

EXPLORE CAREERS



MAJORS

CULTURE



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Section 1: Start Here – What This Workbook Is (and Isn't)

This isn't a personality test or a one-size-fits-all answer. It's a thinking tool designed to help you figure out what matters to you in work, education, and life. Not every section will apply equally to every student. Use what helps, skip what doesn't.

Whether you're considering a four-year degree, a two-year program, or a skilled trade, this workbook is built to help you think clearly and decide intentionally.

What You'll Need

- Ideally, access to the GPT from my program with any notes during your chat session. *(If not, you can still use these ideas with ChatGPT or another AI tool).*
- This workbook (digital or printed)
- An open mind and honest answers

How to Use This Workbook

- Go in order or jump around to what feels most useful
 - Talk through parts with a parent, teacher, or advisor if you want to reflect out loud
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Section 2: How You Think About Work + Success

Reflection Prompts:

- What do you think makes a job “good”?
- When you imagine a great workday, what's happening?
- What kind of work environments stress you out?
- What do you admire (or want to avoid) from how the adults in your life work?

"What Matters to Me" Table:

Work Value	Why It's Important	Example Job That Fits	Dealbreaker if Missing?
Flexibility	I want a varied schedule	Freelance writer	Yes
Tangible, hands-on work	I don't want to sit at a desk all day	Electrician, welder	Yes
Helping others	I want to feel useful	Nurse, counselor	No

Remember to always ask:

1. Does this career suggestion align with your values?
2. Would this still feel like a good fit even if it wasn't the highest-paying option?

Section 3: Career and Major Insights from GPT

Reflection Table:

Career/Field Suggested	What I Know About It	My Gut Reaction	Would I Research More?
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Follow-up Prompt:

- Which suggestion surprised you most?
- What felt "off" or unrealistic?
- What should you explore more deeply?

For Trade/Skilled Work Suggestions:

- Look for apprenticeship options, community college certifications, or local trade programs
- Ask: What would it be like to learn this job through hands-on work?

Tip: Don't just accept the first answers. Ask GPT to compare, critique, or explain its reasoning. That's how you spot gaps or weak suggestions.

Section 4: Connecting Interests, Values, and Strengths

Before you can figure out what might be a good fit for your future, it helps to look at what's already clicked. Think back to a class, job, project, or volunteer experience that felt surprisingly satisfying. Don't overthink it. Just find one example where something about the work *felt right*.

Use the questions below to unpack what made it work (or not). These clues can help you understand your natural preferences, strengths, and what kinds of careers or majors might actually feel good in real life. Not just on paper.



Prompt: Where Have You Seen This Before?

- Think of a class project, job, or volunteer experience that felt satisfying. What made it click?
- What kind of task were you doing, and did it feel natural or challenging in a good way?
- Were you working independently or as part of a group? Which felt better?
- Did you enjoy figuring something out, helping someone, or making something?
- Were you energized or tired after doing it? What does that say?
- What kind of feedback did you get, and how did it make you feel?
- Did you feel like your ideas were valued or useful?
- Was there a subject or skill involved that you'd want to use again?
- Were there any parts you didn't like? And what might that tell you?
- Did the experience give you a sense of purpose or satisfaction?
- Would you do something like it again without being asked?

Self-Inventory Matrix:

Interest	Skill/Strength	Career Area It Might Fit	Want to Explore?
Working with tools	Fixing/building things	Carpentry, HVAC, welding	Yes
Helping people	Patience, listening	Counseling, nursing	Maybe
Creative writing	Coming up with ideas	Marketing, journalism	Yes
Working outdoors	Physical stamina	Landscaping, environmental science, forestry	Yes
Solving problems	Analytical thinking	Engineering, coding, data analysis	Yes
Art or design	Creativity, visual thinking	Graphic design, architecture, UX design	Maybe
Talking with people	Communication, persuasion	Sales, teaching, public relations	Yes
Organizing info/tasks	Detail-oriented	Project management, event planning	Maybe
Animals	Compassion, patience	Veterinary tech, animal care	Yes
Cooking or food	Hands-on, creative	Culinary arts, nutrition, food science	Yes
Gaming or tech	Systems thinking	Game design, IT support, software development	Maybe

Tip: Don't just accept the first answers. Ask GPT to compare, critique, or explain its reasoning. That's how you spot gaps or weak suggestions.

Section 5: Making Sense of the Messy Middle

Reflection Prompts:

- What feels clearer now?
- What's still fuzzy?
- Are you more of a "try it and see" or "plan it all first" kind of person?
- What decisions have you made in the past that worked out well? Why?

Thought Blockers Page:

- "I keep thinking I can't do ____ because..."
- "I feel pressure to pick ____ because..."
- "One voice I trust in this is..."



Exploring Trades and Skilled Work

Why Skilled Careers Matter Some of the best-paying and most stable careers don't require a 4-year degree. Many skilled trades offer hands-on learning, real-world experience, and a faster path to income and independence.

Examples of Trade Careers:

- Electrician
- HVAC tech
- Plumber
- Welder
- Auto mechanic
- CNC machinist
- Elevator installer
- Commercial driver
- LPN or dental hygienist

Exploration Prompts:

- Which jobs sound interesting even if you don't know much about them?
- Would you rather learn on the job or in a classroom?
- Have you ever enjoyed fixing, building, or working with your hands?

Mini Research Checklist:

- Find one trade school or apprenticeship program near you
- Watch one "day in the life" video on YouTube
- Ask someone who works in a skilled trade how they got started

Majors by Category

Use this page to spark ideas and organize what you're curious about. These aren't all the majors out there, but they capture many of the common ones.

Arts & Humanities

- English
- History
- Philosophy
- Visual Arts
- Performing Arts
- Languages
- Religious Studies

Social Sciences

- Psychology
- Sociology
- Political Science
- Anthropology
- Economics
- Criminology

STEM (Science, Tech, Engineering, Math)

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Computer Science
- Data Science
- Engineering (mechanical, civil, electrical, etc.)
- Environmental Science
- Math / Statistics

Business & Communication

- Business Administration
- Marketing
- Finance
- Accounting
- Public Relations
- Journalism
- Communications

Education & Social Services 🍎

- Early Childhood Education
- Secondary Education
- Social Work
- Human Development
- Counseling

Health & Wellness 🏥

- Nursing
- Public Health
- Health Sciences
- Nutrition
- Pre-Med / Pre-PT / Pre-Pharmacy

Hands-On & Applied Majors 🛠️

- Criminal Justice
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Construction Management
- Agriculture
- Graphic Design
- Fashion Merchandising
- Culinary Arts
- Trade/Technical Education

Use this list to mark majors that: You want to research further, connect with careers from your GPT session, Align with your values and interests

Section 6: Action Plan Builder

Planning Table Example:

Step	Why It Matters	Who/What Can Help	Target Date	Notes
Look up 3 college majors	Compare class lists	School website	Friday	Add to spreadsheet
Explore electrician training	Hands-on career option	Local tech college	End of month	Ask about financial aid

Optional Prompt: Write a letter to your future self: What do you want to remember when this process feels overwhelming?

Career & Major Exploration: Action Plan Template

This template is designed to help you keep track of next steps, break big ideas into manageable actions, and follow through on your career and major exploration goals.

You can print it, use it digitally, or copy it into your notes app or planner.

Step to Take	Why It Matters	Who or What Can Help	Target Date	Status	Notes
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Tips for Using This Template:

- Be as specific as possible about each step (e.g. "Look up 3 nursing programs" instead of just "research")
- Use the Notes column to track useful links, names of people, or unexpected findings
- Check in weekly or monthly and update your progress
- Share it with a parent, counselor, or mentor if you want input or accountability

Want to reuse it for something new? Just duplicate and start fresh.

How to Use and Download This [Action Plan Template](#)

1. Click the link above to open the Google Sheet
(Make sure it's the correct view-only link you share)
2. In the top menu, go to
File → Make a copy
This will save a personal, editable version to your own Google Drive.

— or —

File → Download → Microsoft Excel (.xlsx)
This will save a version to your computer that you can open in Excel or another spreadsheet tool.
3. Use the dropdowns in the "Status" column to track your progress:
 - Not Started
 - In Progress
 - Done
4. Fill in the table with your own steps, deadlines, and notes.

Section 7: Summary Page – What I Know Now

3 career or major areas I'm most curious about:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What I've learned about myself:

This could be a strength, a pattern, a work value, or something that surprised you.

What I still want to figure out:

Where are you stuck? What questions do you still have? What's unclear or undecided?

"Right now, I don't know everything. But I know _____."

(Use this sentence to anchor what *is* clear. Even a small insight counts.)

Optional Reflections:

- I'm most energized when I'm...
- I feel drained or stuck when I'm...
- One thing I want to try next is...
- Someone I can talk to about this is...
- A small next step I feel ready for is...