

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS GUIDE CAREER CHOICES

Purpose: This lesson increases students’ awareness of the relationship between personal characteristics and career choices. The Career Pathways framework is used as the organizer for integrating students’ knowledge of their personal characteristics into information about the world of work and possible career choices.

Time: 45-50 Minutes **Group Size:** Whole Class or Small Group **Grade Level:** 4-6

Materials: [Career Pathways](#) Student/PSC Resource; [Matching Personal Characteristics](#) and [Matching My Personal Characteristics with Career Pathways](#) Student Thinking Papers; Guidance eLearning Page (<http://www.missouricareereducation.org/for/content/guidance/>)
An old *Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT)* and/or download several pages (if resources allow, enough for each student to have a page) from the alphabetic list of occupations provided by the electronic version of the DOT ([Dictionary of Occupational Titles \(DOT\) Index](#));

Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program (MCGP) Strand/Big Idea/Concept:

Strand: Career Development (CD)

Big Idea: CD 7 Applying Career Exploration And Planning Skills In The Achievement Of Life Career Goals.

Concept: CD.7.A. Integration of self knowledge into life and career planning *and/or*

Big Idea: CD 9 Applying Employment Readiness Skills And The Skills For On-The-Job Success.

Concept: CD.9.A. Personal skills for job success

American School Counselor Association (ASCA): Domain/Standard:

Career Development Domain

Standard C: Students will understand the relationship between personal qualities, education, training, and the world of work.

Link to Sample MCGP Units/Lessons (Note: this listing does not include all possible related Units/Lessons—they are merely examples of how the activity fits with the MCGP Guidance eLearning Units/Lessons)

4 th Grade	CD.9	UNIT: Presenting: Me!	 
5 th Grade	CD.8, CD.9	UNIT: Your Dream Career	 

Show Me Standards: Performance Goals (check one or more that apply)

X	Goal 1: gather, analyze and apply information and ideas
	Goal 2: communicate effectively within and beyond the classroom
X	Goal 3: recognize and solve problems
X	Goal 4: make decisions and act as responsible members of society

This lesson supports the development of skills in the following academic content areas.

Academic Content Area(s)	Specific Skill(s)
Communication Arts	
Mathematics	
X	Social Studies 4. Economic concepts (work) 6. Relationships of individual and groups to institutions & cultural traditions.
Science	
Health/Physical Education	
Fine Arts	

Enduring Life Skill(s)

	Perseverance	X	Integrity	X	Problem Solving/Decision-Making
X	Courage		Compassion		Tolerance
X	Respect	X	Goal Setting	X	Curiosity

Assessment: acceptable evidence of what learners will know/be able to do as a result of this lesson:

ASSESSMENT: Content:

Given scenarios describing four (4) hypothetical students, learners will demonstrate their knowledge of Career Pathways by providing two (2) Career Paths that are appropriate for each of the hypothetical students.

ASSESSMENT: Personalization of Content

1. Students write a brief scenario describing self re: current strengths/interests and identify two (2) Career Paths that fit for now.
2. Students complete reflection statements integrating self-knowledge with information about personal characteristics and Career Pathways.

Lesson Preparation/Motivation

Essential Questions: How do people decide what their life’s work will be? Where would you begin?

Engagement (Hook): See Lesson Procedures

Procedures

<p><i>Professional School Counselor Procedures:</i></p> <p>Advanced Preparation: Locate an old <i>Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT)</i> and/or download/copy several pages (if resources allow, download enough for each student to have one page) from the electronic version: Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) Index.</p> <p><i>PSC Note:</i> Depending upon the background experiences of students and the existence of character education program(s) in your building/district, you may want to differentiate/compare “character traits” and “personal characteristics”. Personal characteristics include, but are not limited to character traits. Discussions of personal characteristics include such characteristics as perceived strengths, interests, academic skills as well as character traits.</p> <p><i>Throughout the lesson, systematically observe students’ misconceptions about gender roles and workers/occupations and the extent of students’ knowledge of the World of Work.</i></p> <p><i>Hook:</i> Without further instruction, tell students to get out a piece of paper and a pencil and create a list of as many occupations as they can in 2 minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of 2 minutes, tell students to count the number of occupations they listed. Do a quick tally of the number of occupations each student 	<p><i>Student Involvement:</i></p> <p>Students: During this lesson, courageously volunteer and be sure to speak loudly and clearly enough for everyone to hear your great ideas. Use complete sentences and conventions of standard English in speaking and writing.</p> <p><i>Hook:</i> Likity-split—list as many occupations as you can in two (2) minutes.</p> <p>Respond to school counselor’s prompts: count the occupations on your list; hold your hand up when he or she says the range in which your number falls.</p>
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Professional School Counselor Procedures:	Student Involvement:
<p>wrote (e.g., hands-up if listed more than 30, between 20 and 30, between 10 and 20, between 1 and 10.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students they made a good start, and if they listed all of occupations there are, they would be writing for a loooonnnng time—there are well over 10,000 occupations. • Show the <i>DOT</i> and/or hand out sample pages from the electronic version of the <i>DOT</i>. <p>1. Transition from <i>Hook</i> to lesson: Start a 2-column table on the board; label first column “Occupations”.</p> <p>SHOW-ME-SHOUT-OUT (all-together; inside shouts)—two occupations that are currently of interest to you.</p> <p>AGAIN...SHOW-ME-SHOUT-OUT (this time, one-at-time inside shouts): TELL US one occupation that is of interest to you. Write occupations on board.</p> <p>Invite 2 or 3 students to tell the rest of the class the name of one occupation and what appeals to them about the occupation.</p> <p>2. Vocabulary development: Write Personal Characteristic as the label for the second column.</p> <p>Introduce today’s lesson by telling students they will be learning about Personal Characteristics. Ask students to hypothesize about the definition of the term: Personal Characteristics. (<i>Merriam-Webster [http://www.wordcentral.com] defines characteristic as: a special quality or appearance that makes an individual or group different from others</i>)</p> <p>3. Examples of Personal Characteristics: When you have a definition to use as an anchor for lesson, invite students to “SHOUT-OUT” (one-at-a-time inside shouts) examples of personal characteristics; list in second column. Help them expand the list by thinking of such job-related characteristics as interests, skills (e.g., building things) and academic strengths.</p> <p>4. Continue discussion of Personal Characteristics by emphasizing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of personal characteristics helps people explore occupations in which they might like to work when they become adults • There are many occupations (Recall <i>Hook</i>). Ask: “How many occupations are there?” • Personal characteristics (including academic strengths) are guides to help people 	<p>Listen with curiosity—and think about how many 10,000 is.</p> <p>1. Contribute to SHOW-ME-SHOUT-OUTS (all-together and one-at-a-time inside shouts).</p> <p>SHOUT-OUT...all at once: 2 occupations of interest.</p> <p>SHOUT-OUT: one-at-a-time: Tell class one occupation that is of current interest to you.</p> <p>Volunteer to tell classmates about one of the occupations you chose. If don’t volunteer, listen and think about others’ comments.</p> <p>2. Contribute a hypothesis about the meaning of “personal characteristics”.</p> <p>3. Participate in SHOUT-OUT (one-at-time inside shouts): Shout-out examples of personal characteristics.</p> <p>4. If you have questions about any of the personal characteristics listed, ask for clarifications and/or explanation.</p> <p>As school counselor talks about personal characteristics and occupations, relate his or her words to own life. Ask clarifying questions and/or offer clarifying comments as appropriate.</p>

Professional School Counselor Procedures:	Student Involvement:
<p style="text-align: center;">organize/narrow exploration of the World of Work (WOW).</p> <p><i>Systematically observe students' understanding of the relationship between occupations and personal characteristics.</i></p> <p>5. Match occupations and personal characteristics: Give students time to look over the list of occupations on the board (Step 2); add more occupations as appropriate. Look over the list of personal characteristics; add more characteristics as appropriate (make sure "academic strengths" is listed as a personal characteristic. Think about the match of personal characteristics and occupations.</p> <p>For each occupation listed, ask students to identify personal characteristics that are needed to work in the occupation; draw lines to match occupations with personal characteristics. Summarize and discuss as appropriate in preparation for the following activities.</p> <p>6. Match Occupations with Career Pathways: Distribute the Career Pathways Student/PSC Resource. Give students time to look over the information. (<i>If knowledge about Career Paths is not a part of students' background experiences, take time to talk about what they represent in general.</i>)</p> <p>Explain that one way to narrow choices is to consider the themes or categories of interests, preferred activities and academic strengths and interests. Guide students to the Career Pathways and definitions. Using the list of occupations students generated in Steps 1 & 5, help them list one or two of the occupations in appropriate Career Path(s).</p> <p>ASSESSMENT: Content (<i>If time is short, assign each pair 2 of the scenarios.</i>) Group students in pairs; distribute the Matching Personal Characteristics Student Thinking Paper. Give students time to look over the thinking paper; read each scenario to class; explain that they are to re-read each scenario together and identify two Career Paths that might be of interest to the person described in the scenario. Invite clarifying questions; provide encouragement to pairs as they work.</p> <p>Invite several pairs to tell the class about their suggestions for each of the characters in the scenarios. Discuss similarities/differences in responses.</p> <p>ASSESSMENT: Personalization of Content: (Students continue in same pairs.) Distribute the thinking paper:</p>	<p>5. Contribute additional occupations and/or personal characteristics to lists. Think to yourself about how occupations and personal characteristics fit together.</p> <p>Volunteer to match a personal characteristic with an occupational tile. Ask clarifying questions and/or offer clarifying comments as appropriate.</p> <p>6. Look over the <i>Career Pathways</i> resource. If do not know what Career Pathways are, tell your school counselor; he or she will provide an explanation.</p> <p>Using the list of occupations on the board, list one or two occupational titles under each Career Path. Ask for hints if needed.</p> <p>ASSESSMENT: Content: Look over the thinking paper; ask clarifying questions as needed. With your partner, work through one scenario at a time-- read each scenario and identify appropriate career path(s) for the character, then go to the next scenario.</p> <p>If you have not volunteered today, courageously volunteer to tell classmates about the career paths you and your partner identified for one of the characters.</p> <p>ASSESSMENT: Personalization of Content: Complete your story honestly and thoughtfully AND use</p>

Professional School Counselor Procedures:	Student Involvement:
<p><u>Matching My Personal Characteristics with Career Pathways.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the three parts of the thinking paper: My Story, Career Paths/Personal Characteristics and Reflections/Projections. • Instruct students to (independently) write a story about self similar to the stories of the people in the scenarios. • Partners read Part I stories to each other and Work together to identify two (2) Career Paths that may suit them based on their current strengths/interests (Part II). • Individually, students complete the Part III reflections/projections: <p><i>The Career Pathways that match my (current) personal characteristics are ___and ___. At the present time, I think I would be <u>happy</u> <u>unhappy</u> (circle one) working in these Career Pathways because ___. In the future I want to learn how to ___ and/or about ___. In this lesson, I learned I ___. In the future I want to ___. I will ___. Additional thoughts and ideas I have about me and my future ___.</i></p> <p>Invite several students to read a sentence from their reflection to rest of class.</p> <p>Before collecting thinking papers, inform students that you will be reading their letters and then returning papers to their classroom teacher to return to them. The classroom teacher might read the papers. OK? If not, write “PLEASE DO NOT SHARE” at top of thinking paper.</p> <p>Collect <i>Matching Career Pathways</i> and <i>Matching My Personal Characteristics with Career Pathways</i> thinking papers.</p> <p>CLOSURE: Invite several students to answer the questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you decide what your life’s work will be? • Where will you begin? <p>Emphasize:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have a long time before they decide the specific occupation for which they will prepare. • The importance of curiosity and being open to changing their minds as they learn more. • Exploring occupations/observing workers in the world of work now will help them know there are many occupations in which they can be successful (success includes happiness in one’s work). 	<p>conventions of standard English and articulate thoughts and feelings in 1st person language.</p> <p>Work with partner to identify appropriate career paths for your personal characteristics</p> <p>Complete Part III Reflections/Projections using personal characteristic of integrity.</p> <p>Courageously volunteer to read a reflection sentence to classmates.</p> <p>If prefer not to have anyone except your school counselor read your papers, write “PLEASE DO NOT SHARE” at top of thinking paper.</p> <p>Give your school counselor your thinking papers.</p> <p>CLOSURE: Volunteer to respond to your school counselor’s questions. If do not volunteer, listen and think about others’ comments. Do your agree or disagree?</p> <p>As school counselor talks about the importance of being curious and continuing to explore the World of Work and Workers (WOW), relate his or her words to own life. Ask clarifying questions and/or offer clarifying comments as appropriate.</p>

<i>Professional School Counselor Procedures:</i>	<i>Student Involvement:</i>
<p><i>After class, review responses for students' accuracy in matching career paths with personal characteristics. Review Matching My Personal Characteristics with Career Pathways responses for students' (age appropriate) ability to identify their personal characteristics and match them with a Career Pathway. Assess students' age-appropriate command of conventions of standard English and their ability to express thoughts and feelings in 1st person language.</i></p> <p><i>Return to thinking papers to classroom teacher for distribution to students. Honor the privacy of students who write "Please do not share" on papers. Personally deliver papers to those students after your review.</i></p>	

Classroom Teacher Follow-Up Activities (Suggestions for classroom teacher to use to reinforce student learning of Comprehensive Guidance Curriculum concepts)

Provide classroom teacher with an overview of the lesson and copies of [Career Pathways](#) Student/PSC Resource and [Matching Personal Characteristics](#) Student Thinking Paper. [Matching My Personal Characteristics with Career Pathways](#). In addition, provide career development resources (print and on-line) for classroom use. If available, ask him or her to display a Career Pathways poster in the classroom and use it as a reference point to relate occupations to the subject areas and when students express interest in specific areas.

Summarize Systematic Observations: Identify persistent misconceptions about gender roles or the relationship between occupations and personal characteristics. Identify limitations in students' knowledge of the World of Work. Determine if misconceptions and/or limited knowledge indicate challenges for all or many students or for just a few? Identify individual students who had difficulty with any aspect of the lesson either content (e.g., or participation. Specify the difficulties.

Consult with Classroom Teacher: Discuss your systematic observations. Does he or she validate your observations as being classroom issues or behaviors as well? If so, collaborate with the classroom teacher to further identify the extent of misconceptions and limited knowledge about the world of work. How is it evidenced in the classroom? Determine if the difficulty is a "will" or a "skill" issue. Does the student know HOW to identify career pathways and personal characteristics but lacks motivation or the confidence to take the risk to publicly share ideas (will)? Or does the student lack the ability to identify personal characteristics and/or occupations/career pathways (skill)?

Collaborate with Classroom Teacher: Work with teacher to plan interventions. Interventions might include (and are not limited to) additional classroom guidance activities about identifying personal characteristics, the world of work or career pathways. Responsive Services involvement may be indicated for students who lack motivation and/or self-confidence to identify personal characteristics. These students might benefit from individual/group counseling. For some students, more intensive parental involvement may be indicated.

If the student behaviors are limited to classroom guidance lessons, consider reasons: What are the unique factors that might be influencing these students' responses during classroom guidance lessons? Have behaviors occurred during other classroom guidance lessons? All lessons? Topic-specific lessons? Motivated by peers?

CAREER PATHWAYS

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

PSC NOTE: The e-Learning Center (www.mcce.org) is an excellent source for materials as well as links to other resources. Download full-color Career Path (and Career Cluster) posters at:

www.missouricareereducation.org/for/content/career/

Fixing & Building: *People who like to figure out how things work and build things.*

Examples of occupations in the Fixing and Building Career Path

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

Health: *People who like to care for animals and people.*

Examples of occupations in the Health Career Path

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

Nature: *People who like to work outdoors with plants and animals.*

Examples of occupations in the Nature Career Path

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

Helping: *People who like to make things better for others.*

Examples of occupations in the Helping Career Path

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

Creative: *People who like to draw, write or perform.*

Examples of occupations in the Creative Career Path

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

Business: *People who like to do math, sell things, or use computers*

Examples of occupations in the Business Career Path

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

MATCHING PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS WITH CAREER PATHWAYS

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read each scenario and suggest two (2) career paths for each person.

James lives outside of town on a large farm where his family has cattle and other animals. He often helps his mother, who has a machine shop on the property. They repair farm machinery and small motor vehicles. James likes math and also likes to build things. He is big and strong for his age and everyone says he is a good ball player.

Possible Career Paths for James:

- 1.
- 2.

Wei loves to talk— all of the time!! Wei likes to be in plays and always volunteers to be the class speaker. She would much rather give an oral report than prepare a written one. In her spare time, she organized a neighborhood fair for her favorite charity and last year she sold the most Girl Scout cookies in her troop. Wei gets along with people quite well, although some people are afraid of her outgoing personality.

Possible Career Paths for Wei:

- 1.
- 2.

Kristen is a quiet girl who enjoys her home and her family. She is interested in cars and all kinds of motors. She reads a lot about them and often draws sketches of sports cars. The other kids think Kristen is a good friend; she goes out of her way to be nice and do favors for them.

Possible Career Paths for Kristen:

- 1.
- 2.

Irving lives in the city where there are lots of opportunities. He enjoys taking care of animals or pets with which he comes in contact in his neighborhood. He would much rather go to the zoo than go to the movies with friends. He enjoys responsibility and is a very compassionate and sensitive person.

Possible Career Paths for Irving:

- 1.
- 2.

MATCHING MY PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS WITH CAREER PATHWAYS

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

MY STORY

Part I: DIRECTIONS: Write a story about yourself that is similar to the stories of the people in the scenarios. Include several of your personal characteristics, e.g., interests, activities, everyday things you enjoy and/or "things" you do well).

Part II: DIRECTIONS: Identify two (2) Career Paths that match your personal characteristics:

Career Path # 1 _____ Career Path # 2 _____

Part III: REFLECTIONS/PROJECTIONS: Complete the sentences below; be sure your words make the sentence complete and you use conventions of standard written English.

The Career Pathways that match my (current) personal characteristics are _____ and _____ . At the present time, I think I would be happy unhappy (circle one) working in these Career Pathways because _____

In the future I want to learn how to _____ and/or about _____

In this lesson, I learned I _____

In the future I want to _____

I will _____

Additional thoughts and ideas I have about me and my future _____
