

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

Compiled by the staff at the SUNY Oneonta Career Development Center

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the wonderful world of English! This major is what we call a functional major, which means that college graduates with this major could use it in many fields. The English major uses analytical approaches to examine language, literature, cultural studies and writing. With the English major you can acquire many jobs such as a teacher, journalist and public information specialist. The employers of English majors come in a very wide range. There are many options like magazines, newspapers, colleges and universities. The employer market for English majors is endless. Majoring in English provides a background for further study in law, journalism, and radio or television communications.

“The best teachers teach from the heart, not from the book.” Author Unknown

## **Functional Skill Set for English Majors**

- Background of influencing knowledge
- High proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking
- Comprehensive command of grammar and vocabulary
- Good listening, clarifying, questioning, and responding skills
- Ability to conduct and clearly explain research results
- Ability to read Analytically
- Capacity to work well under pressure
- Ability to make keen observations and appropriate decisions
- Ability to concentrate for long periods of time

## Related Career Titles for English Majors

- Account Executive
- Actor/Actress
- Administrative Assistant
- Administrator
- Advertising Copywriter
- Analyst
- Artist
- Assistant Scientific Writer
- Attorney
- Author-Fiction Non-Fiction
- Bank Officer
- Biographer
- Book Critic
- Book Store Manager
- Columnist
- Copy Editor
- Editor, Film/Video
- Editor, Magazine
- Editor, News
- Editor, Newspaper
- Editor, Publications
- Editorial Assistant
- Educator
- Educational Program Specialist
- Entertainment Agent
- Fashion Merchandiser
- Foreign Correspondent
- Freelance Writer/Consultant
- Journalist
- Librarian
- Literary Agent
- Loan Officer
- Lobbyist
- Magazine Writer
- Management Trainee
- Manuscript Reader
- Market Research
- Marketing Specialist
- Marketing Writer
- Mass Media
- Media Planner
- Media Specialist
- Narrator
- Novelist
- Publisher
- Reporter
- Teacher
- Technical Writer
- Speech Writer
- Writer

## Some Organizations that Typically Employ English Majors:

- Newspapers , magazines, broadcast media – script writing
- Trade, professional or consumer publications
- Advertising agencies, corporations, government agencies, colleges and universities
- Any organization or publication with technical focus or technical areas
- Public schools
- Private schools
- Colleges and universities
- Libraries
- Special interest magazines
- Associational and organizational magazines
- Sunday newspaper supplements
- Mass-market paperbacks
- Educational and professional books
- Religious books and magazines
- In-house agencies of large companies
- Public relations firms
- In-house public relations departments
- Trade associations
- Nonprofit organizations
- Law firms
- Corporate legal departments
- Public service agencies
- Commercial banks
- Regional banks
- Savings & Loan associations
- Credit unions
- Business organizations
- Department, grocery, drug, specialty and variety store chains
- Bookstores

## Start a Strategic Plan

### General:

Select a wide variety of electives.

Write for on-campus publications; develop speaking/debate skills; write and edit reports.

Obtain concentration in technical writing.

Take computer courses to gain knowledge about technical areas and trends.

### Teaching:

Gain volunteer experience with Big Brother/Sister program, tutoring, sports, summer camps, teen counseling, childcare centers for special populations.

Participate in school activities: debate, literary club, student publications and government, alumni and admissions work.

Obtain certification for public school teaching.

Obtain graduate degree for post-secondary teaching. Master's required to teach introductory courses. Doctorate required for full-time professorships.

### Publishing:

Participate in summer publishing institute.

Develop word processing and editing skills.

Work on student publications.

Demonstrate talent, persistence, assertiveness and enthusiasm; be prepared to start entry-level.

Obtain solid statistics background for research.

Create portfolio of writing/ideas showing originality and imagination for creative department.

Gain knowledge of various media, contemporary tastes and trends.

Obtain campus newspaper, TV or radio experience.

### Marketing:

Participate in student-run or personal business involving promotion and sales.

Find internship in market research firm.

Obtain internships/work experience to make yourself more marketable.

Develop strong research skills, public speaking ability, enthusiasm and good interpersonal skills.

Become an effective team worker by working on group projects for campus organizations.

Develop organizational skills and concern for detail.

### Law:

Become skillful in debate.

Organize campus events, speaker or political rallies.

Obtain summer or part-time work in law firm.

Specialty training required for paralegals.

Plan to attend law school to obtain Juris Doctor, the degree required for lawyers.

### Business:

Get a business minor.

Develop strong analytical and computer skills.

Obtain cashier, teller or clerical experience.

Gain experience as financial officer/treasurer in campus organization.

A business minor and technical writing experience is helpful.

Secure a leadership role in campus organization.

Join student professional associations.

## **Career Planning Web Sites and Job Websites for English Majors:**

Careers for English & English/Writing Arts Majors

<http://www.oswego.edu/student/career/index.html>

### **Professional Organizations and Associations for English Majors:**

American Society Magazine Editors

919 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave

New York NY 10022

Association of American Publishers (AAP)

71 Fifth Avenue

New York NY 10003-3004

<http://www.publishers.org>

(Has general information about the book publishing and marketing business)

Dow Jones Newspaper Fund

PO Box 300

Princeton, NJ 08543-0300

609-452-2820

<http://djnewspaperfund.dowjones.com/fund>

(Sponsors various internships and job placement assistance)

English in Action

16 E 69<sup>th</sup> St.

New York NY 10021

Magazine Publishers of America

919 Third Avenue, 22<sup>nd</sup> Floor

New York NY 10022

<http://www.magazine.org>

(Has information about magazine internships)

National Council of Teachers of English

111 W. Kenyon Rd.

Urbana IL 61801-1096

<http://www.ncte.org>

Society for Technical Communication

901 North Stuart Street, Suite 904

Arlington VA 22203-1822

703-522-4114 <http://stc.org>

(Publishes a salary survey and offers internships and student memberships)

Women in Scholarly Publishing  
2501 W. 15<sup>th</sup> St.  
Lawrence KS 66049-8350

American Society of Newspaper Editors  
Box 17004  
Washington DC 20041  
<http://www.asne.org>

Modern Language Association  
10 Astor Place  
New York NY 10003-6981  
<http://www.mla.org>

Women in Communications  
210 Wilson Blvd Suite 417  
Arlington VA 22201

American Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation  
The Newspaper Center  
PO Box 17407 Dulles International Airport  
Washington DC 20041  
*Ask for: Your Future in Daily Newspapers*

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association  
10801 Rockville Pike  
Rockville MD 20852

Dickinson College Counseling Center  
Carlisle PA 17013  
*Ask for: Career Areas for English Majors*

INTAC tape series, Northern Illinois University  
Phone: 815-753-0414 and ask for tape no. 838, English or tape no. 835, Communication  
Studies

International Association of Business Communicators  
870 Market Street Suite 940  
San Francisco CA 94102  
*Ask for: Business Communication as a Career*

## **Miscellaneous Websites for English Majors:**

The Write Jobs <http://www.writerswrite.com/jobs/jobs.htm>

Publisher's Weekly Online <http://www.publishersweekly.com/>