes services for students through a college union or student center. Includes bookstore management, conference and special classes coordination, food services, and recreational services.

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