

10.2.1: Exploring My Interests

UNIT OVERVIEW
In this unit, students will explore their interests, extending the work they did on this career question in 9th grade. Students will understand that interests grow into passions when fed with time and practice. Students will learn about, and commit to pursuing, extracurricular activities aligned to their interests or passions.

 **LESSON OBJECTIVE**
Students will identify an interest to pursue this year or later in high school.

PURPOSE	AGENDA	
Students will shift their focus to the program’s goals for 10th grade by identifying an interest to pursue in high school. This lesson is the first in a series of lessons on student interests. These lessons will help students tap into their individual sources of motivation and develop their own “why” for high school and beyond.	5 min	Do Now
	25 min	Learn & Engage <i>My Interests</i>
	10 min	Mentor Connection

 **KEY TAKEAWAY**
Exploring my interests will help me figure out where I want to spend my time and energy to develop real passions.

PM NOTES
N/A

MATERIALS: [10.2.1 Exploring My Interests Presentation](#), [10.2.1 Exploring My Interests Worksheet](#)

Do Now: Passions Polaroid		Notes:
Get students to start thinking about their passions through a low-stakes activity where they will draw or write about the activities that interest them, starting with one that, while they're doing it, they lose track of time! (Hint common app question)		
Slide 2: 5 min	TALKING POINTS As students walk into the room, direct them to their handout and the directions on the board. If they express that they cannot or will not draw, let them know that they can simply block letters, or just write their activity in the box. This is supposed to be fun!	

	When students are finished, have them share their images with each other. At 5 minutes, ask the class, “What did you learn about each other?”	
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Learn and Engage: My Interests		Notes:
This activity frames interest exploration and self-awareness as part of the career exploration process. Students will watch the Career Exploration Video about interests, and then identify one enduring interest and new interest they have. Finally, students will select one interest to pursue this year in order to reinforce the idea that students must actively work to grow their interests as part of pursuing fulfilling careers.		
Slide 3: 1 min	TALKING POINTS Have a student read the key takeaway: <i>Exploring my interests will help me figure out where I want to spend my time and energy to develop real passions.</i>	
Slide 4: 2 min	TALKING POINTS - Let students know that much of this year will be spent starting to explore how your interests might point to a future career. - This does <u>not</u> mean that <i>anyone</i> will select a future job or profession this year. - This process is less about knowing what you want to do, and more about knowing how to map out and pursue a career pathway for yourself. - Career exploration is not about the destination, but about successfully navigating the journey you take to get there.	
Slide 5: 3 min	TALKING POINTS Before showing the video, direct students to the bottom of their handout where they should take some notes as they notice things that are interesting, surprising, or confusing to them. Show Career Exploration Video #2, “ Exploring My Interests ” (2:18). URL: https://vimeo.com/270723293 Pause as necessary to ensure student understanding	
Slide 6 - 8: 9 min	TALKING POINTS DISCUSSION	

	What were the key points or ideas that you heard in this video? <i>Anticipated Responses:</i> • Ask students what they learned that was interesting, surprising, or confusing. • Interests are anything that motivates you to practice and build your knowledge and skills. • $\text{Interests} + (\text{Time} + \text{Practice}) = \text{Passion}$ • Look for opportunities both in and outside of school. • Exploring interests can help you figure out what you like and don't like (some interests grow while others fade).	
Slide 6: 10 min	TALKING POINTS Direct students to reflect on their interests by answering the questions on the handout. • Have students list their interests, what do they love to do? • Then have them think about how they can learn more, practice, get better at, and expand that interest.. • If students mention interests that do not require practice (e.g. watching TV), prompt them to think about things related to that interest that they could get better at with practice. ◦ <i>Example: A student who likes watching TV could start writing reviews of shows they love or hate, or learn how to make a TV show (filming, makeup, scripting, etc.)</i> Direct students to share what they wrote with a partner as they finish.	
Slide 7: Mentor Connection 10 min	Now, let's write to our mentors!	

	Mentor Connection

In this lesson, you revisited your interests and connected your interests to career exploration. This is the first in a two-part series of lessons focused on helping you actively pursue an interest of your choice.

Share your interest list with your mentor. Choose one and let them know how you plan on growing this interest.

On my list of interests is....

I plan on growing my interest in _____ by _____

Ask your mentor about their interests and how they build them.

What are your interests?

How do you work on your interests?



Mentee Connection

Overview

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Your Mentee's Class and Response

Encourage creative thinking if interests like gaming or TV are mentioned, suggesting activities like writing a screenplay or starting a game review blog/YouTube channel.

Your response

Can you reinforce the idea that interests can become lucrative passions if a person takes the time to practice and build their skills? Affirm their interests and encourage them to extend their thinking.

I love your interest list, [Mentee!] You have such great ideas around how you might grow that skill.

Remember most people are not willing to put in the real work in order to grow their skills. If you start now, you'll be way ahead!

Share your interests with your mentees and do your best to be vulnerable around how you grew those interests. Did you fail? What was that like? Did you pivot? How did that go? It will help your mentee to know that growing interests means hard work, obstacles, and that it's all worth it!

When I was in high school I was really into [activity] and thought I would do it for a career so I [what did you

do? How did you actively engage in this interest even if you don't do it anymore?]



Extend

Planning to Grow (20 min)

SUMMARY

In this activity, students will continue to think about how an interest can be developed, and apply those strategies to their plan for growing their own interest.

- 3 min Direct students to write down a long-term interest that has grown over time.
- If students cannot identify a long-term interest, ask them to identify any interest they have.

- 10 min Organize students into small groups.
- Direct groups to brainstorm things they did to develop their interest.
- *Example: "I always was fascinated by lizards. As a kid, I checked out books about lizards from the library and went to visit them at the zoo whenever I had the chance. Once, a reptile expert came to my school to do a show. I stayed after and asked her tons of questions about all of the different reptiles she had. eventually saved up money to get a pet lizard. I had to do a lot research—and some trial and error—to learn how to take care of him properly."*

Direct groups to list common techniques (researching, practicing, seeking out expert advice, etc.)

- 5 min Invite groups to share out their lists whole-group.
- Record on the board or a large sheet of paper to create a master list of ideas.

- 2 min **CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING**
- Direct students to write down which techniques would best help them develop their chosen interest for the year.