

Graphs and Charts

Analyzing Bar Graphs

**Skills for
LIFE**

Cindy's economics class has been discussing the importance of education in determining a person's weekly earnings. She noticed that median weekly earnings appeared to be directly related to educational attainment. Cindy prepared a bar graph depicting data for four years that shows the relationship between median weekly earnings and educational attainment. Follow the steps below to analyze the information Cindy illustrated.

- Identify the kind of information presented in the graph.** (a) What part of the illustration identifies the kind of information depicted? _____
 (b) What categories of educational attainment are shown on the graph? _____
 (c) In 1995, which group had the lowest median weekly earnings? _____
- Look for relationships among the data.** (a) Which of the groups received the smallest increase in earnings over the four-year period? _____
 (b) How would you describe the change in median weekly earnings from 1994 to 1995 for people with less than four years of high school? _____
 (c) In 1997, which was greater, the difference between the median weekly earnings of someone with four years or more of college and someone with four years of high school, or between someone with four years of high school and someone with less than four years of high school? _____
- Use the graph to draw conclusions.** Over the period of time shown in the bar graph, median weekly earnings for each of these groups remained relatively stable.
 (a) What general observations can you draw about the economy based on this information? _____
 (b) Consider the differences in median weekly earnings over the four-year period. Do you believe that the differences in earnings relative to educational attainment are increasing or decreasing? Why? _____

