



Using the DISCOVER® Career Exploration Mini-Course and Activities

Before Using the Materials

These materials were designed to help middle school students explore careers and make tentative life decisions. It is intended to be used either by teachers or career guidance professionals to integrate career exploration into the classroom. How can DISCOVER® help your students?

DISCOVER can help students:

- Select their high school courses
- Learn about their career related interests and abilities
- Explore occupations and discover more information about the world of work.

DISCOVER offers guidance and information to help students make important career and educational decisions. Ideas about who they are and what they want to become influence their career plans and decisions.

Why the Assessment Emphasis?

The role of the inventories in DISCOVER is to collect information about a person and organize it in a way to assist their career exploration and planning. We emphasize the use of ACT's interest and abilities inventories in the program because they are built on sound psychometric footings:

- the inventories measure what they are supposed to measure (are valid)
- the results will be stable over time (are reliable)
- an inventory is easy to take and the results are understandable (are usable)

The inventories in this version of DISCOVER have been developed for middle school students. The abilities inventory is normed for students in the 8th grade and up and the interest inventory is geared for all middle school students.

A summary of research about DISCOVER can be found at:

www.act.org/discover/overview/info.html.

If you have not used DISCOVER, we recommend taking some time and familiarizing yourself with the components of the program before using it with students. You will likely find it helpful in deciding how the curricula can be a useful tool for working with students as they explore careers and make educational plans.

If you are familiar with DISCOVER, you most likely are able to see how it can be useful for students to gather information for career and educational purposes. What we offer here are different ways you and your colleagues may use DISCOVER in a classroom setting.

DISCOVER®



Mini-Course and Activities Content

The mini-course content can be taught in the classroom in four class periods and was devised such that it can be integrated into many classroom experiences. The activities that are separate from the mini-course can be used to supplement the mini-course, or be used either alone or with activities in subject area classes. They were developed by career development professionals for the purpose of infusing course curriculum with appropriate career exploration and planning activities.

Each session within the curriculum is designed to be delivered in typically no more than 40 to 50 minutes. The content is intended to complement the use of DISCOVER with activities that reinforce concepts and are additive to what a student would get from DISCOVER alone. While the curriculum can be used exactly as presented here, we hope that you will freely add activities that are supplementary to those offered here to make the experience personally satisfying and appropriate for the students.

How the Mini-Course is Organized

Each session is organized into three parts:

- Overview: A shorthand description of the activities of each class, including how long each activity should take and materials that are needed for class.
- Administrator Instructions: A more in-depth description of each class's activities and information to help the administrator deliver the content.
- Handouts and activity sheets: Action documents that encourage students to actively participate in the class.

How the Activities are Organized

Each activity is organized by purpose, learning objective, time requirement, materials that are needed, setting, curriculum areas and grade levels for which they are intended, and by type of activity.

Suggestions for Implementation

Administrators should preview the curriculum to decide:

- How the curriculum can be best used in your situation.
- If time is an issue, which parts you will opt out of doing in class and which you will assign as out-of-class activities or edit out of each class.
- What materials you will need to prepare for presenting the class.
- If the curriculum is being done in conjunction with other instructors, you will want to coordinate which classes and activities have the highest priority.

Allow yourself ample class preparation time. Some of the class activities will take a small amount of time to prepare the classroom to accommodate the exercise. Consider how you can modify activities to make them workable in your situation. Finally, infuse the classroom experience with real life examples, as it can be helpful in engaging your students in the process.



Overview of Materials

Career Exploration Mini-Course				
	Class 1 Why Career Plans Matter	Class 2 Importance of Career Interests	Class 3 DISCOVERing Abilities	Class 4 Getting Ready for the Future
Introduction to Career Exploration	X			
Orientation to DISCOVER	X			
Discussing Interests and Processing Inventory		X		
Discussing Abilities and Processing Inventory			X	
Putting the Pieces Together		X	X	
Goals				X
Decision-making & Barriers				X
Next Steps				X

Career and Educational Planning Activities		
Activity	Career Planning	Educational Planning
Career Myths	X	
Career Trivia Game	X	
Career Family History	X	
Scavenger Hunt	X	
Futuretown Park Exercise	X	
Career Planning Summary Exercise	X	
Staying on Course: High School Planning		X
How Do I Get There From Here?		X