

Jobs for English Majors

The English major is a very flexible major. The skills developed are applicable to a very wide range of jobs and careers. The following list is one developed from lists of most common jobs associated with English majors (and to some extent humanities majors in general). Keep in mind, though, that many other jobs and careers are open to English majors. Also, depending on the job/career, some coursework specialization and/or education beyond the BA might be required. You'll notice writing and research skills are often mentioned in the following descriptions, and these skills are an emphasis of work towards an English major.

Teaching: The English major is often a good choice for those preparing to teach K-12, and with advanced degrees, at the college or university level.

Journalism: This includes reporting for print, television or online.

Editing/Publishing: Working for book or magazine publishers requires good writing skills in many capacities in those businesses. Online periodicals or news/information sites are on the increase as well, requiring similar skills as the print media.

Advertising/Marketing: From writing copy for classified ads, to writing for television or radio commercials, to researching to support marketing strategies, there many jobs for English majors in advertising.

Researcher/Analyst: Many businesses, government offices, and organizations need people to research issues, analyze information, and write up results.

Sales: Sales is obviously a very broad category. Though selling to individual consumers is one form of selling, it often requires little education. However, businesses often sell to other businesses or to the government, and these sales careers require people with excellent written and oral communication skills along with some management capabilities that require some education.

Lobbyist: Like in sales, businesses, organizations and interest groups need people who can understand complex issues and articulate positions in written and oral formats.

Communication Officer: A wide range of employers have need of people who can communicate the business or organization's message in print, in person and online.

Grant Writer: Businesses, organizations, educational institutions, etc. compete for funds from foundations and government agencies through grant proposals. Grant writers must be able to research and write effective proposals.

Event Planner: All sorts of business and organizations need those who can organize complex events, and this requires not only great organizational ability, but also strong oral and written communication skills, some management skills as well as research skills.

Law: The reading, writing, and critical thinking skills developed by the English major are great preparation for law school. Though some colleges offer pre-law majors, many do not, so those preparing to become lawyers will need a bachelor's degree in some other major. Other majors, like philosophy, can also be good preparation.

The following info sheets might be of interest as well:

Why Employers Hire English Majors

How to Make the Most of Your College Years as an English Major

What Do I Say To People Who Tell Me I Won't Get A Good Job With An English Major?