

ASSESSING YOUR TALENTS AND INTERESTS



AGENDA

- Starter
- My Time
- We Have Skills
- Interests + Skills + Learning Styles = Careers
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will identify the relationship between their interests and how they spend their time.

Students will identify the skills that relate to their interests.

Students will identify and categorize personal, career, and professional skills.

Students will use their skills and interests to determine career options.

Materials Needed

- A dictionary (Parts I and II)
- One copy of the “Real Time” activity sheet for each student (Students should complete this activity sheet for homework during the week prior to this class.) (Part I)
- One copy of the “Real Time Tally” activity sheet for each student (Parts I, II, and III)

- One copy of the “Skills” activity sheet for each student (Parts II and III)
- One copy of the “Three Skill Groups, Many Occupations” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- Several pairs of scissors (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Lead students through the following calculations:

1. Start with the number of hours worked each day at a nine-to-five job. (8)
2. Multiply by 5 (number of workdays in a week). (40)
3. Multiply by 52 (number of weeks in a year). (2,080)
4. Multiply the answer to step two by 2 (two-week vacation). (80)
5. Subtract step four from step three. (2,000)
6. Subtract 80 (number of federal holidays multiplied by 8). (1,920)
7. Subtract your current age from 65. (for a 16-year-old: 49)*
8. Multiply the answer to step seven by the answer to step six. (94,080)

Tell students that the final answer is the approximate number of hours that they will probably work at a job. Students are likely to be surprised by the final number. Lead students to recognize that it is important to have jobs, careers, or professions that they enjoy. Remind them that they have already thought about their dreams and goals. Tell them that in today's lesson they will look at their interests to see how they can be translated into careers and professions.

*Step seven of this calculation assumes that students will work 40 hours a week starting at their current age. You may want to adjust this step depending on your students.

Part I My Time (5 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize the connection between their interests and how they spend their time.

1. Students define “discretionary time.”

Write the word “discretion” on the board. Ask the class to suggest the meaning of the word. Then, instruct a volunteer to find the definition of “discretion” in the dictionary. (Merriam-Webster defines “discretion” as “individual choice or judgment.”)

With this definition in mind, ask students to consider what might be meant by “discretionary time.” Lead them to recognize that discretionary time is free time to use as they see fit, to pursue an activity of personal interest that they find fulfilling.

Instruct students to take out the “Real Time” activity sheet, which they completed during the week preceding this class. Ask for volunteers to share how they spend their discretionary time. Write student responses on the board. Elicit reasons why students find their activities worthwhile; write the reasons next to the items on the list.

2. Students calculate how they spend their time.

Distribute the “Real Time Tally” activity sheets and have students use the information from their “Real Time” activity sheet to fill in the top half.

Then, ask students to circle the five activities that they enjoy most and order the activities from one to five, with one being the most enjoyable and five being the least enjoyable. Ask students why they enjoy the noted activities. Point out to students that often people most enjoy doing the things at which they excel.

Part II We Have Skills (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students define the concept of skill and identify the skills that relate to their interests.

1. Students define “skill.”

Write the word “skill” on the board. Have the class brainstorm a definition for the word. Then, have a volunteer read a definition from the dictionary. (Merriam-Webster defines “skill” as “a developed aptitude or ability.”)

Select one of the discretionary time activities that students listed earlier. Elicit from students the skills needed for that activity. For example, coordination; the ability to jump, move fast, throw, catch, and aim; and teamwork are needed to play basketball.

Point out to students that almost all of their discretionary time activities demonstrate specific skills. Explain that the skills people bring to a job are the talents, gifts, and abilities that they possess. Tell students that knowing their gifts, talents, or abilities—and how these things translate into jobs—will help them target potential careers and professions.

2. Students identify the skills that relate to their favorite activities.

Divide the class into groups of three or four students and distribute one copy of the “Skills” activity sheet to each student.

Tell students to look at their top five favorite activities from the “Real Time Tally” activity sheet and choose three activities to consider. Instruct students to work with their groups to identify the skills needed to excel at each activity they wrote on the top half of their “Skills” activity sheet.

After students have finished working, discuss the skills they listed. Encourage students with similar interests to add skills that they had not thought of. List several skills on the board and have students brainstorm a variety of activities and interests that might utilize those skills.

Tell students to leave the bottom half of the activity sheet blank for now.

3. Students explore the three skill groups.

Distribute the “Three Skill Groups, Many Occupations” activity sheet to students.

Explain to students that most skills can be categorized into one of three different groups: people/animals, things, and information. Define each group and discuss as needed. Elicit suggestions from the class for completing the activity sheet and have students fill in the blanks. Student responses may include some of the following:

- People or Animals: serving, counseling, advising, managing, performing, consulting, persuading, communicating, supervising, negotiating
- Things: fixing, operating equipment, physical/athletic effort, handling objects, working with the environment
- Information: planning, developing, creating, improving, designing, organizing, researching, visualizing, adapting, evaluating, computing, observing

Instruct students to brainstorm occupations or careers for each skill group.

Have groups share their occupation lists with the class.

4. Students identify and evaluate their skills in terms of the three skill groups.

Refer students to the bottom half of the “Skills” activity sheet. Explain that they are now going to complete this activity sheet by categorizing the skills they listed in the three columns. Have them list each skill under its appropriate heading.

When students have finished working, have them total the number of skills in each group. Ask students to share what they think that information reveals about their interests.

Point out to students that, usually, the profession that would be most interesting to them is the one at which they would do best. Remind them of the calculation that they made in the starter and suggest that their profession should be something that interests them a great deal.

Part III Interests + Skills + Learning Styles = Careers (30 minutes)

Purpose: Students connect learning styles to the three main skill groups.

1. Students review the different learning styles.

Ask students to recall the learning style activities that they did in *Module Six: Skills for School and Beyond*. Elicit the following list of learning styles from the class and write it on the board: athletic/body, musical, visual/spatial, mathematical/logical, verbal/linguistic, social/interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

2. Students evaluate interest categories in terms of learning style profiles.

Divide students into groups of four or five and distribute scissors. Have students cut out the learning style labels on the bottom of their “Real Time Tally” activity sheets from Part II. Then, have them match the learning styles to the skill groups on the “Skills” activity sheet. Tell them that more than one learning style may be appropriate for each skill group.

When students have finished working, have the groups share their results.

3. Students evaluate their personal data.

Tell students that they are now going to put their interests, their learning styles, and the skill groups all together. Tell students to complete the following sentences independently:

- My favorite activity is _____.
- My learning style is _____.
- My preferred career skill group category is _____.

Have students consider if the categories complement or clash and if their learning styles are compatible with their activity preferences and the career categories. Discuss what they can conclude if the three answers complement each other and what they can conclude if they clash.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to summarize why it is important to assess our talents and interests. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Work is a large part of our adult lives; therefore, it is important to choose a career or profession that we enjoy.
- Our interests, hobbies, and favorite activities involve skills that can be applied to jobs or careers.
- Identifying our interests, skills, and learning styles gives us important information about the kinds of work or careers we should explore.

Student Assessment

1. List one of your favorite after-school activities and the skills that you use for it.
2. How does your learning style complement your skills and interests?
3. How can knowing your skills, interests, and learning styles help you in the future?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“I never did a day’s work in my life. It was all fun.”

Have students read and interpret this quote. Have them discuss careers that would be “all fun.”

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students create flowcharts that depict the progression of strengths and interests to careers.

Have students share their charts with the class or hang them on the walls.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about why it is important to choose a career based on their talents and interests.

Have students discuss careers that they know they are not interested in pursuing.

Using Technology

Have students choose careers that interest them and that match their skills. Ask students to access and list websites that might be used as resources for people in those careers.

Have students share their lists with the class. Create a “master list” of website resources for students to use.

Homework

Ask students to list their interests and talents. Have them look at a college catalog and choose three classes that match their listed talents and skills.

Have students write a few paragraphs describing how these classes and their skills/interests are related.

Additional Resources

Have students review the list of 18 very odd jobs from *The Book of Lists* by David Wallechinsky and Amy Wallace.

Have students categorize each job based on the categories presented in this lesson.

REAL TIME

For one week, record the amount of time you spend on each activity you do. Write in after-school or part-time jobs, sports or other hobbies, chores, reading for pleasure, talking on the phone, dates, and so on.

[illegible]

REAL TIME TALLY

There are 168 hours in the week. Here is how I spend my time:

sleeping: _____

other activities: _____

school: _____

eating: _____

watching TV: _____

talking on the phone: _____

TOP FIVE FAVORITE ACTIVITIES:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

LEARNING STYLES (To the teacher: Save for Part 3.)

Cut out each learning style. Tape them to the bottom of the appropriate skill category on the “Skills” activity sheet.

Athletic, Body	Musical	Visual, Artistic	Mathematical, Logical	Verbal, Linguistic	Social, Interpersonal	Intrapersonal
Athletic, Body	Musical	Visual, Artistic	Mathematical, Logical	Verbal, Linguistic	Social, Interpersonal	Intrapersonal
Athletic, Body	Musical	Visual, Artistic	Mathematical, Logical	Verbal, Linguistic	Social, Interpersonal	Intrapersonal

SKILLS

Pick three of your favorite activities. List the skills needed for each below.

Activity: Skills:	Activity: Skills:	Activity: Skills:

List each skill above under the appropriate heading below. Count the number of skills and write the total below each box.

PEOPLE (or ANIMALS)	THINGS	INFORMATION
Learning Style(s): 	Learning Style(s): 	Learning Style(s):

TOTAL: _____

TOTAL: _____

TOTAL: _____

With the skills I have, I might enjoy a job, career, or profession working with _____

THREE SKILL GROUPS, MANY OCCUPATIONS

<p>A. People (or Animals)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • helping or caring for • entertaining • teaching • coaching <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Occupations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>B. Things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repairing • operating vehicles • using tools • working with nature <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Occupations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>C. Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning • creating • designing • organizing <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Occupations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____
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