

Module: Self Awareness

Topic: Getting to Know Your Interests

Competency – Students will:

- Use results of an interest assessment to describe their top interest areas and relate them to careers/career clusters.
- Apply results of all assessments to personal abilities in order to make realistic career choices.

Length:

3 class periods (allow at least 2-3 class periods to take interest assessment, explore careers, and save information to portfolio)

Overview:

Students will expand their views of personal interests and learn how those interests are related to career success and job satisfaction. Students will complete the Interest Profiler Activity and have the opportunity to see how their results match the careers listed in Choices Planner.

Objective:

Students will:

- Learn that awareness of their interests can help them make better career decisions
- Complete an interest assessment
- Use their assessment results to create a list of careers that match their interest profile

Materials:

- Access to Choices Planner
- Pictures (cut from magazines) of 10 to 13 vehicles (include cars, trucks, motorcycles) mounted on a clipboard
- Six pages of flip chart paper to mount on the wall
- Six cards labeled with the names of the interest areas measured by the **Interest Profiler**:
 - Artistic -- You are a "creator"
 - Social -- You are a "helper"
 - Investigative -- You are a "thinker"
 - Enterprising -- You are a "persuader"
 - Realistic -- You are a "doer"
 - Conventional -- You are an "organizer"

Description of Activity:

- Choose just four of the pictures of vehicles -- all cars -- to display at the front of the room. Briefly discuss the characteristics of each of the cars to help students identify what they like about each one.
- Hold each picture up and ask, "Is there anyone who would like to drive or purchase this vehicle?" Hand the picture to someone who indicates that they would like it.
- Once all four pictures have been distributed (keep other pictures out of sight), ask, "Are you satisfied with the car you chose? Is there anyone who might like to trade for a different one?" Inevitably, when given a chance to trade, at least one person will be interested.
- At this point, bring out the other pictures of vehicles, including sportier cars, trucks and motorcycles. Allow the students to trade their first cars for a vehicle from this new group.
- Now ask the students why they traded. Elicit responses regarding why they like the newer choice better, why having more choices results in a better decision, and how the newer choice better matches their preferences.
- Now ask whether anyone out shopping for a new vehicle would want to choose from just four cars. Why not? Talk about the idea that when making major decisions, we all want to make the best possible choice. We want to make choices that will make us happy. We want to understand all the possibilities and options before making a choice. If we don't know about all the options, we might miss the one that would offer the best chance of happiness and success.
- Tell students that their career decisions are among the most important decisions they will make in life. Have students think about how it would be to wake eager to go to work, thinking, "I get to go to work today!" Ask them for examples of people they know who appear to be most satisfied in their jobs. People who work in the careers that match their interests are more likely to be happy and satisfied in their jobs.
- Help students understand that career interest assessments are designed to help people organize what they know about their personal interests in a way that will help them discover the careers that are consistent with those interests. However, assessment results can only reflect the student's responses. Obviously, the most meaningful results come from responding to the assessment items in a thoughtful and truthful manner.

Core Activities:

1. The Interest Profiler

- Students should set up Choices account if they have not already done so. Introduce the Interest Profiler Activity in Choices Planner (www.flchoices.org) - located on the home page under the Work heading). Reiterate the importance of reading every item and marking their honest responses. Let students know that this assessment should expand their career options by helping them learn about careers they may otherwise not have considered. Tell students that you will be helping them understand their results.
- Allow students ample time to complete the **Interest Profiler**. Encourage those that are finished early to review results and consider sharing why their top interests came up for them.

2. Career Awareness (How many careers do you know?)

- Tell students that the results of the Interest Profiler are expressed in terms of six broad interest areas, compatible with Holland codes. Ask students to look at their Interest Profiler results and note their two top interest areas.
- Post the six cards labeled *Realistic*, *Investigative*, *Artistic*, *Social*, *Enterprising*, and *Conventional* in different areas of the room. Ask students to go stand in the area labeled with their top interest area. Give each of the six groups one piece of flipchart paper to mount on the wall.
- Instruct the students that on the count of three, they will have two minutes to write down as many careers as they believe match their interest area/Holland code. (Note: It never fails -- after about 60 seconds; most groups have finished writing and are at a loss to come up with any more career titles that match their area of interest.)
- Time's up! Ask the students to add up the total number of careers they came up with as a group. As a class?
- Move from one group to the next, read the following descriptions and ask if anyone has any more career titles to add.
 - People in Realistic careers are generally active, "hands-on" workers who like working with tools and equipment, are often athletic and enjoy the outdoors.
 - People in Investigative careers like using their minds to solve problems. They often excel in science and math. They are independent thinkers and may enjoy puzzles and games based on logic.
 - People in Artistic careers are creative and enjoy expressing themselves through art, music, dance, writing and drama. These workers may seek out free, unstructured environments.
 - People in Social careers value their relationships with other people. They like helping others and seek out opportunities to give advice or otherwise interact with people.
 - People in Enterprising careers might be called persuaders. They like leadership roles, as well as sales. They often have good verbal abilities and can talk people into doing things their way.
 - People in Conventional careers are very organized, structured workers. They like accomplishing their work step-by-step and are good record-keepers.
- Have the students name some of the sample occupations for each of the interest areas and discuss what aspects of the work would be consistent with the descriptions above. Tell students that in exploring the careers that are most consistent with their interests, it is a good idea to use at least their two highest interest area codes to search for careers in Choices Planner.
- Have them move back to their computers and use the Search feature to see how many more occupations match their interest results.
- Students will identify the career cluster of each occupation in which they are interested. Do all occupations fall within the same cluster? Or is there more than one cluster? If occupations fall within more than one cluster, students can save their top career clusters in their portfolio.

After deciding which occupations they are most interested, students will identify the career cluster of each occupation in which they are interested. Do all occupations fall within the same cluster? Or is there more than one cluster? Students can save their top career clusters in their portfolio. Students can also review a generic high school program of study for the cluster. When students develop their ePEP at FACTS.org, they will need to know their career clusters since these are matched to programs of study and Major Areas of Interest.

Reflective Activity:

Tell students that careers that are interesting to them are likely to be enjoyable, but there are other aspects of work to consider. Have students name some of the other things they will want to know about occupations to help make their decisions (earnings, skill requirements, education, etc.) Choices Planner can help them learn much more about the occupations that will best match their other wants and needs. Encourage students to use Choices Planner frequently as they continue to explore the world of work.

Evaluation:

Student will be able to name at least three occupations in which they are interested and identify the matching career cluster(s).

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