

**Learning Outcome**

Students will learn the importance of setting goals, and record short- and long-term goals to complete during the school year.

**NC Standard Course of Study Alignment (Guidance, Grades 6-8):** 2.07, 8.08, 8.11

**Introduction**

Invite volunteers to answer the question, “What are some choices that you have had to make recently?” Tell students that these could include choices about how to spend their time, choices about how to behave, or choices about activities that they are planning to do in the future.

**Activity**

1. Ask a volunteer to answer the “Imagine you are a builder...” prompt in the activity. Request that a second volunteer read the rest of the text on the page and invite students to discuss the meaning of the quote, “Today’s choices are the foundation for tomorrow’s options.”
2. Compare the students’ examples of choices with the samples that are listed in the activity. Ask a student to read the paragraph that starts with, “One key to making good choices...”
3. Tell students to complete the “What Do You Want?” section in the activity, which asks them to create a plan for accomplishing two goals. Remind students to record the “By when?” dates in their calendar.

If there is time in the lesson for students to create more than two goals, a full sheet can be downloaded and printed from [CFNC.org/MS](http://CFNC.org/MS).

**Wrap Up**

Ask students to share one goal that they have for the future with either the entire class or a small group. Encourage students to describe why it will be beneficial to accomplish this goal.

**Learning Outcome**

Students will recognize the value of completing schoolwork and earning good grades, understand the purpose of taking classes in different subjects, and learn to calculate GPA.

**NC Standard Course of Study Alignment (Guidance, Grades 6-8):** 3.03, 3.06, 7.18

**Introduction**

Ask students to break up into groups of three or four. Have them make a list of their top five reasons to work hard in school. Ask one volunteer from each group to share the team’s list with the class. Make linking statements about the similarities of different teams’ responses.

**Activity**

1. Before students have calculated the total scores for James and Katie’s grades, invite them to raise their hands to vote for which student’s overall grade is higher. “Everyone who thinks James has a higher overall average, raise your hand.” “Ok, now everyone who thinks Katie’s average is higher, raise your hands.” Once they have raised their hands, have each student calculate the totals independently at their desks. Remind them that to find the average score, they will need to add all the scores together and divide by 10.
2. Ask a volunteer to share James’ total average (68). Call on another student to share Katie’s average (86).
3. Read the statement from the activity about a score of “0” causing low grades.
4. Introduce the next section by saying, “Now let’s talk about the importance of taking classes in a variety of subjects to be well prepared for different careers.”
5. Ask students to write down the subject they would pick if they could take all of their classes in that one area. Have each student turn to a classmate sitting to her left and report what that subject is.
6. Working in pairs, direct the students to circle any subjects they see listed three times in the table of high school classes that were beneficial.
7. Have your students read the instructions for the final activity of listing subjects under the categories and complete the activity.

**Wrap Up**

Share with students that many colleges require students to complete certain courses in order to be accepted to college. Remind students that the choices they make every day in 7<sup>th</sup> grade are becoming part of their road map to college or their future job opportunities; therefore, working hard now is important and worthwhile!

**Learning Outcome**

Students will understand that prioritizing activities and creating a schedule can help them balance their schoolwork, extracurricular activities, family time, and social activities.

**NC Standard Course of Study Alignment (Guidance, Grades 6-8):** 1.06, 3.01

**Introduction**

Begin by asking the class, “What comes to mind when you hear the phrase “time management?” Make a list on the chalkboard/whiteboard with the ideas students offer. If you need to help them get started with the brainstorming, some examples could be, “prioritize,” “make choices,” “planning my time,” “making sure everything gets done on time,” or “not wasting my time.”

Provide an overall summary of the brainstormed ideas and inform students that you will be collectively discussing time management today because it is an important topic in getting all of your work completed, while still making sure you have time for fun, eating, sleeping, and spending time with friends and family!

**Activity**

1. Have students read the instructions for reviewing Sam’s schedule. Instruct them to make a list of what is missing. Have volunteers share what they wrote for what is missing. Be sure students have included the following: eating dinner, doing homework, spending time with his family, and having time for mental resting!
2. Introduce the idea of living a balanced life and the term “overextended.” Explain that Sam could get so tired from being stretched too thin that he may not be able to keep up all of those activities and may feel overwhelmed. In addition, his schoolwork could suffer if he is so busy working on extracurricular activities that he is too tired to keep up with his class assignments.
3. Instruct students to complete their own charts for activities they would like to do this year. Remind them about balance and that there are only 24 hours in a day so they will have to choose carefully.
4. Introduce the idea of keeping a weekly schedule. Ask students to raise their hands if they are already using a calendar to keep a list of their weekly activities. Ask one or two volunteers who raised their hands to share what benefits they feel they get from keeping track of their schedules in writing.
5. Remind students that our minds can only keep track of so much information at once and we can’t always trust ourselves to accurately remember dates for events, tests, birthdays, etc. Ask students to try to answer the questions on page 2 without looking anything up. Do they remember the date of their next report card, school vacation day, etc.?
6. Student can pick a day and fill in their activities to see if it compares to Sam’s.

## **Wrap Up**

Encourage students to record their activities every week. Summarize that a person who is balanced and has time for both work and play is usually someone who will be healthier and happier!

**Learning Outcome**

Students will recognize the benefits of work and gain awareness of factors that motivate adults' career choices, including personal fulfillment, helping others, and earning a living.

**NC Standard Course of Study Alignment (Guidance, Grades 6-8):** 6.01, 6.04, 6.06

**Introduction**

Ask students, "Who plans to work at some point in the future in order to earn a living and make money?" Point out that not surprisingly, all or most of them raised their hands. Tell them, "We're all clear about the fact that jobs pay us money, but there are more reasons to work than just because of the paycheck. Today, we will explore what some of those other reasons are."

**Activity**

1. Instruct students to fill out the "Why do you think adults work?" section in their activity.
2. Have students work with one other classmate to compare their lists and come up with their favorite idea for why adults work, other than money.
3. Make a list on the board of each pair's top reason, making a tally mark next to repeat answers. Suggested answers include "to help others," "to have something to do all day," "to feel challenged intellectually," "to not be bored," or "to feel good about contributing to society."
4. Instruct students to read the directions and complete the activity about working professionals by circling the reasons for working mentioned.
5. Ask volunteers to list any additional ideas for "why work?" that emerged from the exercise of circling reasons.
6. Invite students to complete the final activity by listing their possible career interests and the reasons they chose them. Encourage them to keep in mind the "why people work," reasons that have been brainstormed today.

**Wrap Up**

Encourage each student to look at their list of possible careers and come up with their top three choices. Let students know that it can be helpful to talk with adults in their lives about their plans. Challenge them to talk to their parents/caregivers/guardians at home tonight about the career ideas they have. Also suggest that students ask an employed adult in their lives the question, "Why do you work, other than for money?" to begin dialoging about this important topic.

### Learning Outcome

Students will gain awareness that there are many career options. Use the work blogs, career videos, and profiles on CFNC.org to explore various careers.

**NC Standard Course of Study Alignment (Guidance, Grades 6-8):** 4.01, 4.02

### Introduction

Ask students to raise their hands if they have already used CFNC.org career tools to research career information. Ask students who have used the tool to share what they liked about it, or one thing they learned from using it.

Tell students, “Today we will be exploring a cool online tool for looking up information about careers. If you have always wanted to know what it takes to become a lawyer, librarian, nurse, car mechanic, teacher, etc., today will be a day you can start to learn more about those options! We’ll be using the computer and Internet to login to a large database of information. You can even find out what people who are in a certain career have to say about what they do every day on the job.”

### Activity

1. Instruct students to complete their guesses about the careers listed in their activity.
2. Provide answers so students’ interests are piqued:
  - a. Paralegal – assists a lawyer by doing research about legal cases and helping them do paperwork and prepare those cases.
  - b. Criminologist – conducts research in crime labs, helping police and the courts make decisions about a crime.
  - c. Anesthesiologist – a doctor who specializes in monitoring and controlling pain.
  - d. Seismologist – studies earthquakes and vibrations in the earth.
  - e. Choreographer – creates dances and interprets different kinds of dance moves.
  - f. Forestry Technician – plants seedlings, maps trees, and fights wildfires.
  - g. Dietician – specializes in the effects of food on the human body.
  - h. Volcanologist – studies rock formations and volcanic activity.
3. Tell students, “Now we want to be able to look up careers, like the ones we just discussed.” An easy way to search for information online is to use a tool on CFNC.org called “Choices Explorer,” which is geared toward Middle School students.
4. Make sure students have a CFNC.org account. It’s fast and easy to set one up and if you need help with instructions, call our toll free number to speak to a representative at 866-866-CFNC.
5. Once students are logged in at CFNC.org/MS, instruct them to look for the link to Sukh’s work blog, read his information, and answer the questions provided in their activity.
6. Review answers to the four questions by asking student volunteers to share their answers. Here are some ideas in case you want to supplement students’ responses:

- a. Sukh's job is a special education teacher and a volleyball coach.
- b. Sukh decided to work in Yukon because he thought the area was beautiful and because there was a need for a special education teacher.
- c. Sukh enjoyed many activities: lunch-hour intramurals, coaching volleyball, and traveling.
- d. Activities that were stressful for Sukh included being evaluated by the principal (Nov. 20, 2005), and recognizing that the shrinking budget makes it difficult to pay for the online current events package he would like to get for his students (Oct. 13, 2005).

7. Encourage students to view one career video by following the directions in their activity.

### **Wrap Up**

Once students have finished watching their career video, bring the class back together for a wrap-up discussion. Ask each student to name the most interesting thing learned today, and one career they wish to continue learning about in the future.

Complete the discussion by reminding students that they always have free access to CFNC.org and are able to search for careers from home or school. The final activity provided entitled "Career Profiles" could be a good activity for them to do on their own after class to continue exploring CFNC's career tools.

**Learning Outcome**

Students will take a career interest inventory and complete a real-life math activity to recognize the connection between academics and careers.

**NC Standard Course of Study Alignment (Guidance, Grades 6-8):** 1.12, 2.07, 3.03, 5.02, 6.02

**Introduction**

Ask students to turn to the January monthly activity and fill in the blanks with three careers that they have already considered. Invite volunteers to share what they have written. Ask another student to read the two paragraphs starting with “Why do you think you’ve thought about these?”

**Activity**

1. Provide a few minutes for students to answer the six multiple-choice questions about their career interests, as well as the fill-in-the-blank reflection questions.
2. If you have more than 20 minutes for the lesson and your students have Internet access, request that they go to [CFNC.org/MS](http://CFNC.org/MS) and click on “Choices Explorer.” Tell students to look for the link that says, “Start with a quick quiz.” Completing the 14 questions will provide each student with a list of her or his “Top 20 Careers.” Students should select three careers, click on those careers to read their profiles, and record the “Name of Career” and “Interesting Things You Found” in their activity on page 2.
  - Remind students that they can also see a “Top 50” or a “Top 100” list by adjusting the drop-down menu.
  - Emphasize that the careers on your students’ lists are not necessarily the only ones that they should consider. If a student is interested in another career, encourage her or him to research it, as well.
3. Tell students to answer the “Real-Life Math” question in the activity, either individually or in pairs. Inform your students that math skills are required for almost every career, which is why the “Choices Explorer” career profiles include “Real-Life Math” activities.
  - The answer to “How much money did you spend today?” is \$1,021.50 and the answer to “What was today’s profit?” is \$978.50.
4. If you have 40 or more minutes for the lesson, invite the students to try the “Real-Life Math” activity for one of the careers that they identified in Step 2. The students should return to that career’s profile and look for the “Get Started” tab on the left. Most profiles include a “Real-Life Math” or “Real-Life Communication” link in this section.

**Wrap Up**

Ask each student to share one career that he or she read about on [CFNC.org](http://CFNC.org). If your students had time to complete the real-life math activities for those jobs, discussing the activities may emphasize the importance of math skills in any career.

**Learning Outcome**

Students will understand the relevance of taking challenging courses – especially in math – to post-secondary education and careers.

**NC Standard Course of Study Alignment (Guidance, Grades 6-8):** 3.06, 5.07, 5.09

**Introduction**

Write the names of all four core classes (e.g., language arts, math, science, social studies) on the board as well as physical education and any other electives that your students are taking. Ask each student to choose the subjects that are easiest and most difficult for her or him. Invite volunteers to share their answers.

- Emphasize that, although students’ answers are different, all students find some subjects to be more difficult than others.
- Students should turn to the February monthly activity and record their answers.

**Activity**

1. If you have more than 20 minutes for the lesson and your students have Internet access, request that they go to the “Choices Explorer” on CFNC.org. Tell each student to use the “Your School Subjects” section to select one challenging subject that he or she will need to continue taking in high school. Your students should then complete the questions in the activity and record their answers.
  - You can emphasize the connection between academics and careers by asking students to share their answers to the last question with the rest of the class.
2. Ask a volunteer to read the text on the second page, which will ask the students to look at the lists of recommended high school classes in the September activity; calculus appears on several lists. Your students can then try to answer the calculus problem in the February activity, although it is unlikely that any will be able to do so. Invite a second student to read the text below the calculus problem, which explains that most 7th graders could not answer the problem.
  - Encourage students to remember the sequence of courses that they must take before taking calculus; they will need to know this information when they plan their high school classes next year.
  - CFNC’s “UNC Minimum Course Requirements” publication shows the courses, including upper-level math classes, that students must take in high school if they plan to attend a four-year college or university. You can view the publication at CFNC.org, or call 1-866-866-2362, option 1, to request free copies for your students.
3. Ask another volunteer to read the box labeled, “Want to start taking college classes early?” Ask the students if they have heard of an early college in your district or know an older student who is currently attending one.
  - Ask your students, “Can you think of any advantages of attending an early college instead of a traditional high school or taking college courses during high school?”

4. If you have 40 or more minutes for the lesson and your students have Internet access, ask them to go to the Learn and Earn website (the address, [www.learnandearn.nc.gov](http://www.learnandearn.nc.gov), is listed in the activity).
  - The “Learn and Earn High Schools” section of the site provides links to all of the early colleges’ websites, which will allow your students to learn about an early college in your district.

### **Wrap Up**

Ask your students, “What are the benefits of taking advanced courses in high school?” Emphasize that advanced classes teach skills that are useful for college, as well as for jobs. Feel free to talk about all of their options including AP, Dual Enrollment, Huskins, Learn and Earn Online, as well as Early College High School (ECHS).

**Learning Outcome**

Students will understand what college is and gain awareness of factors that make each college unique, such as size, student activities, and the types of degrees that are offered.

**NC Standard Course of Study Alignment (Guidance, Grades 6-8): 2.13**

**Introduction**

Tell students to turn to the March monthly activity, read the descriptions of Jasmine and Evan’s colleges, and identify five differences. Invite volunteers to share their responses and ask students to record the answers in their activity.

**Activity**

1. Read the statement on page 2 of the activity: “High school students consider many factors when choosing a college. It is especially important to think about size, student activities, and types of degrees that are offered.”
2. Tell students to read the “Size” box and circle their preference.
  - If you have more than 20 minutes for the lesson, you may wish to discuss students’ reasons for choosing a large college over a small college, or vice versa.
3. Ask students to complete the “Student Activities” box. Invite volunteers to share the sports, clubs, or organizations that they would like to pursue in college, including any that are not on the list below the activity.
4. Invite a volunteer to read the text in the “Types of Degrees” box. If you have more than 20 minutes for the lesson and your students have Internet access, you can ask them to go online and answer the question about veterinary school.
5. Write “Not Important,” “Somewhat Important,” and “Very Important” on the board. Review the three factors (size, student activities, and types of degrees) and ask students to raise their hands to indicate whether each factor is not important, somewhat important, or not important to them. Record the class’s responses on the board.
  - CFNC.org’s “Finding the Right College for You” publication includes a “College Priorities Worksheet” with a longer assessment of students’ college preferences. You can view the publication in the “Downloadable Resources” section of CFNC.org, or call 1-866-866-2362, option 1, to request free copies for your students. Please allow 10 business days for delivery.
6. If you have more than 40 minutes for the activity and your students have Internet access, tell them to go to CFNC.org/MS and put their preferences into the “Matching Assistant.” This will allow students to see a list of North Carolina colleges that fit their preferences.

7. If you would like to lengthen the activity, you can also tell your students to go to the Choices Explorer and click on the “Learn” tab. The students will see a link that says, “What you should be doing in... 8th grade,” which describes ways that they can start preparing for college now.
- Alternatively, you can use copies of CFNC’s “Put College In Your Future” brochure, which describes three steps that can help middle school students start preparing for college. Call 1-866-866-2362, Option 1, to request free copies for your students. Please allow 10 business days for delivery.

**Wrap Up**

Ask each student to share one of their preferences with the rest of the class by completing the phrase, “I will look for a college that has \_\_\_\_\_.”

**For Your Information:**

	<b>Medium and Large Colleges and Universities</b>	<b>Smaller Schools</b>
<b>Diversity of Academic Offerings</b>	Larger schools have more professors and usually offer a wider variety of courses. They may also have more money to buy highly specialized equipment and keep larger research libraries. If students want to study a very specific field, a larger college might be better.	Smaller schools have fewer professors, so there may be less variety in the courses offered. However, many smaller colleges develop special programs in selected fields and can match the opportunities available at a large school in specific programs.
<b>Diversity of Student Activities</b>	At larger colleges and universities, there may be more cultural events and a greater variety of activities. It might be easier to find a club or group of people with similar interests in a large student body.	Smaller colleges offer fewer activities and student groups, but students may have more opportunities for leadership roles. For example, at a smaller school, students could more easily be the editor of the school newspaper or play in the concert band.
<b>Class Size</b>	At larger colleges and universities, some classes have hundreds of students. It might be more challenging to get to know faculty members, especially during the first two years of	At smaller colleges, class size may vary from five or six to 100 people. There may be a greater chance of developing personal relationships with faculty

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college when classes tend to be larger. members.

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**Focus on Students**

Most large universities offer Master's and Doctorate degrees, so their faculty members spend considerable time doing research and working with graduate students. Graduate teaching assistants instead of faculty members may teach introductory courses. To thrive as an undergraduate, students will need to be self-motivated and seek out instructors when they need direction.

At schools that offer few graduate degrees, faculty members are more involved in teaching undergraduate courses and may be more accessible.

**Learning Outcome**

Students will understand the value of delaying gratification. As an example, they will learn that college costs, but a lack of education is even more costly.

**NC Standard Course of Study Alignment (Guidance, Grades 6-8):** 1.05, 7.06

**Introduction**

Tell students to turn to the April monthly activity and answer the three questions by circling A or B. Read the text in the activity and ask volunteers to share answers to the three open-ended questions at the bottom of the page.

- Ask your students to share additional examples of times when it might be appropriate to “delay gratification.”

**Activity**

1. Ask students to find a partner and complete the activity on the second page. Tell your students that although they are collaborating, both partners should individually record the answers in their activities. Compare students’ answers after they have completed the activity. Option A would receive \$12,000 total and Option B would receive \$102,375 total. Emphasize that oftentimes, like the exercise shows, education can look less appealing in the short term, but pays off in many ways in the long term.
2. Ask a volunteer to explain the significance of the “Average Lifetime Earnings” chart at the bottom of page 2.
  - Emphasize that the numbers are only averages, but they show that getting more education usually leads to eventually earning a higher salary.
  - Tell your students that the difference in earning power may be even more significant than the graph shows: people with higher salaries are often able to retire earlier, so their “lifetime earnings” may be based on fewer years of work.
3. If you have more than 20 minutes for the activity and your students have Internet access, tell them to go to the “Choices Explorer” on CFNC.org, click on the “Learn” tab, and look for “Dan’s College Diary” in the column on the right. Once the students are viewing the blog, they should look for the link that says, “More about him.” Tell your students to read this section and answer the question, “What are some of the challenges that Dan faces in law school?” After students have shared their answers to this question, ask a second question: “In spite of these challenges, why does Dan think that it is worth it to attend law school?”

**Wrap Up**

Ask students to write an answer to the prompt, “Education is delaying gratification because \_\_\_\_\_.”

### Learning Outcome

Students will understand career clusters and how they can help identify groups of prospective careers that match their individual interests and abilities.

**NC Standard Course of Study Alignment (Guidance, Grades 6-8):** 5.02, 5.04

### Introduction

Tell your students to write down the name of a job, then to write the names of two more jobs that require similar skills. Next, ask the students to write the name of a job that is “very different” from their first selection and two additional jobs that would require similar skills. Invite volunteers to share the six jobs that they listed and ask students to determine which ones were grouped together.

- For example, a student might share her or his list, including “doctor, construction worker, roofer, nurse, athletic trainer, and carpenter.” The class would then divide those six jobs into two categories: “doctor, nurse, athletic trainer” and “construction worker, roofer, carpenter.”

### Activity

1. Ask students to turn to the May monthly activity and invite a volunteer to read the definition of a “career cluster.”
2. Tell students to complete the activity on the first page, which asks them to guess the name of one career in each cluster. If your students have access to the Internet, they can check their answers by returning to the “Choices Explorer” and looking in the “Work” section. Go to [CFNC.org/MS](http://CFNC.org/MS) to get started. Students can click on the name of each cluster to view a comprehensive list of the careers within it.
3. Ask students to transfer the names of the careers that they explored in the November and January activity onto the second page. If you have more than 20 minutes for the lesson and your students have Internet access, they can use Choices Explorer to search for these careers and identify their clusters.
4. If you have more than 40 minutes and your students have Internet access, they can complete the final section in the activity, which asks them to explore the specific clusters that are likely to include additional careers of interest. The students should choose three new careers, use the Choices Explorer to research them, and fill in the “Why Does It Look Interesting?” section.

## **Wrap Up**

Ask students to answer the question, “Why is it helpful to know about career clusters?” Also, invite volunteers to share any careers that they had not thought about before the lesson, but are now considering.