Next

A GUIDE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL

THIS GUIDE BELONGS TO:

_____

THIS GUIDE HAS AREAS IN WHICH TO RECORD PERSONAL INFORMATION. IF YOU WILL BE CARRYING THE GUIDE FROM PLACE-TO-PLACE OR ARE AT RISK OF LOSING IT, PLEASE DO NOT WRITE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION IN THIS GUIDE.

As exciting as it may be to finally be in middle school, three years will fly by and then you will be faced with what comes NEXT. This Guide is intended to help you prepare for that NEXT step. Many people will be involved in helping you prepare for high school and beyond. In the table below, list the information for the primary contacts at your school you can go to for help researching colleges and/or planning for a career. We call this group your Student Success Team. Each member has a different and unique role in helping you realize your dreams, take the next steps, and reach the finish line.

One word to describe middle school is... _____

I am thankful for... _____

The thing I do best is... _____

Something I would like other people to know about me is... _____

I feel really good about myself when... _____

Other people compliment me on my ability to... _____

Something nice I recently did for someone else was... _____

In ten years, I would like to be... _____

STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM MEMBER	CONTACT
School Counselor:	Email:
Helpful Teacher:	Email:
Coach/Adult Mentor:	Email:
Family Member:	Email:
Other:	Email:

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

- Attend a four-year college or ***university*** to earn a ***bachelor's degree***
- Enroll in a ***community college first,*** and then transfer to a ***university*** after two or three years to earn a ***bachelor's degree***
- Obtain an ***associate degree*** or ***certificate*** at a ***community college***
- Obtain a ***certificate or license*** from a ***Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT)*** or other technical/vocational school
- Enlist in the ***military***
- Immediately enter the ***workforce***
- I have ***no idea***

Congrats- You're in Middle School!

Starting middle school is a scary time for everyone. You are maturing physically and mentally while facing a million new challenges such as lockers, moving from class to class and teacher to teacher, and meeting new students who didn't attend your elementary school. That's a lot of new stuff to take in all at once.

The upside is that every other student in your grade is facing the same challenges and insecurities, even if they don't show it. Try to think of middle school as a new adventure with treasure hidden around every corner. While it may be a stretch to think of this guide as treasure, you will be rewarded with knowledge you didn't have before.

Knowledge is your superpower. Let's apply that superpower to figuring out what you want to do with the rest of your life. While this guide can't provide every potential pathway to your future college and career, it will be a good introduction to the world of college and the world of work. Wherever you plan to go after high school graduation - whether you're headed to college, the workforce, or the military - staying on track to earn your high school diploma and knowing the next steps for your chosen path is important. So, let's dig right in and take the first step on the path to what comes next.

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SECTION ONE

DREAM!

6TH GRADE

“How others see you
is not important.
How you see yourself
is everything.”

- Superman

Different & the Same

Your first days in middle school may feel like being on a different planet, but it's probably not all that different from elementary school. Besides, different isn't necessarily bad, it's just different.

ACTIVITY

Name of your elementary school _____

Name of your 5th grade teacher _____

How did you travel to school last year? _____

What was your favorite class/subject last year? _____

Who was your best friend last year? _____

How many people from your 5th grade class are at your new school? _____

Name of your middle school _____

Names of your middle school teachers _____

How do you travel to school this year? _____

What is your favorite class/subject? _____

Who is your best friend at school? _____

Name one new friend who didn't attend your elementary school _____

Below, list 10 different things that make up elementary school (like recess, lunch, music class) in the left column. In the right column, list the ways middle school is alike or different.

Elementary	Middle
One or two teachers	Many teachers

When you consider the upcoming school year, what are you most excited about? _____

What are you most nervous about? _____

Skills for Success

Is it more important to be smart or to work hard? Explain. _____

_____

There is no right or wrong answer. Even smart people need to work hard sometimes. We are all born with talents and skills that set us apart, and we can improve our natural abilities through learning and hard work.

ACTIVITY

Below, **mark** the talents/skills that you possess:

- ☐ Building
- ☐ Gardening
- ☐ Assembling
- ☐ Repairing
- ☐ Exercising
- ☐ Landscaping
- ☐ Typing
- ☐ Observing
- ☐ Investigating
- ☐ Visualizing
- ☐ Interviewing
- ☐ Researching
- ☐ Interpreting
- ☐ Acting
- ☐ Playing
- ☐ Purchasing
- ☐ Simplifying
- ☐ Understanding
- ☐ Inventing
- ☐ Composing
- ☐ Collecting
- ☐ Designing
- ☐ Inspecting
- ☐ Illustrating
- ☐ Organizing
- ☐ Editing
- ☐ Experimenting
- ☐ Improvising
- ☐ Drafting
- ☐ Completing
- ☐ Recording
- ☐ Expressing
- ☐ Counting
- ☐ Learning
- ☐ Performing
- ☐ Measuring
- ☐ Remembering
- ☐ Relaxing
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Auditing
- ☐ Budgeting
- ☐ Testing
- ☐ Speaking
- ☐ Styling
- ☐ Comparing
- ☐ Copying
- ☐ Reading
- ☐ Studying
- ☐ Drawing
- ☐ Teaching
- ☐ Counseling
- ☐ Coordinating
- ☐ Explaining
- ☐ Mentoring
- ☐ Socializing
- ☐ Empowering
- ☐ Supporting
- ☐ Serving
- ☐ Training
- ☐ Summarizing
- ☐ Accepting
- ☐ Coaching
- ☐ Helping
- ☐ Trusting
- ☐ Nursing
- ☐ Comforting

Name three new talents/skills you would like to acquire from the list above:

_____ _____ _____

Straight A's of Success

THERE ARE THREE KEYS TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS: ATTENDANCE, ACADEMICS, AND ASSISTANCE.



Attendance – **"You have to be present to win."** Sound familiar? Learning is more than just reading a book or completing a worksheet. Hearing from your instructor and your classmates in class enhances your learning. You also get the opportunity to ask questions of a person trained to give you answers.

What is an acceptable number of absences in a school year?

_____

Academics – Your academic success is based on the quality of your work. Students who do their best on every assignment typically do the best in school. These students ask questions when they don't understand and take pride in their work. Another big part of academic success is taking the time to study.

How much time do you spend studying at home? _____

Everyone studies differently but having a designated study spot at home and school will train your brain to concentrate when you are in that spot.

Where do you like to study at home? _____

Where do you like to study at school? _____

Our brains study better during daylight hours. When is your best time to study? _____

Do you like your study area to be light or dark? _____

Do you like your study area to be quiet or have background noise or music playing? _____

Do you like to study alone or with others? _____

Assistance – John Donne once wrote that **"No man is an island."** He meant all human beings are connected and that connection is important to our success. One person who gets paid to help you be successful is your teacher. A teacher's responsibility is to present new and different information to help you become educated. If you don't understand the work, directions, or expectations, it's your responsibility to seek help. That help can come from your teacher or another student. Sometimes you can get help during class, but you may have to come in before or after school or during lunch to get help.

What is the last question you asked in class? _____

Do you know when your teachers are available for extra help? _____

Focusing on these three A's of academic success won't guarantee you will make straight A's in your classes, but it will put you on the path to success.



Have you ever wondered why you have a class schedule?
Why are all classes the same length?
Or not?
To accomplish the many things that occur during a school day, a schedule is needed to keep you moving forward. There is so much to learn in such a short time that it is necessary to schedule the day. Managing time is a way to get more things done more effectively.

What is your definition of time management? _____
_____
_____
_____

ACTIVITY

More will be expected of you in middle school. You will have to juggle many different classes and outside activities. Estimate the time you spend on school and life activities during a typical seven-day week.

Activity	Daily Hours	Weekly Hours (x5 or x7)
School		
Homework		
Fun/Leisure/Sports		
Sleep (Target = 9-11 hrs.)		
Meals		
Hygiene (Showers/baths, brushing teeth, etc.)		
Family Commitments		
Friend Commitments		
Commute/Travel Time		
Communication (phone calls, texts, etc.)		
Household Chores		
Total Hours	0	0

Number of hours available in a week: **168**
Total Weekly Hours (from above): - 0
Remainder: = 168

How should you spend any extra hours? _____

HOW DO I USE MY TIME?

PART I. Think back over the last 24 hours and calculate how much time you have spent on the following activities. Blanks are provided for you to add other categories if needed.

I spent…

_____ minutes on sleeping

_____ minutes eating

_____ minutes talking to my friends

_____ minutes on activities

_____ minutes with my family

_____ minutes on TV or video games

_____ minutes on _____

_____ minutes on _____

PART II. Now let's test how you spend your time on school. If your answer to the question below is always, put down a 3. If your answer is sometimes, put a 2. If your answer is probably not, put a 1.

1. I have a regular time for studying each day. _____

2. I write my assignments down and check the list regularly. _____

3. I always have the materials I need when I start to study. _____

4. I rarely distract myself with wandering away from the task when studying. _____

5. I do assignments in chunks to avoid last minute work. _____

6. **TOTAL** 0 _____

12 –15 Points: You have awesome study and time management skills.

7 – 11 Points: You have some good habits, but you can use a little improvement.

6 or below: You can use some help with your study habits.

PART III. Reflect on how you answered the questions above and fill out the chart below.

What are the things that I could do sometimes, but not every day?	
What are the things that I need to do regularly every day?	
What are the really important things that need more time?	

Sharpen Your Skills

On page 7, you identified skills/talents that you possess. You may need to refer to that list to complete this activity. You can learn a skill you don't have and improve any skills you do have. A person with a lot of well-developed skills is more likely to be successful in the things they do.

What is the difference between interests and skills?

1. Interests are things people LIKE to do. Being involved in these activities typically makes you happy because you are good at it and enjoy it.
2. Skills are things you CAN do. When people pursue education, work, and activities that relate to their skills, they are more likely to be successful in those activities.

ACTIVITY

List the skills you use to accomplish each activity or task (refer to the skills list on p. 7)

	SCHOOL	HOMEWORK/ STUDY	FUN/LEISURE/ SPORTS	FAMILY/ FRIENDS	CHORES
Activities A list of the different things I do throughout the day					
Skills I Have A list of the skills I use when I am involved in the activities above					
Skills I Need A list of skills I need that I can develop through school courses and involvement in life activities					

TAKE NOTE(S)

You will probably be asked to take notes from class lectures and readings this year more than ever before. Many students try to write down every word the teacher or writer says. A better way to take notes is to think about what's most important and write that down in short, concise sentences with headings for each topic. Below is an introduction to the two-column note-taking system, which will serve you well through middle school, high school, and college. It uses topic headings on the left and points of information on the right.



Read the notes below which were written down almost word for word from an article about the book "Lord of the Rings."

	Lord of the Rings
	The Lord of the Rings is an epic high fantasy novel written by philologist and Oxford University professor JRR Tolkien. The story began as a sequel to an earlier, less complex fantasy novel called The Hobbit (1937), but it eventually emerged into a much more comprehensive and symbolic novel. It was written in stages between 1937 and 1949, much of it during World War II. Although known to many readers as a trilogy, the work was originally intended to be one volume of a two-volume set along with The Silmarillion: however, the publisher decided to omit the second volume and instead published The Lord of the Rings in 1954-55 as three volumes, containing a total of six books, rather than one, for economic reasons. It has since been reprinted numerous times and translated into numerous languages, becoming one of the most popular and influential works of 20th century literature.

The notes below were taken from the same article using the two-column note-taking system. Notice that notes don't have to be written in complete sentences since they are only for your use as you study.
Which version would help you study for a test? _____

	Lord of the Rings	
	Author	- Written by JRR Tolkien
	Philologist	- He was a philologist (studies languages) and Oxford professor
		- Took 12 years to write (1937-49)
		- Was a follow up to The Hobbit (1937) – children's book
	Trilogy	- Part of a trilogy (three volumes)
		- One of the most popular works of the 20th century

STUDY HALL

Each person has their own study style. Knowing your study style makes you more effective in preparing to take a test. If you are getting good results, you should probably maintain your study habits. However, if you would like to improve, you might need to make some changes in your approach to study.

ACTIVITY

For each section, select the description that is most like you. When you are finished, complete your study profile on the next page.

1. When I do my homework or study, I like...
☐ it nice and quiet.
☐ background noise.

2. I like my surroundings to be...
☐ in bright light.
☐ in dim light.

3. I need the room to be...
☐ warm.
☐ cool.

4. To study, I like to ...
☐ sit at a desk or table.
☐ lay on the bed or floor.

5. I need...
☐ to finish one task before I start another.
☐ work on one task for a while, then work on another.

6. I do better when...
☐ I structure my learning myself.
☐ I get step-by-step guidance.

7. I do things...
☐ exactly the way I am instructed.
☐ the way I think might work best.

8. I work hard on tasks because...
☐ I want to succeed.
☐ it is expected that I do the work.

9. I learn best...
☐ working by myself.
☐ in a small group or team.
☐ directly from the teacher.

10. The best time of day for me to study is...
☐ morning.
☐ afternoon.
☐ evening.

11. I need to eat...
☐ while I am studying.
☐ before or after I study.

12. When I study, I...
☐ can sit in one spot for quite a while.
☐ must get up and move around every once in a while.

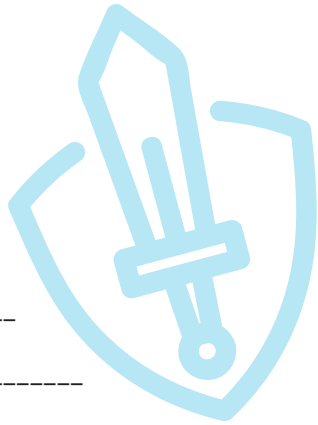
13. I learn best by...
☐ seeing pictures, diagrams, and charts.
☐ listening to teachers/others speaking.
☐ participating in discussions, games, or projects—by "doing" the work.

14. To understand my work, I need...
☐ to see the main goal, the big picture.
☐ need the step-by-step process.

15. When I am learning, I think in...
☐ pictures and patterns.
☐ words and order of operations.

16. I decide on an answer or a process...
☐ without thinking about it too much.
☐ after giving it much consideration.

STUDY PROFILE



Describe the surroundings you like when studying (#1-4 on the previous page):

_____

_____

The things that motivate you to do your best are (#5-8):

_____

_____

Other things can influence my studying. I like it best when (#9-12):

_____

_____

My brain works best when (#13-16):

_____

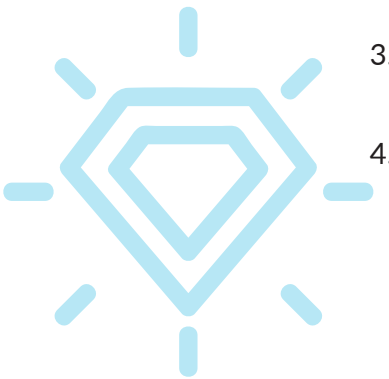
_____

Describe your study routine:

Time of day: _____ Location: _____

My preparation strategies to attack my tests are:

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



PLAN OF ATTACK

Go through the list below and place a small check mark by the test-taking strategies you use today. **Mark** any strategy you plan to use in the future.

PREPARING FOR THE TEST:

- ☐ 1. Take notes during class and when reading your assignments.
- ☐ 2. Ask questions. Get help when you don't understand.
- ☐ 3. Get help from someone who understands the subject.
- ☐ 4. Get together with others to study.
- ☐ 5. Practice! Re-work your math problems or write a practice essay.
- ☐ 6. Quiz yourself over the material. How did you do?
- ☐ 7. Get a good night's sleep and eat breakfast.

WHEN IT COMES TIME TO TAKE THE TEST:

- ☐ 1. Take a few minutes to look over the entire test. What types of questions does it ask: multiple choice, short answer, or essay?
- ☐ 2. Do the headings or questions give you clues to the content?
- ☐ 3. Read each question thoroughly. Underline or circle important concepts. Ask yourself, "What are they really asking me in this question?"
- ☐ 4. Cross out wrong answers or unimportant sentences.
- ☐ 5. Pay attention to words like "always" and "never".
- ☐ 6. If you don't know an answer, skip it and move on to the questions you do know. Circle the skipped question numbers and come back to these after you answer all the questions you know.
- ☐ 7. Write legibly. The teacher has many tests to grade. If they can't read your writing, you may not get credit for correct answers.
- ☐ 8. Go over your work if you have time. Re-read your answers; recalculate your problems; check your spelling and grammar.

OTHER STUDY STRATEGIES YOU USE:

1. _____

2. _____

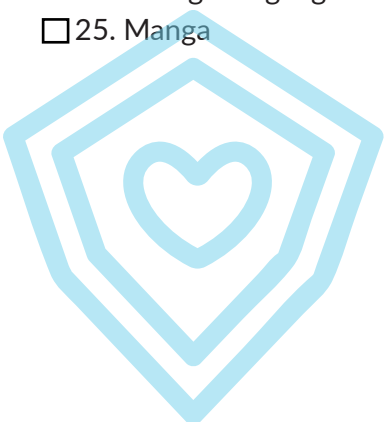
3. _____

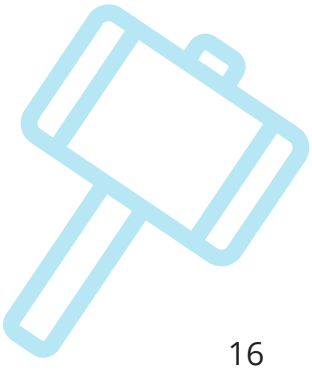
IN THE INTEREST OF INTERESTS

ACTIVITY

Interests are things that people like to do. People can pursue their interests through education, work, recreation, leisure, and/or volunteer activities. From the list of interests below and on the next page, select at least 20 that you would be interested in pursuing at some point in your life by circling the activity.

- ☐ 1. Baseball/Softball
- ☐ 2. Sudoku
- ☐ 3. Laser tag
- ☐ 4. Rock tumbling
- ☐ 5. Acting/Drama
- ☐ 6. FootballFly-tying
- ☐ 7. Animal care
- ☐ 8. Dagger collecting
- ☐ 9. Karaoke
- ☐ 10. Volleyball
- ☐ 11. Environmental action
- ☐ 12. Architecture
- ☐ 13. Bird watching
- ☐ 14. Calligraphy
- ☐ 15. Basketball
- ☐ 16. Ceramics/Pottery
- ☐ 17. Crochet
- ☐ 18. Fashion design
- ☐ 19. Film Making
- ☐ 20. Floristry
- ☐ 21. Gardening
- ☐ 22. Jewelry making
- ☐ 23. Knitting
- ☐ 24. Foreign languages
- ☐ 25. Manga
- ☐ 26. Painting/Drawing
- ☐ 27. Photography
- ☐ 28. Quilting
- ☐ 29. Scrap booking
- ☐ 30. Creative Writing/Journalism
- ☐ 31. Sewing
- ☐ 32. Sign language
- ☐ 33. Cheerleading
- ☐ 34. Cooking
- ☐ 35. Four wheeling
- ☐ 36. Inventing things
- ☐ 37. Pottery
- ☐ 38. Writing stories/poetry
- ☐ 39. Daydreaming
- ☐ 40. Guitar
- ☐ 41. Harmonica
- ☐ 42. Piano/Keyboard
- ☐ 43. Singing
- ☐ 44. Songwriting
- ☐ 45. Video gaming
- ☐ 46. Helping children
- ☐ 47. Web research
- ☐ 48. Electronics
- ☐ 49. Genealogy
- ☐ 50. Opera
- ☐ 51. Astrology
- ☐ 52. Astronomy
- ☐ 53. Investing
- ☐ 54. Jet Skiing
- ☐ 55. Archery
- ☐ 56. World travel
- ☐ 57. Racquet sports
- ☐ 58. Boxing
- ☐ 59. Body building
- ☐ 60. Camping
- ☐ 61. Cartooning
- ☐ 62. Band
- ☐ 63. Choir
- ☐ 64. Fishing
- ☐ 65. Golf
- ☐ 66. Hiking
- ☐ 67. Horseback riding
- ☐ 68. Hunting
- ☐ 69. Ice skating
- ☐ 70. Inline skating
- ☐ 71. Kayak/Canoe
- ☐ 72. Martial arts
- ☐ 73. Pilates
- ☐ 74. Running
- ☐ 75. Reading
- ☐ 76. Gardening
- ☐ 77. Snowboarding/Skiing
- ☐ 78. Swimming
- ☐ 79. Tai chi
- ☐ 80. Music
- ☐ 81. Wakeboarding
- ☐ 82. Waterskiing
- ☐ 83. Weight training
- ☐ 84. Yoga
- ☐ 85. Ballet.





IN THE INTEREST OF INTERESTS (CONTINUED)

- ☐ 86. Psychology
- ☐ 87. Reading
- ☐ 88. Science
- ☐ 89. Shopping
- ☐ 90. Social networking
- ☐ 91. Airplane flying
- ☐ 92. Airplane combat
- ☐ 93. Auto-racing
- ☐ 94. Go-karts
- ☐ 95. Motocross
- ☐ 96. Mountain biking
- ☐ 97. Mountain climbing
- ☐ 98. Mountaineering
- ☐ 99. Off-road driving
- ☐ 100. Paintball
- ☐ 101. River rafting
- ☐ 102. Skateboarding
- ☐ 103. Scuba diving
- ☐ 104. Debating
- ☐ 105. Surfing
- ☐ 106. Arcade games
- ☐ 107. Billiards/Pool
- ☐ 108. Board games
- ☐ 109. Card games
- ☐ 110. Archaeological digs
- ☐ 111. Chess
- ☐ 112. Bungee jumping
- ☐ 114. Event volunteering
- ☐ 115. Magic/Card tricks
- ☐ 116. Meditation
- ☐ 117. Leadership/Politics
- ☐ 118. Pinball machines
- ☐ 119. Radio-controlled vehicles
- ☐ 120. Ping pong
- ☐ 121. Antiques
- ☐ 122. Coin collecting
- ☐ 123. Mechanics
- ☐ 124. Classic cars
- ☐ 125. Art collecting
- ☐ 126. Model cars
- ☐ 127. Watching movies
- ☐ 128. Movie memorabilia
- ☐ 129. Music memorabilia
- ☐ 130. Sports memorabilia
- ☐ 131. Sports trading cards
- ☐ 132. Comic book collecting
- ☐ 133. Stamp collecting
- ☐ 134. Woodwork

Look back over the interests you circled. Do they share anything in common? Explain.

_____

_____

Do any of your friends or family participate in one of these activities? What do they enjoy about it?

_____

_____

_____

My Bucket List

A Bucket List is a list of things you would like to do at some point in your life.
You don't have to do them all at once; these are things that someday you might like to learn more about, take lessons or classes to understand, or join a group that is involved in that particular activity.

ACTIVITY

List 20 interests below that are on your bucket list. Use the interests you previously circled or add your own.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

What percentage of your Bucket List interests are you involved in today? _____

Does this percentage seem high, low or "just right" to you? Explain. _____

_____

Which interest that you are not involved in would you most like to pursue?
_____

_____



The Wide World of Careers

Did you know that there are more than 10,000 different types of work available to you? Most people can't name even 1% of the work options available to them. The terms we use to describe different types of work are used interchangeably and can be confusing. Definitions are provided below.

	Job	Occupation	Career
Definition	A job is an activity through which an individual can earn money. A job is work for which you receive pay. Individuals tend to talk about their work as "just a job" when it doesn't give them much long-term career satisfaction.	An occupation is a series of related jobs. A high school English teacher's occupation is education, and her job is teaching. She could also become a high school counselor or principal where her occupation is still education. An occupation is a wide category of jobs with similar characteristics.	A career is the pursuit of a lifelong ambition or the general course of progression towards lifelong goals. A career can be thought of as the accumulation of all the jobs in one or more occupations that have made up an individual's work life. Your career is comprised of the actions you typically take within a certain occupation.
Requirements	Specific education levels or special training may or may not be required.	May require new learning or training as new jobs are accepted.	Usually requires special training or higher levels of education where the individual is expected to increase their expertise to match higher levels of responsibility.
Time	Generally for an identified period of time, often short term.	Can be either short- or long-term depending on the relationship of subsequent jobs.	Long-term
Income	Varies by demand. Most likely to be paid as a "wage" by the hour.	Varies	Varies depending on value to society or some other entity. Salary is more common.
Security	Dependent on demand, can change rapidly.	Dependent on the field.	A career may be more stable, but it may encourage one to take risks.
Example	Reporter	Journalist	Reporter<Editor<Managing Editor

JOBS

1.List jobs teenagers might be able to get. _____

2.List the jobs of adults you know._____

OCCUPATIONS

1.Look back at the jobs you listed for teenagers. Do these fit any particular occupations? _____

_____

2.What occupations do most of the adults you know work in? _____

_____

CAREER CATEGORIES

Occupations can be sorted into the following categories:

Arts and Entertainment
Business
Education
Law and Government
Manufacturing and Trade
Medicine and Health
Science and Technology
Social Services

ACTIVITY

Using the categories above, identify ten possible job fields for you in your future and ten different potential career interests.

Possible Job Fields	Potential Career Interests

Lifestyle Calculator

We've talked a lot about your talents and how those might lead to future jobs and careers. Another factor to consider when choosing a career is the lifestyle you want to live. Many rewarding careers might pay very little while some boring careers might pay a lot. Think about your priorities. Are you interested in a big house or a fancy car, or is being fulfilled in your career more important than money? We have a tool to help you think through your priorities.

ACTIVITY *Visit https://www.collegefortn.org/lifestyle-calculator/ to begin your calculations.*

Our Lifestyle Calculator shows you the true cost of the lifestyle you want and how much you'll need to earn to afford it. This exercise is all about setting you up for long-term success. To get started, you'll be asked to tell us a little bit about yourself. You'll then be asked a series of questions related to housing, insurance, leisure activities, cars, education and much more. When you have completed the Lifestyle Calculator, return to this page.

The Lifestyle Calculator will give you a monthly budget calculation based on the answers you provide. It will look something like this:



What are your estimated monthly expenses? _____ Annual salary needed? _____

*The annual salary amount includes 25% of your annual expenses for income tax. You have the option to:

SHARE PROFILE TO EMAIL >

This button allows you to email the results to yourself or your teacher. OR you can:

FIND CAREERS >

This allows you to search for careers that will pay a salary that meets the needs of your lifestyle.

From the "Find Careers" tab, name three careers that intrigue you:

Career 1: _____ Education Required _____

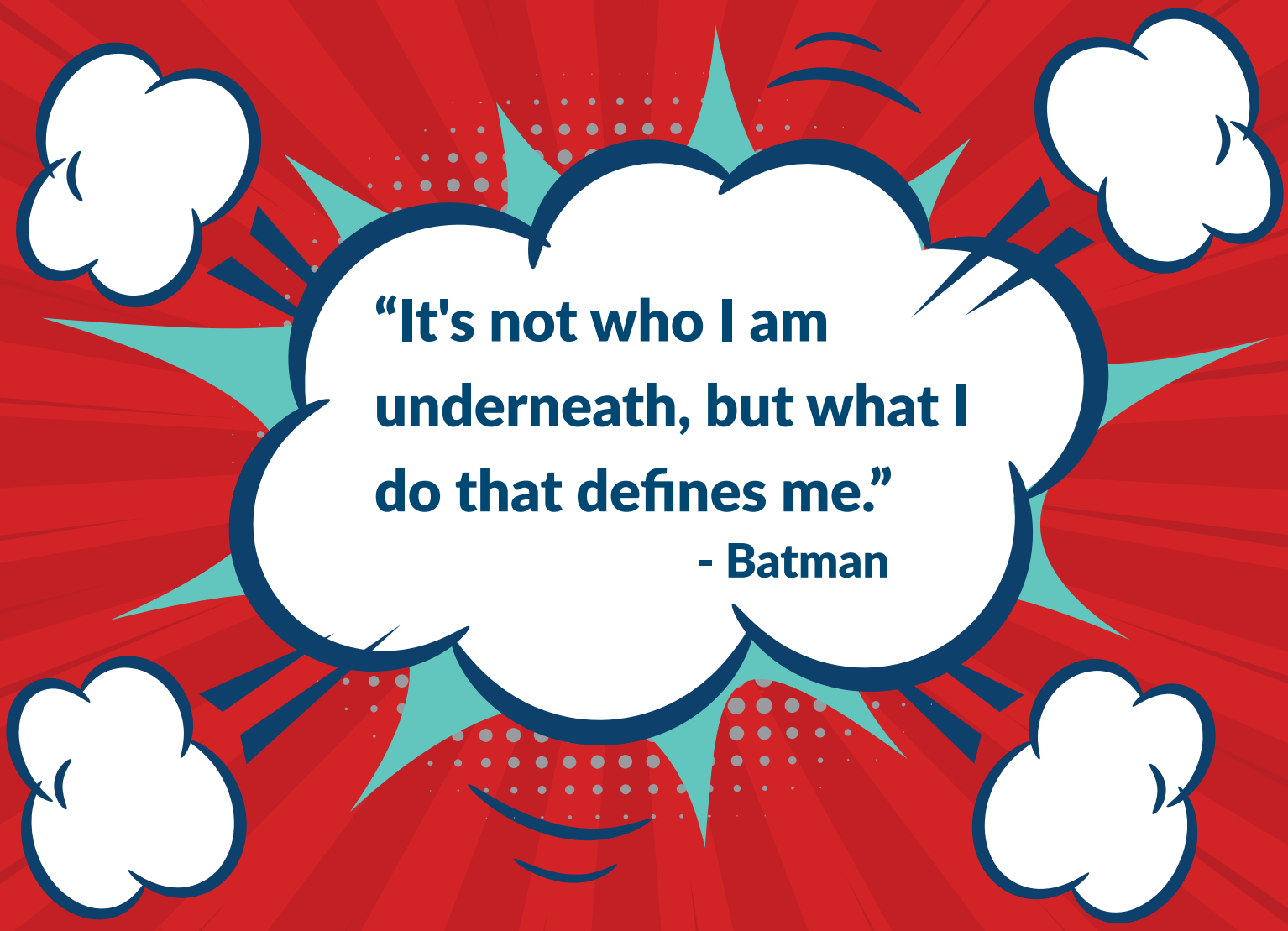
Career 2: _____ Education Required _____

Career 3: _____ Education Required _____

SECTION TWO



7TH GRADE


“It's not who I am underneath, but what I do that defines me.”
- Batman

WELCOME TO 7TH GRADE!

The good news is you SURVIVED 6th grade and are now ready to CONQUER 7th grade! That means you will be facing a whole new set of unknowns. Think of it as a journey with twists and turns, but lots of beautiful scenery along the way.

Let's take a moment to evaluate your 6th grade year.
On a scale of 1-4 (1 is defined as terrible, 4 is defined as stupendous, 3 is pretty good, and 2 is okay) answer the questions below:

How do you feel generally about your 6th grade school year? _____

_____

How do you rate your level of academic success in 6th grade? _____

_____

How do you rate your participation in school or community activities in 6th grade? _____

_____

How would your family describe your 6th grade year? _____

_____

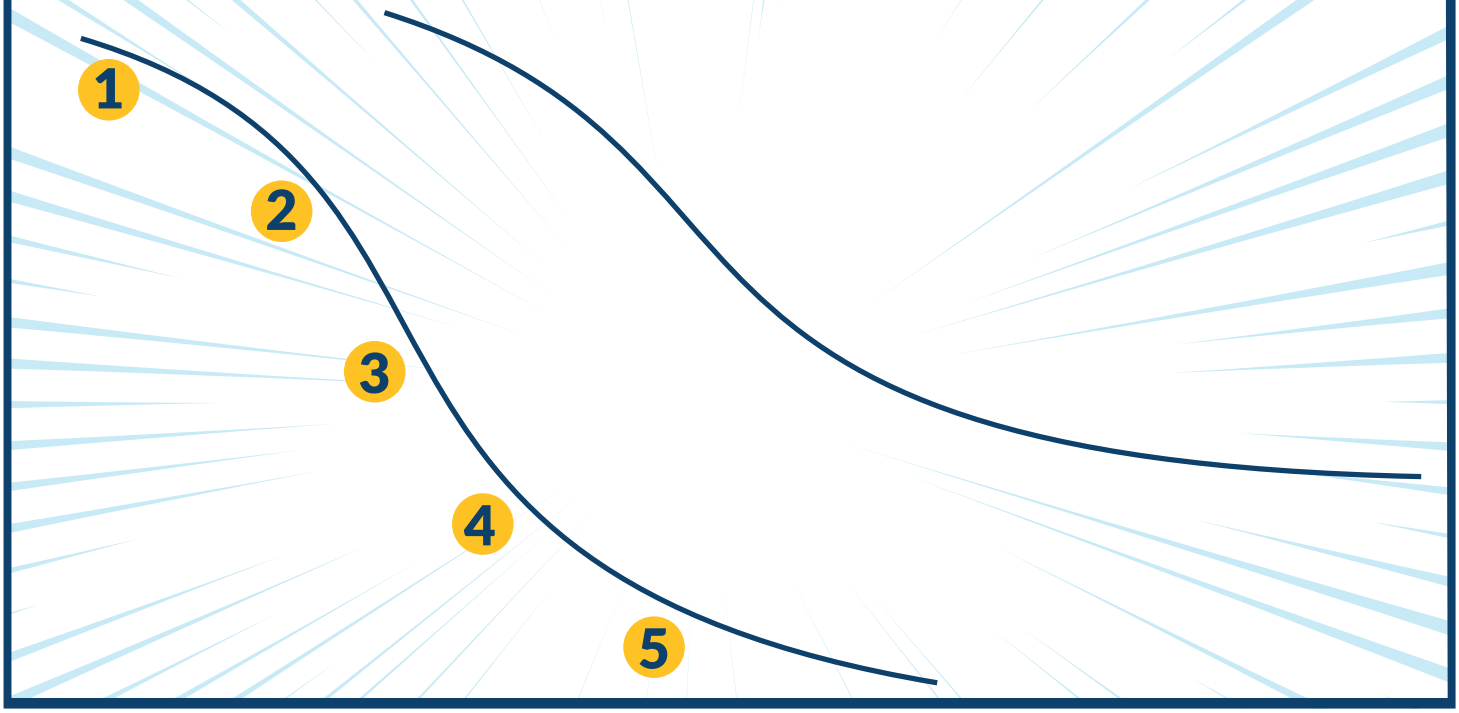
How successfully did you take charge of your future in 6th grade? _____

_____

_____

ACTIVITY

Let us begin the journey by setting five goals for the year and recording them on the roadmap below.
Two of your goals should be academic, two should be activity-related, and the fifth can be anything you want. We will revisit these at the end of the chapter to see how you did. Good luck!



WITH INTEREST

An interest is 'something you like to do'. You can often guess someone's interests from what they wear or items they carry. Interests that are cultivated may lead to careers. From the items below, name the interest each object relates to. For example, a tent might relate to camping.









_____ _____ _____ _____

There are hundreds of different interests in the world. Your interests are unique to you and no one else in the world will share all the same interests as you. However, you probably share at least one interest with everyone in the world.

Below are some common interests. Rate how well you like these interests on a scale of one to four (four means you really like it, and one means you don't like it.)

Exercise _____ Comedy _____ Animals _____ Skateboarding _____ Cars _____

Next, you'll identify your top ten interests using a list of things people like to do. Read the list of words below and place a checkmark to the left of the word if you like to do that activity or might like to do it sometime in the future. Then choose your top ten interests by placing a checkmark in the column titled 'Top Ten'. Interests change continuously, so this is just a snapshot of your interests at this point in time. There are no wrong answers – every person will choose their own unique set of interests.

√	INTERESTS	TOP TEN	√	INTERESTS	TOP TEN
	Animal Care			Art/Painting/Drawing	
	Astronomy/Space			Building Things	
	Cartooning/Drawing			Collecting Things	
	Comedy/Humor			Computers	
	Cooking			Dancing	
	Designing Things			Drama/Theatre	
	Fashion			Fitness/Exercise	
	Fixing Things			Foreign Languages	
	Gardening/Landscaping			Geo-caching/Hiking	
	Helping Children/Elderly			History/Family History	
	Individual Sports			Leadership/Politics	
	Magic/Card Tricks			Mechanics/Cars	
	Meeting New People			Money/Investing	
	Music/Concerts			Nature/Geography	
	Organizing Things			Outdoor Recreation	
	Photography			Playing Games/Puzzles	
	Psychology			Public Speaking/Debate	
	Reading			Science	
	Shopping			Singing	
	Surfing the Web			Team Sports	
	Travel			Video Games	
	Watching Movies/TV			Water Sports/Kayaking/Sailing	
	Working With Numbers			Working With Tools	
	Writing Stories/Texting			Yoga	



A skill is something a person can do.
Like interests, everyone has different skills.

Name a skill you have: _____

_____

Michael Jordan is well-known for his skills on the basketball court, the amount of time he could stay in the air to shoot the ball, and for the number on his jersey, 23. Michael has had a successful line of shoes, clothing, cologne, and now advertisements.

Describe the skills Michael Jordan has: _____

Dolly Parton is an American singer-songwriter, actress, philanthropist, and businesswoman, known primarily for her decades-long career in country music. She is also in a select group to have received at least one nomination from the Academy Awards, Grammy Awards, Tony Awards, and Emmy Awards. Outside of her work in the music industry, she also co-owns The Dollywood Company, which manages a number of entertainment venues, including the Dollywood theme park, the Splash Country water park, and a number of dinner theatre venues. Her Dollywood Foundation works to bring education and poverty relief to East Tennessee where she grew up.

Describe the skills Dolly Parton has: _____

Michelle Obama is an American attorney and author who served as first lady of the United States from 2009 to 2017. She was the first African-American woman to serve in this position. She is married to former President Barack Obama. In 2014, Mrs. Obama launched the REACH HIGHER INITIATIVE, an effort to inspire young people across America to take charge of their future by completing their education past high school, whether at a professional training program, a community college, or a four-year college or university.

Describe the skills Michelle Obama has: _____

Questions

1. What skills do these three people have in common? _____

2. How does a person's skill set influence the person they become? _____

3. Most people define skills as "what a person is good at." A more modern definition is "what a person can do." Why do you think some people believe 'good' is an ineffective word to use when defining skills? _____

_____

SKILLS CHECKLIST

Place an X next to each word that describes something you can do.

Academic Skills	____	Fixing/Repairing Things	____	People Skills	____
Acting/Performing	____	Foreign Language Skills	____	Physical Coordination	____
Athletic Quickness/Speed	____	Fund-Raising Skills	____	Physical Strength	____
Building/Constructing	____	Helping/Caring for Others	____	Precision/Detail Skills	____
Coaching/Teaching	____	Improvising/Adapting	____	Problem-Solving Skills	____
Communication Skills	____	Influencing/Selling Others	____	Product Assembly	____
Computer/Tech Skills	____	Interviewing/Questioning	____	Project Planning	____
Conflict Resolution	____	Investigating/Analyzing	____	Reading Skills	____
Cooking/Tasting	____	Leadership Skills	____	Record-Keeping	____
Creativity/Ideas	____	Learning Quickly	____	Research Skills	____
Customer Service Skills	____	Listening to Others	____	Resilience/Toughness	____
Dance/Rhythmic Skills	____	Managing Others	____	Rules Management	____
Data Analysis	____	Mathematical Thinking	____	Self-Management	____
Decision-Making	____	Measuring/Calculating	____	Speaking/Debating	____
Decorating Skills	____	Mechanical Reasoning	____	Spelling/Editing	____
Designing Skills	____	Meeting Management	____	Strategic Planning	____
Directional/Map Skills	____	Money Management	____	Stress Management	____
Drawing/Cartooning	____	Motivating Others/Self	____	Study Skills	____
Entertaining/Amusing	____	Multi-Tasking Skills	____	Teamwork Skills	____
Estimating Skills	____	Musical Skills	____	Test-Taking Skills	____
Evaluating/Assessing	____	Negotiating/Reasoning	____	Time Management	____
Expressing Feelings	____	Organizing/Coordinating	____	Troubleshooting Skills	____
Fashion Sense/Sewing	____	Operating Equipment	____	Writing Skills	____

Circle each of the skills above that makes someone a good student.

Top Skills...

Identify five top skills you have and provide an example of where those skills were used successfully in school, home, or the community.

Examples: Academic Skills – Honor roll for the past two years. Organizing Skills – Coordinated bike transition zone at local Triathlon.

1

2

3

4

5

COLLEGEFORTN.ORG INTEREST ASSESSMENT

Career interest inventories and assessments are testing instruments designed to help you learn more about yourself, as well as identify careers that would be a good fit based on your interests.

Go to CollegeForTN.org/Find a Career/Interest Assessment to complete the Interest Assessment.
The first page asks for demographic information. The remaining pages ask a series of questions about your likes and dislikes in the world of work. After completing the assessment, you will see your results along with the graphic below.



Based on the results of the Interest Assessment, what are your three top interest areas?

_____

_____

_____

Which word above describes you best? Next, Choose ONE career from the list below that word to research. Click on "Find Careers Based on Your Interests" to search for the career you choose.

REALISTIC	INVESTIGATIVE	ARTISTIC
1. Automotive Mechanic 2. Carpenter 3. Electrician 4. Farmer 5. Landscape Architect	1. Chemist 2. Doctor 3. Electrical Engineer 4. Pharmacist 5. Veterinarian	1. Actor 2. Architect 3. Dancer 4. Musician 5. Writer
SOCIAL	**ENTERPRISING**	**CONVENTIONAL**
1. Coach 2. Teacher 3. Psychologist 4. Recreational therapist 5. Childcare Worker	1. Lawyer 2. Loan Officer 3. Politician 4. Real Estate Agent	1. Accountant 2. Computer Support Specialist 3. Court Reporter 4. Librarian

The job I researched is: _____

What is this job like? _____

What education would I need? _____

How much does this job pay? _____

Is this job in high demand? _____

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Imagine you live in a world that has no concept of time. Identify a variety of ways that a timeless world would be different.

_____

_____

Time is a man-made tool that allows us to do things in an organized manner. Identifying daily commitments and organizing them in a useful way helps you to get more done, improve school achievement, and have more free time after your work is completed.

ACTIVITY

Your school day is already organized for you. Think about the time after the school day. Organize those after school activities into a schedule for your afternoon/evening.

List your after-school activities and commitments and how long each takes.

After-School Activities Example

60 minutes of homework
2 hours watching TV
30 minutes talking on telephone
30 minutes snack time
45 minutes dinner
30 minutes chores
2 hours of softball practice

My List of After-School Activities

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Create a schedule to fit all the activities you must complete after school in one day.

Schedule Example

3:15-5:15 Softball practice
5:15-5:45 Walk home
5:45-6:15 Snack
6:15-6:45 Chores
6:45-7:00 Dinner
7:00-8:00 Homework
8:00-8:30 Talking on phone
8:30- 9:00 Watching TV
9:00-9:15 Get ready for bed
9:15 Sleep

My Schedule

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Why did you choose to put the activities in that order?

_____

_____

Weekly Planner

Starting with next week, create a list of your activities for the entire week including your classes, homework, events, chores, and activities. This list should be detailed and should include the weekend. Place a time beside each event.

Monday Date:	Tuesday Date:	Wednesday Date:	Thursday Date:	Friday Date:

Saturday Date:	Sunday Date:

Looking at the schedule you have made for the next week, what will be the biggest challenges in following that schedule?

_____

TESTING, TESTING, 1 ,2, 3

Let's take a "pop quiz" on multiple choice questions. Read the following statements and guess whether they are FACT or FICTION:

1. Multiple choice questions can test higher level thinking? _____
2. Grammar doesn't matter in a multiple-choice question. _____
3. "All of the above" is ALWAYS the right answer to a multiple-choice question. _____
4. Your first choice is usually the right answer. _____
5. After completing a multiple-choice test, you should go back and review your answers. _____
6. When in doubt, choose B. _____

(Self-score your answers: FACT, FICTION, FICTION, FACT, FACT, FICTION)

There are ten **"GOLDEN RULES OF MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST TAKING".** If you follow them, you should see your scores on multiple choice tests improve. Of course, there's no replacement for knowing the test material.

Golden Rule #1
Breathe. Begin every test with a deep breath. Remind yourself that worrying will not make you know more answers. A relaxed mind will help. Use your intelligence – you'd be surprised what a calm person can do on a multiple-choice test!

Golden Rule #2
Plan your test attack. Listen carefully to your teacher when directions are given. Be sure you understand exactly what you have to do for each part of the test. Allocate time based on the value of each question.

Golden Rule #3
Think first. Read the multiple-choice question and try to answer it before looking at the various answers. You will move much more quickly through a multiple-choice test by looking for a specific answer in the options available.

Golden Rule #4
Answer the questions you know first. It builds a sense of confidence and helps you when you return to do the questions where you were unsure. Sometimes one test question will give you a clue about a correct or incorrect option somewhere else.

Golden Rule #5
Pace yourself. Don't spend too much time on any one question. Do your best and then move on. Be sure to place a mark by questions you skip and remember to go back if you have time!

Golden Rule #6
Improve your odds. When working on questions where you are unsure or don't know, eliminate options you know are incorrect. A 1/3 chance is better than a 1/5 chance!

Golden Rule #7
Never leave a question blank. Always make an educated guess. Once you make your choice, move on. There's no use spending too much time on a question you don't know. If you are truly unsure, select C.

Golden Rule #8
Review your answers. Check to make sure you answered all the questions. Never stop working on a test until you have re-checked every question (or the teacher tells you time is up).

Golden Rule #9
Don't change answers unless you are sure. As you go back through all the completed questions, DO NOT change your answers unless you are certain your answer was wrong. Your FIRST guess is usually RIGHT.

Golden Rule #10
Ignore answer sequences – just because the last two answers were B does not mean the next one isn't.

ASKING FOR HELP

Do you ask for help when you don't know how to do something or can't manage it on your own? Or, rather than look stupid and incompetent, do you pretend like you know what you're doing? Rather than a sign of weakness, asking for help is a form of self-care.

ACTIVITY

Answer the questions below about when, why, and how students ask for help. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. Check the answer that most applies to you.

☐ I always ask for help when I need it.

☐ I sometimes ask for help when I need it.

☐ I rarely ask for help even when I need it.

Explain in two to three sentences why you answered the way you did.

_____

_____

_____

2. We all have times when we do ask for help. When are you most likely to ask someone else for help? (Examples: at home, from a friend, when assigned a new task)

_____

_____

3. We all have times when we just won't ask for help. When are you most likely to avoid asking for help? Why?

_____

_____

4. Rate the following questions as True (T) or False (F).

_____ Asking for help in class makes you look needy or nerdy.

_____ Asking for help shows that you are thinking about what you are learning.

_____ Asking for help puts other students in an awkward position.

_____ Asking for help means that you trust the teacher to help you.

_____ Asking for help means you are the teacher's favorite or a teacher's "pet".

5. Do you believe it is important to ask for help when you don't know how to do something on your own? Explain the reasons for your answer.

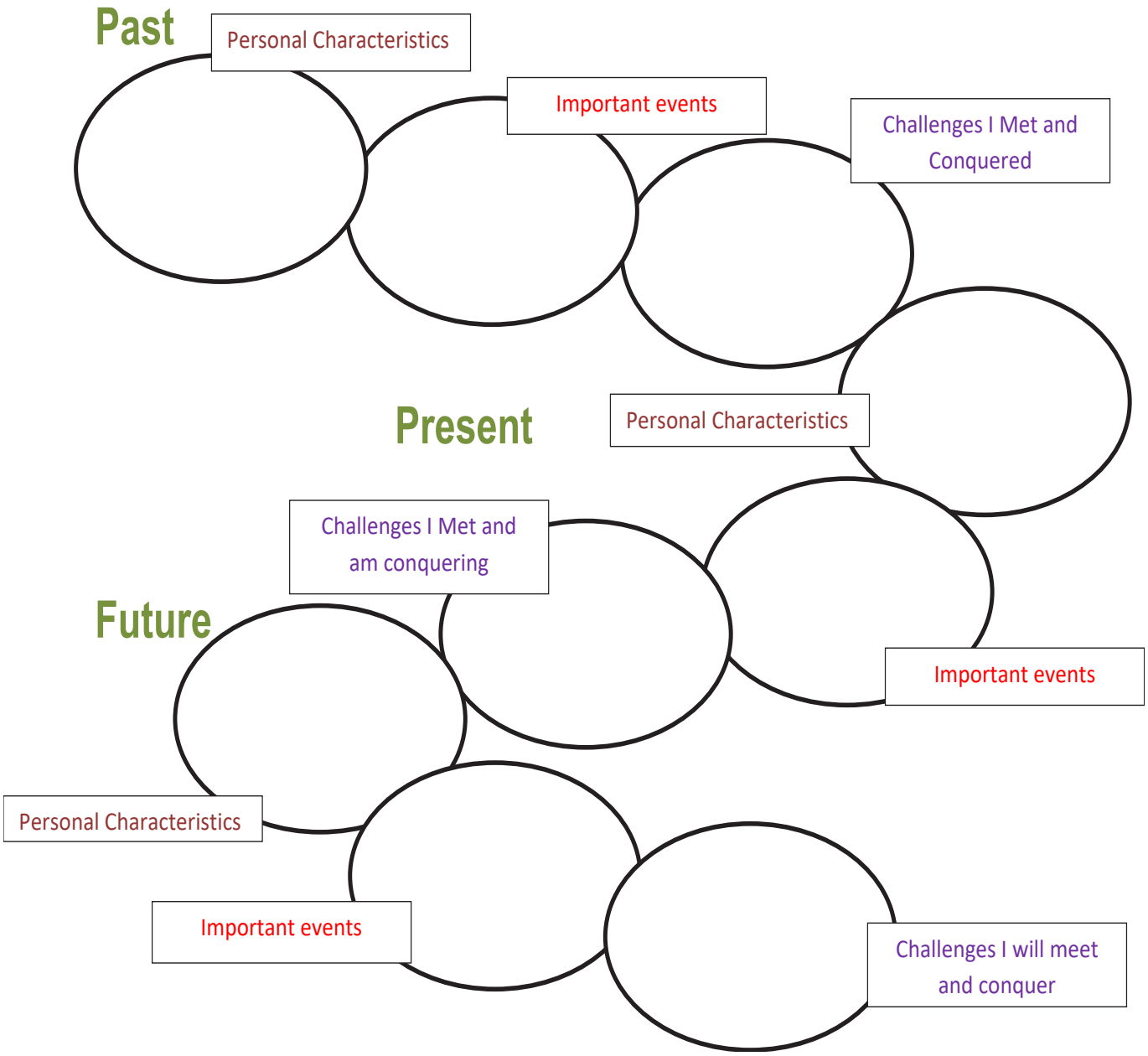
_____

_____

Answers to Question 4: F, T, F, T, F

MY STORY

A person's story is a combination of factors including their personal characteristics and circumstances, important events in their lives, and challenges they have overcome. It is told on a timeline from the past to the present and into the future. Below is a brief outline to help you reflect and collect the information you need to tell your story.



Something else I would like you to know about me as we begin this year together is...

_____

_____

RÉSUMÉ OR ACTIVITY LOG



A résumé or activity log is a good way to introduce yourself. You will usually need one if you are applying for a job, an internship, or scholarship, and one may be needed for a college application. A résumé or activity log summarizes who you are including, but not limited to, your experience, what you can do, and your unique skills, talents, and leadership and/or athletic abilities. While this is a good start, you should continue to update your résumé through high school.

Contact Information: (This should include your name, address, phone number, and email address. Make sure you list a number at which you can be reached, and your email address is professional.)

_____

_____

_____

Objective: (If you are applying for a job, describe why you want the job, and what you hope to learn. If you are not applying for a job right now, write that you want to put your skills to work in the community. If you are using your activity log for writing a personal statement for a college or scholarship application, more details about your leadership roles, goals, or special circumstances are needed.)

_____

_____

_____

Skills and Strengths: (Write short points using action words such as led, organized, managed, designed, and developed. Refer to the earlier activities you completed in this guide for suggestions. You should also list any Career and Technical courses, certifications, college credit, and pre-apprenticeship certifications.)

_____

_____

_____

Experience: (Show your positions/titles, main responsibilities or things you did in the position, work or volunteer experience, and list your accomplishments in any school or community-based groups you've joined.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Activities/Athletics, Leadership Roles, Talents, Awards, Community Service: (Describe your positions and list your accomplishments in the groups you've joined.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

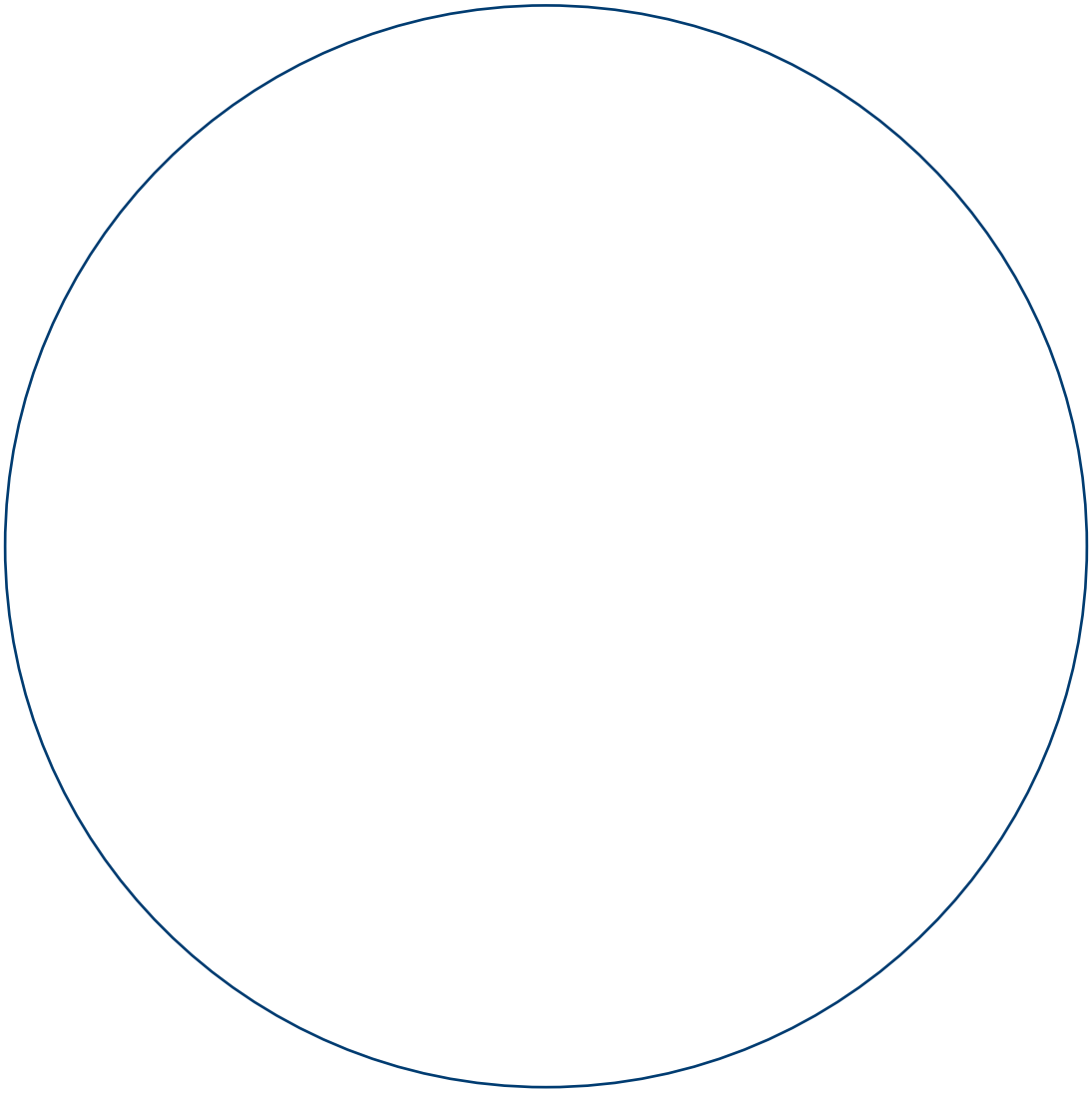
YOUR PIECE OF THE PIE

There are four types of career and life activities: work (paid activities), education (learning activities), recreation (active health and relaxing activities), and volunteering (contribution activities). Below, give examples of each activity type. Remember that each type of activity plays an important role in a person's life. It is important that each of us maintains a healthy balance of each type of activity throughout our lifetime.

Work/Chores _____ Education _____

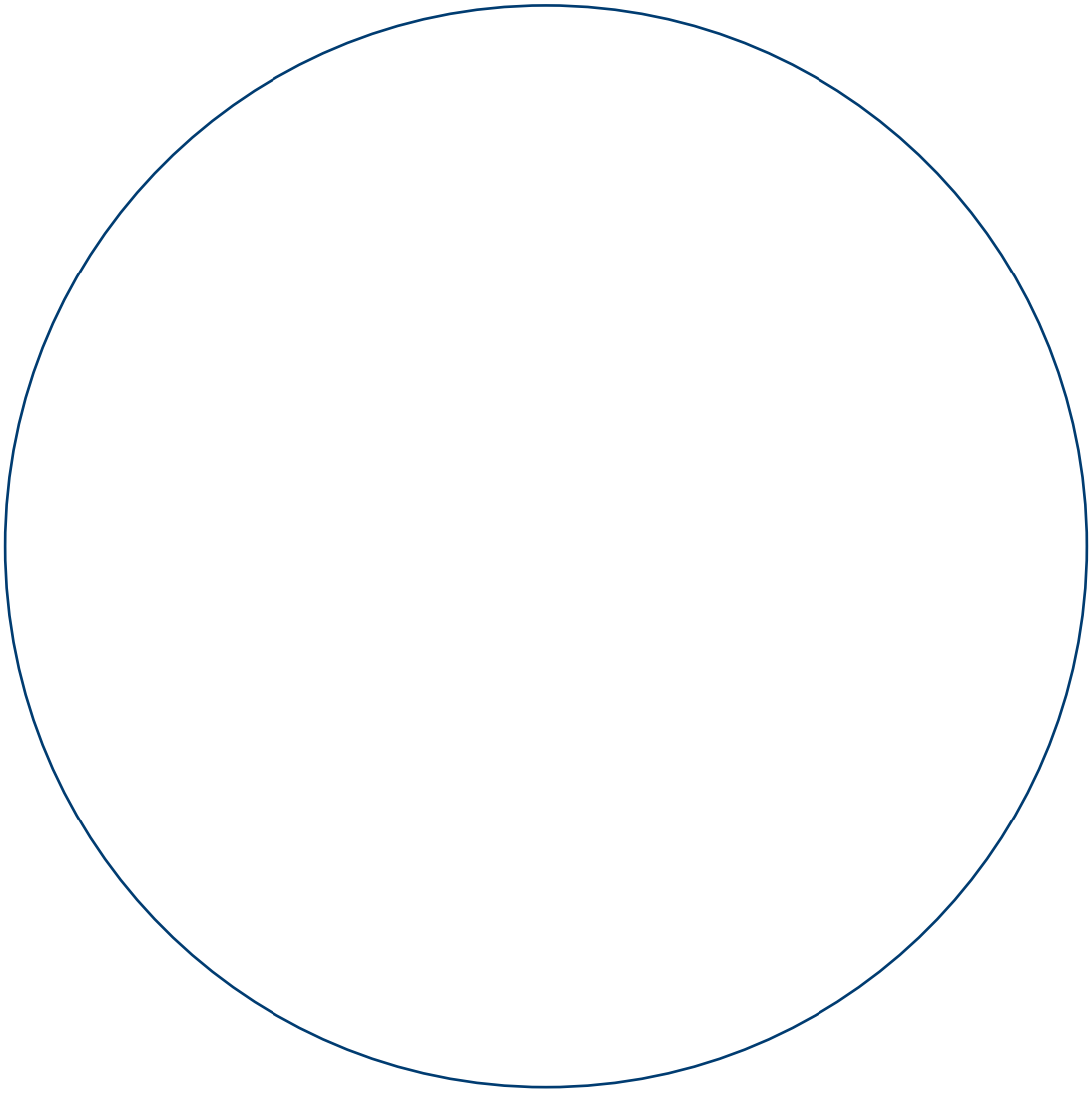
Recreation _____ Volunteering _____

Below is a pie that represents the time you will spend in your life involved in four career and life activities: work, education, recreation, and volunteer activities. Divide and label the pie according to how much time you believe should be spent on each of the career and life activities.



NEXT YEAR

Below is a pie that represents the time you'd like to spend in the next year with the four career and life activities: work, education, recreation, and volunteer activities. Divide the pie according to how much time you believe will be spent on each of the career and life activities. BTW: School time will take up approximately 20% of the 5,840 waking hours in a year, not counting homework or extra study time.



LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

What do you dream about doing? No matter what you want to do, you're encouraged to continue your education after high school graduation. That's because nearly every job today requires "postsecondary" (after high school) education. Below are descriptions of the five most common career paths after high school. Each path has value, and each person will choose the path that takes them to their defined career goal.

Universities

These schools, sometimes called colleges, generally offer bachelor's degrees that take about four years to complete. They also offer master's degrees, doctoral degrees, and professional degrees.
University of Tennessee Knoxville, University of Tennessee Martin, University of Tennessee Chattanooga, University of Tennessee Southern, University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Austin Peay State University, University of Memphis, Tennessee State University, Middle Tennessee State University, East Tennessee State University, and Tennessee Technological University are the public universities in Tennessee and are selective in their admissions, meaning that not all students who apply will earn admission. There are many private colleges and universities in Tennessee, as well.

Community Colleges

These schools offer associate degrees and certificates. They also offer all the general studies courses needed for a bachelor's degree, and the credit for these courses can be transferred to a university. Completing the general studies requirements at a community college and then transferring to a university to complete the courses in a specific major can be a cost-effective way to complete a bachelor's degree. Community Colleges are also open-enrollment colleges, meaning that all who successfully complete an application within the required deadlines will be granted a seat in the upcoming semester. There are 13 community colleges in Tennessee and many more satellite campuses.

Apprenticeships/CTE

Registered apprenticeships provide the opportunity to "earn while you learn." Partnerships between trade organizations, employers, state government, and community colleges provide a program that combines classroom training (which may include college credit courses) and paid, supervised on-the-job training, lasting two to five years. After successful completion of an apprenticeship program, students are eligible for certificates of completion, journeyman status, and/or licenses for specific occupations and trades, such as electrician, carpenter, and horse trainer. Some high schools work closely with Work-Based Learning Opportunities, and some students begin these apprenticeships while still in high school. To learn more, check out www.tn.gov/apprenticeshiptn.

Technical Colleges/ TCATs

These schools are colleges that provide mostly employment-preparation skills for trained labor, such as welding and culinary arts. These programs generally take no more than two years to complete. Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs) are examples of this kind of school. Depending on the institution and the field of study, the credential awarded may be a certificate or a diploma and, depending on the program, may take several weeks or up to two years to complete. Tennessee has 24 TCATs across the state. Like community colleges, TCATs offer open enrollment to those students who apply and complete the required steps for admission. Certain programs in high demand may require that students be placed on a waiting list until available spots open up. Apply early and ask your local technical school or TCAT representative to help you navigate the process.

Military Service

The five active-duty branches of the U.S. Military, consisting of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard, each offer educational options tied to multi-year commitments of service. Some students enlist immediately after high school graduation, while others elect to serve in the National Guard while enrolled in college coursework. Others pursue ROTC to help pay for university tuition and then serve after they have graduated from college.
To learn more visit www.todaysmilitary.com.

Which path do you plan to follow? Why? _____

_____

_____

Goals Checkup

How am I doing so far? By now, you are well into 7th grade Let's take some time to see how it's going. You set goals for your academics and activities back on page 24. Look at each of your goals. How are you doing on them?

Goal #1 _____

- ☐ Doing Great!
- ☐ Okay
- ☐ Could be better.
- ☐ Need help!

Next step for this goal: _____

Goal #2 _____

- ☐ Doing Great!
- ☐ Okay
- ☐ Could be better.
- ☐ Need help!

Next step for this goal: _____

Goal #3 _____

- ☐ Doing Great!
- ☐ Okay
- ☐ Could be better.
- ☐ Need help!

Next step for this goal: _____

Goal #4 _____

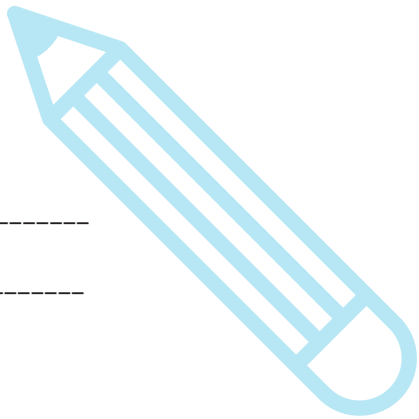
- ☐ Doing Great!
- ☐ Okay
- ☐ Could be better.
- ☐ Need help!

Next step for this goal: _____

Goal #5 _____

- ☐ Doing Great!
- ☐ Okay
- ☐ Could be better.
- ☐ Need help

Next step for this goal: _____



KEEPING YOUR OPTIONS OPEN

What do you think a family wage job is? The answer is obvious: it's a job that pays enough to support a family! But what does that mean? Can you earn enough to pay rent? Enough to afford a car? Most jobs that pay more than minimum wage require some level of education or training after high school, commonly called postsecondary education.

PART A: Answer the questions below. Give yourself 10 points for every correct answer.

	T or F?	Your Score
1. Most family wage jobs require education or training after high school.	_____	_____
2. Just one year of education or training after high school can increase your lifetime earnings.	_____	_____
3. On average, college graduates have lower rates of unemployment than high school graduates.	_____	_____
4. College graduates have more jobs to choose from.	_____	_____

TOTAL SCORE: 0_____

Would you be surprised to learn that the answer to all four questions is true? Why or why not?

_____

_____

PART B: CollegeForTN.org is Tennessee's college and career planning website. For the next exercise, go to https://www.collegefortn.org/career-finder/ to find the education needed for the careers below. Simply enter the career name in the Search box at the top left of the page.

CAREER	POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION NEEDED
Carpenter	
Licensed Practical Nurse	
Computer Support Specialist	
Graphic Designer	
Environmental Engineer	

TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUR OPTIONS OPEN

What you do today matters! Your work during middle school and high school will set your path for the future. Here are a few tips to help you keep your options open so that you can achieve your dreams. Share these tips with your family. Check off each one that you can do.

WORK HARD IN SCHOOL

- ☐ 1.Attend class every day and make sure you're prepared.
- ☐ 2.Pay attention during class.
- ☐ 3.Join in class discussions. Show your teachers what you know!
- ☐ 4.Ask questions. If you don't understand something, be sure to ask about it.
- ☐ 5.Keep up with your assignments. Set a schedule for big projects and do a little every day.
- ☐ 6.Check your assignments before turning them in to make sure they're correct.
- ☐ 7.Study with a friend or a tutor if you do better working with others.
- ☐ 8.Find a quiet, organized place to study.

GET INVOLVED

- ☐ 1.Join at least one activity at school that interests you.
- ☐ 2.Find out if you can volunteer at school – to help a teacher or tutor a younger student.
- ☐ 3.Get involved in activities and organizations in your neighborhood.

EXPLORE YOUR INTERESTS

- ☐ 1.Start thinking about what you'd like to do when you grow up.
- ☐ 2.Learn about career possibilities.
- ☐ 3.Read something every day: newspapers, blogs, books, or magazines.
- ☐ 4.Talk with your family and your school counselor about your goals and dreams for your career.

LEARN HOW TO GET THERE FROM HERE

Here are a few websites that will help you plan the steps you should take between now and your high school graduation. Explore these sites on your own or with your family.

1. ***www.collegefortn.org*** In addition to the career finder you visited on the previous page, you can learn about Tennessee colleges and universities and Tennessee financial aid.
2. ***www.educationplanner.org*** You can take a quiz about your learning style and personality type, learn about interesting careers, and find out what education you'll need.
3. ***www.mappingyourfuture.org*** Within this site, you'll find a series of "Guides to Life After High School" and learn about paying for college.

PREPARING FOR HIGH SCHOOL

Middle and high school is a very important time. It will be as exciting and rewarding as you make it. Part of making high school rewarding is planning ahead to take advantage of the opportunities that will be offered. You can start planning ahead today – by thinking about how you might make your time in high school count.

WHO ARE YOU?

Think about all the things you like to do. Write down three interests – maybe playing soccer or playing guitar or hiking. Then write a sentence about what you can do at school or at home to build on your interests. Maybe you can play a school sport or join a club.

Three of my interests are: _____

_____

_____

I can build on my interests by _____

_____

_____

HOW ARE YOU DOING IN MIDDLE SCHOOL?

You are in your second year of middle school. How are you doing? What can you do to improve?

To do better in school, I can _____

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO IN HIGH SCHOOL?

What do you hope to accomplish when you are in high school? Check all that apply.

- ☐ Join a sports team
- ☐ Get a high GPA
- ☐ Take 4 years of science
- ☐ Be in school government
- ☐ Take career prep courses
- ☐ Join clubs & activities
- ☐ Take honors & advanced classes
- ☐ Take a world language
- ☐ Help out other students
- ☐ Learn about postsecondary programs
- ☐ Play a musical instrument
- ☐ Take 4 years of math
- ☐ Get a part-time job
- ☐ Volunteer in the community
- ☐ Graduate on time

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

Based on what you know today, what do you think you want to do after high school?

- ☐ Get a job right away
- ☐ Get a 4-year college degree
- ☐ Find an apprenticeship
- ☐ Go to graduate school
- ☐ Finish a 1-2 year program
- ☐ Join the military

A GOAL FOR THE FUTURE



Complete this phrase:
In 10 years, I will be... _____

_____

Now, think about how you will get from here to there.

INTERESTS

My goal for 10 years from now builds on my interests because I am interested in:

_____

HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES

To achieve my goal for the future, I plan to take the following classes in high school (Check all that apply):

☐ 4 credits in math
☐ 3-4 credits in science
☐ 3-4 credits in social studies
☐ 4 credits in English
☐ 2-4 credits in a foreign language
☐ Advanced or honors classes
☐ 1.5 credits in PE & Wellness
☐ 0.5 credits in Personal Finance
☐ 1 credit in Fine Arts
☐ CTE (career prep) classes in: _____
☐ Electives (3 credits) in: _____
☐ I want to participate in clubs or sports, including: _____

POSTSECONDARY PLANS

To achieve my goal for the future, I will continue to work hard after high school graduation. I will (choose all that apply):

☐ Get a job right away
☐ Find an apprenticeship
☐ Finish a certificate or 2-year (Associate) degree
☐ Get a 4-year college degree
☐ Go to graduate school
☐ Join the military

My ideal job would be: _____

It would help me achieve my goal because _____

_____

Future Possibilities

One way people can begin to identify careers they like is to take an interest survey. Below you will check off boxes in each section that describes or identifies your interests. At the bottom of each box, you will tally how many descriptions you checked and write the total in the box.

CAREER INTEREST SURVEY

Activities that sound interesting to me are:
- ☐ 1.Helping people
- ☐ 2.Helping sick people
- ☐ 3.Taking care of animals' injuries and illnesses
- ☐ 4.Studying anatomy and disease
- ☐ 5.Helping with sports injuries
- ☐ 6.Helping people stay healthy

Personal qualities that describe me are:
- ☐ 1.Compassionate and caring
- ☐ 2.Good listener
- ☐ 3.Good at following directions
- ☐ 4.Conscientious and careful
- ☐ 5.Patient

In my free time I would enjoy:
- ☐ 1.Volunteering in a hospital
- ☐ 2.Taking care of pets
- ☐ 3.Working at being healthy
- ☐ 4.Exercising

School subjects/activities that I enjoy or do well in:
- ☐ 1. Math
- ☐ 2.Science
- ☐ 3.Biology
- ☐ 4.Chemistry

TOTAL # CHECKED = Health & Medicine: 0

Activities that sound interesting to me are:
- ☐ 1.Predicting the weather
- ☐ 2.Predicting earthquakes
- ☐ 3.Growing plants
- ☐ 4.Studying rocks and minerals
- ☐ 5.Raising animals
- ☐ 6.Working in a chemistry lab

Personal qualities that describe me are:
- ☐ 1.Like to solve problems
- ☐ 2.Nature lover
- ☐ 3.Physically active
- ☐ 4.Detailed
- ☐ 5.Observant

In my free time I would enjoy:
- ☐ 1.Hiking
- ☐ 2.Experimenting with a chemistry set
- ☐ 3.Bird watching
- ☐ 4.Gardening

School subjects/activities that I enjoy or do well in:
- ☐ 1. Math
- ☐ 2.Geography
- ☐ 3.Biology
- ☐ 4.Earth Science

TOTAL # CHECKED = Environment & Nature: 0



CAREER INTEREST SURVEY *(Continued)*

Activities that sound interesting to me are:
- ☐ 1. Reading or writing stories or articles
- ☐ 2. Creating scenery for plays
- ☐ 3. Designing advertisements
- ☐ 4. Taking photographs
- ☐ 5. Acting in a play or movie
- ☐ 6. Listening to/playing music

Personal qualities that describe me are:
- ☐ 1. Imaginative
- ☐ 2. Creative
- ☐ 3. Outgoing
- ☐ 4. Like using hands to create things
- ☐ 5. Performer

In my free time I would enjoy:
- ☐ 1. Working on the school newspaper
- ☐ 2. Acting in a play
- ☐ 3. Painting pictures, drawing
- ☐ 4. Creating a blog

School subjects/activities that I enjoy or do well in:
- ☐ 1. Speech/drama
- ☐ 2. Choir/chorus/band/orchestra
- ☐ 3. Creative writing
- ☐ 4. Art

TOTAL # CHECKED = 0
Creative/Fine Arts

Activities that sound interesting to me are:
- ☐ 1. Putting things together
- ☐ 2. Working on mechanical things
- ☐ 3. Using math to solve problems
- ☐ 4. Repairing electronic equipment
- ☐ 5. Using tools
- ☐ 6. Taking things apart to find out how they work

Personal qualities that describe me are:
- ☐ 1. Practical
- ☐ 2. Like using my hands
- ☐ 3. Logical thinker
- ☐ 4. Organized
- ☐ 5. Observant

In my free time I would enjoy:
- ☐ 1. Building things
- ☐ 2. Figuring out how machines work
- ☐ 3. Working on cars
- ☐ 4. Solving puzzles

School subjects/activities that I enjoy or do well in:
- ☐ 1. Math
- ☐ 2. Mechanics
- ☐ 3. Construction
- ☐ 4. Science

TOTAL # CHECKED = 0
Engineering & Technology

CAREER INTEREST SURVEY *(Continued)*

Activities that sound interesting to me are:
- ☐ 1. Interviewing people
- ☐ 2. Making things operate efficiently
- ☐ 3. Leading a team of people
- ☐ 4. Coordinating meetings
- ☐ 5. Being in charge of a group project
- ☐ 6. Planning for positive change

Personal qualities that describe me are:
- ☐ 1. Practical
- ☐ 2. Independent
- ☐ 3. Organized
- ☐ 4. Decision-maker
- ☐ 5. Like to be around people

In my free time I would enjoy:
- ☐ 1. Being in a speech contest or debate
- ☐ 2. Organizing a club or team
- ☐ 3. Joining a political party
- ☐ 4. Investing in the stock market

School subjects/activities that I enjoy or do well in:
- ☐ 1. Law
- ☐ 2. Language Arts
- ☐ 3. Math
- ☐ 4. Marketing

TOTAL # CHECKED = Business & Management 0

Activities that sound interesting to me are:
- ☐ 1. Helping people solve problems
- ☐ 2. Working with children
- ☐ 3. Working with the elderly
- ☐ 4. Providing guidance or advice
- ☐ 5. Helping the homeless
- ☐ 6. Raising funds for a worthy cause

Personal qualities that describe me are:
- ☐ 1. Friendly
- ☐ 2. Open
- ☐ 3. Outgoing
- ☐ 4. Caring
- ☐ 5. Good listener

In my free time I would enjoy:
- ☐ 1. Tutoring young children
- ☐ 2. Helping with a community project
- ☐ 3. Coaching kids in a sport
- ☐ 4. Listening to a person's problems

School subjects/activities that I enjoy or do well in:
- ☐ 1. Language Arts
- ☐ 2. Child Development
- ☐ 3. Psychology/Sociology
- ☐ 4. Peer Counseling

TOTAL # CHECKED = Public Service 0

CAREER INTERESTS

Using your results from the survey you just took, transfer the TOTAL # CHECKED for each category to the table below. After reading the description of each pathway, circle the jobs in the Sample Jobs column that interest you.

Career Pathway	Career Focus	Description	Sample Jobs
1. Health and Medicine My total is: 0 _____	Working to help people.	People working in this field provide health care and support services to address the physical, mental and emotional needs of their clients. They apply scientific, technical, social and interpersonal skills to diagnose and treat illnesses, document care, provide a therapeutic environment and maintain the health of their clients.	☐ Ambulance Driver ☐ Chiropractor ☐ Clinical Psychologist ☐ Dental Hygienist ☐ Paramedic ☐ Pharmacist ☐ Doctor ☐ Nurse ☐ Pharmacist ☐ Physical Therapist ☐ Psychiatrist ☐ Sports Nutritionist ☐ Surgeon ☐ Veterinarian ☐ X-ray Technician
2. Environment & Nature My total is: 0 _____	Working with and managing resources in the natural world.	People working in this field apply technical and scientific knowledge to the study of the earth and its elements and frontiers. They care for and protect environments, harvest natural resources, and raise animals.	☐ Agricultural Engineer ☐ Astronomer ☐ Biochemist ☐ Ecologist ☐ Environmental Scientist ☐ Farmer/Rancher ☐ Fish/Wildlife Manager ☐ Forest/Park Ranger ☐ Geologist ☐ Landscaper ☐ Marine Biologist ☐ Park Naturalist ☐ Soil Conservationist ☐ Water Quality Technician
3. Creative/Fine Arts My total is: 0 _____	Using ideas and information to express personal perspectives and communicate with people.	People working in this field engage in literary, cultural, artistic, and entertainment activities. They interpret and communicate concepts and ideas through writing, painting, drawing, speaking, dancing, musical expression and a wide variety of other expressive techniques.	☐ Actor ☐ Advertising Specialist ☐ Artist ☐ Cartoonist/Animator ☐ Dancer ☐ Gallery Owner ☐ Graphic Designer ☐ Film and Video Editor ☐ Florist ☐ Interior Designer ☐ Musician ☐ Photographer ☐ Radio/TV Announcer ☐ Script Writer ☐ Set Designer

CAREER INTERESTS *(Continued)*

Career Pathway	Career Focus	Description	Sample Jobs
4. Engineering & Technology My total is: 0 _____	Working with objects, data, and ideas to create, move, change, operate, or build things	People working in this field use technical knowledge and skill to assemble, inspect, design, maintain and repair. They provide scientific and diagnostic skills to maintain and repair computer equipment, aircraft, automobiles, buildings, roads, bridges and manufacturing machinery.	☐ Aerospace Engineer ☐ Aircraft Mechanic ☐ Architect ☐ Automotive Technician ☐ Carpenter ☐ Civil Engineer ☐ Computer Programmer ☐ Database Manager ☐ Electrician ☐ Electronics Engineer ☐ Plumber ☐ Software Developer ☐ Surveyor ☐ Web Developer
5. Business & Management My total is: 0 _____	Working with people and information to lead and manage the delivery of products and services to the market.	People working in this field support public and private enterprises by managing people and information. They perform such activities as planning, training, promoting, consulting, researching, and reporting. These activities result in the development of products and services that meet specific societal needs.	☐ Accountant ☐ Banker ☐ Cashier/Teller ☐ Chief Executive Officer ☐ Chief Financial Officer ☐ Insurance Sales Agent ☐ Lawyer ☐ Marketing Manager ☐ Office Manager ☐ Politician ☐ Real Estate Agent ☐ Retail Salesperson ☐ Sports/Acting Agent ☐ Stockbroker ☐ Travel Agent
6. Public Services My total is: 0 _____	Working to help people and solve social prob-lems.	People working in this field provide protective, social, education and community services. They provide assistance to individuals or families in periods of need throughout their lives.	☐ Beauty Therapist ☐ Child Care Specialist ☐ Correctional Officer ☐ Flight Attendant ☐ Guidance Counselor ☐ Home Health Aide ☐ Librarian ☐ Lifeguard ☐ Police Officer ☐ Psychologist ☐ Recreation Specialist ☐ Social Worker ☐ Speech Pathologist ☐ Teacher ☐ Translator/Interpreter

In which of the six categories do you have the highest score? _____

Look at the sample jobs you circled in that category. What are your top three?

_____ _____ _____

NOTE-TAKING SKILLS

Listening to a lecture can be challenging. At best, students with poor listening habits only hear 50% of what a speaker says and remember only 20% at a later time. Effective note-taking can significantly improve those numbers.

There is a difference between taking notes from a written text versus taking notes from a lecture. Many students have developed some successful skills at reading text information and then writing down helpful notes. Taking notes from lectures or oral presentations may be a little more difficult.

ACTIVITY

In order to take good lecture notes, you must first be a good listener. For each negative listening habit below, list the right way to listen effectively.

Poor Listening Habits	Good Listening Habits
Calling the subject dull	_____
Criticizing the speaker	_____
Putting your head down on the table	_____
Not facing the speaker directly	_____
Talking while the speaker is talking	_____
Listening only for the facts	_____
Faking attention	_____
Socializing with friends	_____
Not asking questions	_____
Not thinking about what the speaker is saying	_____
Letting emotion get in the way	_____
Not making connections to what the speaker is saying	_____

GENERAL NOTE-TAKING TIPS

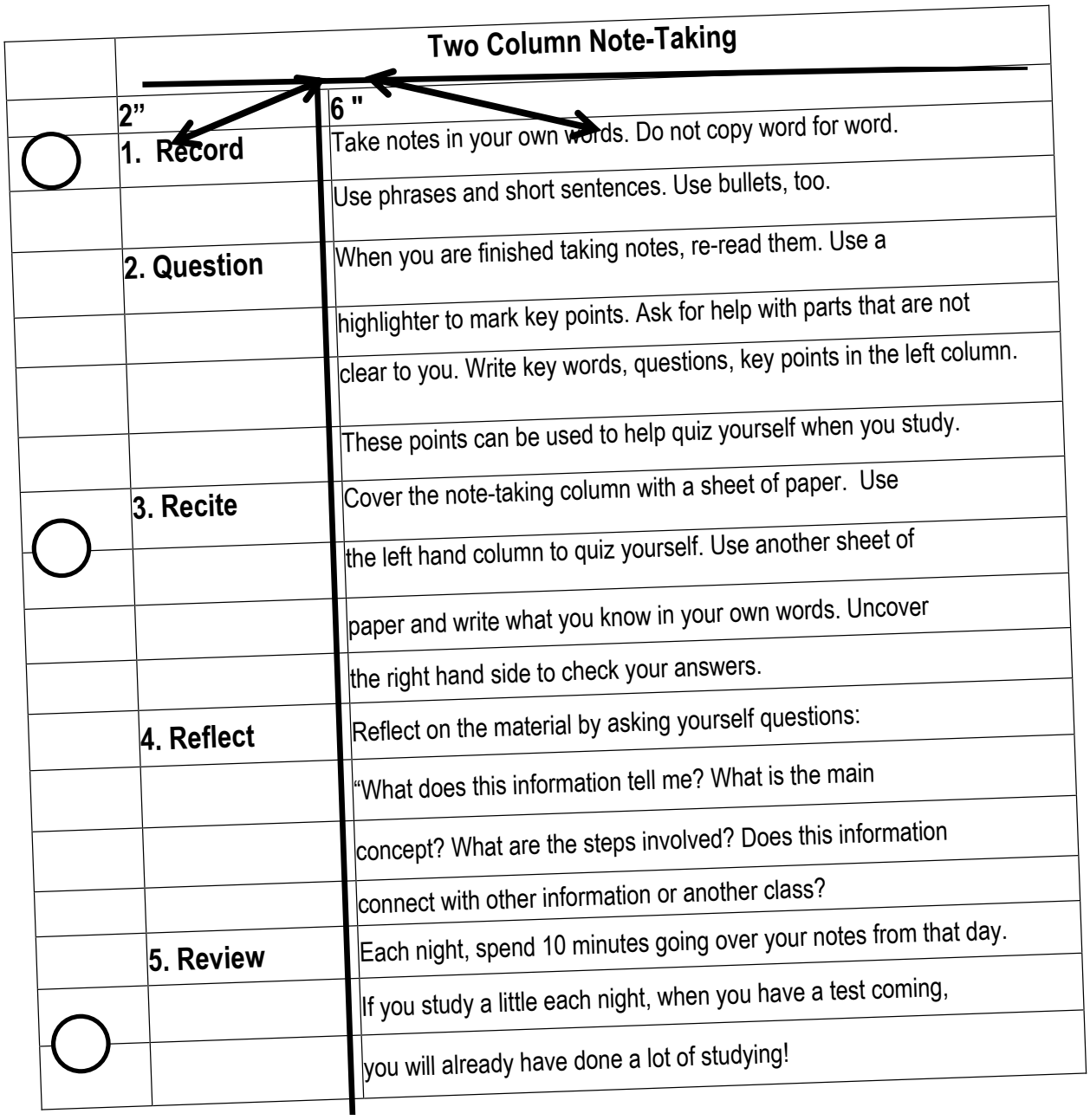
1. Listen carefully and think about what is said to develop an understanding of the material.
2. Determine what is important in the lecture, writing brief notes that summarize key points.
3. Personal notes are easier to remember, so put lecture ideas into your own words.
4. When the speaker repeats information, emphasizes words or writes words down on the board, these are clues that the information is important. Record these things in your notes.
5. Don't write down everything that you read or hear. Be alert and attentive to the main points. Concentrate on the "meat" of the subject and forget the trimmings.
6. Notes should consist of key words, or very short sentences. Almost like a caveman would speak—short and to the point.
7. Take accurate notes. You should usually use your own words, but try not to change the meaning. If you quote directly from an author, quote correctly and use quotation marks.
8. Think before you start making notes. Don't take notes just to be taking notes! Take notes that will be of real value to you when you look them over at a later date.
9. Have a uniform system of punctuation and abbreviation that will make sense to you. Leave lots of white space for later additions.
10. Omit descriptions and full explanations. Keep your notes short and to the point. Condense your material so you can grasp it rapidly.
11. Don't worry about missing a point.
12. Don't keep notes on oddly shaped pieces of paper. Keep notes in order and in one place.
13. Shortly after making your notes, go back and rework (not redo) your notes by adding extra points and spelling out unclear items. Remember, we forget things rapidly. Budget time for this vital step just as you do for the class itself.
14. Review your notes regularly. This is the best way to achieve a lasting memory.

GENERAL NOTE-TAKING TIPS *(Continued)*

The goals of note-taking are to record the meaningful facts and ideas, question information, recite the facts and information, reflect on what was learned and review the information to remember what was learned.

Below is a description of the two-column note-taking system we introduced in the 6th Grade chapter. Some of the key points to this system are:

1. Always write the title and date on the top of each page.
2. Use the right-hand column for detailed notes.
3. Use the left-hand column for summary points.
4. Sometimes you will record information in the left column first, and sometimes you will take notes in the right-hand section and then provide the cues in the left-hand section.



CAREER DOOR #1, 2, OR 3?



In the table below, you will look at three different career pathways and evaluate what you think may be the best fit for you. It is especially important to consider all college, career, and technical opportunities you will have in school and beyond high school.

Possible Steps in my Career Pathway	Starting Place #1	Starting Place #2	Starting Place #3
One of my interests			
Possible jobs that fit my interests			
Occupational areas I might like to explore			
High school CTE or Tech Prep courses that would help			
Internships and Apprenticeship programs that would help me			
Technical, Community College or Military programs that would help me			
University programs I might want to consider			
First Stop - First Job!			
My first-year salary			

SUMMER AGAIN & MY TOP TEN

As the school year begins to wind down, it's never too early to start thinking about summer and looking ahead to 8th grade. As you make your summer plans, look for a healthy balance of each type of activity: work (paid activities), education (learning activities), recreation (active health activities), volunteerism (contribution activities), and family.

What's your summer plan?

Work: _____

_____

Education: _____

_____

Recreation: _____

_____

Leisure: _____

_____

Volunteerism: _____

_____

Family: _____

_____

My 7th Grade Top Ten

As a way to reflect on all that you have accomplished this year, complete a list of your top ten achievements. Identify achievements in all areas of your life such as school, work, recreation, leisure, volunteerism, and family.

That is a lot to be proud of. Keep the momentum going. Next stop- 8th grade!

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

6._____

7._____

8._____

9._____

10._____

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SECTION THREE



8TH GRADE


"Life doesn't
give us purpose.
We give life purpose."
- The Flash

Welcome to 8th Grade!

Throughout this guide, we've talked about two commitments – to "take charge of your future" and to become "high school ready" by the end of 8th grade. The success you've had in middle school can be attributed to your involvement in your classes and school activities. Are you ready for high school?

ACTIVITY

In this activity, you are being interviewed by a sports announcer because of your participation in the Academic World Cup (which is totally made up.)

Interviewer: Welcome Mr./Ms. _____. You are a world-renowned student of excellence here at the Academic World Cup. Many of our viewers are wondering how you completed 7th grade the way you did. What were your academic goals for 7th grade?

You: Write your 7th grade academic goals:

_____

_____

Interviewer: There were also some upsets to your year as well. What were some of the challenges you encountered last year in pursuit of your goals?

You: Write your 7th grade challenges:

_____

_____

Interviewer: Looking back to the future, we have a new year ahead of us. What are your top five academic goals for 8th grade? What are your top five activity-related goals?

You: Write your 8th grade academic goals.

1:_____

2:_____

3: _____

4:_____

5:_____



Write your 8th grade activity goals

1:_____ 4:_____

2:_____ 5:_____

3:_____

Interviewer: What do you think some of the biggest challenges you will face this year will be?

You: Write your 8th grade challenges:

_____

Interviewer: Can you name at least three people who can help you with those challenges?

You: People who can help are:

_____

LIST YOUR TOP THREE GOALS FROM THE 10 GOALS YOU WROTE DOWN EARLIER:

1._____

2._____

3._____

Will these goals help to make you "high school ready"? Why or why not?

When you get to the end of 8th grade and you look back on your year, what do you hope will be your greatest accomplishment? What must you do to make that happen?

_____

_____

_____

_____



BUILDING PERSONAL INTERESTS

Interests are defined as “things you like to do.” Each person has their own unique set of interests. Each person shares some interests with others. Interests are a great way to meet people. Interests and hobbies can change over time.

INTERESTS CHECKLIST

From the list below, identify your own top ten interests. Score each interest word as ‘Love It’, ‘It’s OK’, or ‘Not Interested’.
- If there are more than 10 words in the ‘Love It’ column, choose the ten interests you like the most and circle those words.
- If there are less than 10 words in the ‘Love It’ column, circle all the ‘Love It’ interests and choose words from the ‘It’s OK’ column to get a top ten interests list.

Top Ten	Interests	Love it	It's OK	Not Interested
☐	Animals/Pets/Wildlife	○	○	○
☐	Art/Painting/Pottery	○	○	○
☐	Astronomy/Space	○	○	○
☐	Building Things	○	○	○
☐	Collecting Things	○	○	○
☐	Comedy/Humor	○	○	○
☐	Computers	○	○	○
☐	Cooking	○	○	○
☐	Dancing	○	○	○
☐	Designing Things	○	○	○
☐	Drama/Theater	○	○	○
☐	Drawing/Cartooning	○	○	○
☐	Fashion/Sewing	○	○	○
☐	Fitness/Exercise	○	○	○
☐	Fixing Things	○	○	○
☐	Foreign Languages	○	○	○
☐	Gardening/Landscaping	○	○	○
☐	Helping Children/Elderly	○	○	○
☐	History/Family History	○	○	○
☐	Individual Sports	○	○	○
☐	Kayaking/Sailing	○	○	○
☐	Leadership/Politics	○	○	○
☐	Magic/Illusion	○	○	○
☐	Mechanics/Cars	○	○	○
☐	Meeting New People	○	○	○
☐	Money	○	○	○
☐	Music/Singing/Concerts	○	○	○
☐	Nature/Geography	○	○	○
☐	Organizing Things	○	○	○
☐	Outdoor Recreation	○	○	○
☐	Photography	○	○	○
☐	Playing Games/Puzzles	○	○	○
☐	Psychology	○	○	○
☐	Public Speaking/Debate	○	○	○
☐	Reading	○	○	○
☐	Science	○	○	○
☐	Shopping	○	○	○
☐	Team Sports	○	○	○
☐	Travel	○	○	○
☐	Video Games	○	○	○
☐	Watching Movies/TV	○	○	○
☐	Web Surfing/Chat	○	○	○
☐	Working With Numbers	○	○	○
☐	Working With Tools	○	○	○
☐	Writing Stories/E-mail	○	○	○

ACTIVE INTERESTS

SECTION 1

Using your finished Interests Checklist, sort your top ten interests into active or inactive lists. An interest is 'active' if you are doing things now to pursue that interest. An interest is 'inactive' if you are not involved in any activities now that relate to that interest.

Active interests

_____

_____

Inactive interests

_____

_____

SECTION 2

List two of your active interests, then identify five different education, work, and/or other life activities where you could become actively involved with each interest.

Interest #1:_____

Activities:_____

_____

Interest #2:_____

Activities:_____

_____

SECTION 3

What causes someone to 'quit' doing something they enjoy? In the space below, identify reasons why people choose NOT to do things they like. Also, suggest ways or ideas for preventing people from dis-engaging from things they love to do.

Reasons People Quit

_____

_____

_____

Ideas for Preventing Yourself from Quitting

_____

_____

_____

Where Does Time Go?

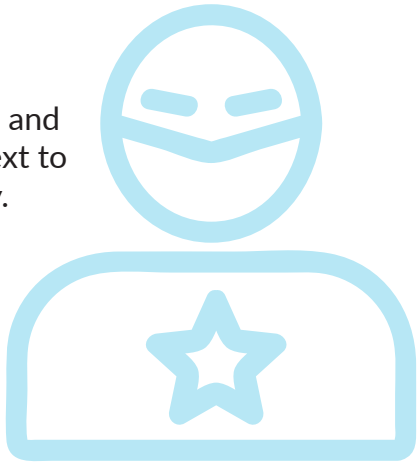
Below is an example of how Burt Toast, a student with good time management skills, schedules his day. Complete the bottom of the handout, defining your typical daily schedule. Don't be too picky, these are rough estimates of your current use of time.

Morning	Afternoon	Evening
6:00am *Wake up, get ready for school*	**12:00pm** *4th period (art class)* *5th period (P.E.)*	**6:00pm** *Sometimes Sports practice then Dinner*
7:00am *Catch bus/meet friends before bell rings*	**1:00pm** *5th period (P.E.)* *6th period (Reading)*	**7:00pm** *Relaxing time*
8:00am *1st period (Math)*	**2:00pm** *6th/7th period (Reading)*	**8:00pm** *Watch favorite show for 30 minutes then talk with family*
9:00am *2nd period (Science)*	**3:00pm** *School Ends/ see friends, catch bus*	**9:00pm** *Go to bed and read until tired*
10:00am *3rd period (Social Studies)*	**4:00pm** *Get snack and finish my homework*	**10:00pm – 6:00am** *Sleeping*
11:00am *Lunch break*	**5:00pm** *Finish homework, check email and favorite internet site*	

Now it's your turn! How do you spend your time in a typical day? Also, write down what time you go to sleep. BE HONEST!

Morning	Afternoon	Evening
6:00am	**12:00pm**	**6:00pm**
7:00am	**1:00pm**	**7:00pm**
8:00am	**2:00pm**	**8:00pm**
9:00am	**3:00pm**	**9:00pm**
10:00am	**4:00pm**	**10:00pm**
11:00am	**5:00pm**	**11:00pm**

MY PREFERRED TIME USE



Think about the activities that you devote your time to. List these activities and then write down how many hours per week you devote to each activity. Next to each number, indicate how much you would like to dedicate to each activity.

Education: ('learning activities')

Recreation: ('active health' – e.g., sports, camping, swimming)

Leisure: ('relaxing activities' – e.g., reading, television, video gaming)

Volunteer: ('contribution activities')

Work: ('paid activities')

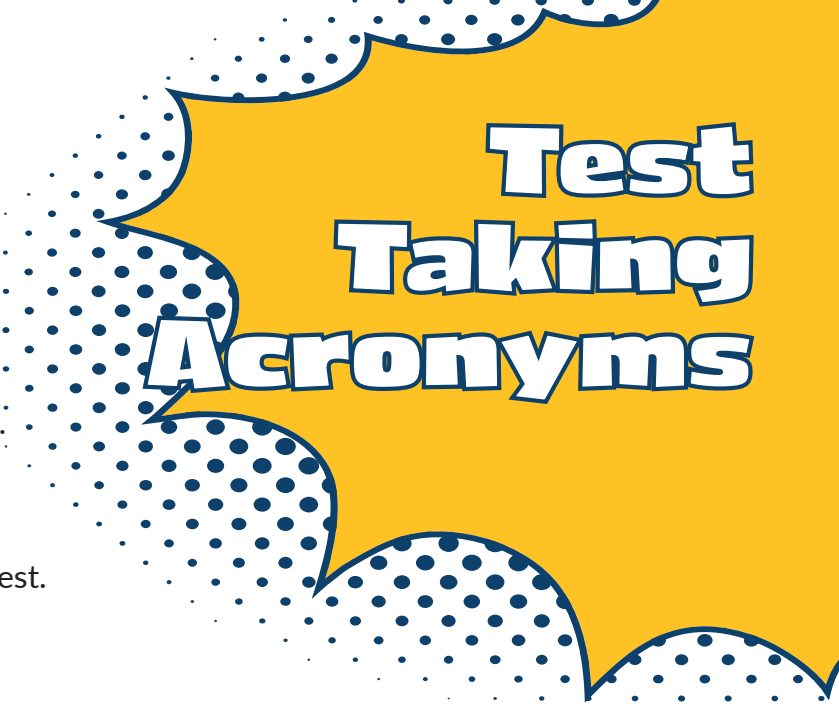
Personal Maintenance: (e.g., showering, hair, breakfast)

Other:

Now revise your daily schedule to include time for the activities you listed above.
Make changes in the schedule below to represent how you would like to use your time.

Morning	Afternoon	Evening
6:00am	12:00pm	6:00pm
7:00am	1:00pm	7:00pm
8:00am	2:00pm	8:00pm
9:00am	3:00pm	9:00pm
10:00am	4:00pm	10:00pm
11:00am	5:00pm	11:00pm

TEST MANAGEMENT



We all get anxious when we think of taking a test. Being prepared for the test is the best defense against test anxiety. Many students use acronyms to help them remember important points for a test. An acronym is an abbreviation that uses the first letter of a group of words to form a shorter word, often used to help remember things. An example would be using the acronym HOMES to remember the names of the five Great Lakes (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Superior). Acronyms can also help you prepare to take that test.

For Test Nervousness: BRAVE

Breathe deeply,
Relax,
Attitude is everything,
Visualize yourself in your favorite place,
End is in Sight (keep positive)!

To Help Complete Tests on Time: FLEAS

First read directions,
Look over the entire test,
Easiest questions answered first,
Answer questions that are worth more,
Skip a question if stumped.

To Help with Reading Directions and Questions Carefully: RAINS

Read entire question,
Analyze the context,
Identify key words,
Notice the negatives,
Search for grammatical errors.

Helping with Difficult Essay Tests: RULE-WE

Read the questions,
Underline the key words,
List or outline the major points,
Emphasize the details for each of the points,
Write the answer,
Evaluate your answer.

(Test-taking memory mnemonic acronyms from: http://coe.jmu.edu/learningtoolbox/strategies.html)

Test Taking Acronyms

Without looking at the previous page, what do the following acronyms stand for?

BRAVE

FLEAS

RAINS

RULE-WE

Make up your own test-taking acronym:

Write a “tweet” about what test-taking tips you will use on your next test. Tweets are simple text messages, using no more than 140 characters (or approximately two sentences.) Your tweet should tell others the best test-taking tip you learned today and when it will next be used.

ARE YOU READY FOR HIGH SCHOOL?

Begin to plan now for the classes you will take in high school. Tennessee high school students must complete 22 credits to graduate. To receive a regular high school diploma, all students enrolled in a Tennessee public school during their eleventh-grade year must take either the ACT or SAT. Most colleges require one of those tests for admission.

Tennessee High School Graduation Requirements		
Subject	**Total Credits Required**	**Course Names**
Math	**4 Credits**	**Algebra I** **Algebra II** **Geometry** **4th Higher Level Math**
English	**4 Credits**	
Science	**3 Credits**	**Biology** **Chemistry or Physics** **3rd Lab Course**
Social Studies	**3 Credits**	**U.S. History and Geography** **World History and Geography** **U.S. Government and Civics** **Economics**
Physical Education and Wellness	**1.5 Credits**	
Personal Finance	**.5 Credit**	
Foreign Language May be waived to allow for additional elective focus.	**2 Credits**	
Fine Arts May be waived to allow for additional elective focus.	**1 Credit**	
Elective Focus	**3 Credits**	**Math & Science** **Career & Technical Education** **Fine Arts** **Humanities** **Advanced Placement (AP)** **International Baccalaureate (IB)**

WHAT IS STEM?

STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, fields that are the underpinnings of modern life. Every student studies STEM subjects during their school years, but students who are interested in a STEM career not only take extra math and science courses but also learn to "put it all together" to use their strong foundation of knowledge to solve real world problems.

▶ **SCIENCE:** The "S" in STEM stands for SCIENCE and includes fields ranging from biology and chemistry to physics, ecology, geology, astronomy, and even environmental studies.

▶ **TECHNOLOGY:** The "T" in STEM stands for TECHNOLOGY. Students who want to be on the cutting edge of new discoveries may want to study technology. They can focus on computers and software, or alternative energy, artificial intelligence, green technology, or biotechnology.

▶ **ENGINEERING:** The "E" in STEM stands for the process of ENGINEERING. The engineering process is an approach to solving real world problems that leads to a new product or system.

▶ **MATHEMATICS:** The "M" in STEM stands for MATHEMATICS. A basic understanding of math concepts is required for many career fields. Professional mathematicians use numbers and equations to solve problems and help explain how the world works.

WHY STUDY STEM?

STEM fields are important in today's technology-dependent world. They challenge students and help them do better in school. Studying STEM also helps students after graduation: employment in STEM fields is projected to grow 70% faster than growth for other occupations. On average, STEM graduates are expected to enjoy better employment prospects and higher starting salaries than graduates in non-STEM fields.

Your STEM experience in school so far: What have you learned about STEM in your classes at school this year? Write down a few things you have learned in each box.

SCIENCE	TECHNOLOGY
ENGINEERING	MATHEMATICS

Putting it together: The power of STEM is not just studying these four separate disciplines. It is putting your strong foundations to work to solve real world problems. What would you most like to do with STEM? Are you interested in environmental science or marine biology? Are you interested in video game design or robotics? Are you interested in designing a rocket to travel to outer space?

Here's what I'd like to do with STEM knowledge: _____

_____

The Importance of GPA (Grade Point Average)

What is a GPA?
A GPA, or Grade Point Average, is a number value that schools calculate by averaging your grades from each course you've taken. High schools and colleges typically use GPAs to make admissions decisions and to evaluate their students. Your GPA is a measure of your success so far at school.

Who looks at your GPA?
Lots of people look at your GPA. That includes selective high schools, colleges, scholarships, internships, fellowships, academic awards, and employers. GPA carries the most importance in college admissions decisions. Your high school GPA will be extremely important when it comes time to apply to college, and your college GPA will be extremely important when it comes time to start your career or apply to graduate school.

Cumulative GPA
Your cumulative GPA is the total semester average for all of your grades in high school up until the calculation point. If you were a senior, for instance, your cumulative GPA would be the average for fall and spring semesters for all four years. Your cumulative GPA is the one colleges will look at.

To figure your cumulative GPA, visit gpacalculator.io/cumulative-gpa-calculator/

How important is your GPA?
According to scholarprep.org, students' GPAs are compared for scholarship and admissions applications. While GPAs are not the only piece examined, it is one of the most important factors in determining winners for scholarships and admissions over other students to a postsecondary education institution.
Other factors looked at by scholarship and admissions applications include your service to your community, athletics and extracurricular activities in school, and leadership positions. While being well-rounded is vital, your GPA can make or break your chances of receiving scholarship funds or acceptance to your first choice of schools since many large universities put a great deal of weight on your GPA alone.

Staying on Track

What students do today affects their future, especially their high school graduation, admittance to higher education, and even possible job opportunities and careers. On the next pages are the stories of actual high school freshmen.

1. Read through the case studies and analyze each students "transcript" at the end of their freshman year.
2. Place the data in each column of the Case Studies Worksheet as indicated – attendance, behavior, GPA, failures, and credit accumulation.
3. Make a decision about whether or not this student is on-track for graduation.

Descriptors:

1.Attendance: Missing 20 days or being absent 10 percent of school days;
2. Behavior: Two or more mild or more serious behavior infractions; and
3. Course performance in high school:
   - A GPA of less than 2.0;
   - Two or more failures in ninth grade courses;
   - Failure to earn on-time promotion to the tenth grade or accumulate 5 or more freshman credits

CASE STUDIES

Olga

Descriptor	First Semester Information	Second Semester Information
Single Period Tardies	5	8
Total Absences	9	4
Biology	A	A
Human Geography	A-	A-
Rec. Activities	A	A
Spanish 1	A	A
Geometry	A	A
English	B	A
Discipline Infractions	0	0

David

Descriptor	First Semester Information	Second Semester Information
Single Period Tardies	15	3
Total Absences	7	7
World History	A	A-
Biology	C-	C
PE	B+	B-
Algebra 1	D	F
English	D	F
French	D	F
Discipline Infractions	1 disruptive in class	

Tanisha

Descriptor	First Semester Information	Second Semester Information
Single Period Tardies	4	2
Absences	10	0
Biology	C+	B+
World History	A	A
English	C	C
Algebra 1	C	C
Spanish	F	No grade
Leadership	A	B
Discipline Infractions	0	0

CASE STUDIES *(Continued)*

Emily

Descriptor	First Semester Information	Second Semester Information
Single Period Tardies	0	0
Absences	14	8
Algebra 1	D	D
Choir	A	A-
English	D+	B
English Support	P	P
World History	D+	B-
Biology	F	D+
Discipline Infractions		2 – Disrespect toward teachers

Jake

Descriptor	First Semester Information	Second Semester Information
Single Period Tardies	7	4
Absences	4	2
Biology	A	A-
Geometry	C+	C-
French	D+	C-
Guitar	A-	A-
World History	F	A-
English	C	B-
Discipline Infractions	0	0

Maria

Descriptor	First Semester Information	Second Semester Information
Single Period Tardies	6	13
Absences	12	11
World History	A	A
Biology	C	C-
Algebra 1	C+	C
Health/wellness	B-	C+
English	C	F
Spanish	B	A
Discipline Infractions	0	0

CASE STUDIES WORKSHEET

Student	Attendance	Behavior	GPA	Number of F's	*Credit Towards Graduation	On Track for Graduation? Yes/No/Maybe
Olga						
David						
Tanisha						
Emily						
Jake						
Maria						

**Two successfully completed semesters of a class equals one credit. F's don't count for credit.*

1. What do the students need to do to change the predictions for high school graduation and change their lives?

2. What resources does the school have that might help students get back on track?

ACTIVITY RESUMÉ

Even though college may seem very far away, it's important to start an activities resumé now and keep it updated. You will use it for college applications, scholarship applications, recommendation letters, college interviews, and applications for jobs and internships.

ATHLETICS, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS
(LIST YOUR ROLE/POSITION EACH YEAR)

Name of Club/ Sports Team	8th Grade	Freshman

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Name of Organization/ Contact	Description of Volunteer Service	Number of Hours of Service	Date(s) of Service

HONORS AND AWARDS

Name and Date of Award	Reason for Award/Honor	Sponsor

WORK EXPERIENCE
(list most recent examples first)

Start and End Date of Employment	Job Title	Company Name	Business Address	Brief Description of Duties

GET A HEAD START ON COLLEGE & CAREER

Early postsecondary opportunities (EPSOs) include a course and/or exam that give students a chance to obtain postsecondary (college) credit while still in high school. They ensure that students are ready to take full advantage of the Tennessee Promise and succeed in education and training after high school. Research has shown that students who participate in early postsecondary courses are more likely to enroll and stay enrolled in college.
Early postsecondary opportunities will allow you to:

1. earn postsecondary credits while in high school.
2. become familiar with postsecondary rigor and expectations.
3. develop confidence and skills for success in postsecondary learning.
4. make informed postsecondary and career decisions.
5. decrease the time and cost of completing a certificate or degree.

What types of early postsecondary opportunities are available?

Advanced Placement

The College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) Program provides an opportunity for high school students to experience postsecondary-level coursework across multiple subjects. Each course is aligned to a subject-specific AP exam, which provides students the potential to earn credit for postsecondary coursework in that subject.

Cambridge International

A division within the University of Cambridge, Cambridge International Examination provides internationally recognized academic programs for students ages 5 to 19. The high school A and AS Level courses, available only through approved Cambridge International Schools, provide students the opportunity to earn postsecondary credit that is accepted by colleges in the U.S. and abroad.
Participating schools design their own Cambridge curriculum based on the needs of their students; some schools may base their whole curriculum on Cambridge qualifications, while others may combine Cambridge with other learning programs.

College Level Examination Program

Developed by the College Board, College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams can be taken by students and adults to assess mastery of postsecondary-level material acquired in a variety of ways, including through general academic instructions, significant independent study, or extracurricular work. Students can earn credit for postsecondary coursework in a specific subject. Examinations are currently offered in 33 subjects at test centers across the state.

Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment (DE) is a postsecondary course, taught either at the postsecondary institution or at the high school, by postsecondary faculty or credentialed adjunct faculty. Dual enrollment instructors must meet postsecondary requirements, but do not have to meet specific TN teacher licensure or endorsement requirements.
Dual enrollment courses can be taught at the postsecondary campus, the high school, or online. The location of the course does not affect its status as a dual enrollment course.
Students are enrolled at the postsecondary institution and earn postsecondary credit upon completion of the course. High school credit is awarded based on local policy.

International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program, available only through an approved IB World School, provides high school students the opportunity to take a rigorous, pre-university course of studies. IB courses are aligned to internationally benchmarked exams which provide opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit while still in high school.
The IB Diploma Program is available to any student aged 16-19 at participating schools.

Dual Credit

Local dual credit is a high school course aligned to a local postsecondary institution's course and exam. Students who pass the exam earn credits that are accepted and/or recognized by the local postsecondary institution. Courses are taught by licensed high school teachers or certified college instructors approved by the school system and the postsecondary institution.

Student Industry Certification

Industry certifications (IC) are earned through secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs and courses. High school students are encouraged to focus their elective credits on robust, career-aligned learning pathways. Robust learning pathways should culminate with the achievement of nationally recognized industry certifications, meaningful work-based learning experiences, and/or attainment of postsecondary credit hours through early postsecondary opportunities. As it pertains to industry certifications, all certifications approved by the Tennessee Department of Education are aligned with postsecondary and employment opportunities and with the competencies and skills that students should have acquired through their chosen programs of study.

DUAL ENROLLMENT GRANT

Dual Enrollment allows eligible students to work toward both a high school diploma and a college degree at the same time. For each course, students earn honors credit at the high school level and college credit hours at the postsecondary level. Most college credits will transfer to public colleges and universities throughout Tennessee and the United States. Tennessee offers a Dual Enrollment Grant (DEG) program, funded by the Tennessee Lottery, and administered by the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation. This program provides grants for students to begin working toward a college degree as early as freshman year, while still pursuing a high school diploma.

Dual Enrollment Grant Funding at 2-Year and 4-Year Institutions

To qualify for DEG at a two-year or four-year college, students must be a high school junior or senior and satisfy dual enrollment (DE) admissions criteria set by the college. DE students must earn a cumulative 2.00 DE GPA, for all courses attempted while under the grant, each semester to remain eligible for the grant.

Students attending 2-year or 4-year institutions will receive Dual Enrollment Grant funding as outlined below. This chart provides the number of the course being taken and the amount of funding the student will receive. At public community colleges, a Dual Enrollment Grant will cover the tuition for a dual enrollment course. Students should confirm with the community college regarding any additional fees associated with taking a dual enrollment course. For students attending public and private 4-year institutions, students should confirm with the institution regarding any balance in tuition and fees after a Dual Enrollment Grant has been applied. Some institutions will cover the gap between the Dual Enrollment Grant and the cost to take a dual enrollment course.

COURSE	AWARD
1	UP TO $601.65
2	UP TO $601.65
3	UP TO $601.65
4	UP TO $601.65
5	UP TO $601.65
6 - 10	UP TO $100/CREDIT HOUR

DUAL ENROLLMENT GRANT FUNDING AT TENNESSEE COLLEGES OF APPLIED TECHNOLOGY (TCAT)

Any high school student (9th – 12th grade) may qualify for DEG at a TN College of Applied Technology (TCAT). The student must meet dual enrollment (DE) admissions criteria set by the TCAT. DEG will pay for up to 1296 clock hours at a TCAT.

Students attending a Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) will receive Dual Enrollment Grant funding as outlined below. This chart provides the number of the course being taken and the amount of funding the student will receive. It is important to note that TCATs operate using clock hours instead of credit hours. Therefore, financial aid is awarded based on the number of clock hours contained within a course. Additionally, TCATs cover the gap between the cost of a course and the funding provided by the Dual Enrollment Grant.

CLOCK HOURS	AWARD
1 - 40	$228.90
41 - 80	$309.75
81 - 135	$468.30
136 - 217	$815.85
218 - 340	$1,317.75
341 - 450	$1,474.20

Apply for the Dual Enrollment Grant (DEG) at TN.GOV/THECSTUDENTPORTAL each Academic year & check out COLLEGEFORTN.ORG for more about Tennessee Financial Aid

Four Students and Three Pathways

There are many different ways to achieve the same goal. Read the four case studies below and consider how these students may be like or unlike you. Answer the questions on the next page about their future plans.

CASE STUDIES

Eliza: Eliza is interested in one day becoming an FBI agent. Her dream would be to work on terrorism cases. She knows that she will need a Bachelor's degree in order to even think about the FBI. Eliza has worked with her high school counselor and has started taking classes through the Dual Enrollment program at the local community college. She anticipates that she will be able to finish her Associate degree in Criminal Justice at the end of the summer semester after high school graduation. Because money is tight in her family, Eliza will need to work after high school. She already has a part-time job at McDonald's and thinks they will make her a shift supervisor once she graduates from high school this summer. Once she has her AA completed, Eliza is planning to get a job in security or with a local law enforcement agency for several years giving her real-life experience in her field and allowing her to begin work on a four-year degree program.

Shane: Shane isn't sure what she wants to do. She knows that she wants to go to college but really wants to take a year off after high school graduation. She has taken all of the required courses for high school graduation but didn't find anything exciting enough to take honors or advanced classes. She is much more interested in helping at home or hanging out with her friends. She is planning to work after high school graduation in retail to earn money for college.

Juan: Juan has an uncle who owns a small, local construction company. The uncle has invited him to join him in the business when he has completed enough course work to qualify for a construction foreman's position. Juan did some research and found that his high school offers a Construction Careers Academy that meets either from 7:00 – 9:00 a.m. or 1:00 – 4:30 p.m. Signing up for these courses will earn Juan both high school and college credit provided he demonstrates proficiency in the course. Juan wants to play football so he thinks he will opt for the 7:00 session even though he hates to get up early.

Ryan: Ryan knows he wants to be a teacher. Having been homeless through much of his high school years, he has really appreciated the support he has had from teachers and counselors. Ryan knows his ticket to a college education will be a combination of credit through examinations, scholarships, what he can save, and working when he is on campus. He would like to be able to avoid loans. Ryan began taking AP classes at the beginning of his junior year. While it is a real struggle to get to school living in different places, he is maintaining his grade point average at a 4.0. As Ryan works with his high school counselor, he is planning to begin college with enough course credit to be classified as a sophomore, saving almost a year of tuition. Ryan's real worry right now is the cost for the AP tests. Each test is about $90 and he hasn't a clue where he will find that kind of money. (The cost of the AP test is lowered for low-income students. Ryan needs to check with his counselor or AP teacher.)

CASE STUDIES *(Continued)*

1.Which students are showing the greatest understanding of developing “work readiness” early?

2.What are the immediate and long-term financial implications (good and bad) for the students?

3.Which pathway seems most challenging to you?

4.Which students seem like they will be most successful in reaching their goals?

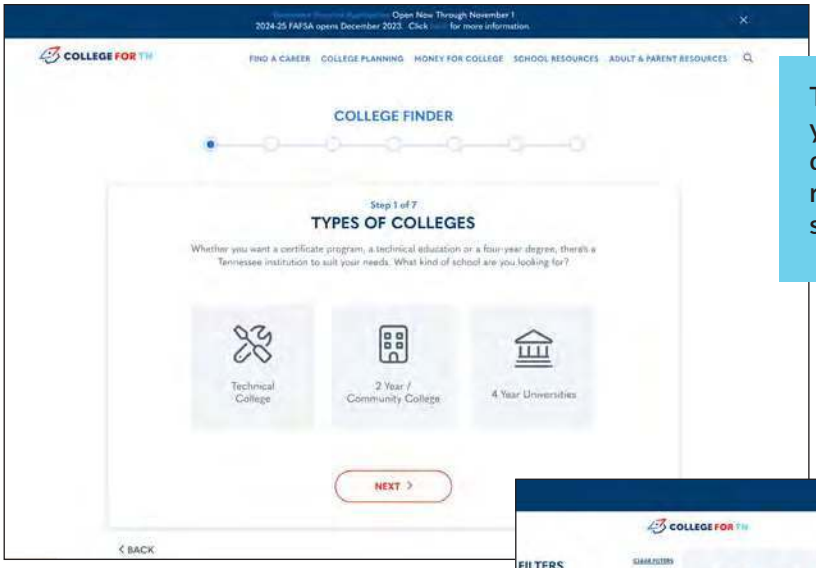
5.What pathway are you likely to choose?

COLLEGE FIT

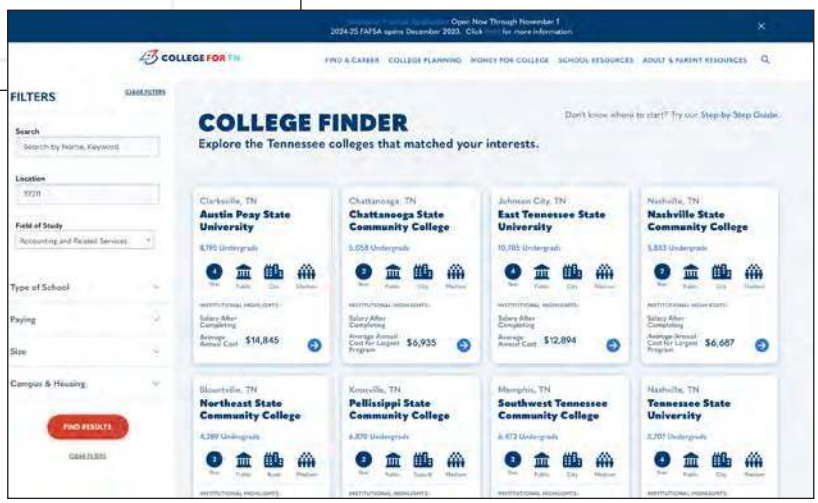
When you begin to think about college in the future, it's important to realistically look at what colleges or universities would be a good fit for you. College fit includes a lot of considerations such as school type, student life, location, affordability, admission requirements, housing, academics, and size.

Activity

A good way to find schools that would be a good fit for you is by completing the College Finder at *https://www.collegefortn.org/college-finder/college-step-by-step-guide/*.



The Step-by-Step Guide asks you a series of seven filtering questions that allow you to narrow the results to display only schools that fit your answers



Results display as cards which contain highlights of each school. Click on the card to see a detailed description

After completing the Step-by-Step Guide, which school is your favorite?

_____

Would this school be a good fit for you? Why or why not?

_____

_____

While you're there, be sure to check out all the college and career resources on CollegeForTN.org



ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

Looking back at your 8th Grade Goals at the beginning of this chapter, provide three examples of how you have progressed towards achievement of your academic goals, or three plans you have to improve your progress.

Example 1:
Example 2:
Example 3:

ACTIVITY DEVELOPMENT

Looking back at your goals, provide three examples of how you have progressed towards achievement of your activity goals, or three plans you have to improve your progress.

Example 1:
Example 2:
Example 3:

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Thinking back to your top career interests identified in the Career Door #1, 2, or 3, worksheet on page 51, provide three examples of how your academic and activity achievements this year support your top career interests.

Example 1:
Example 2:
Example 3:

OTHER GOALS

Are there other goals that haven't been discussed that you have reached? (Example: no detentions, getting along better with siblings, being recognized by peers, etc.)

Example 1:
Example 2:
Example 3:

How have you changed since the beginning of the year? Give examples.

_____

_____

_____

THE COST OF COLLEGE

The cost of college will depend on the choices you make as a college student. In this activity, you will place an X next to the least expensive choice on each line.

What kind of program do you want to study?

_____ Technical Certificate or Apprenticeship (one year or less)
_____ Technical College for a two-year degree
_____ Community College for an AA or AS two-year degree
_____ College or university for a four (plus) year degree



What community will fit you best?

_____ Hometown
_____ Within 1-2 hours from hometown
_____ Within 3-4 hours from hometown
_____ Out-of-state

Where do you want to live?

_____ At home paying some rent
_____ In a college dormitory
_____ In an apartment with friends

What do you want to spend on books?

_____ All new books
_____ Used books
_____ E books
_____ Rental books

What kind of transportation will you need?

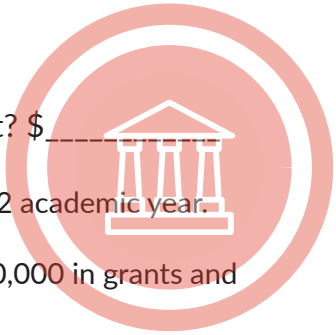
_____ Bike/skateboard
_____ Car: gas/parking
_____ Bus/train
_____ Plane

What do you want to spend on personal expenses?

_____ I'm really frugal now and expect to be in college. I will look for free activities and go out with my friends for pizza only occasionally.
_____ I think I will need a budget. I will look for both free entertainment and activities that might have a small cost. I would like to be able to go out with my friends for pizza regularly.
_____ I am not good at budgeting and know I will need a pretty big personal budget for clothes, entertainment, food, and time with friends.

PAYING FOR COLLEGE

What do you estimate an average year of college tuition in Tennessee would cost? $_____



The average annual in-state college tuition in Tennessee was $16,452 for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Don't let the sticker price scare you away! The state of Tennessee awards over $500,000,000 in grants and scholarships each year to Tennessee residents.

Below are just some of the programs available to help you pay for college:

The Tennessee HOPE Scholarship is worth up to $2,250 per semester for freshman and sophomores and $2,850 per semester for juniors and seniors at four-year institutions; and up to $1,600 per semester for two-year institutions.

Requirements:

1.Minimum 21 ACT composite (or concordant equivalent on the SAT) on a national or state test date *OR* 2.Final cumulative 3.0 GPA* for entering freshmen graduating from eligible public or category 1, 2, or 3 private high schools

The Aspire Award provides up to $750 per semester at four-year institutions and up to $250 per semester at two-year institutions as a SUPPLEMENT to the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship.

Requirements:

1. Meet Tennessee HOPE Scholarship requirements *AND* 2. Parents' or independent student's (and spouse's) adjusted gross income must be $36,000 or less on tax form 3. Students may receive ASPIRE or GAMS (see below), but not BOTH

The General Assembly Merit Scholarship (GAMS) award provides up to $500 per semester as a SUPPLEMENT to the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship.

Requirements:

1.At least a final cumulative 3.75 GPA* *AND* 29+ ACT composite (or concordant equivalent on the SAT) on a national test date or state test date

The Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant is available to anyone who enrolls in a certificate or diploma program at a Tennessee College of Applied Technology and meets residency requirements. The award amount is up to $2,000 per academic year.

Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TSAA) award amounts for an academic year are: four-year/two-year private - $4,000; and four-year public/two-year public/Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology/career schools - $2,000.

Requirements:

1.Student Aid Index (SAI) of 5000 or less on the FAFSA; 2. Priority for this award is given to U.S. citizens; 3. Must meet satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards to maintain award

Tennessee Promise is a scholarship and mentoring program that allows students in Tennessee to attend a community or technical college tuition-free. It provides students a last-dollar scholarship, meaning the cholarship will cover the cost of tuition and mandatory fees not covered by the Pell Grant, the HOPE Scholarship, or the Tennessee Student Assistance Award. Students may use the scholarship at any of the state's 13 community colleges, 24 colleges of applied technology, or other eligible institutions offering an associate degree program.

Requirements:

1. Apply for the scholarship; 2. Complete the FAFSA; 3. Complete and report eight hours of community service; 4. Attend a mandatory mentor meeting

FINANCIAL AID

There are many sources available to help you pay for college. Below are descriptions of the five most common types of aid. After reading the description, decide which type of aid it refers to and write the aid type in the second column.

GRANTS **LOANS** **WORK STUDY** **SCHOLARSHIPS** **OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Financial Aid Description	Financial Aid Type
This kind of money is given to students based on many factors, most often need. It can come from the college, the state, or the Federal government.	
This kind of financial aid recognizes that students have many unique talents that will make them great college students.	
Colleges often have paid positions on campus so that students can work while they go to school. Colleges also have employment offices that help students find work off campus.	
This kind of money has several different categories and requires that you pay the money back AND pay an additional fee or interest for borrowing the money.	
This is money that may come from private or family sources as a gift.	

FINANCIAL AID MYTHS

There are many myths associated with financial aid. Can you spot the myths? Circle the answer below that corresponds with whether you think the statement is true or false.

1. Only students with the best grades qualify for financial aid. ○ TRUE ○ FALSE
2. Only rich kids can afford four-year schools. ○ TRUE ○ FALSE
3. Only students from low-income families qualify for financial help. ○ TRUE ○ FALSE
4. Students who are not high achieving or top athletes should not spend time searching for scholarships. ○ TRUE ○ FALSE
5. All students who go to college leave owing a lot of money. ○ TRUE ○ FALSE

Would you be surprised to learn that they are all false?
Financial Aid Types Answers: Grants, Scholarships, Work Study, Loans, Other Financial Assistance

LET'S REVIEW

Looking back at your middle school years, identify your top ten achievements since entering 6th grade. You may identify academic achievements, activity achievements, social achievements, family achievements, or personal achievements. It's important to recognize that you have accomplished things, even if you wanted to accomplish more.

Summarize your top ten achievements in middle school.

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

6._____

7._____

8._____

9._____

10._____

Write your top hopes and fears about high school next year.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

List three most important 'things to work on' to be successful in high school.

1._____

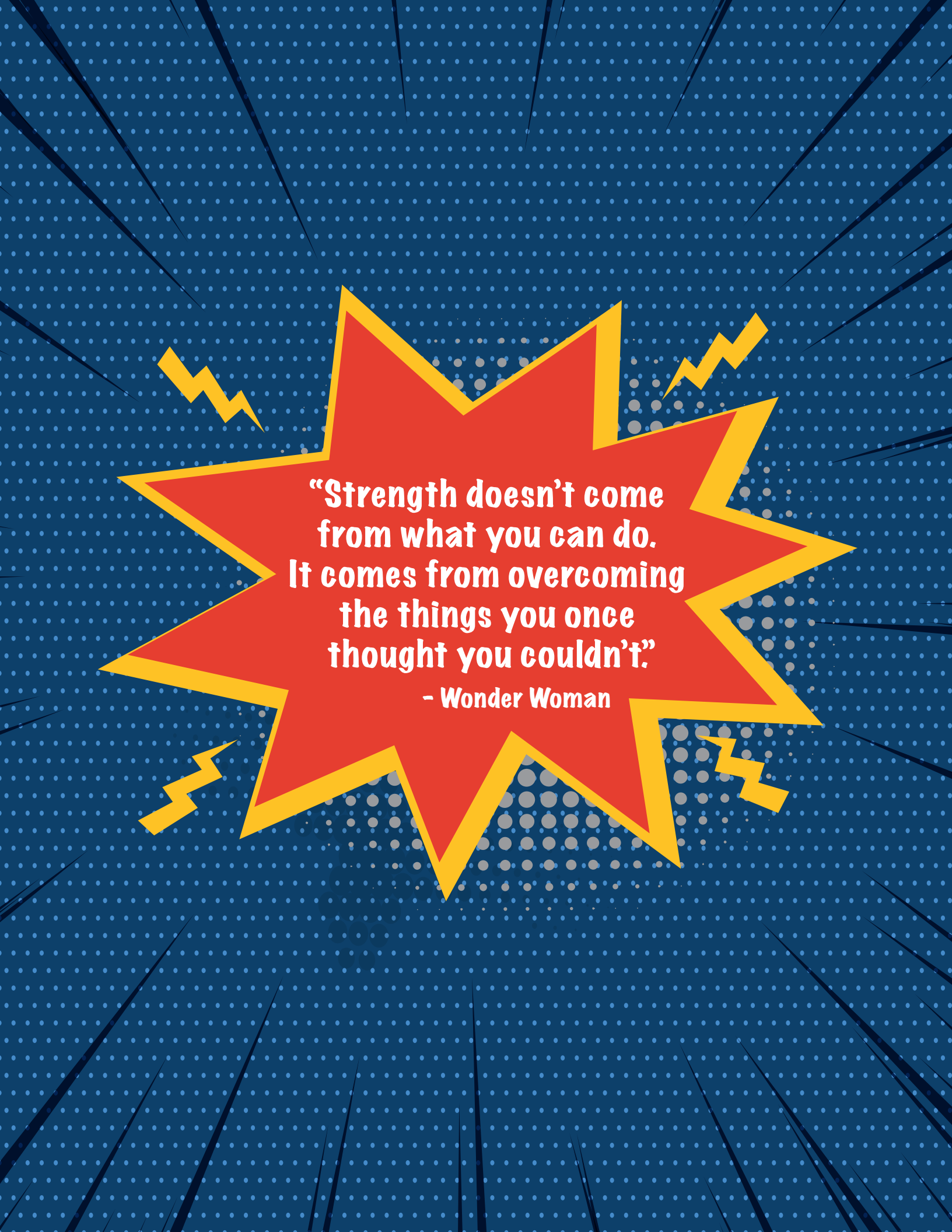
2._____

3._____

Did you spend more time watching or actively engaging in your middle school years?

SECTION FOUR

WHAT'S NEXT?


"Strength doesn't come
from what you can do.
It comes from overcoming
the things you once
thought you couldn't."
- Wonder Woman

7TH & 8TH GRADE MILESTONES

Milestones are reference points in your school career that mark important stages of progress. Each milestone allows you to evaluate your forward progress toward the goal of college and career.

Check all that you've accomplished so far:

ACTIONS:

- ☐ Meet with a school counselor to develop a postsecondary plan (i.e., explore pathways for potential careers) and discuss the costs associated with postsecondary education
- ☐ Attend an information session and/or shadow a student at your local high school to get a feel for what's next.
- ☐ Take a career exploration course (online if not offered at school)
- ☐ Participate in college and career awareness experiences (e.g., campus visits, hands-on events, or job shadowing.)
- ☐ Participate in school and student organizations (e.g., clubs, athletics, school newspaper, yearbook, etc.)
- ☐ Participate in summer activities related to an interest, talent, or curiosity (e.g., academic, athletic, artistic, etc.)

ACTIVITY

KNOWLEDGE:

- ☐ I understand that different careers require different levels of postsecondary education or training
- ☐ I understand how high school will be different from middle school (how GPA, course credits, course selection, early postsecondary opportunities, work-based learning, and school activities lead to college and career readiness)
- ☐ I understand that it is important to continue to explore and broaden my academic, career, and personal interests.

MY FUTURE PLAN

The intent of this plan is to synthesize research, reflection and experiences gathered throughout the career planning process.

MY GOALS:

What is your plan for postsecondary?

(Select your preferred option below):

- ☐ Get a 4-year college degree
- ☐ Join the military
- ☐ Attend a 2-year college
- ☐ Get a job right away
- ☐ Finish a certificate program
- ☐ Find an apprenticeship

Other: _____

Target Careers (list Top 3)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Preferred colleges (list Top 5)

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

Preferred Majors/Interest Areas (list Top 5)

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

How can high school help me achieve these goals?

WHAT'S NEXT?

Use the following suggestions to make the most of your summer and your freshman year.

SUMMER

1. READ! Read at least five books not required by your school. Try something you've never read before.
2. Do your summer homework. Don't put it off until the last minute.
3. Explore. If you're considering a career or career pathway, learn more about it. Talk to people who hold that job. Set up a job shadow day. Take a trip. While there, visit some colleges in the area.
4. Think about what's next. Purchase school supplies well ahead of the start of school to avoid stress.
5. Help someone else. Look for organizations in your community that need volunteers: hospitals, nursing homes, food pantries, homeless shelters, and more. It will make you feel good and looks good on your college applications.

FALL

6. Talk with your counselor about the year ahead. Confirm that your courses will put you on the right track for college admission.
7. Start developing a résumé—a record of your accomplishments, activities, and work experience. This will be an important part of your college application.
8. Become a joiner. If you haven't participated in many activities outside of class, now is the time to sign up. Consider clubs at school, team sports, leadership roles, or involvement in a religious or civic community group.

Congratulations – You're a FRESHMAN!

SPRING

9. Work with your counselor to set your sophomore schedule. Enroll in the most challenging courses.
10. Explore summer opportunities on college campuses—this is a great way to find out what college life is really like.
11. Continue researching colleges and universities. Go to college fairs and open houses. Learn as much as you can about colleges online.
12. Begin planning college visits. If your school offers excused absences for college visits, use them! Try to visit colleges near you over spring break. Include a large, medium size, and small campus.
13. Develop a preliminary list of colleges that interest you. Go online to request additional information. This is a great way to get on the radar of colleges that interest you.
14. Begin to look at some college applications. Make note of all the pieces of information you will need to compile. Make a list of teachers, counselors, employers, and other adults who could write letters of recommendation.
15. Consider lining up a summer job or internship.

GLOSSARY

There are a lot of acronyms and confusing terms on the road to college. Here are a few that you might be wondering about. If there's one you don't see listed here, check with your college/career counselor for assistance.

2+2 programs: A postsecondary pathway in which students begin at a community college where they complete general educational requirements over two or three years and then transfer to a university (for the remaining one or two years) to complete a bachelor's degree.

ACT/SAT: Standardized college entrance exams. Many colleges and universities ask for ACT or SAT scores as part of the application process. ACT stands for American College Testing. SAT stands for Scholastic Assessment Test.

Advisor: A college staff member or professor who helps a student plan and complete a course of study at a college or university.

Application: A form that must be filled out to be considered for entry into a university, community college, or technical school; to be considered for a scholarship or grant; and, in many cases, to be considered for a job.

Associate Degree: A degree granted after successful completion of a course of study requiring approximately 60 credits, typically by a community or junior college. Full-time community college students taking 15 credits per semester can generally finish an associate degree in two years (also known as AA, AS, or AAS degree, short for Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science.)

ASVAB: A test to determine qualification for enlistment in the U.S. Armed Forces. It stands for Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery.

Award Letter: Notice from a school of the amount and type of financial aid that the school is willing and able to provide a student.

Bachelor's Degree: A degree earned for a course of study that normally requires 120 to 130 credits, involving specific classes related to the student's major. Full-time students ideally complete a bachelor's degree in four years, although changing majors, transferring institutions, taking fewer than 15 credit hours per semester, and/or taking courses that don't count toward one's declared major can make it take longer (also known as BA or BS, short for Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science.)

Certificate: An official document attesting to a particular fact or accomplishment. In the postsecondary realm, students complete a series of specified courses, and sometimes an internship, and typically pass a test to obtain certificates in specif ic trades or areas of expertise required to work in those fields. Examples include welding, medical technology, auto mechan ics, massage therapy, and court stenography.

Community College: A public postsecondary institution (Motlow State, for example) that offers courses to residents in the surrounding area. Students may attend community colleges to obtain associate degrees or technical certificates or may take courses there toward a bachelor's degree before transferring to a four-year university (2+2 pathway). Students can also take courses to enhance their skills in an area, or just for fun.

Cost of Attendance (COA): The total cost of going to college, including tuition, fees, room and board, books, transportation, and personal expenses.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program: A kind of administrative relief from deportation. This policy allows young children (under the age of 16) who came to the United States without documentation, and have been educated by U.S. school systems, the opportunity to remain in the U.S. by following specific guidelines.

Early Action: When a student applies for admission to a college by an early deadline (before the regular admission deadline) and receives notice of acceptance, denial, or deferment, with no obligation to the university to enroll.

Early Decision: When a student applies for admission to a college by an early deadline (before the regular admission deadline), with the understanding that if accepted, the student must enroll in that school. Students should apply for early decision only to their first-choice school.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): is an online form submitted annually by current and prospective college students (undergraduate and graduate) in the United States to determine eligibility for student financial aid. Students who are eligible to file the FAFSA should complete it every year.

FAFSA Student Summary (FSS): The FSS summarizes the information included on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FSS provides the Student Aid Index (SAI), which is used to determine whether a student is eligible for a federal Pell Grant and other federal aid.

Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID: A username and password used by current and prospective students and their parents to log into U.S. Department of Education Websites including the FAFSA Website. The ID is used to sign documents electronically (it has the same legal status as a written signature.)

Fee Waiver: Permission to not pay a fee, based on meeting some requirement or condition. In the postsecondary realm, waivers of college application fees and ACT or SAT fees are often available for students based on financial need.

Financial Aid Package: The amount and types of federal, state, and college aid that a college/university offers to a student it has accepted for admission, to offset the cost of attendance at their school. This is also referred to as an Award Letter. Depending on the package, sometimes it can be cheaper for a student to attend an expensive school because more aid is offered to offset the cost. This is why it is important to apply to the schools you want to attend, even if you don't think you can afford it. There are different types of aid available including loans, work-study, scholarships, and grants.

Four-Year University: A postsecondary college/university that offers undergraduate (bachelors) degrees. Many four-year institutions also offer graduate (master's) degrees.

Full-Time Student: A student who enrolls in at least a minimum number (determined by your college or university) of credit hours or courses.

Grade Point Average (GPA): The average of all of the course grades you have received in high school, or in college, on a four-point scale.

Housing and Meals: The cost of a room in a residence hall and a dining hall meal plan at a college or university.

Ivy League: A group of long-established colleges and universities in the eastern U.S. having high academic and social prestige. It includes Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Dartmouth, Cornell, Brown, and the University of Pennsylvania.

Letters of Recommendation: Letters of endorsement (often from high school teachers/staff) written on a student's behalf during the college and/or job application process.

Major: A concentration of study focused on a discipline, which requires completion of specific courses.

Minor: A college or university student's declared secondary academic discipline during their undergraduate studies.

Orientation: A meeting/event many colleges offer (hour-long or days-long) where incoming students and parents/guardians receive information about registering for classes, meet their advisor, and learn about school resources and policies.

Pell Grant: Money from the U.S. government to support a student's education that does not have to be paid back. Pell Grants are awarded to U.S. citizens and legal residents based on financial need and timeliness of completing the FAFSA.

Placement Test: Colleges and universities may require students to take tests to determine the appropriate level of college math and/or English needed.

Postsecondary Education: The broadest term to describe any education beyond high school, including community college, university, technical school, etc.

Residence Hall: A building primarily providing living/sleeping quarters for large numbers of students. Also known as a dorm or dormitory and often referred to as "on-campus housing."

Resident: A student who lives in and meets the residency requirements for the state where a public university is located. Tuition at public universities often is more expensive for non-residents.

Resumé: A brief account of a person's education, qualifications, and previous work experience, typically sent with a job application.

ROTC: Programs to train college students to become officers in the U.S. Armed Forces. ROTC stands for Reserve Officer Training Corps.

Scholarship: Money to support a student's education that does not have to be paid back. Scholarships are awarded based on academic, athletic, artistic, or other types of achievements, affiliations, or competitions.

Student Aid Index (SAI): The portion of a family's financial resources that should be available to pay for college based on a federal formula using the information on the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).

Student Loan: Money a student borrows to help pay for college, which must be paid back. Subsidized loans are offered to students who qualify financially as determined by the FAFSA. The federal government pays the interest while the student is in college. There are also unsubsidized loans where interest begins accruing as soon as the loan is accepted.

Summer Bridge Programs: Programs offered by many universities and some community colleges, which occur in the summer between high school graduation and fall transition to college. They offer students accelerated, focused learning opportunities that can help better prepare them to succeed in college.

Technical School: A general term used for a college that provides mostly employment-preparation skills for trained labor, such as welding and culinary arts. These programs generally take no more than two years to complete. Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs) are examples of this kind of school.

THEC: The Tennessee Higher Education Commission was created in 1967 by the Tennessee General Assembly. The Commission develops, implements, and evaluates postsecondary education policies and programs in Tennessee while coordinating the state's systems of higher education, and is relentlessly focused on increasing the number of Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential. Additionally, THEC administers over 20 different state student financial aid programs, including the HOPE Scholarship, Tennessee Promise, Tennessee Reconnect, Tennessee Student Assistance Award, and the Dual Enrollment Grant.

Transcript: An official academic record from a specific school which lists when you attended, the courses you have completed, grades, and sometimes test scores. Universities, colleges, and technical schools usually require high school transcripts be submitted as part of the application process.

Acknowledgements

Many of the activities in this guide were adapted with permission from Career Guidance Washington, which was created by the Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Career Guidance Washington Lessons are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

Tennessee Higher Education Commission

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Tennessee Higher Education Commission, Authorization No. NA6RZ3-1,900 copies, June 2026. This public document was promulgated at a cost of $9.83 per copy.