



Module 1

Duration: 55 minutes

Scanning the World of Possibilities

This module is designed to help students understand the importance of career planning and to motivate them to use this curriculum to begin formulating career choices.

Objectives

At the end of this module, students will be able to:

- State three reasons why it is important to spend time and energy doing career exploration.
- List the influences on their career thinking to date.
- List topics to be covered in the remainder of the curriculum.

Module 1: Overview

Classroom Components

- **Introduction to the Curriculum**
5 minutes
- **Activity 1: The Career Game**
15 minutes
- **Mini-Lecture and Discussion: Why Career Pathways are Important**
10 minutes
- **Discussion: Influences on My Career Decisions**
15 minutes
- **Mini-Lecture: Summary of Remainder of Course**
10 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

1. Read the lesson plan and resource material.
2. For **middle school students**, duplicate materials Activity 1: The Career Game, Handout 1: Course Overview, and Activity 4: Decision Making in My Life.
4. Print one copy of the Occupational Profile Cards for use with Activity 1: The Career Game. These cards can be accessed in Navigator® with the Module 1 PowerPoint download.
5. Arrange for a computer and display device to show the PowerPoint presentation. This presentation can be accessed in the Kuder Navigator admin experience.

Homework Assignments

For Middle School Students:

Before the next session, have middle school students use Activity 4: Decision Making in My Life to record at least five decisions that they make between now and the next session. As indicated on the worksheet, they should describe:

- The decision made.
- Alternatives they had to choose from.
- What information, if any, they collected in order to make the choice.
- The results of the decision, if known.

The Next Session

Middle school students move on to:
Module 3: Determining Your Direction

Module 1: Lesson Plan



Introduction to the Curriculum

(5 minutes) (Slides 1 and 2)

Think of your life as a voyage. You have already traveled to many destinations. Right now, the rest of life's journey is uncharted. This curriculum will help you think about the places where you would like to go in the future. What will be the significant events in your life? Who will be on the journey with you? So far, most major life decisions have been decided for you by those who have been entrusted with your care. Increasingly, you will be making the decisions that will shape your life. The kind of work you choose will influence the lifestyle you lead – where you live, what you wear, and what kind of transportation you use. If you want to be the one to decide what the destinations of your future will be, pay attention and participate fully, because it is your future that is being defined.

Engage students in discussion with questions such as the following:

- Does anyone remember the first time you were asked, “What do you want to be when you grow up?”
- How did you answer that question at that age? Two years ago? And now?
- Who or what influenced you to make those choices?

This was the beginning of your career development. The message was, “You will be something and you do have a choice.” Just as you have changed your choices in the past, you will continue to do so in the future because both you and the world of work will change – and that's fine. But, you need to explore the possibilities now as you learn about the process of career decision making so that you can use it again and again as you and the world of work change.



Activity 1: The Career Game

(15 minutes)

Share: Hundreds of thousands of occupations exist throughout career pathways, most of which we don't even know exist. I am going to assign each of you an occupation. This will be done randomly and in no way indicates the occupation I think you should choose. A short description of the occupation will be on the occupational profile card you receive.

Do not tell anyone the occupation you have been assigned! Your task is to describe this occupation to a partner without telling her or him what it is. Your partner will try to guess the occupation as you give hints by answering the questions on your sheet.

Provide two handouts to each student: 1) an occupational profile (found in Navigator, beneath the Module 1 PowerPoint download), and **2) a copy of the questions to ask** ([Activity 1: The Career Game](#)).

Please divide into pairs. One of you will play the role of the person in the occupation assigned to you. The other will ask questions from the list provided. When your partner has guessed your occupation, change roles and try to guess her or his occupation. You have 10 minutes for this activity.

After 10 minutes, say:

- I'm interested in your reactions to the game you just played.
- How many of you liked the occupation you were assigned? Why?
- How many of you disliked the occupation you were assigned? Why?
- If you had to be in this occupation, what do you think your life would be like?
- How much education would you need?
- How much money would you make?
- What kinds of tasks would you do every day?

Mini-Lecture and Discussion: Why Career Planning is Important

(10 minutes) (Slide 3)

Share: Some of you liked your assigned occupations and some did not. However, these are real occupations, and real people do this work every day – and may like it or dislike it. Why is it important that you like the work you do and that you choose wisely?

List student responses on a flip chart or board. Look for and encourage the following answers:

- We spend so much time at work (daily and in a lifetime).
- What we do determines whether we are happy at work (and unhappiness at work may spill over into family life).
- Our work determines how much money we make (this determines the kind of home, car, leisure activities, vacations, and financial needs we will have).

Discussion: Influences on Career Decisions

(15 minutes) (Slide 4)

Share: Since some of you liked your occupations and some did not, there must be some kinds of influences that lead each of us to have a different combination of interests, abilities, and goals. Let's think about the people and experiences that influence the decisions you make. For example, who, or what, influences the kind of clothes you wear? Who, or what, influences how you spend your time after school? Who, or what, do you think will influence your thinking about your future choice of work?

Middle school students should participate in the discussion and verbally list influences on their career planning. List possible influences on the board as students name them. As students name influences, ask how that person or event has affected their thinking about career choice. Following are questions to stimulate discussion:

- **Who are some of the people that might influence you?** Parents, friends, neighbors, relatives, teachers, counselors, etc.
- **What are some other influences?** Television and Internet.
- **What are some experiences that have resulted in your preferring a certain kind of work – or being driven away from it?** For example, a person going through physical therapy might become interested in that as future work; a person working at a desk may decide that it's not work to consider for a lifetime.
- **How has your coursework in school affected your thinking about future occupation(s)?**
Subjects liked or disliked.

Mini-Lecture: Summary of Remainder of Course

(15 minutes) (Slides 5 and 6)

Indicate that the class members have begun to think about what will influence their possible career choices. Provide [Handout 1: Course Description](#) and suggest that students show this sheet to their families, who can support them as they think about their futures.

Homework Assignment: For Middle School Students

(Slide 7)

Provide middle school students with [Activity 4: Decision Making in My Life](#) to complete. This will introduce them to Module 3: Determining Your Direction for the next class session.

Instruct: Before the next session, use [Activity 4: Decision Making in My Life](#) to record five decisions that you have recently made and to summarize the alternatives, information considered, and results of each decision.

Example:

Decision	Alternatives	Information Considered	Results
What to wear today?	1. Jeans and shirt 2. Sweatshirt 3. Dressy outfit	Weather? Will others like it? Activities planned?	Worked out fine.

Optional Activities

1. Have students create a collage of people and things that have influenced their thinking about future careers. A collage is a collection of pictures. Students may put them in a small picture album, or may paste them onto a poster or piece of flip-chart paper.

Module 1: Resource Materials



Why is work important?

Work takes on different meanings for different people. For some, it is viewed as the means by which money is earned so that satisfaction can be found in other life roles. For others, it is viewed as a way to express interests and skills and to attain values – that is, to find self-actualization. Still, for others, it is a deep spiritual commitment, a way in which to contribute to society or establish meaning in life.

Regardless of the meaning that work takes on in an individual's life, its selection is one of life's most important decisions. This is true because it consumes at least one-third of our waking hours, and it has the potential to make those hours satisfying or dissatisfying. Work has the potential to interact with and influence many of the life roles played by individuals. For example, one's attitudes about and satisfaction with work are likely to affect the roles of spouse/partner and parent. The amount of time that one has to spend at work affects the amount of time one can spend in the roles of spouse/partner, parent, and citizen.

Traditionally, one's occupation is a significant determiner of socioeconomic class and income. In turn, these two variables affect our lifestyle, the friends we have, the education we achieve, the neighborhood and kind of house we live in, the kinds of leisure we can afford, and the type of retirement we can have.

Beyond that, work offers the potential to express self-concept and create a self-identity. This fact is so pervasive that it is likely that the first question we ask people we have just met is what kind of work they perform for a living. The titles of occupations trigger stereotypes, which have some measure of truth to them. Persons who work in a specific occupation tend to have similar interests, abilities and skills, and personality traits.

Still further, work serves to structure time. Though most of us dream of unstructured time, the fact is that many people – if not most – are more productive and happier when their time is structured.

Why plan?

Given the rapid changes in the nature of work, hastened by technological advances and globalization, some current career planning theorists say that it is impossible to plan ahead and that we should be teaching young people simply to learn about change and to go with the flow.

Though many changes are occurring in work tasks, places of work, and skills required for occupations, we also believe in the value of planning. Clearly, the idea of selecting one occupation and drafting a long-term career plan is passé. We know that we will all make several changes in jobs, as well as in occupations, in our lifetimes. We also know that we will never “finish our education,” but rather will need to continually upgrade skills and acquire new ones. It also seems evident that jobs of the future will be described by the list of skills needed to perform them and the level of each skill needed. Thus, in the future, we may talk about transferring a set of skills from one occupation to another, and the titles of those occupations may appear to be quite different from each other, though the skill set needed to perform them is common. Finally, we know that it will be important to teach young people about change – or transition, as some theorists call it – and to teach them some models for coping with it.

Although acknowledging that this is a time of change, professionals in the field still advocate that having an **evolving career plan** is highly desirable. We know from research that there is a high correlation between having career plans and retention in either high school or college. We also know that career plans change but are usually highly related to each other. For example, if a student taking an interest inventory expresses high interest in one cluster of occupations and chooses a college major based on that cluster, there are more than eight chances out of 10 that, if that student changes majors, the new one will be within the same general cluster or one that is closely related. Thus, research substantiates the fact that interests are quite stable from the middle adolescent years on through adulthood, and that changes made in school majors related to occupational choices revolve around a central area of interest.

Further, it is difficult for persons of all ages, but especially middle school and high school students, to plan for and move from Point A to Point Z. It is much easier to plan to move to Point B from A, then to C from B, etc. In other words, we humans are most comfortable moving a mini-step at a time toward a longer-term goal. This being the case, it is highly desirable for a student to formulate a tentative plan so that specific short-term goals can be set, even though that plan and those goals may change with time and experience.

Having a tentative plan makes it possible for students and their parents or guardians to be informed when selecting school subjects or exploratory experiences that will either support the plan or modify it, and when planning for further education. This is a more desirable state than selecting school subjects blindly, following what peer pressure may dictate, or having no goals to motivate one to stay in school.

The overarching purpose of this curriculum is to help students learn about themselves and the world of educational and occupational options at their disposal, and to formulate a modifiable career plan so that decisions can be informed ones.

Name _____

Date _____



Activity 1: The Career Game

An occupation was assigned to you during this class session. Occupations were distributed randomly and in no way indicate the occupation your instructor thinks you should choose.

A short description of the occupation was included on the profile card.

Describe this occupation to a partner without saying what it is. Your partner will try to guess the occupation as you give hints by answering the following questions:

- How early, or late, would you need to get up in the morning in order to get to work on time?
- How would you dress to go to work?
- How would you plan to get there?
- Would you be working indoors or outdoors?
- Would you be working in an office, on an assembly line, in a gym, etc.?
- Would you be working with ideas? Machines or tools? Numbers? Computers? People?
- Would you be working by yourself or with others?
- Would you be working independently or would someone be supervising you?
- Would your work be creative or would you be doing the same thing every day?
- Would you bring your lunch, eat in the company cafeteria, or go to a fancy restaurant for a business lunch?
- Would you be working regular hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday)?
- At what time would you go home?
- How would your work influence your choice of home, location, mode of transportation, etc.?



Handout 1: Course Overview

Direct Your Future™ is an 11-module career planning curriculum to help you explore the world of work and prepare you to make informed career decisions in the future. Below is an overview of the entire course.

Module 1: Scanning the World of Possibilities

Do you know what you want to do with your life? Don't worry if you have no clue; you are not alone. This session helps you understand why career planning is important and who or what influences the decisions you make.

Module 3: Determining Your Direction

You make decisions from morning until night. Some are more important than others. This session will teach you how to handle the tough decisions regarding your future.

Module 4: Embarking on a Voyage of Self-Discovery

Sometimes you may like yourself, and other times you may wish you could be a completely different person. This session helps you to see and value yourself, and then relates this self-information to initially choosing an occupation and making changes in the future.

Module 5: Exploring the Destinations

There are thousands of jobs from which to choose, but they can be organized into clusters that will help you understand and explore the world of work more easily. These clusters will also help you relate your course selection to your occupational choices in high school and in further education.

Module 6: Finding Your Personal Compass Points

In this session, you will take what is called an interest inventory and a skills assessment. It is not a test, and there are no wrong answers. It is a way to help you see how your interests and skills relate to occupational choices.



Handout 1: Course Overview – Continued

Module 7: Using Guideposts to Direct Your Journey

Like people, jobs have characteristics. It is important you become aware of characteristics that will give you the greatest satisfaction in any job.

Module 8: Refining the Destinations

In previous sessions, you will have identified many occupations that could be possible destinations for your future. In this lesson, you will explore in depth a few occupations from your list of possibilities.

Module 9: Charting Your Course

This session is designed to help you make a connection between what you want out of work and your future educational planning. It focuses on the selection or reevaluation of high school courses and the type and level of postsecondary education available.

Module 10: Writing Your Personal Logbook

By now, you will have begun the process of career exploration, discovering occupational options that relate to your current interests and skills. This session will help you bring it all together in a personal career plan that will help you meet your goals in the future.

By now you will know who you are, where you are going, and how you will get there. It is your life and as you *Direct Your Future*, you need to take responsibility for making your dreams come true. This is an exciting time as you think through what you want to do in life. Enjoy the journey!

Name _____

Date _____



Activity 4: Decision Making in My Life

Before the next session, record five decisions you have made recently and summarize the alternatives, information considered, and results of each decision.

Decision	Alternatives	Information Considered	Results
What to wear today?	1. Jeans and shirt 2. Sweatshirt 3. Dressy outfit	Weather? Will others like it? Activities planned?	Worked out fine.

Five Decisions I Have Made

Decision	Alternatives	Information Considered	Results