

DISCOVER[®]



I.
Career Exploration
Mini-Course

ACT[®]



Mini-Course Class 1: Why Career Plans Matter

OVERVIEW

Purpose

To motivate students to become interested and invested in career exploration and planning.

Learning Objectives

- The student will understand why planning is important.
- The student will be able to classify representative, broad interest areas.
- The student will be able to distinguish activities in the broad interest areas.
- The student will be able to evaluate how their personal interests best match the needs of a larger group (beyond the individual).
- The student will examine some false beliefs they may have about career planning.

Time Required

45 minutes

Materials Needed

Student worksheets, “Desert Island” Careers

Setting

A classroom

Curriculum Areas

Life Skills, Career Education, Group Guidance, Social Studies, English

Grade Level

6

7

8

9

Activities

I. Desert Island Careers—Part I

- a. Using the “Desert Island Careers” worksheet, introduce the context and have students choose one item to rescue. *(5 minutes)*
- b. Students individually choose two interest areas. *(5 minutes)*

II. Desert Island Careers—Part II

- a. Create “Islands”—In small groups, students choose one person for each area on the worksheet. *(5 minutes)*
- b. “Island Council”—Students decide whether 1) Their group will try to get off the island, or 2) Their group will devise a plan for surviving on the island. *(5 minutes)*
- c. PLAN—Next, the group will devise a plan either to leave or to survive. *(10 minutes)*

III. Follow-Up Discussion

- a. Debriefing: What was difficult? Why? *(10 minutes)*
- b. Talk about different kinds of plans and why plans are good. *(5 minutes)*



Mini-Course Class 1: Why Career Plans Matter

ADMINISTRATOR INSTRUCTIONS

Desert Island Careers

I. Desert Island Jobs, Part I

- a. Hand out the “Desert Island” worksheet and read the following scenario: “Imagine, the plane you are on has to make an emergency landing and crashes in the ocean near a deserted island. The plane has split in two and you have barely enough time to rescue one item from the plane before it sinks. What would you rescue from the plane? Write it down on your worksheet.”
- b. After students have written down an item, continue with the scenario: “You are now stranded on a deserted island with five other survivors. In order to either survive on the island or attempt to get off the island, you will need to play a unique role in your group. Choose two of the following roles where you feel you could best contribute to the group—Write down your favorite choice first and your second choice next.”
- c. Proceed to Desert Island Jobs, Part II.

Desert Island Job Descriptions:

Artists: Work mainly with ideas, and also with people, to express thoughts or feelings through painting, writing, designing, music, and drama.

Administrators: Work mainly with data and also with people to persuade, lead, or direct them.

Organizers: Work mainly with data, and also with things, to maintain accurate files, records, or accounts and to make sure that orderly steps are followed in business.

Guides: Work mainly with people—to lead them, teach them, counsel them, provide a service, or help them get well.

Technologists: Work mainly with things—to use, repair, or design tools, equipment, hardware, and other things. They also may raise crops and work with animals.

Investigators: Work mainly with ideas, and also with things, to do scientific investigation and research.

II. Desert Island Jobs, Part II

- a. Split the students up into random groups of six; allocate each group to a different part of the room as their island. If your class has an odd or small number of students, adjust the exercise accordingly. You can use this script:

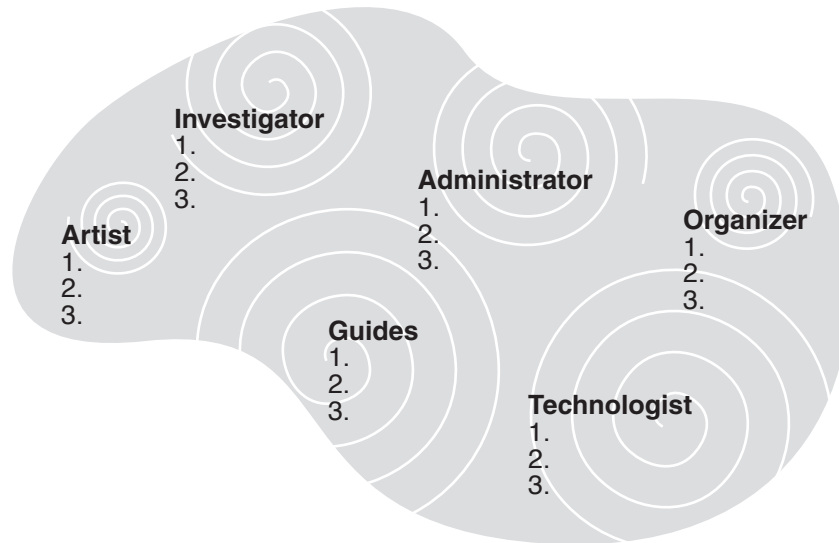


“Your group will meet as an Island Council to decide who will best fill each role. Remember, to survive you need one person in each role, so you will need to decide as a group how you will choose only one person and fill each area.”

Note: Give suggestions of how this may be accomplished, but each group needs to decide how they will complete this process (e.g., voting, flipping a coin, nominations, etc.)

- b. Once each role is filled, students will need to decide:
 1. If the group will attempt to get off the island or whether the group will stay on the island and try to survive.
 2. What use can be made of the item each person chose to bring with them?
 3. What is the plan, using each role and the items, to carry out a plan to either survive or get off the island?

Desert Island Plans



- c. Will your group try to leave the island or will you stay and survive?
- d. How will you use the items your group salvaged, along with the roles of the group to create your plan? Create a plan with your group:
 1. Decide what sort of activities the person in each role will do. Record in the appropriate space above.
 2. Decide how the items will (or will not) help you complete your plan.

III. Follow-Up Discussion

- a. What was difficult about working as a group? Why?

Examples:

 1. *Student:* “I didn’t get the role I wanted.”
Instructor: Emphasize how, often in the real world, we may not get



what we want for various reasons (the more popular person might get it, someone who planned better might get it, or someone who was more fitting for the job might get it). Knowing our interests and planning can help you go where you want to go!

2. *Student*: “Everyone (nobody) wanted to be in charge.”
Instructor: Emphasize how, often in the real world, many people want to (or do not want to be responsible to) take the lead, but it is important to determine what is needed and to be responsible for the part for which you are the leader.
- b. Do you feel your group had a good plan? Why or why not?
Examples:
 1. *Student*: “I did not like the group’s plan—I had nothing to do with it.”
Instructor: “Some of you may have found that you may like to engage in planning alone, rather than in a group.”
 2. *Student*: “I liked the plan a lot!”
Instructor: “Some of you probably found that you enjoy talking with other people as you plan. In everyday life, these might include relatives, friends, counselors, teachers, and the like.”
Instructor: Emphasize that the important thing, whether the student prefers to plan alone or by consulting others, is to know what personal interests are and to engage in planning that is personally fitting.
- c. Why is planning important?
Examples:
 1. *Student*: “Why is planning important, anyway? I mean, I’m only in 8th grade!”
 2. *Instructor*: “Planning starts early—not that you should decide your career right now, but in order to find something you enjoy doing, you can start getting to know your interests and strengths now, so you can plan for and work through the appropriate classes and other activities.”
 2. *Instructor*: “Adults who are most satisfied with their careers do something that they love doing. Planning will help you to both find what you like to do and then plan so you have a better chance of getting a career in the area you choose—not one that you just end up with.”
- d. Why is career planning important?
Examples:
 1. *Instructor*: “The first part of career planning is to know yourself and what you find interesting. You might think that you enjoy one area, but change your mind after completing a volunteer experience in that area. Career planning now will set you on the track that is right for you—and only you can make those choices.”



Mini-Course Class 1: Why Career Plans Matter

FOR STUDENTS

Desert Island Careers

Desert Island Job Descriptions:

- *Artists:* Work mainly with ideas, and also with people, to express thoughts or feelings through painting, writing, designing, music, and drama.
- *Administrators:* Work mainly with data and also with people to persuade, lead, or direct them.
- *Organizers:* Work mainly with data, and also with things, to maintain accurate files, records, or accounts and to make sure that orderly steps are followed in business.
- *Guides:* Work mainly with people—to lead them, teach them, counsel them, provide a service, or help them get well.
- *Technologists:* Work mainly with things—to use, repair, or design tools, equipment, hardware, and other things. They also may raise crops and work with animals.
- *Investigators:* Work mainly with ideas, and also with things, to do scientific investigation and research.

Directions: Complete the following based on your own personal interests:

If you could salvage one item from a plane crash, what would it be?

Which of the Desert Island Jobs is your first choice?

Which of the Desert Island Jobs is your second choice?

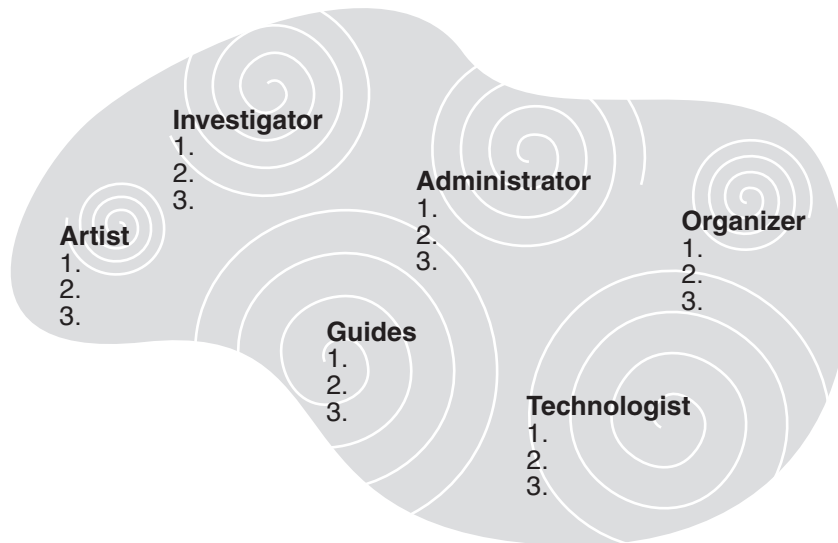


Mini-Course Class 1: Why Career Plans Matter

FOR STUDENTS

Desert Island Careers Group Exercise

Directions: As a group, decide who will fill each role. Be sure to have one person fill the role in each area.



Will your group try to *leave* the island or will you *stay* and survive?

How will you use the items your group salvaged, along with the roles of the group to create your plan? Create a plan with your group:

- Decide what sort of activities the person in each role will do. Record in the appropriate space above.
- Decide how the items will (or will not) help you complete your plan.



Mini-Course Class 2: Importance of Career Interests

OVERVIEW

Purpose

To help students become invested in career exploration and explore their interests.

Learning Objectives

- Students will become familiar with DISCOVER.
- They will learn about their interests and understand their importance in career exploration.

Time Required

40 minutes

Materials Needed

Student worksheet, DISCOVER logon information including passwords

Setting

A classroom with access to computer workstations with Internet access

Curriculum Areas

Life Skills, Career Education, Group Guidance, Social Studies, English

Grade Level

6

7

8

9

Activities

I. Orientation to DISCOVER

- a. How to logon (*5 minutes*)
- b. Components of DISCOVER (*5 minutes*)

II. Interest Inventory

- a. Brainstorm
How can we learn about our interests? From where might our interests come? (*5 minutes*)
- b. Have students complete the interest inventory in class. (*15 minutes*)
- c. Activity
Occupations & My Interests: Students explore suggested occupations that match their interests. (*10 minutes*)



Mini-Course Class 2: Importance of Career Interests

ADMINISTRATOR INSTRUCTIONS

I. Orientation to DISCOVER

- a. Logon Instructions (*5 minutes*)
Give each student a password for DISCOVER (see “Generate Passwords” instructions in Support Materials). Have your students open their Internet browser and go to www.act.org/discover/dms. Then have your students follow instructions to logon to DISCOVER. Offer to help students if they have trouble with the logon process.
- b. Components of DISCOVER (*5 minutes*)
Once students have completed the logon process, they should be at DISCOVER’s “Introduction to Futuretown” page. Have the students read the instructions on the page which summarizes what DISCOVER is and how the program can help them. Once they click on “Next” they will be on the Futuretown home page.

II. Interest Inventory

- a. Brainstorm (*5 minutes*)
Inform students that there are several ways they can learn about their interests. Have them brainstorm as a class how they might learn about their interests.

After they have brainstormed with each other fill them in on anything they may have missed: We can *observe* what others choose to do, what they like and activities that they engage in. We can have *discussions*, like we are doing now. Or we can *measure* interests, using a tool like the UNIACT Interest Inventory. All three are important. There are other ways that we can learn about our interests: work experience, hobbies, and high school/college course work.
- b. Have students complete the interest inventory in class. Have the students click on the “Inventories” button and select “Interest Inventory” and then choose to “Online” (note: students can also take the inventory on paper and enter their results). (*15 minutes*)
- c. Activity
Prompt students to think about how they might use the inventory to confirm/not confirm career ideas.
Occupations & My Interests
Give students handout 2a.
Encourage the students to explore occupations by clicking on one of the six cluster buildings in Futuretown Park on the screen and print out information about two occupations that interest them. (*10 minutes*)



Mini-Course Class 2: Importance of Career Interests

LOGON INSTRUCTIONS

To use the DISCOVER for Middle Schools Career Planning Program, go to www.act.org/discover/dms. Bookmark this page.

Choose a user name and type it in the User ID space.

Your User ID is: _____

Your Password is: _____

Type it into the Password space and click Submit.

Enter your user information to create your DISCOVER for Middle Schools record.

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Mini-Course Class 2: Importance of Career Interests

FOR INSTRUCTORS

Occupations & My Interests

Part 1

Directions: Logon to DISCOVER. Go to Futuretown Park and click on one of the cluster buildings that matches your interests (has a blue arrow next to it). Choose at least two different career areas and explore one occupation in each –OR– two different occupations from one career area.

Note to Instructor: Students will have to log on to DISCOVER. This can take some students longer than others. Plan to circulate around the room to prompt students as necessary or demonstrate before having the students log on.

Career Area _____

Occupation _____

Career Area _____

Occupation _____

Part 2

Directions: Write a summary about which occupation interests you the most and why.



Mini-Course Class 2: Importance of Career Interests

FOR STUDENTS

Occupations & My Interests

Part 1

Directions: Logon to DISCOVER. Go to Futuretown Park and click on one of the cluster buildings that matches your interests (has a blue arrow next to it). Choose at least two different career areas and explore one occupation in each –OR– two different occupations from one career area.

Career Area _____

Occupation _____

Career Area _____

Occupation _____

Part 2

Directions: Write a summary about which occupation interests you the most and why.



Mini-Course Class 3: DISCOVERing Abilities

OVERVIEW

Purpose

To introduce students to abilities and the importance of abilities in career exploration.

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn about themselves, and will be able to apply their abilities to the world of work.
- They will use the information from their completed abilities inventory to explore more careers.

Time Required

40 minutes

Materials Needed

Student worksheets

Setting

A classroom with computer workstations and Internet access

Curriculum Areas

Life Skills, Career Education, Group Guidance, Social Studies, English

Grade Level

6

7

8

9

Activities

I. Abilities Brainstorm

- a. Students identify as many skills/abilities as they can in 30 seconds and have a class discussion. *(5 minutes)*

II. Abilities

- a. Understanding Abilities: A mini lecture on why it is difficult to identify our abilities, but also why it's important that we are able to do so. Also, get students thinking about how they can interpret and use their results from the abilities inventory. *(10 minutes)*
- b. Abilities Inventory: Instruct the student to assess their abilities using DISCOVER. *(10 minutes)*
- c. Occupations & My Abilities: Students explore suggested occupations that match their abilities. *(15 minutes)*



Mini-Course Class 3: DISCOVERing Abilities

ADMINISTRATOR INSTRUCTIONS

I. Abilities Brainstorm

- a. *Give students handout 3a.*

Instruct the students to write down as many of their skills and abilities that they can think of in 30 seconds. Ask students how many skills/abilities they listed. Note all the different abilities/skills on the board. *(5 minutes)*

II. Abilities

- a. Understanding Abilities

Talk to the students about abilities. Use the previous activity to demonstrate how it is difficult to think about all of our abilities. Mention that we often take so many things that we are able to do for granted; we don't count them as skills/abilities. Give examples like: reading, writing, etc. Another reason that we may tend to underestimate our abilities is that we are taught to be modest, so we don't spend a lot of time talking/thinking about all of our strengths! Sometimes we don't have the language to describe our skills/abilities.

How can we learn about our abilities? From where might our abilities come? Get students thinking about how they can interpret and use their results from the abilities inventory. *(5 minutes)*

- b. Abilities Inventory

Have students log on to DISCOVER and complete the abilities inventory. *(15 minutes)*

- c. Occupations & My Abilities

Give students handout 3b.

Using the abilities inventory results, students should explore suggested occupations that match their abilities. *(15 minutes)*



Mini-Course Class 3: DISCOVERing Abilities

FOR INSTRUCTORS

Abilities Brainstorm

Directions: List as many of your skills and abilities that you can think of in 30 seconds.

For example: I'm good at math, I can repair things, I'm a good listener



Mini-Course Class 3: DISCOVERing Abilities

FOR INSTRUCTORS

Occupations & My Abilities

Part 1

Directions: Logon to DISCOVER. Go to Futuretown Park and click on one of the cluster buildings that matches your abilities (has a red arrow next to it). Choose at least two different career areas and explore one occupation in each –OR– two different occupations from one career area.

Note to Instructor: Students will have to log on to DISCOVER. This can take some students longer than others. Plan to circulate around the room to prompt students as necessary or demonstrate before having the students log on.

Career Area _____

Occupation _____

Career Area _____

Occupation _____

Part 2

Directions: Write a summary about an occupation that interests you

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Mini-Course Class 3: DISCOVERing Abilities

FOR STUDENTS

Abilities Brainstorm

Directions: List as many of your skills and abilities that you can think of in 30 seconds.

Mini-Course Class 3—Handout

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Mini-Course Class 3: DISCOVERing Abilities

FOR STUDENTS

Occupations & My Abilities

Part 1

Directions: Logon to DISCOVER. Go to Futuretown Park and click on one of the cluster buildings that matches your interests (has a red arrow next to it). Choose at least two different career areas and explore one occupation in each –OR– two different occupations from one career area.

Career Area _____

Occupation _____

Career Area _____

Occupation _____

Part 2

Directions: Write a summary about an occupation that interests you



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

OVERVIEW

Purpose

To review the information that students have gained from career exploration with DISCOVER and to engage in career planning activities.

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn to revise goals and think about future steps they want to take in career exploration.
- They will consider barriers that could get in the way of their career plans.
- They will develop a tentative plan for their future education or career.

Time Required

40 minutes

Materials Needed

Student worksheets

Setting

A classroom

Curriculum Areas

Life Skills, Career Education, Group Guidance, Social Studies, English

Grade Level

6

7

8

9

Activities

I. Goals

Students will identify life and career goals based on the information that they have explored. *(10 minutes)*

II. Barriers

In small groups students will discuss: what some potential career barriers may be. How can our strengths help us deal with career barriers we may encounter? *(5 minutes)*

III. My Plan

- a. “Career Plan Outline”—Students will create a plan of action using what they’ve gained from DISCOVER. *(25 minutes)* –OR–
- b. “Education Plan Outline”—Students will create a high school plan using what they’ve learned from DISCOVER. *(25 minutes)*



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

ADMINISTRATOR INSTRUCTIONS

I. Goals

Give students handout 4a “My Goals”

Have students identify goals they have in general and those they base on the information they have gathered over the previous classes (10 minutes)

Example: Ask students to give examples of goals they have (e.g., top score on a video game, play pro football, get good grades in school).

II. Barriers

Give students handout 4b “Things That Could Hold Me Back”

In small groups students will discuss: What are some potential life goal and career barriers? Be sure they consider school, work, and personal barriers, as well as family and important others. (5 minutes)

III. My Plan

a. Career Plan Outline (25 minutes)

Give students handout 4c “My Career Plan Outline.”

Have your students summarize information they have learned about themselves and their favorite occupations. –OR–

b. Education Plan Outline (25 minutes)

Give students handout 4d “My Education Plan Outline.”

Have your students summarize information they have learned about themselves and their favorite occupations and high school courses that can help them prepare for careers.

Have your students save their plans and encourage them to revisit them, like they might their New Year’s resolutions. If you have parent conferences, these plans can be revisited then. Another possibility is to have students add these to a portfolio of accomplishments for the class.



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

FOR INSTRUCTORS

My Goals

Directions: Answer the following questions

My goal is (The thing I want to achieve most in life right now):

How will I do it?

Step 1 _____

Step 2 _____

Step 3 _____

Step 4 _____

Step 5 _____

Based on what I know about careers, the career I want right now is:

How will I do it?

Step 1 _____

Step 2 _____

Step 3 _____

Step 4 _____

Step 5 _____



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

FOR INSTRUCTORS

Things That Could Hold Me Back

Directions: *Think about the following questions: What are some potential roadblocks? How can our strengths help me deal with roadblocks I may encounter? Write your answers below.*

These are the things that could keep me from doing what I most want to achieve in life:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How I would deal with them (think about who or what could help):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

These are the things that could keep me from doing what I would like to do right now for a career:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How I would deal with them (think about who or what could help):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

FOR INSTRUCTORS

My Career Plan Outline

Directions: Answer the following questions.

INFORMATION ABOUT MYSELF

What **INTERESTS** me?

What are some of my strengths? (**ABILITIES**)

What are some of my weaknesses? (**ABILITIES**)

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**Mini-Course Class 4:
Getting Ready for the Future**

FOR INSTRUCTORS

My Career Plan Outline (continued)

INFORMATION ABOUT MYSELF

What themes (similarities or differences) do I notice when looking at my **INTERESTS/ABILITIES**?

What have I learned about myself through the career exploration program?

What have I learned that I should take into consideration in career planning?

What are some of my **INTERESTS** that can be fulfilled outside of a career?



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

FOR INSTRUCTORS

My Career Plan Outline (continued)

INFORMATION ABOUT MY FAVORITE OCCUPATIONS

My favorite occupations:

Which of my **INTERESTS** are fulfilled within each of these occupations?

How do each of these occupations fit with my strengths and weaknesses?
(**ABILITIES**)

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**Mini-Course Class 4:
Getting Ready for the Future**

FOR INSTRUCTORS

My Career Plan Outline (continued)

MY FUTURE

My goals for the rest of the school year:

Goals to be met before I graduate:



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

FOR INSTRUCTORS

My Education Plan Outline

Directions: Answer the following questions.

INFORMATION ABOUT MYSELF

What **INTERESTS** me?

What are some of my strengths? (**ABILITIES**)

What are some of my weaknesses? (**ABILITIES**)

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**Mini-Course Class 4:
Getting Ready for the Future**

FOR INSTRUCTORS

My Education Plan Outline (continued)

INFORMATION ABOUT MYSELF

What themes (similarities or differences) do I notice when looking at my **INTERESTS/ABILITIES?**

What kind of career am I considering (for instance, something general like “science-related,” or something specific like “to be an eye doctor”)?

What kinds of classes in high school should I take to be prepared (talk to your teacher or counselor):



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

FOR STUDENTS

My Goals

Directions: Answer the following questions

My goal is (the thing I want to achieve most in life right now):

How will I do it?

Step 1 _____

Step 2 _____

Step 3 _____

Step 4 _____

Step 5 _____

Based on what I know about careers, the career I want right now is:

How will I do it?

Step 1 _____

Step 2 _____

Step 3 _____

Step 4 _____

Step 5 _____



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

FOR STUDENTS

Things That Could Hold Me Back

Directions: *Think about the following questions: What are some potential roadblocks? How can our strengths help me deal with roadblocks I may encounter? Write your answers below.*

These are the things that could keep me from doing what I most want to achieve in life:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How I would deal with them (think about who or what could help):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

These are the things that could keep me from doing what I would like to do right now for a career:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How I would deal with them (think about who or what could help):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

FOR STUDENTS

My Career Plan Outline

Directions: Answer the following questions.

INFORMATION ABOUT MYSELF

What **INTERESTS** me?

What are some of my strengths? (**ABILITIES**)

What are some of my weaknesses? (**ABILITIES**)

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**Mini-Course Class 4:
Getting Ready for the Future**

FOR STUDENTS

My Career Plan Outline (continued)

INFORMATION ABOUT MYSELF

What themes (similarities or differences) do I notice when looking at my

INTERESTS/ABILITIES

Mini-Course Class 4—Handout

What have I learned about myself through the career exploration program?

What have I learned that I should take into consideration in career planning?

What are some of my **INTERESTS** that can be fulfilled outside of a career?



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

FOR STUDENTS

My Career Plan Outline (continued)

INFORMATION ABOUT MY FAVORITE OCCUPATIONS

My favorite occupations:

Which of my **INTERESTS** are fulfilled within each of these occupations?

How do each of these occupations fit with my strengths and weaknesses?
(**ABILITIES**)

DISCOVER[®]



**Mini-Course Class 4:
Getting Ready for the Future**

FOR STUDENTS

My Career Plan Outline (continued)

MY FUTURE

My goals for the rest of the school year:

Goals to be met before I graduate:



Mini-Course Class 4: Getting Ready for the Future

FOR STUDENTS

My Education Plan Outline

Directions: Answer the following questions.

INFORMATION ABOUT MYSELF

What **INTERESTS** me?

What are some of my strengths? (**ABILITIES**)

What are some of my weaknesses? (**ABILITIES**)

DISCOVER®



**Mini-Course Class 4:
Getting Ready for the Future**

FOR STUDENTS

My Education Plan Outline (continued)

INFORMATION ABOUT MYSELF

What themes (similarities or differences) do I notice when looking at my **INTERESTS/ABILITIES?**

What kind of career am I considering (for instance, something general like “science-related,” or something specific like “to be an eye doctor”)?

What kinds of classes in high school should I take to be prepared (talk to your teacher or counselor)?