What Can I Do With A Degree In English?

WRITING/EDITING

Areas
- Creative Writing
- Novels: Fiction and Nonfiction
- Poetry
- Plays
- Screenplays
- Scripts
- Greeting Cards
- Lyrics/Jingle Writing
- Journalism
- Writing/Reporting
- Editing
- Critique
- Freelance Writing

Employers
- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Broadcast media companies including television, radio, and the movie industry
- Trade, professional, or consumer publications
- Internet sites
- Large corporations
- Government agencies including:
  - Department of Homeland Security
  - Department of Defense
  - Department of State
  - Veterans Affairs
  - National Archives and Records Administration
  - Universities and university presses
Technical industries
Self-employed/Freelance

Information/Strategies
- Select elective coursework in a particular area of interest.
- Write for campus publications such as college newspapers, magazines, or departmental or program newsletters.
- Volunteer to assist or tutor students in a writing center.
- Become familiar with the proposal writing and submission process involved in freelance writing.
- Gain as much experience as possible through volunteer positions, internships, or part-time jobs.
- Demonstrate patience and persistence in starting a career in creative writing.

TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Areas
- Technical Writing and Editing
- Science and Medical Writing
- Grant and Proposal Writing
- Software and Hardware Documentation
- Information Technology Writing
- Human-Computer Interface Design
- Corporate Communications and Training
- Mechanical Communication

Employers
- Management, scientific, and technical consulting companies
- Technical industries
- Retailers including electronics
- Engineering firms
- Healthcare industry
- Computer systems design companies
- Software publishers
- Self-employed/Freelance

Information/Strategies
- Earn a bachelor’s degree with a focus in English, communication, or journalism. Complete coursework in technical communications.
- Minor or take classes in science and/or computer science to learn about technical areas and trends.
- Gain experience in a specialized field such as engineering, medicine, science, web design, or computer software.
- Develop strong grammar and language skills, including a second-language.
- Obtain volunteer or internship experience as a research assistant in a technical information department.

PUBLISHING

Areas
- Editing
- Advertising
- Sales
- Circulation
- Production
- Publicity
- Marketing
- Promotion
- Administration

Employers
- Trade publishing
- Special interest magazines
● Trade magazines
● Association magazines
● Sunday newspaper supplements
● Educational publishing
● Religious books and magazines
● Professional and scholarly publishing
● University presses
● Independent publishers
● Alternative media publishers including:
  ● E-books
  ● Audiobooks

**Information/Strategies**

● Obtain an internship in the publishing industry.
● Participate in a summer publishing institute.
● Develop word processing, editing, and desktop publishing skills; build additional technical skills if working in an online environment.
● Gain experience by writing for student publications such as the newspaper, creative writing magazines, the yearbook, etc.
● Conduct an informational interview with or shadow a professional in the publishing industry.
● Look for positions with local dailies and alternative weeklies in the community.
● Volunteer to write or edit publications with local nonprofit organizations to gain experience.
● Develop extensive grammar and language skills.
● Be prepared to relocate to cities with a publishing presence. A large majority of opportunities exist in New York City.
● Research the publishing industry to learn more about career ladders.

**EDUCATION**

**Areas**

● Teaching
● Administration
● Higher Education Administration:
  ● Admissions
  ● Financial Aid
  ● Academic Advising and Support Services
  ● Development
  ● Alumni Affairs
  ● International Education and Study Abroad
  ● Student Affairs, e.g. Residence Life, Student Activities, Orientation, Leadership, Greek Life, Multicultural Affairs
● Information/Library Science
● Non-classroom Teaching
● English as a Second Language (ESL)
● Research
● Tutoring

**Employers**

● Public and private K-12 schools
● Colleges and universities
● Language institutes, local and abroad
● Libraries
● Museums
● Private learning centers
● Test preparation organizations
● Nonprofit organizations involved with literacy

**Information/Strategies**

● Obtain appropriate state certification for public school teaching. Gain certifications to teach multiple subjects or age groups for increased job opportunities.
Earn a master’s or doctorate degree for postsecondary teaching.
Maintain a high grade point average and secure strong faculty recommendations for graduate school.
Plan to attend graduate school in college student personnel or information science for those fields.
Seek volunteer experiences working with children through Big Brother/Sister programs, tutoring, summer camps, YMCA’s, etc.
Participate in activities such as debate or literary clubs, campus publications, or student government.
Get involved in roles of leadership such as resident advisor, peer mentor, student advisor, etc.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Areas
- Account Coordination
- Writing/Editing
- Media Relations
- Social Media
- Account Management
- Fundraising
- Research

Employers
- Public relations firms
- Advertising agencies
- In-house public relations departments
- Trade associations
- Colleges and universities
- Nonprofit organizations
- Government agencies

Information/Strategies
- Obtain internship or other relevant work experience to break into this field.

ADVERTISING

Areas
- Creative Services
- Copy Writing
- Art Direction
- Web Page Design
- Account Management
- Media
- Account Planning
- Production

Employers
- Advertising agencies
- In-house agencies of large companies

Information/Strategies
- Demonstrate talent, persistence, assertiveness, and enthusiasm.
- Be prepared to start in an entry-level position.
- Obtain strong statistics background for market research positions.
- Create a portfolio of writing showing originality and imagination for creative positions.
- Gain knowledge of various media, contemporary tastes, and trends.
- Obtain experience with campus newspaper, TV, or radio.
- Participate in sales and promotions for student organizations or private businesses.
- Complete an internship in a market research firm or advertising agency.
- Supplement curriculum with courses in advertising, communications, business, art, or graphic design.
• Be prepared to start at the bottom and work towards higher levels.
• Develop strong research skills, public speaking ability, enthusiasm, and interpersonal skills.
• Supplement curriculum with business courses.
• Become an effective team member by working on group projects for campus organizations.
• Volunteer to write publications for nonprofit or student organizations.

BUSINESS

Areas
• Management
• Customer Service
• Sales and Marketing
• Human Resources
• Insurance
• Claims
• Underwriting

Employers
• Business organizations including banks, real estate agencies, insurance firms, and large and small corporations
• Retailers including department, grocery, drug, specialty, variety, and book stores

Information/Strategies
• Obtain a business minor.
• Gain relevant experience through part-time jobs, internships, or volunteer work.
• Secure leadership roles in campus organizations and student professional associations.
• Seek experience as a financial officer or treasurer of a campus organization.
• Develop strong analytical and computer skills.

LAW

Areas
• Law Assistance
• Prosecution
• Defense
• Contractual
• Corporate
• Nonprofit or Public Interest
• Government
• Mediation
• Lobbying

Employers
• Law firms
• Government agencies
• State and local government
• Corporations
• Public interest organizations
• Private practice
• Colleges and universities

Information/Strategies
• Participate in a debate or forensic team to hone communication skills.
• Develop strong research skills and attention to detail.
• Take courses in and gain experience with mediation and conflict resolution.
• Get involved with pre-law organizations.
• Obtain a summer or part-time job in a law firm.
• Plan to shadow an attorney to learn more about the field and various specialties.
• Complete special training requirements for paralegal positions.
• Attend law school and earn a JD to become an attorney.
Maintain an excellent GPA and secure strong faculty recommendations to gain law school admittance. Plan to take the LSAT.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

- A bachelor’s degree in English is very broad and is sufficient for entry level positions in business and industry, as well as in areas such as entertainment, radio and television commentary, and museum work. Because English can lead to many different career paths, it is important to identify an area of interest and be planful about gaining the right skills, experience, and credentials to enter that field.
- A major in English is also good preparation for continued graduate or professional training in areas such as English, law, political science/government, public administration, communications, religious studies (e.g. seminary).
- Be proactive, determined, assertive, and confident in order to secure freelance writing opportunities. Writers typically experience many rejections for each piece that is accepted for publication. Save samples of written work to be used for a portfolio. Cultivate other career opportunities in order to supplement a freelance writing income.
- Obtain additional areas of expertise such as journalism, broadcasting, technical writing, or politics for specialized positions.
- Conduct informational interviews or shadow professionals in careers of interest to learn more about their jobs.
- Join relevant professional associations. Attend their conferences and read their journals.

**Careers in English**

- The Riley Guide
  www.rileyguide.com
- The Write Jobs
  www.writejobs.com
- Writing/Editing
  www.SunOasis.com
- English as a Second Language
  www.esl.about.com/blcareer.htm
- Magazine Publishers of America
  www.magazine.org
- Glossary of Writing Careers
  www.poewar.com/glossary-of-writing-careers/
- Writers & Editors,
  stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos089.htm

**Career Exploration**

- Stanford
  studentaffairs.stanford.edu/cdc/research/intl-travel-writing
- UC Berkeley
  career.berkeley.edu/Infolab/CareerFields.stm
- Guides for Specific Careers
  www.jobstar.org/tools/career/spec-car.cfm
- Job Web
  www.jobweb.com/
- Top Ten Jobs for People Who
  www.princetonreview.com/cte/articles/plan/tenjobs.asp
- College Journal from the Wall Street Journal
  www.collegejournal.com
Career Journal from the Wall Street Journal
www.careerjournal.com

Occupational Outlook Handbook
www.bls.gov/oco/

The Job Hunters Bible
www.jobhuntersbible.com/

O’Net
online.onetcenter.org

**Exploring Majors**

Kansas State University
www.k-state.edu/acic/majorin/english.htm

University of Manitoba
www.umanitoba.ca/counselling/careers.html

University of Tennessee
career.utk.edu/students/majors.asp

University of Delaware
www.udel.edu/CSC/mrk.html

MonsterTrak.com
content.monstertrak.monster.com/tools/careerconverter/

**Job Postings**

National Newspaper Association
nnaweb.org/

California Journalism Job Bank
www.csne.org/jobs/postings.html

Diversity Journalism Job Bank
www.newsjobs.com/

National Writers Union Job Hotline
www.nwu.org/hotline/

The Write Jobs
www.writejobs.com

Magazine Publishers of America
www.magazine.org/home/

**Professional Associations**

Associations and Societies
www.ntu.edu.sg/home/ctng/assoc.htm

Yahoo! Professional Organizations
www.yahoo.com/Economy/Organizations/Professional

Google.com
www.google.com

**Journalism**

American Journalism Review
www.ajr.org/

American Society of Journalist and Authors
www.asja.org/

National Newspaper Association
nnaweb.org/

American Society of Newspaper Editors
www.asne.org

Society of Professional Journalists
www.spj.org

Writers Guild of America
www.wga.org

Suburban Newspapers of America
www.suburban-news.org

Magazine Publishers of America
www.magazine.org/home/