

## Lesson 2

### High School Students Look to the Future

#### Materials Needed

pen or pencil  
access to library or Internet



**Vocabulary:** These words will help you understand this lesson.

Word/Term	Definition
<b>PSAT/NMSQT</b>	Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test offered mostly to juniors who want to practice for the SAT and perhaps qualify for scholarships
<b>SAT</b>	Scholastic Assessment Test - a test many colleges require in order to be considered for admission
<b>job</b>	a regular activity performed in exchange for payment; a position in which someone is employed
<b>career</b>	a chosen pursuit, a profession or occupation; the general course or progression of one's working life or one's professional achievements
<b>higher education</b>	education beyond the secondary level, especially education at the college or university level earning an associate or bachelor's degree
<b>associate's degree</b>	approximately 60 credit hours of study; many colleges allow a transfer into a bachelor's degree program
<b>bachelor's degree</b>	approximately 120-128 hours of study typically finish college with this degree
<b>master's degree</b>	a postgraduate academic degree awarded after the completion of an academic program of one to six years in duration.
<b>doctoral degree</b>	the most advanced degree, awarded after three to five years of additional study following completion of a master's degree

Journal writing can be used for many purposes. For this lesson journal writing has a specific purpose – to help you plan for the future. Writing in a journal gives you an opportunity to speculate on paper, confident that your ideas, observations, emotions, and writing will be accepted without criticism. The benefits of journal writing are many. It allows you to sort out problems and consider options. It can help you reflect on personal values, goals, and ideals. It can even allow you to discover and/or explore your feelings about the future.

### **Journal Entry**

Have you thought about what you might like to do after you complete your high school course requirements? Would you like to pursue a career in education, medicine, business, social services, engineering, criminal justice or ??? In your journal write for at least ten minutes on a career you think you might consider pursuing. It is perfectly possible you have two or three careers you are wondering about. Select one or two for this entry. Explain why the careers interest you.

### **Options after High School**

After high school what then? Perhaps you are considering immediate employment, finding a trade, military service, or further education. Education beyond high school is a big investment of time, money, and effort. However, more education equates to higher earnings. Are you finding excuses not to go? “No one in my family has ever gone.” You be the first! “I can’t afford college.” Most students get financial aid based on need. (The less you have the more aid you might get.) “I won’t fit in.” Most college students come from a variety of backgrounds. “I’m not sure what I want to study.” It’s not necessary to start knowing exactly what you want to do with the rest of your life. Invest in your education; the payoff lasts a lifetime. Let’s focus on college and see if it’s right for you. Go to the web site *First In the Family* [www.firstinthefamily.org/index.html](http://www.firstinthefamily.org/index.html) to learn of the experiences of others who were “firsts.”

**Looking Towards the Unknown**

Some high school graduates have a definite idea of what they want to pursue as a career; however, that often changes. Some students have a little idea of what they would like to do; others have no idea. Do you feel pressured into making a decision that could affect the rest of your life? Decision making is a process, not an event. Answer the following questions to help you discover more about yourself.

**Analysis**

1. What were the responsibilities you had with a job or activity you have had while in high school?

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2. What did you like about those responsibilities?

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3. What didn't you like about those responsibilities?

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4. What were your job accomplishments? How did they make you feel?

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5. What were your favorite courses in school?

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6. What course(s) did you not enjoy?

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7. What course(s) did you do best in?

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8. Do you see a connection between your success in school and your future career? How are they connected?

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9. Do you know your strengths? What are your strengths?

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**Drive of Your Life** is a great site to investigate if access to the Internet is available! This is an online career exploration game. Although it was designed for middle-school students, anyone who likes interactive computer activities to learn more about themselves can benefit from it.

1. Access the Drive of Your Life website by typing **www.driveofyourlife.org** in the address bar of the computer's browser. This website belongs to Indiana Youth Institute and is used by Indiana public schools. Please get permission from your computer's administrator before downloading any plug-ins, such as Adobe, that may be required.
2. Register as a student. You will be asked to input your name, state, and email address. In addition, you will be asked for the name of one of your teachers as well as where you go to high school. You will then create a unique user name and password. These become your future login giving you access information and results that you save.



**My Drive of Your Life login information:**

User Name \_\_\_\_\_

Password \_\_\_\_\_

3. Begin to play by customizing your ride. Answer questions about your skills and interests. As you do, you customize your car. Right answers are truthful ones. If you are truthful about yourself, you will get good information about career areas that may interest you.

Customizing takes about 20 minutes. If you run out of time and need to leave the program, save your changes by clicking *Exit* in the upper right-hand corner. When you log back in, you will pick up where you left off.

**My working style profile results:**

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Now plan a road trip to take in your customized car. You will select at least three jobs from a list of careers that match your working style profile. The list includes some basic information about each job such as annual income or education required. The jobs you choose become destinations on your trip. Each destination gives you the opportunity to learn more about that job. This part of the game could take up to 30 minutes.

**Three of my job interest destinations:**

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Next, jump in and drive to learn more about the jobs you selected as destinations. On the road, earn (or lose) Drive of Your Life cash by answering career trivia questions, visiting career exits, and avoiding dangerous detours. Use your cash to buy accessories for your car or go for the glory and try to get your name listed with the top 25 scorers. Plan on spending between 15 to 20 minutes completing this part of the activity.

<b>Drive of Your Life Cash I earned</b> _____
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6. You will exit the highway at each of your chosen destinations. You then decide how you want to learn about the job. On the one hand, you can read Fast Facts to learn about career information such as salary, employment outlook, and preparation requirements. You can also read about related jobs and add them as destinations if you wish.

On the other hand, you can learn with a Typical Day on the job. Here, you view job skills and tasks, physical demands, environment, and steps you need to take. Typical Day also includes a brief video about the job.

Click *Save & Keep Driving* to save jobs you are interested in.

I learned about jobs with:   \_\_\_ Fast Facts   \_\_\_ Typical Day   \_\_\_ Both

I saved these careers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. You must save at least three careers before completing the Drive of Your Life. To quit before you've finished, click the exit button in the upper right of the window. This will save all your information and results. When you return, you can pick up where you've left off.

**When you have completed Drive of Your Life, print out a copy of your Career Operator Driver License and attach it to this worksheet.** If printing is unavailable, remember that your results will be saved. Log in to Drive of Your Life with your user name and password the next time you are on a computer with a printer available.

### **Difference between a Job and a Career**

A **job** is defined as a regular activity performed in exchange for payment; a position in which someone is employed. A job may lead to some advancement or it may not have any possibility for a step beyond the basic position. A **career** is defined as a chosen pursuit, a profession or occupation; the general course or progression of ones working life or ones professional achievements. A job is what you may have now. A career is something you may aspire to have when you finish high school. It probably would have an entry level starting position and have a possibility for advancement.

**Select a Broad Category to Explore**

- education • business • medicine • accounting • food service
- engineering communications • the arts • law enforcement • library science
- environmental life sciences • social sciences • writing • science
- human resources • computer science • technology

The list is only a partial list of career areas to explore. Select one you might be interested in and find at least three articles on the Internet or in the library that explain the possibilities in that field. For example, if you select *food service* you might find an article about becoming a chef, an article about becoming a nutritionist, and one on becoming a dietician. Summarize each article. Give the title and author or web site. At the end evaluate the article. Was it helpful? Did it give specifics enough to clarify the job? Do you need to look further? Would you consider this as a career?

If you have access to the Internet an excellent web site to start with is the *BLS Career Information Home Page* <http://www.bls.gov/k12/> However there are many others.

**10. 1<sup>st</sup> Article**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author/web site: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_

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Evaluation of the article: \_\_\_\_\_

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**2<sup>nd</sup> Article**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author/web site: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary:

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Evaluation of the article:

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**3<sup>rd</sup> Article**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author/web site: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary:

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Evaluation of the article:

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### **Where Do You Go From Here?**

If you know exactly where you are headed, you are lucky. That doesn't mean your decision is permanent or "cast in stone." You may change your mind as another opportunity presents itself. On the other hand ... you can't think of what direction you might like to go! You can't answer the question, "What do I really want to be or do with my life as an adult?" It's not terribly important at this point. However, you should at least consider what you would like to major in at the start of college – math, English, foreign language, business, art, or science. A great web site to explore for majors is MyMajors at [www.mymajors.com](http://www.mymajors.com) It's worth the time! Follow the instructions to be successful.

### **What Are You Doing Now to Get Ready for Next Year?**

Have you gone online to look for college possibilities?

Do you know what different types of colleges there are?

Have you written for college catalogs? (They are free.)

Have you visited a college nearby, even if you aren't considering that one?

Have you asked a person in a career you are considering if you could "shadow" for a day?

Have you discussed college with your parents/guardian, your mentor?

Are you planning on taking the SAT or the ACT?

Have you thought about how you will pay for college?

Do you have a timeline on which you have dates that must be met?

**Whoa! Let's do one thing at a time!**

**If possible visit the web site *Know How 2 Go* at <http://knowhow2go>**

It offers excellent information on many issues for **your** level. Select the level (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior) you are currently at. This site offers the information in **Spanish** as well as English. This site is comprehensive and answers many questions.

**OR**

**To get started locate the information for your school year in the**

**APPENDIX**

**There is an appendix at the end of this Unit and one section is for you.**

**11. Take a Look Back**

You have just begun to think about the future. At the beginning of this lesson you wrote some of your first thoughts on what you might consider as a career. Do you still feel you are on the right track? Should you do another career search? Review what you wrote in your journal. Do you want to look for something else? What career choice would you not want to pursue?

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Do some reading before you say, “College is too expensive,” or “I’m not sure about committing to four years of college.” If you have access to the Internet go to a site called *Keys to Success in Community College* at

**<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/where-to-start/49360.html>**

It is worth the time to read about the benefits of community colleges.

**12.** Search for one article on another career you would **NOT** consider. Fill in the information on the article.

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author/web site: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Evaluation of the article: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

13. Go online and request a catalog from two colleges.

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Write to two colleges and request a catalog. Be sure to include your return address. List the school or schools you have requested catalogs from.

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14. What seems to be the biggest obstacle for you at this point?

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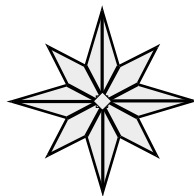
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15. If you don't go on to further education, what would you do? Is this what you want to do with your life?

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**End of Lesson 2**