

Overview

In this activity, individuals create a mind map to help them organize possible career paths.

Materials

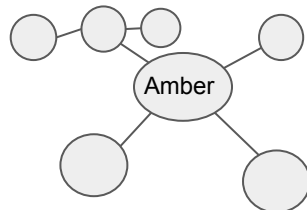
- Large sheets of plain paper
- Markers and pens in different colors
- [Mind Map Prompt Guide](#)

21st-Century Skills Targeted

- Communication
- Creativity
- Productivity
- Initiative
- Flexibility
- Leadership

Steps

- Give everyone a large sheet of plain paper, with markers and pens of different colors.
- Everyone should start with a circle in the middle, and write their name inside.
- Encourage students to begin writing down interests and goals (professional, academic, recreational, personal, etc.) that they would like for their future by connecting more circles to the center. Each new idea should connect to the center circle, and/or to other circles in the mind map. For example:



- If students are having difficulty getting started, consider sharing some of the prompts on the Mind Map Prompt Guide.
- After completing the mind map, have everyone look for any themes that emerged. This can be done independently, or in pairs. Have students jot themes down on a separate sheet of paper. Emphasize that there is no right or wrong in this process!
- After identifying themes, have students assign a different color to each category, and circle all items within that category with that color.
- Next have everyone decide which themes emerged the most across their maps. On the page where they recorded their themes, have students identify their top three that matter most to them. The idea is that these are to serve as a starting point when identifying potential careers.

Mind Map Prompt Guide

- a. What have been your favorite classes to take?
- b. In your previous jobs, internships, or extracurricular experiences, what tasks did you enjoy most?
- c. What are the things you find yourself doing and enjoying, even though you don't have to do them?
- d. What local, societal, or global problems interest you?
- e. If you were a writer, what subjects would you want to tell stories about?
- f. If you could teach a course on any subject, what subjects would you teach?
- g. What do you do for fun? To relax and unwind?
- h. What type of work environment can you picture yourself in?
 - i. What are the best parts about working on a team/doing a group project? What are the most challenging parts?
 - j. Do you prefer calling or texting your friends? Why?
- k. How do you learn best? (For example: by reading, watching videos, listening to someone, jumping right in and trying it yourself, etc.?)

Adapted from The New York Times [Skills Practice - Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion](#)