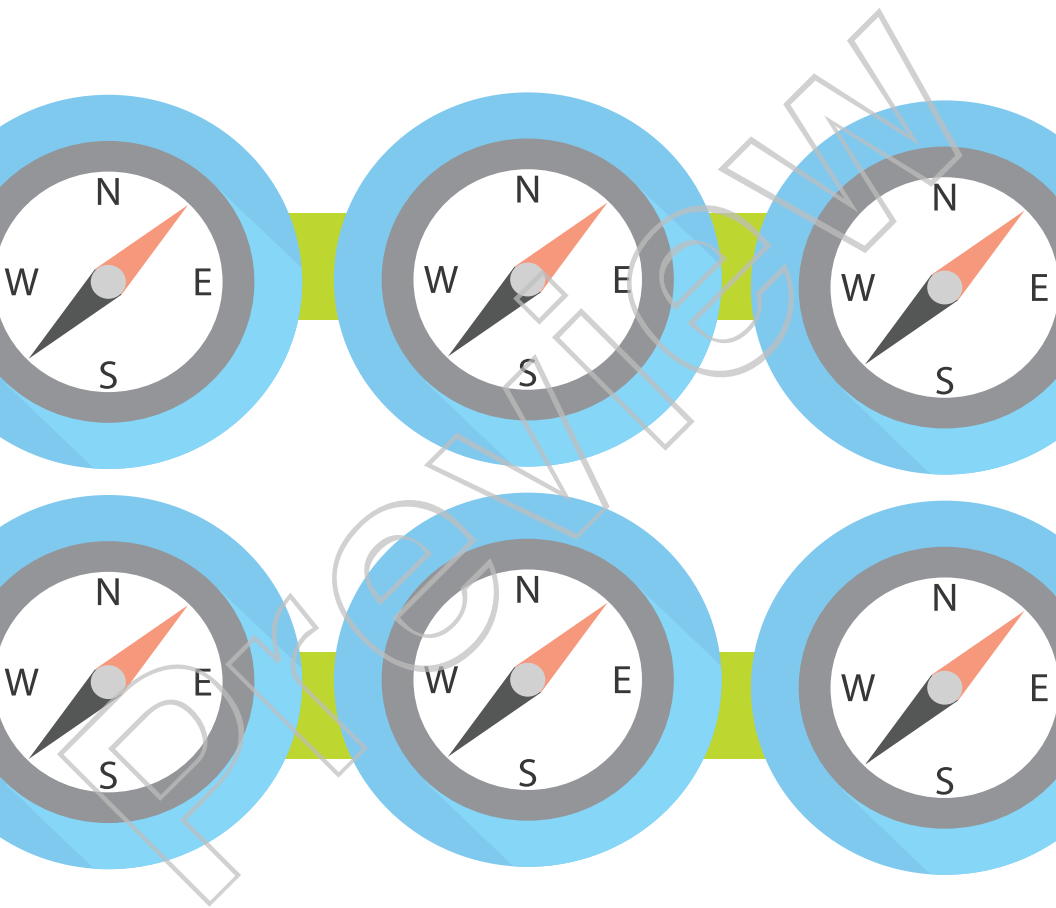


# Interests, Abilities & Values

## Career Exploration Activity Book



Activities to help you think about what you like, what you're good at, and what's important to you

# Your Interests

When you're thinking about a career, it's very important that you consider your interests. You want to make sure that the things you do as part of your career are activities you like and enjoy.

Go through each of the following questions. Take your time and think about your responses.

1. Imagine that you're at summer camp and every camper is given a job to do. Look over the jobs listed below and put a ✓ by the three jobs you would most like to have. Put an X by any job you would not want. Skip those you feel neutral about.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen helper       | <input type="checkbox"/> Social committee member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Office assistant     | <input type="checkbox"/> Camp greeter            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First aid helper     | <input type="checkbox"/> Child care helper       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds crew worker  | <input type="checkbox"/> Choir member            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift shop helper     | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer assistant      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Painting crew worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance crew worker |

2. A huge storm destroys the camp! Every camper has to help get things up and running again. Look over the list below and put a ✓ by the three jobs you would most like to have. Put an X by any job you wouldn't want. Skip those you feel neutral about.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fix the tents             | <input type="checkbox"/> Repair the camp sailboats       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help out with the injured | <input type="checkbox"/> Write a report on what happened |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare meals             | <input type="checkbox"/> Help fix the computers          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plan a social activity    | <input type="checkbox"/> Comfort the younger campers     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Run the emergency radio   | <input type="checkbox"/> Help organize the work schedule |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organize supplies         | <input type="checkbox"/> Study the storm damaged areas   |

3. Name two or more hobbies you enjoy.

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4. Some people enjoy working with and helping other people. Some would rather work with things like objects or tools, while others prefer working with information and doing desk-type activities.

**What about you?** Would you prefer a career in which you work with people, things, or information?

People       Things       Information

Think about the one you checked. Why did you make that choice?

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## Think About It!

Look at your responses to the previous four questions. Do you see any similarities with regard to the types of activities you're drawn to?

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When thinking about your interests, it's also important to be aware of the things you don't enjoy. Do your responses indicate certain types of activities that you wouldn't want to do in a career?

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# Your Abilities

Considering your abilities, skills, and talents is very important when determining which careers will be a good match for you. You are likely to be much happier and successful in a career that focuses on your strengths!

1. What two school subjects do you like and do well in?

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2. Name two things that you're good at.

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3. Name two things you'd like to get better at.

---

4. Below is a list of things you may have to do at a job. Put a ✓ in the boxes next to the tasks you think you'd be good at. Put a ? in the boxes next to the tasks you aren't sure you'd be good at, but would like to try. Put an X next to the tasks you don't think you'd be very good at.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make presentations | <input type="checkbox"/> Work in teams        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work on a computer | <input type="checkbox"/> Work independently   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be creative        | <input type="checkbox"/> Work with your hands |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work with money    | <input type="checkbox"/> Write reports        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organize events    | <input type="checkbox"/> Do math              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Train/teach others | <input type="checkbox"/> Help customers       |

5. Below is a list of soft skills. These are characteristics, skills, and abilities that all employers value in their employees. *Having the following soft skills will help you succeed in any career!*

Think about your soft skills and put a ✓ in the boxes of your strongest soft skills. Put an X in the boxes of the ones you should work on.

- Communication
- Creativity
- Teamwork
- Adaptability
- Conflict resolution
- Leadership

- Work ethic
- Positive attitude
- Problem solving
- Organization
- Willingness to learn
- Integrity

## Think About It!

Look at the soft skills you marked with an X, and choose one to work on. Which one did you choose, and what will you do to help develop this skill?

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6. List four of your classes and/or activities that are helping you develop skills you might use in a career one day. What skills are they helping you develop?

For example - Language Arts - Writing skills, creativity

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# Your Values

Your values are what's important to you. They are the things that make a career or job meaningful and worthwhile to you.

Go through the list below and rate how important each one is to you in a career.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
1. Make good money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have ideal work hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Work inside	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Have work that's creative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Work independently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Have job security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Have exciting work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Be in charge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Work with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Work outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Make a difference	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Have opportunities for advancement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Which of the above values are most important to you? Why?

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# Careers by Subject Area

Think about the responses you've made regarding your interests, abilities, and values, and consider which of the following careers might be a good match for you. Circle any career you'd like to learn more about.

## English

Actor/actress  
Administrative asst.  
Broadcaster  
Court Reporter  
Editor  
Journalist  
Lawyer  
Librarian  
Minister/priest/rabbi  
Paralegal  
Public Relations Specialist  
Reporter  
Salesperson  
Speech pathologist  
Teacher/professor  
Writer/author

## The Arts

Actor/actress  
Architect  
Artist  
Art therapist  
Commercial artist  
Composer  
Dancer/choreographer  
Fashion designer  
Floral designer  
Graphic artist  
Illustrator  
Interior designer  
Landscape architect  
Musician  
Photographer  
Sound engineer  
Teacher/professor  
Web developer

## Foreign Language

Flight attendant  
Interpreter  
Nurse  
Peace Corps worker  
Social worker  
Teacher/professor  
Tour guide  
Translator  
Travel agent

## Math

Accountant  
Bank teller/manager  
Carpenter  
Computer programmer  
Electrician  
Engineer  
Financial planner  
Insurance agent  
Loan officer  
Real estate appraiser  
Statistician  
Stockbroker  
Surveyor  
Systems analyst  
Teacher/professor  
Tool and die maker  
Web developer

## Science

Athletic trainer  
Biologist  
Botanist  
Chemist  
Chiropractor  
Dental hygienist

## Science (cont.)

Dentist  
Engineer  
Environmentalist  
Forester  
Geologist  
Medical technician  
Meteorologist  
Nurse  
Optometrist  
Paramedic/EMT  
Pharmacist  
Physical therapist  
Physician  
Physicist  
Teacher/professor  
Veterinarian  
Zoologist

## Social Studies

Archaeologist  
Corrections officer  
Criminologist  
Economist  
Geographer  
Lawyer  
Lobbyist  
Minister/priest/rabbi  
Newscaster  
Paralegal  
Police officer  
Politician  
Psychologist  
Social worker  
Sociologist  
Teacher/professor  
Urban planner

# What's Next?

Once you've identified a few careers that might be a good match for you, learn as much as you can about them.

## Do some research.

Libraries, guidance/counseling offices, and bookstores have a variety of career resources, and there's a wealth of career information online.

The best place to start is the online edition of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* ([www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh)).

## Talk to people.

Speak with people who are knowledgeable about the career(s) you're interested in. Talk to your counselor and to teachers who teach related subjects. Also talk to your parents and family members about their careers. Ask them what they do, and about what they like and dislike about their career.

## Learn about your education choices.

Find out what kind of education is required for the careers you're interested in (e.g., 4-year college, 2-year college, career school). The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* ([www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh)) can help with this.

For more information on the different ways that you can prepare for a career, check out the following websites:

College information – visit [bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org)

Career/trade school information – visit [nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator](http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator)

Military information – visit [myfuture.com/military](http://myfuture.com/military)

Apprenticeship information – visit [dol.gov/apprenticeship](http://dol.gov/apprenticeship)

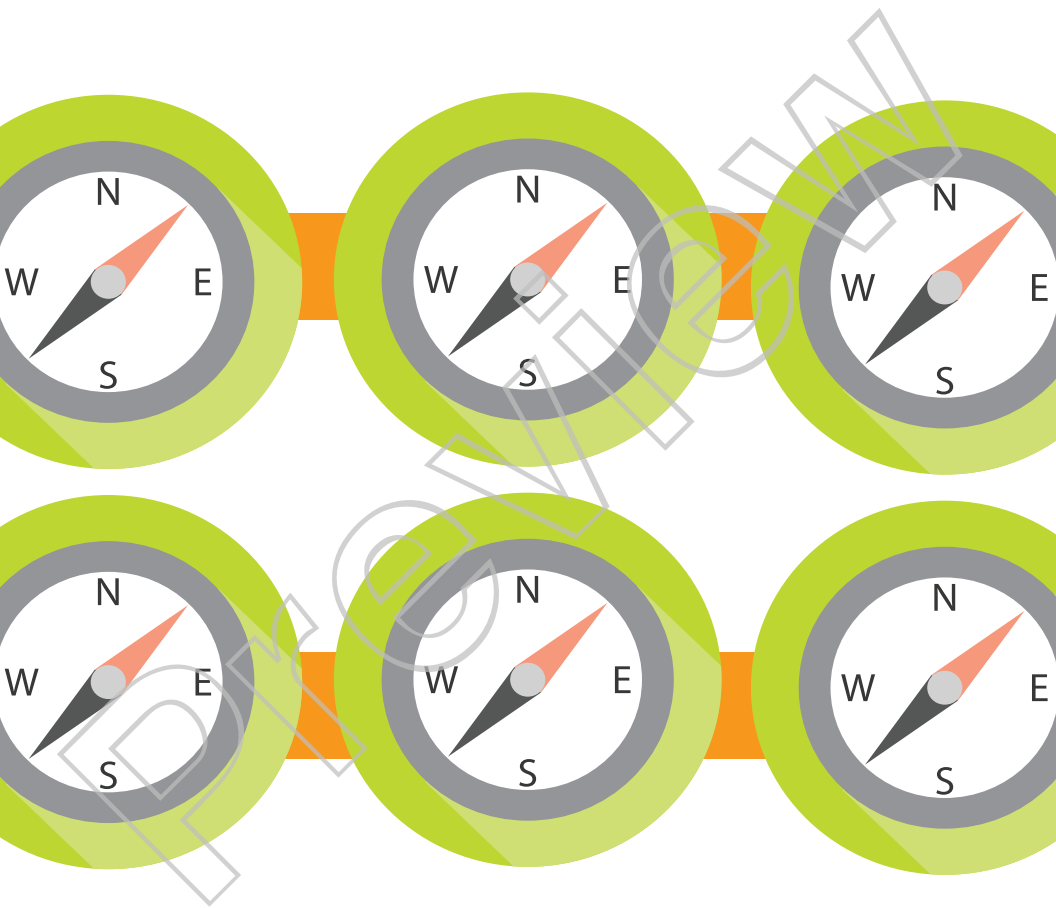
## FINAL WORDS

The best way to create a future that's bright and full of options is to get a good education. Work hard in school, get the best grades you can, and you will have a future that is full of possibilities!



# Learning About Careers

## Career Exploration Activity Book



Activities to help you learn about the types of careers out there so that you can choose the best one for you

# Getting Started

**It's never too early to be learning about your career options and to be thinking about which careers might be right for you.**

Deciding which careers to consider can be difficult. On one hand, there is you, a unique individual with specific interests, abilities, talents, and values. On the other hand are the hundreds of careers from which you can choose.

In order to find the careers that may be a good match for you, you need to think about what kinds of things you like to do, what you're good at, and what's important to you. You also need to learn as much as you can about your career choices. *This booklet will help you explore your career choices and determine which careers or career areas might be a good fit for you.*

## Careers by School Subject

**It's smart to consider careers related to your favorite school subject(s). These are often the careers you're likely to enjoy the most, and be the most successful at.**

What school subject do you like and do well in? \_\_\_\_\_

Name as many careers as you can related to that subject.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Which of these careers sound the most interesting to you?

\_\_\_\_\_

# Popular Careers

Below are some of the most popular careers. Circle three or more careers that you would like to learn more about.

Accountant	Computer Programmer	Musician	Reporter
Actor/Actress	Dental Hygienist	Nurse	Salesperson
Architect	Dentist	Paramedic	Secretary
Artist	Electrician	Pharmacist	Social Worker
Athletic Trainer	Engineer	Photographer	Stock Broker
Biologist	Fashion Designer	Physical Therapist	Systems Analyst
Broadcaster	Firefighter	Physician	Teacher
Carpenter	Flight Attendant	Police Officer	Truck Driver
Chemist	Lawyer	Politician	Veterinarian
Chiropractor	Medical Technician	Psychologist	Writer

Choose one career you circled (or another career you are interested in) and list four traits or skills you would need to be successful in that career.

**Career:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

## Fast Growing Career Fields

When considering a career, it's important to think about the job outlook. You need to know how easy it will be to find a job in that career field.

Why do you think each of these career fields is growing?

Health Care \_\_\_\_\_

STEM Careers \_\_\_\_\_

Green Careers \_\_\_\_\_

# Career Clusters

Below are the 16 Career Clusters, along with the kind of work people do in each. Put a ✓ by any Career Cluster you might be interested in.

- Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources:** farm, fish, and work to improve the environment
- Architecture & Construction:** design, build, and maintain homes and structures
- Business Management & Administration:** plan, oversee, and organize a business
- Education & Training:** teach in schools, libraries, museums, and businesses
- Finance:** manage and work with money
- Government and Public Administration:** make laws and provide public services
- Health Science:** work in healthcare treating people and animals
- Hospitality & Tourism:** work in restaurants, hotels, and casinos
- Human Services:** help people – counseling, social work, and more
- Information Technology:** work with computers, software, and network systems
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections, & Security:** keep people safe and enforce laws
- Manufacturing:** make products, such as in a factory
- Marketing:** promote and sell goods and services
- Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics:** use math and science to do research and solve problems
- Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics:** transport people and goods from one place to another by car, truck, airplane, or train

# Narrow your Focus

To help you determine what career(s) or career area(s) you want to focus on, use your responses on the previous pages to answer the following questions.

1. At the bottom of page 2, which two careers did you write down?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Which of the popular careers did you circle on page 3?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which Career Clusters did you check on page 4?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Consider your above responses. Do you see any similarities or trends in your answers?

Use the above information to choose a career you'd like to learn more about.

## No Career Path is Permanent

It's important to realize that no career path is permanent or irreversible. In fact, most people change careers several times during their lives. Make your career choices based on who you are today, but know that you can always pursue a different career path in the future.

# Do Some Research

Researching a career means that you learn everything you can about that career.

Go to [www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh) (the online edition of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*) and find the answers to the following questions.

**CAREER TO RESEARCH:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Tasks and Responsibilities** – What does someone with this career actually do?

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**2. Education/Training** – What kind of education/training does this career require?

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**3. Pay** – What is the average starting pay? \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Job Outlook** – Is this a growing career? \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you think this career might be a good fit for you?  
Why or why not?**

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*Continue to explore your career choices, and remember that choosing a career is a process. Keep an open mind and continue to learn as much as you can about yourself and the careers you're considering.*

# Career Interview

An informal interview is a great way to learn about a career. If possible, interview someone in a career you're interested in and ask the following questions. If that's not possible, interview a parent, relative, or another adult about their career.

**THEIR CAREER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What do you do on a typical day?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**How did you prepare for your career?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**What qualifications and personal characteristics does someone need in order to be successful in this career?**

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**What do you like most about your job/career?** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**What do you like least about it?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Do you have any advice for someone considering this career?**

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# What's Next?

Once you've chosen some careers to consider, you need to think about how you might prepare for them.

Some careers require two or four years of college; others require only one year of training or education. In many cases, your career choice will determine which education option is most appropriate for you.

**Which of the following options will be the best way for you to prepare for your career?**

## Four-Year College

A four-year college education (bachelor's degree) can provide you with a wide range of career opportunities.

## Two-Year Community College

Community colleges offer affordable career programs. You can also start at a community college and transfer to a four-year college.

## Career and Trade School

Career and trade schools offer short-term training in a number of career fields. Some programs last only a few weeks; others take a year or more to complete.

## Apprenticeship

Apprentices learn a skilled trade through classroom instruction and on-the-job training.

## Military

The U.S. military offers enlistees free job training in over 2,000 job specialties.

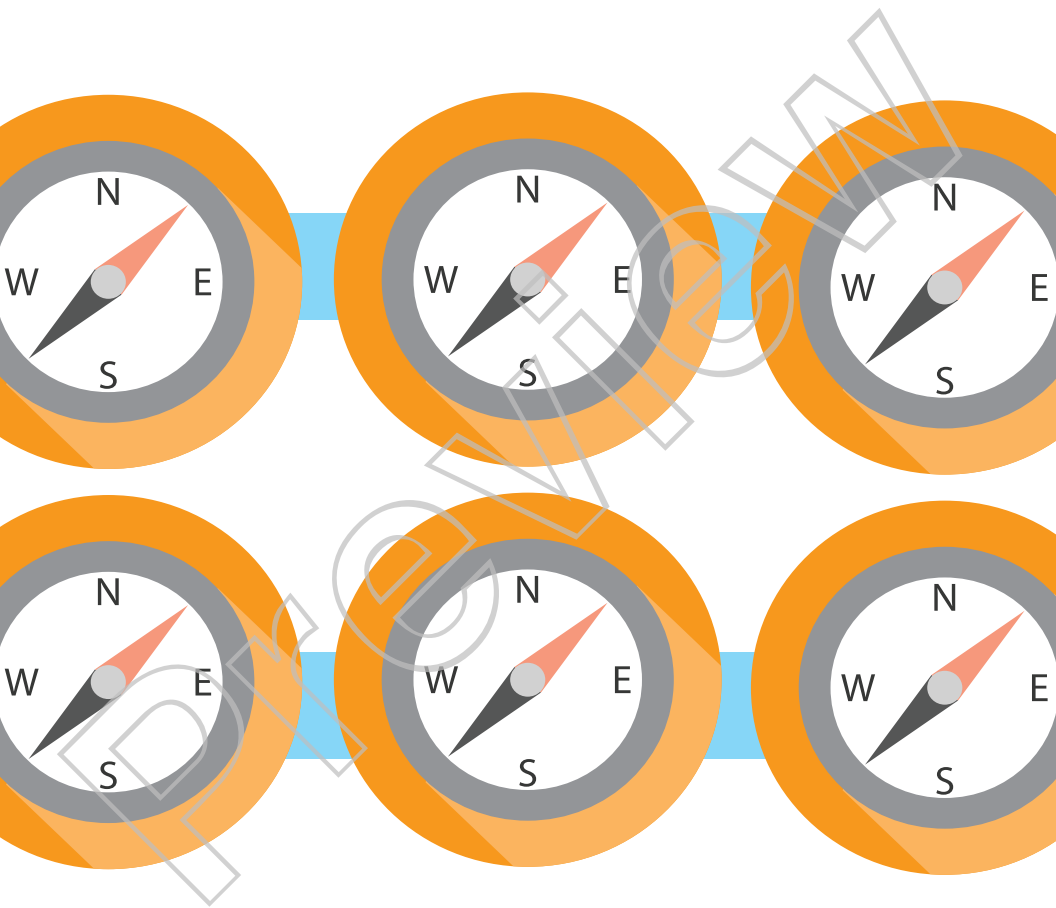
## FINAL WORDS

The best way to create a future that's bright and full of options is to get a good education. Work hard in school, get the best grades you can, and you will have a future that is full of possibilities!



# Preparing for a Career

## Career Exploration Activity Book



Activities to help you learn about the various ways you can prepare for a career

# Getting Started

There are many ways to prepare for a career, and it's important that you consider all of your options. In this booklet, we will look at five different ways that you can prepare for a great career.

## How will you prepare?

Given what you know now, indicate how you feel about each of the following.

Check **Yes** (this is how you want to prepare for your career), **Maybe** (you'd like to learn more), or **No** (you don't think this option is for you).

- |                        |                              |                                |                             |
|------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Two-Year College    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Four-Year College   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Career/Trade School | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. The Military        | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5. Apprenticeship      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Each of the above choices has positive and negative aspects. Try to learn as much as you can about each option so that you can make the best choice for you. *The information in this booklet will get you started.*

### On the following pages...

For each of the five ways you can prepare for a career, you will first be asked three True/False questions, just to see what you know. (Answers are at the bottom of each page.) You'll then be given a list of popular career fields you can prepare for, along with a list of important things to know.

# Two-Year College

Two-year community colleges provide affordable, career-oriented one- and two-year programs.

## What do you think? True or False?

1. To be accepted at a community college, you must take certain college prep courses in high school. T  F
2. One year at a community college and one year at a four-year college generally cost about the same. T  F
3. You can start at a community college and transfer after a year or two to a four-year college. T  F

## Popular career fields you can prepare for

Accounting	Fire science technology	Paralegal
Automotive technology	Information systems	Paramedic
Business management	Interior design	Physical therapy ass't
Dental hygiene	Law enforcement	Veterinary technology
Early childhood education	Nursing	Web design

## Important to know

- ▶ All high school graduates are welcome.
- ▶ Going to a two-year community college can be an excellent choice for students who have specific career goals.
- ▶ Attending a two-year community college for a year generally costs less than half of what it costs to attend a four-year college for a year.
- ▶ To save money, many students take their general education courses at a two-year college and then transfer to a four-year college.
- ▶ For more information, go to [bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org).

# Four-Year College

A four-year college education (bachelor's degree) can prepare you for a wide range of careers.

## What do you think? True or False?

1. You need to have at least a B average in high school to go to a four-year college. T  F
2. College students spend less time in class than high school students. T  F
3. If you pay your bills, you can continue at a four-year college as long as you like, regardless of your grades. T  F

## Popular career fields you can prepare for

Accounting

Biology

Business

Communications

Computer science

Education

Engineering

English

Information sciences

Journalism

Marketing

Nursing

Political science

Psychology

Zoology

## Important to know

- ▶ Four-year colleges vary greatly in their admission requirements, size, costs, and in the majors they offer.
- ▶ Four-year college students take about half of their courses in their major (the subject they have chosen to study in depth).
- ▶ To provide students with a well-rounded education, all students are required to take general education courses (English, math, science).
- ▶ Students who want to attend a four-year college should take college prep courses in high school and work hard to get good grades.
- ▶ For more information, go to [bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org).

# Career/Trade School

Career and trade schools offer short-term training in a variety of career fields.

## What do you think? True or False?

1. Career and trade schools all cost about the same. T  F
2. Career and trade school programs are all two-year programs. T  F
3. All career and trade schools provide their students with a quality education. T  F

## Popular careers you can prepare for

Auto mechanic

Bookkeeper

Broadcaster

Carpenter

Child care worker

Cosmetologist

Dental assistant

Electrician

Graphic artist

Interior designer

Legal assistant

Massage therapist

Nurse's aide

Pharmacy technician

Truck driver

## Important to know

- ▶ All high school graduates are accepted.
- ▶ Some programs take one or two years to complete; others can be completed in a matter of weeks.
- ▶ Career and trade schools are privately owned and in business to make a profit. Their costs vary greatly, and they can be expensive.
- ▶ Thoroughly check out any career/trade school you're considering. Some of them are not reputable. Consider all of your options.
- ▶ Visit [nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator](https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator) to find the career/trade schools in your area.

# Apprenticeship

Apprentices learn a skilled trade through classroom instruction and on-the-job training.

## What do you think? True or False?

1. Apprentices don't earn any money during the first six months. T  F
2. Most apprenticeship programs are two-year programs. T  F
3. Programs generally require that an applicant be 18 years old and a high school graduate. T  F

## Popular careers you can prepare for

Auto mechanic

Carpenter

Cement mason

Construction laborer

Cook

Electrician

Firefighter

Florist

Landscaper

Machinist

Paralegal

Photographer

Plumber

Tool and die maker

Welder

## Important to know

- ▶ Apprentices start by doing simple tasks under the supervision of a journey worker.
- ▶ While apprenticeship programs are available in many career fields, the majority of programs are in construction and manufacturing.
- ▶ Apprentices start off earning about half of what experienced workers earn. As their skills improve their wages increase.
- ▶ There is often a great deal of competition for apprentice positions. Apprenticeships can therefore be difficult to get.
- ▶ For more information, go to [apprenticeship.gov](http://apprenticeship.gov).

# The Military

The U.S. military offers enlistees free job training in over 2,000 job specialties.

## What do you think? True or False?

1. If you enlist in the military, you are obligated for 10 years of active duty service. T  F
2. As a first-year enlistee, you must pay for your own medical care and housing. T  F
3. The U.S. military is the nation's largest employer. T  F

## Popular careers you can prepare for

Accountant	Dental assistant	Public affairs officer
Aircraft mechanic	Firefighter	Radar operator
Computer programmer	Machinist	Security officer
Computer repairer	Medical assistant	Welder
Cyber security specialist	Office manager	X-ray technician

## Important to know

- ▶ Enlistees generally obligate themselves to four years of active duty.
- ▶ After 8-12 weeks of basic training, enlistees typically go to Advance Individual Training where they receive training for a specific job.
- ▶ The career, training, and educational opportunities are different for each branch of the military, so it's important to talk to recruiters representing two or more branches of the military.
- ▶ To enlist in any branch of the military, one must earn a minimum score on the ASVAB (a 3-hour test that identifies abilities).
- ▶ For more information, go to [todaysmilitary.com](http://todaysmilitary.com).

# Planning Your Future

**What career(s) or career field(s) do you think might be a good match for you?**

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**What do you think will be the best way for you to prepare for your career?**

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*Having career and educational plans can provide you with focus and motivation, but remember, as you grow and learn more about yourself and your choices, you can always change your goals and your plans.*

**What can you do between now and the time you graduate to help you achieve your career and educational goals—and ensure that your future is bright and full of possibilities?**

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## FINAL WORDS

The best way to create a future that's bright and full of options is to get a good education. Work hard in school, get the best grades you can, and you will have a future that is full of possibilities!