



Parents as Career Coaches

Student Workbook

Junior High

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Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

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PART 1

What I Really, Really, Really Like!

An important part of deciding what type of career you might like is thinking about what you really like to do and what makes you happy. This is important because you will spend a lot of years working, and so it would be a good idea to work in a job that makes you happy.

When you ask most people, they can tell you what they do not like. For example, some people will say, "I don't like a certain food, homework, and cleaning my room." But we do not always think about what we like and what makes us happy. This exercise will help you to look at what you really, really, really like, not just like. Under each of the headings are 10 statements. If you like a statement, check it off. Then, at the end of each section, write down the total number of check marks you have for that section.

Arts and Recreation

- _____ I enjoy activities like drawing, designing, doing crafts, and creating presentations on the computer.
- _____ I enjoy activities that don't have a lot of rules and that allow me to do the activity the way I want to.
- _____ I enjoy performing (e.g., singing, playing an instrument, dancing).
- _____ I enjoy using my imagination.
- _____ I enjoy writing stories.
- _____ I like a lot of variety rather than the "same old, same old" routine.
- _____ I like activities that allow me to express how I feel.
- _____ I like being physically active (e.g., playing sports, running).
- _____ I prefer to work on projects by myself.
- _____ When I think about possible jobs, my favourite type of job would be creative (involving, for example, crafts, dance, acting, photography, sports).

Total

Business, Management, and Office

_____ I enjoy reading over school papers or tests to make sure they are accurate.

_____ I enjoy typing my reports on the computer.

_____ I enjoy working with others on a project.

_____ I like games that have clear rules.

_____ I like having a schedule for what is to happen each day.

_____ I like working on a project or homework with very clear directions.

_____ I like working with numbers.

_____ I really like being organized.

_____ Sometimes I really like being the leader on a project or team.

_____ When I think about possible jobs, my favourite type of job would involve working in an office (e.g., manager, clerk, sales rep).

Total

Hands-on

- _____ I enjoy being physically active rather than sitting down and working on something.
- _____ I enjoy helping an adult with repairs and improvements (e.g., building something, fixing a car, painting the house).
- _____ I enjoy learning about nature.
- _____ I enjoy taking something apart to see how it works.
- _____ I enjoy working with my hands (e.g., using tools, using machinery, painting).
- _____ I like fixing something that is broken.
- _____ I like outdoor activities (e.g., walking, camping).
- _____ I like schoolwork that allows me to solve a problem by working at it, instead of reading or talking about it.
- _____ I like to work with others sometimes but also like to work by myself.
- _____ When I think about possible jobs, my favourite type of job would be one in which I could work outdoors or work with tools and machinery, building or fixing things.

Total

Law & Government

- _____ I like solving mysteries.
- _____ I enjoy talking with other people to find out more about them.
- _____ I enjoy working under pressure to get a project done.
- _____ I enjoy working with other people to solve problems.
- _____ I like experimenting to find the best way to do something.
- _____ I like helping people or animals that are sick.
- _____ I like learning about what keeps people healthy.
- _____ I like to study science.
- _____ I like TV shows, movies, or books that are mysteries.
- _____ When I think about possible jobs, my favourite type of job would be one in which I could help people or keep them safe.

Total

Medicine and Health

- _____ I enjoy learning about how the body works.
- _____ I enjoy talking with other people to find out more about them.
- _____ I enjoy working under pressure to get a project done.
- _____ I enjoy working with other people to solve problems.
- _____ I like experimenting to find the best way to do something.
- _____ I like helping people or animals that are sick.
- _____ I like learning about what keeps people healthy.
- _____ I like to study science.
- _____ I like TV shows, movies, or books that are mysteries.
- _____ When I think about possible jobs, my favourite type of job would be one in which I could help people either to stay healthy or to get better (e.g., work in a hospital, work in a laboratory).

Total

People

- _____ I enjoy helping other people to learn how something works.
- _____ I enjoy listening to other people so I can better understand how they feel or what they need.
- _____ I enjoy working with other people rather than always working by myself.
- _____ I like finding new ways to do something instead of doing it the same way every time.
- _____ I like helping other people with their chores (e.g., cleaning, mowing lawns).
- _____ I like helping other people with their schoolwork.
- _____ I like talking with other people.
- _____ It makes me feel good when I help others.
- _____ When I think about possible jobs, my favourite type of job would be one in which I could work with and help other people (e.g., tour guide, social worker, counsellor).
- _____ When my friends are sad and have a problem, I like to help them solve it.

Total

Science and Technology

- _____ I enjoy discovering all of the features on a computer or other types of technology (e.g., cellphone, iPad).
- _____ I enjoy doing science experiments.
- _____ I enjoy working with computers.
- _____ I like creating something using technology (e.g., computer programs).
- _____ I like playing video games and seeing how they work.
- _____ I like showing other people how to use computers and other technological devices.
- _____ I really like it when I get to use technological devices in class or for a school project.
- _____ One of my favourite subjects is mathematics.
- _____ One of my favourite subjects is science.
- _____ When I think about possible jobs, my favourite type of job would be one in which I could work with technological devices (e.g., computers) or do some kind of work in which I could use science (e.g., do science research, work in a laboratory).

Total

PART 2

What I Really, Really, Really Like!

The exercise you just did is one way of starting to identify possible careers you might want to find out more about. Here is how that works.

Step 1

In the spaces below, write down the title of the two (or three if you have a tie) sections in which you have the most check marks.

Example:

People

Medicine and Health

1

2

3

Step 2

Now that you have identified your top sections, use the insert provided (Sample Occupations) and look at the sample occupations for the two (or three) sections.

Step 3

Circle any of the occupations that you feel you might like or want to find out more about.

Remember, you are simply searching now. If you come across any occupations that you don't know, please circle these. The reason you should circle these is so that later you can find out more about them and then decide if you are interested in them.

If you do not find at least 10 occupations that you are interested in or want to find out more about, look at the other section lists and circle any occupations that are of interest to you or that you want to learn more about. Some occupations fall in more than one section. You have to circle that occupation only once if you like it or want to find out more about it.

Name of Occupation:

.....

What did you like about this occupation?

.....

.....

.....

.....

What did you not like about this occupation?

.....

.....

.....

.....

What level of education, certification, or training (e.g., high school, community college, apprenticeship, university, postgraduate university) would you need to work in this field?

.....

.....

.....

.....

- I think this is a career I might like.
- I'm not sure whether I would like to work in this type of occupation, but I would like to find out more about it.

If you check either of the boxes above, write down the occupation on the Possibilities List in the next section. If not, check the box below.

- I definitely do not feel this is the type of career I would want.

Possibilities List

After you have completed research on an occupation, please write or print the name of the occupation below. You can add new occupations to the list at any time.

When you are picking courses, it would be a good idea to take a look at your list of occupations, to make sure you are taking the types of courses required for these occupations.

Note

You may decide as time goes on to take some things off the list and add others. This might happen as you learn more about yourself and what makes you happy, or as you gather more information about the occupations. Feel free to cross out occupations you discover you no longer are interested in and to add any new ideas you have.

The list may be long and remain long for quite a few years. It may get a bit shorter near the end of high school. Keeping the list up-to-date will help you to make career decisions when the time is right.

My Skills

In school and when you eventually get a job, obviously some skills will help you. Different jobs require different types of skills and skill levels. Some people find certain skills very easy to learn and others very difficult.

It is important, when trying to decide what courses you should take and what type of job you want to do, to take a close look at what your skills are. Sometimes this will help you to decide what courses would help you to improve or develop skills you need for the types of jobs you like.

The questions on the following pages will help you to start examining your skills. You can do these alone or with your career coach (your mom, dad, grandparent, foster parent, aunt, uncle). Either way, when you are finished, talk with your coach. This may help you to decide what you might do to continue growing and improving your skills.

Communication

Think about and give your best answer to the following questions:

Think about talking with other people (adults or others your age). Which of these statements best describes how you would rate your communication skills in this area?

- I am not sure how good my speaking skills are.
- I don't have any problems talking with other people (adults or others my age).
- I have trouble talking with most people because I am nervous.
- Sometimes I have trouble talking with other people because I am nervous, but once I am comfortable it gets easier.
- Sometimes I have trouble talking with other people because I can't seem to find the right words to describe what I want to say.

Think about when other people (adults or others your age) talk to you. Which of these statements best describes your response?

- I am not sure how strong my listening and understanding skills are.
- I usually can understand what other people are saying. For example, I can follow directions they give me, even if they are not written down.
- Sometimes I have trouble understanding what other people are saying because they use words I don't know.
- I often have trouble following directions, unless people show me what to do or write the directions down.

Computer Use

Choose an answer to complete the following statements about your computer skills:

My keyboarding speed (when texting, chatting online, or typing a paper) can be best represented by the following statement:

- I am faster than my friends
- I am about the same as most of my friends
- I am a bit slower than my friends.
- I am unsure about my ability.

Think about your ability to learn how to use new programs, such as in games, word processing, PowerPoint, designing web pages or apps, etc. (Note: Remember that you do not have to be able to do all of these, as the programs listed are just examples.) Which of these statements best describes your abilities?

- I find it easy to learn or figure out programs on my computer, tablet, phone, etc.
- Sometimes I need help learning new programs, but most of the time I don't.
- I find it hard to learn new programs without help.
- I am unsure about my ability.

My ability to use the Internet to search for information is best represented by this statement:

- I have no problem finding information on the internet.
- Most of the time, I can find the information I am looking for.
- I usually can't find the information I am looking for.
- I am unsure about my ability.

Mathematics

Choose an answer to complete the following statement about your mathematics skills:

I feel my mathematics skills are

- very strong
- average
- not strong
- (not sure)

Problem Solving

Choose an answer to complete the following statement about your ability to solve problems:

When someone gives me a problem to solve (like a written mathematics problem or a logic problem), I

- usually can solve it
- sometimes find it hard
- usually find it very hard to solve
- (not sure)

Reading

Choose an answer that best describes your reading skills.

I sometimes have trouble understanding what I have read.

- hardly ever
- sometimes
- most of the time

I sometimes have trouble remembering what I have read.

- hardly ever
- sometimes
- most of the time

Writing

Choose an answer to complete the following statements about your writing skills:

Which of these statements best describes your ability to write (print or type) papers, reports, or letters?

- I usually don't run into any problems.
- Sometimes I run into problems, but I can do it.
- I find it very hard.
- I am unsure about my ability.

Other people who read what I write (e.g., stories, papers) would say my writing and expression of ideas is

- easy to understand
- hard to understand
- (not sure what they would say)

My spelling skills are

- very strong
- average
- not strong
- (not sure)

Thanks so much for thinking about these skills and answering the questions. Next, it might be helpful for you to talk about your answers with your coach. After you and your coach have talked about your answers, **make a list of the skills you think you are average or strong in.**

You probably have skills in a lot more areas than are listed here. These may be skills you have developed through your experiences outside of school. For example, you may be very good at dancing, singing, swimming, sports, using tools, and in many other areas.

Talk to your coach about other skills you can add to your list and put them down here.

You might also want to talk about skills you want to make stronger or that you are unsure about. Maybe you and your coach can come up with ways to make these stronger or try to learn more about these qualities if you are uncertain. Sometimes you can get others, like a teacher, relative, or neighbour, to help you improve some of your skills.

Use the rest of this page to write own the ideas you come up with.

My Qualities

Qualities are special gifts you have that you develop throughout your life. While skills are important, your qualities help you just as much to enjoy life and make friends. These can help you at both school and work.

Sometimes we do not think about our qualities, but it is important to recognize them and discover how to use them in all parts of life. Just like skills, we have some qualities that are very well developed and others we might want to make stronger. This exercise will help you to begin to think more about your qualities.

Change

Over time, lots of changes occur. For example, friends move or we move. Each year we often have new teachers that we must get used to. Sometimes we move to a new school or get a new family member. Technology constantly changes, and then we have to learn how to use it. When we leave school and go to work, we often have to deal with even more changes. The ability to deal with change is important. **Think about how you feel when something changes, and choose the statement that best describes your feelings.**

- I get bored with the “same old, same old,” which is why I like change.
- I’m not sure how I feel about change.
- Most of the time I like when something changes.
- Often (not all the time but most of the time), when something changes, I really get upset, and it takes me a long time to get used to the change.

Getting Along with Others

Whether it is at school or at home, we are often around other people. Some people we really like and others we do not like as much. The same is true when people go to work. Some people become good friends, and others do not. But whether we like someone or not, we may need to work with them (e.g., on a sports team, on a school project, in a job).

Think about your family, friends, teachers, and other people you are in contact with most days. Choose which of these statements best describes how you get along with other people.

- I am not sure how I get along with others.
- I get along very well with people I like but have a hard time getting along with people I don't like and people that don't seem to like me.
- I seem to be able to get along with almost everyone I meet.
- I try to stay away from people and would rather just be by myself.
- I know only a few people I can't get along with.

Responsibility

Both at home and in school we have responsibilities. As we grow older, it often seems as if we are given more and more responsibilities. For example, we may be expected to do more chores at home or babysit our younger relative. In school, we are expected to be on time, bring certain items to school, and get our homework done. When we go to work, we are also given responsibilities. For example, you may be responsible for getting a piece of work done in a very short time without anyone reminding you. Think about some of the responsibilities you have been given. **Which of these statements best describes how you feel about responsibilities?**

- Even though I don't like all of my responsibilities or chores, I do carry them out most of the time.
- I try to carry out what I am responsible for, but I often forget or don't get things done on time.
- I'm not sure how I deal with responsibilities.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself. It changes from time to time, depending on what is going on in your life. **When answering this question, you should think about how you feel most of the time.**

Which of these statements best describes how you feel about yourself?

- I am not sure how I feel about myself.
- Most of the time I don't feel good about myself.
- Most of the time I feel good about myself, even though I am not happy with a few things.
- Most of the time I feel good about myself.
- Most of the time I feel that I am not as good as other people.

Teamwork

We often have to work with others. Sometimes we are on a sports team or working on a school project, or we need to work with our family on a project. The same is true when we get a job. Often, when we have a job, we need to be part of a team because each person has different skills and to complete a project, each person will have to share their special skills.

Think about times when you have worked on a project with other people. Which of these statements best describes how you feel about working on a team?

- I don't work well on a team
- I would rather work by myself than be part of a team.
- I do work well on a team, but also work well on my own.
- I'm not sure how I feel about being part of a team.
- Most of the time I really like being part of a team.

That was a lot to think about. It might be helpful now to talk with your coach about your answers. For example, you might talk about how you have used your well-developed qualities in the past. It might also be a great idea to talk about how you might use these in other situations, like in school or even when you get a job.

You might also want to talk about qualities you want to make a bit stronger or that you are unsure about. Maybe you and your coach can come up with ways to make these stronger or try to figure out more about these qualities if you are uncertain.

Use the rest of this page to write down the ideas you come up with.

Tips and Ideas

Moving from school to work is a long journey, but you are making great progress by taking a closer look at who you are and creating a list of career possibilities. Here are some tips and ideas that might help you to eventually make some decisions on training and a career.

1. Keep updating your Possibilities List.

As you grow older and move into other grades, you may find new interests. As a result, it is a good idea to go back to your workbook questions and use Internet resources to update your list so it reflects what makes you happy.

2. Find out more about yourself.

There are all kinds of ways you can find out more about what your interests and values are. For example, you can keep a journal about what you like and do not like. Also, you can do website quizzes. Keep in mind that quizzes or tests can never tell you what to do, but you can think about what they say and explore some of the ideas further.

3. Find out more about careers.

Occupations you have included on your Possibilities List should be checked out further. It might be a good idea to ask your coach to help you with this. The following are some suggestions for further research:

- Your coach might know someone who works in one of the areas you are interested in. Maybe they could arrange for you to talk with that person.
- Perhaps you could volunteer to work for an organization where people do jobs like ones you are interested in.
- You could talk to your guidance counsellor, who may have some books or brochures or might even arrange for you to talk to people who work in the jobs you are interested in.

4. Keep your options open.

When you are trying to decide which courses to take in high school, try to make sure these courses will allow you to go to community college or university when you graduate from high school. If you look at all of the occupations on your Possibilities List, probably some require community college, university, or other education beyond high school. Maybe some on your list do not. However, by taking courses that allow you to take the program(s) you're interested in, you will have more choices when the time comes for deciding whether you will pursue further education.

High-Five Messages

As you complete junior high, move on to high school, and then possibly pursue further education or training and eventually get a job, these five messages are important to keep in mind. They will help you to understand lots of what is happening in your career journey.

Change is constant.

Keep changing with the times.

Learning is continuous.

We learn in many ways, and learning does not stop.

Focus on the journey.

The journey is filled with lots of nice surprises.
Stop along the way, reflect, and embrace the opportunities.

Team up with others.

We all have unique talents and gifts,
so maintain friendships and form new ones.
Friends will help you on your journey.

Follow your dreams.

Never lose sight of your dreams as they will help you
to find true happiness in both your work and your life.

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