Technology
Section 2 Career Exploration
Dental Hygienists

Background:

Dental hygienists perform a wide variety of duties. During a typical appointment with one patient, a hygienist might take dental X rays, remove deposits from the teeth, apply fluoride or sealant to the teeth, and discuss oral hygiene. Dental hygienists work closely with dentists, most often in dental offices. Many hygienists work flexible, part-time schedules. Nearly all states require dental hygienists to be licensed. To be eligible for such a license, dental hygienists must graduate from a recognized training program. This program is most often a two-year course of study, resulting in an associate’s degree. Bachelor’s and master’s degrees are also offered, for students who wish to pursue them.

Answer the following questions using information from these Web sites:

www.ada.org/education.aspx—Click on and read the brochure and the fact sheet for dental hygienists.

www.stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos097.htm

Activity Questions:

1. Write a short paragraph describing the nature of this work.

2. What schooling and training are necessary for a career as a dental hygienist?

3. What skills and talents would be necessary for success in this job?

4. What courses might be taken now to prepare for a career as dental hygienist?
5. What is the job outlook for dental hygienists?

6. Is this a career that interests you? Why or why not?

7. Most dental hygienists have associate’s degrees. What would be the advantage of pursuing a bachelor’s or master’s degree in dental hygiene?