

Goal-Setting

Imagine you are a builder. A business in Chicago has contacted you because it wants to add 10 levels to one of its buildings. The business sends you two photographs of buildings it owns and asks you to choose the best one for adding the 10 levels. Which would you choose? Why?

You'd likely choose the one with the best foundation—the one that gives your new addition the best opportunity to succeed. Your life is not so different from this example.

Right now in middle school, you are making choices that are forming the foundation for your future.



“Should I study for my math test or watch TV?”

“Should I cheat on my history exam?”

“Should I hang around with those people even though they get me in trouble?”

“Should I work hard in school or just try to get by?”

Today's choices are the foundation for tomorrow's options.



One key to making good choices today as you build your foundation is setting goals about what you want in the future.

Keith Ellis wrote a book entitled *The Magic Lamp: Goal Setting for People Who Hate Setting Goals*.

“The real trick is figuring out what you want,” Ellis writes. “Strangely enough, people don't usually get what they want from life because they don't know what they want.”

What Do You Want?

Setting Goals

The goals that you have for your future guide the choices that you make. Here's how simple goal-setting can be:

Goal

I want to improve my history grade from a B to an A.

By when?

End of this year

Steps

Tell my teacher about this goal and ask for his or her advice.

By when?

November 1

Study history every Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday night.

Ongoing from 7:00–8:00

Give It A Try!

Use the space below to set a couple of your own goals.

Goal One

By when?

Steps

By when?

Goal Two

By when?

Steps

By when?

*Use this calendar to record the important dates for your goals.
Download a full sheet for goal-setting at CFNC.org/MS.*

Why Work Hard in School?

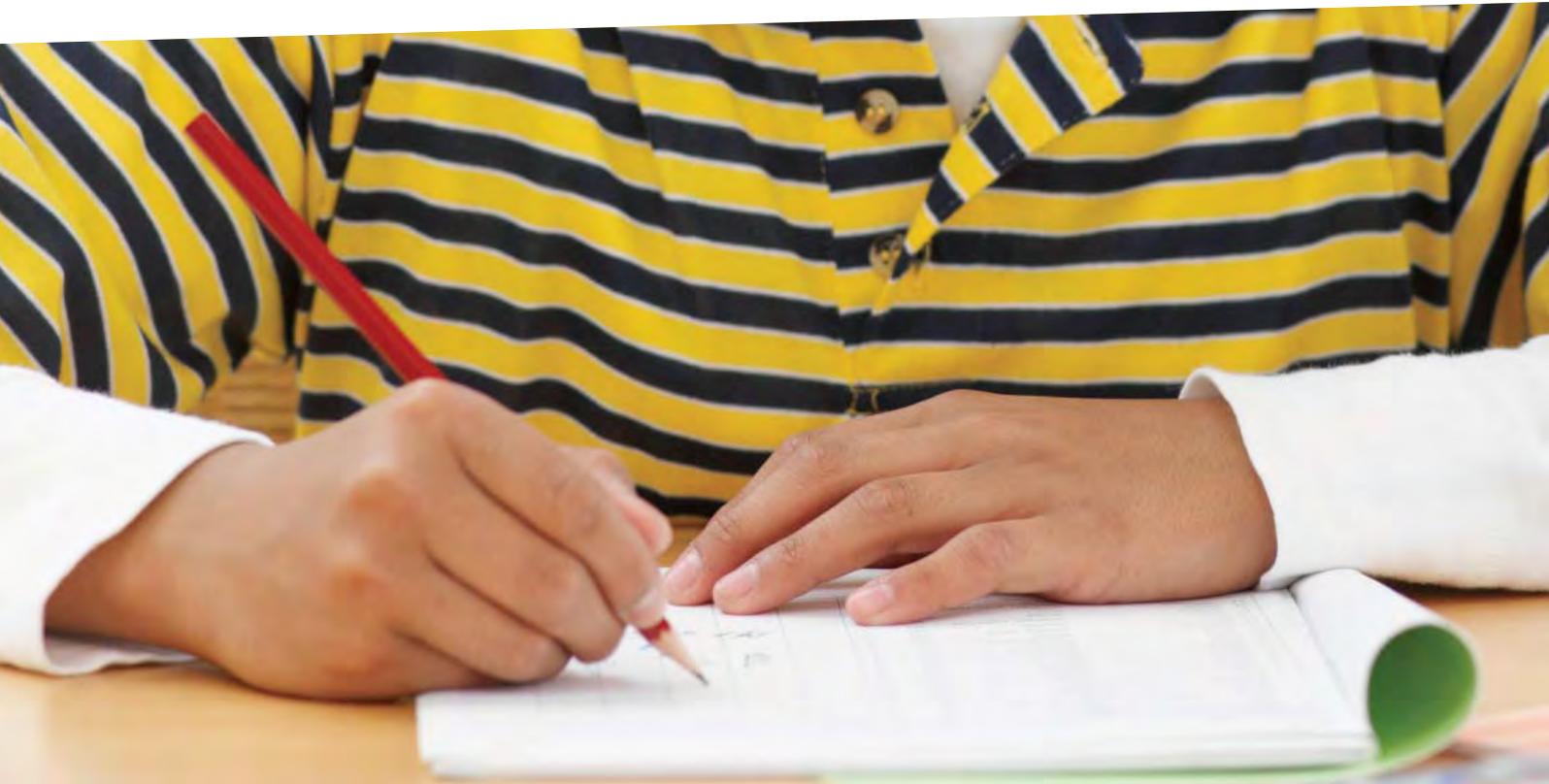
James and Katie are students in the 7th grade. Their teacher has graded 10 of their homework assignments. A grade of 0 indicates that the assignment was not handed in.

James's Grades:					Katie's Grades:				
100	0	95	100	90	85	90	80	75	90
0	95	100	0	100	95	85	100	85	75
Add all of the grades and divide by 10 to get James's overall grade: _____					Add all of the grades and divide by 10 to get Katie's overall grade: _____				

Which student has more 100s? _____

Which student has a higher overall grade? _____

Students sometimes think that a few missed assignments won't affect their grades. However, a single 0 can cause you to get a low grade, even if you get excellent scores on all of your other assignments.



Imagine that you could take all of your courses in one subject. Which one would you pick?

Everyone has favorite subjects, but it is important to take a variety of courses in high school and college. The following table shows some of the high school courses that are beneficial for people entering different careers.

Circle any subject that you see three or more times:

Doctor	Detective	Engineer	Architect	Teacher
Biology	Biology	Biology	Biology	Biology
Calculus	Chemistry	Calculus	Calculus	Chemistry
English	English	Economics	Design	English
History	Forensic Science	English	Economics	History
Psychology	History	History	English	Physics
Sociology	Psychology	Physics	History	Psychology
Statistics	Statistics	Statistics	Physics	Statistics

Did you make a lot of circles? Even though these jobs are very different, people take many of the same courses to prepare for them.

Take another look at the table and list the names of any subjects that would fit into each of these categories. If you don't recognize a subject, consult with a classmate or your teacher.

Math	Science	Social Studies	Language Arts

The math, science, social studies, and language arts courses that you are taking now will prepare you for these high school courses and for whatever you want to do in the future, so make sure that you learn a lot! Go to CFNC.org/MS to download an article about improving your study skills.

Time Management

Sam is in the 7th grade. He takes seven courses and runs on his school's cross country team. Sam recently saw a list of clubs and signed up for the debate team, art club, and school newspaper. He also plans to continue participating in a youth group, playing piano in recitals, and volunteering at his town's animal shelter.

Look at the after-school schedule that Sam has planned. What is missing?

Sam's Schedule	
4:00–5:00	Cross country practice
5:00–6:00	
6:00–7:00	Practice for debate competitions
7:00–8:00	Youth group meeting
8:00–9:00	Volunteer at the animal shelter
9:00–10:00	Practice piano
10:00–11:00	Write articles for the school newspaper
11:00	Go to bed

Have you ever heard of a person being “overextended”? That word is used to describe someone like Sam who is trying to do more activities than he or she is capable of doing. Before you sign up for a team or club, make sure to ask how much time you will need to spend on it.

Sam's schedule also lacks balance. He's signed up for too many clubs and competitions and has left no time for activities with his friends and family. Write down some ideas about what you would like to do this year. Try to put something in every column, but make sure that none of the lists are too long.

Sports	School Clubs	Volunteering	Activities with My Family	Activities with My Friends

Try to answer these questions without looking anything up:

What is the date that you will get your next report card? _____

What is the date of the next school vacation day? _____

What is the date that you will take the 7th grade writing test? _____

What is the date that your spring break starts? _____

It would be impossible to memorize the dates and times of everything you will do during the next year. However, you don't want to miss a fun activity or forget to prepare for a test. This planner includes monthly and weekly calendars so that you can keep track of the important events in your life.

It is also helpful to create a weekly schedule to make sure that you aren't scheduling too much on any particular day. Write down any activities that you are planning to do every week:

Activity	Day

If any day appears several times in the right-hand column, think about whether your schedule on that day could end up looking like Sam's. Turn to the next week in your calendar and record the highlights of your schedule.

Why People Work

What do you want to be when you grow up?

You may have heard that question so many times that you're sick of it. There's a reason that people expect you to have an answer: almost every adult has a job at some point in her or his life. Most adults are employed for 40 years!

Why do you think adults work? Write down some ideas—and put more than just “money”!

CFNC interviewed people in several professions about their reasons for working. Read these excerpts and try to circle all of the reasons that they mention:

“The money is a bonus. It's not the only reason I'm doing this. I'm just lucky enough to be paid well to be doing something I enjoy.”

- *Chris Butler, Dental Hygienist*

“Nursing has so many rewards for people interested in helping others. There are the grateful families whose wife, husband, mother, father, daughter, son, or friend you've helped save. For me, the best experiences involve patients who arrive dead and are revived and go on to lead happy and productive lives.”

- *Kevin Davis, Registered Nurse*

“I'm so independent. If I don't feel like teaching it the same way I taught it yesterday, I don't have to. It's all my own personal responsibility.”

- *Dick Chapleau, High School Teacher*

“I chose this career because I was looking for adventure. If you like working with people and you like travel, I can't think of a better job.”

- *Pease Berding, Flight Attendant*

“I wanted something that would pay my bills and help me to get a retirement fund going. I chose the electrical trade because it could be full-time and the working conditions are pretty good.”

- *Lesley McCallum, Electrician*

You may think that 40 years of work sounds pretty overwhelming, but most adults have good reasons for working. Work allows them to do something they enjoy, help others, and earn money for the things they need to buy. They also find time for vacations, hobbies, and spending time with their families.

Write down some careers that interest you and at least one good reason for you to pursue each one:

Career	Why?

Do you think that adults in these careers would list the same reasons you did? You can find out at CFNC.org. Next month's activity will help you get started.



The World of Work

Try to guess what people do in each of these careers:

Paralegal _____

Criminologist _____

Anesthesiologist _____

Seismologist _____

Choreographer _____

Forestry Technician _____

Dietitian _____

Volcanologist _____

You shouldn't expect to recognize every career on the list. In fact, many people only know about just a handful of careers when there are thousands of career options!

You may find it overwhelming to choose one career from thousands of possibilities. No one expects you to make a decision in 7th grade, but if you research careers now, it will be easier for you to choose one later on. You can get started at CFNC.org.

Go to CFNC.org/MS to learn more about careers.



Now that you are on the website, take a look at some of the features that help you explore careers.

Work Blogs

The CFNC.org blogs are a great way to learn how people in various careers spend their time. Look for Sukh's work blog and try to answer the following questions:



What is Sukh's job?

Why did Sukh decide to work in the Yukon?

Describe one activity that Sukh enjoyed.

Describe one activity that was stressful for him.

Career Videos

The CFNC website, CFNC.org, has videos for over 200 careers. Look at the career profiles for the careers you wrote down in November, and see if there is a video available (right-hand side of the page).

Choose one career video and write down what you learned from it:

Career Profiles

Pick a career and look at each of the sections in its profile: What They Do, Money and Outlook, What to Learn, Interviews, and Connections. You will explore more career profiles in January.

Careers and Your Interests

Quick! Name three careers that you've thought about doing as an adult (for example, dentist):

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Why do you think you've thought about these? There's a good chance one of the main reasons is that these careers involve things that interest you. If you talk to an adult about why they chose a particular career, they are likely to mention interests they've had for many years. Talk to a basketball coach and they'll tell you how they've enjoyed the game of basketball since they were young. Talk to a nurse, and they'll probably tell you how for years they have been interested in helping people.

Another reason people choose careers is because of their skills—the things they do well. You won't often find people earning a living at something they can't do very well. For example, not many people would buy a ticket to hear a person who loves to sing but is a terrible singer!

Take a few minutes to answer the questions below about your interests:

1. Are you interested in activities that use tools, machines, or objects, working outside, or physical labor and using your hands?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Often	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Not really	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Are you interested in science and math, or finding ways to solve problems?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Often	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Not really	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Are you interested in creating beautiful things such as new ideas, art, music, or writing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Often	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Not really	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Are you interested in helping, training, serving, or enriching the lives of other people, or working and learning with other people around you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Often	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Not really	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Are you interested in leading others toward individual or team goals, or making decisions to get things done?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Often	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Not really	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6. Are you interested in detailed work in words, language, or finance, or organizing people and information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Often	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Not really	<input type="checkbox"/> No

To which question(s) did you respond "Yes" or "Often"? _____

How do you think the answers relate to the three careers you listed above?

Online Career Finder

Learn more about your interests and get ideas for careers by using the Career Finder at CFNC.org. Go to CFNC.org/MS for a link.

Once you open the Career Finder, look on the left-hand side of the page under “My Characteristics” and click on “Interests.” Read the descriptions, check the ones that apply to you, and view your matching careers. Click on any of the career names for detailed information. Pick three careers and note some of the most interesting things you find.

Name of Career	Interesting Things You Found
1. _____	_____ _____
2. _____	_____ _____
3. _____	_____ _____

Real-Life Math

Did you know that almost every job requires math skills? Imagine that you are a singer. You may think that singing has nothing to do with math, but consider your daily expenses and profits.

You want to be sure that you won't go into debt, so answer the following questions:

Expenses

- \$66.50 for amp repair
- \$75 to dry-clean your outfit
- \$80 for Mike (set-up staff)
- \$400 for Alex (guitar player)
- \$400 for Sarah (keyboard player)

Profits

\$2,000 for a gig at the Cat's Cradle

How much money did you spend today? _____ What was today's profit? _____



Select one career that interests you and do the Real-Life Math activity. Click on the career name, look in the Real Life Activities section, and then select “Real-Life Math.”

Taking Challenging Courses

Every student finds some courses to be easier than others. Which course is easiest for you?

If some courses are easier, others must be more difficult. Which course is most challenging for you?

You may not be looking forward to taking advanced courses in a subject that is difficult for you. Nevertheless, overcoming this challenge will prepare you for college-level courses and careers.

Go online to CFNC.org/MS for a link to career profiles. Choose one career that you find interesting, and click "What to Learn" on the left side of the page. Look at some of the types of courses you may need to take in high school and after high school. Click on the program name(s) in the Beyond High School section to find more interesting details.



Write the name of the career you explored: _____

Write one subject or type of course needed for this career that would be challenging for you: _____

What could you do now and in the future to succeed in school subjects you find challenging?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



Want to see which careers match with your favorite school subjects? Go to CFNC.org/MS for a link to the Career Finder and choose "School Subjects" on the left side of the page.

Take another look at the September activity, which showed you lists of high school courses that help students prepare for various careers. It is especially valuable to take calculus, which is a type of advanced math. Can you answer the following calculus problem?

Calculate the following limit:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow a} \sin(4x + 10)$$

If you don't know the answer, you have something in common with almost every other 7th grade student. Very few people your age could answer this question because students should finish other courses before taking calculus. High school students often take the following courses so that they can study calculus during their senior year or in college.





These courses will be available at your high school, so try to take them. However, your teachers will only recommend you for certain challenging math courses if you make good grades in Pre-Algebra and Algebra I. Do you think that your current math grade is high enough?

Yes No

If you answered no, ask your math teacher or school counselor for advice about developing your math skills.

Want to start taking college courses early?

Have you ever heard of an early college? An early college is a type of high school that is often located on a college campus where students can take college courses during 9th-12th grades. They are also called Learn and Earn high schools and students can earn up to two years of college credit without paying any tuition!

There are currently 60 early colleges across the state, and there might be one in your school district. If you are interested in learning more, talk to your school counselor or visit North Carolina's Learn and Earn website: www.learnandearn.nc.gov.

What is College?

You've probably heard the word "college" many times, but what does it really mean? Simply put, college is a place that offers advanced learning beyond high school. You will have the opportunity to take some college-level courses during high school as well as attend a college after you graduate from high school.

Jasmine and Evan are both college students. However, there are some important differences between their colleges.



Jasmine chose to attend college in the mountains of North Carolina. More than 10,000 other students are enrolled at the same school. Jasmine lives in a dormitory and has a roommate. She is part of an a cappella group, meaning that she and the other singers do not use musical instruments. Jasmine also plays on her college's field hockey team. She is planning to attend her college for four years and graduate with a bachelor's degree in math.



Evan selected a college on the North Carolina coast. He and the other 900 students do not live on-campus, but Evan's house is only 10 minutes away from the college. He writes articles for his college's newspaper and participates in two clubs: beach volleyball and photography. Evan will earn an associate's degree in dental hygiene after two years. He is able to take some of his courses at night, which lets him have more time during the day to work.

Try to find five differences between these two college choices and write them below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

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.

Size

Think about the size of the city or town you live in. Does it seem like there are too many people, too few people, or the right number? You may already know whether you will want to attend a small, medium or large college. If you already have a preference, circle that option.

Small

Fewer than 5,000 students

Medium

5,000–10,000 students

Large

Greater than 10,000 students

Student Activities

Four-year colleges and some community colleges have sports teams. Write down any sports that you might like to play in college.

Here are some more student activities that you may enjoy. Circle any that look interesting.

Club Sports

- Bowling
- Golf
- Gymnastics
- Ice Hockey
- Kickball
- Ultimate Frisbee

Other Clubs

- Debate Team
- Drama/Theater Club
- Martial Arts Club
- Movie Making Club
- Photography Club
- Videogaming Club

Organizations

- A Cappella Singers
- Campus Newspaper
- Student-Run Radio Station
- Marching Band
- Community Service Club
- Student Government

Types of Degrees

Different colleges offer different types of degrees. Two-year associate's degrees are offered at community colleges (like Evan's) and bachelor's degrees are offered at four-year colleges (like Jasmine's). You may also decide to earn an advanced degree, such as a master's degree, a doctoral degree, or a professional degree.

Go to CFNC.org/MS and have some fun looking at all the colleges in North Carolina. Use the Matching Assistant tool to search for colleges that offer a particular degree. As an example, try to answer this question:

Only one university in North Carolina trains veterinarians. What is its name? _____

Delayed Gratification

Answer the following questions by circling either A or B.

1. When you eat dinner, would you rather...

- A. Eat your dessert first.
- B. Save your dessert until the end of the meal.

2. If you are going to take a vacation, would you rather...

- A. Leave for Florida today and stay there for a week.
- B. Wait until summer vacation to spend a week in Florida.

3. If you want to see a movie, would you rather...

- A. Watch the movie tonight.
- B. Go see the movie on Saturday night.

Don't feel bad if you circled some A's. It can be difficult to postpone an enjoyable experience. However, most people choose option B in each of these situations. See if you can explain why:

1. Most people eat dessert at the end of a meal. Why?

2. Most students do not go on long trips until the summer. Why?

3. Most people go to the movies during the weekend. Why?

The examples in the B options are forms of delayed gratification. Try another activity on the next page.

Imagine someone told you that he or she was going to give you money every month for a whole year. Which of the two options below would you choose?

Option A: You will get \$1,000 in January, \$1,000 in February, \$1,000 in March, and continue to receive \$1,000 every month through December.

Option B: You will get \$25 in January, \$50 in February, \$100 in March, and the amount will continue to double every month through December.

Which option should you choose? Write down how much money you would receive each month and calculate the total.

Option A

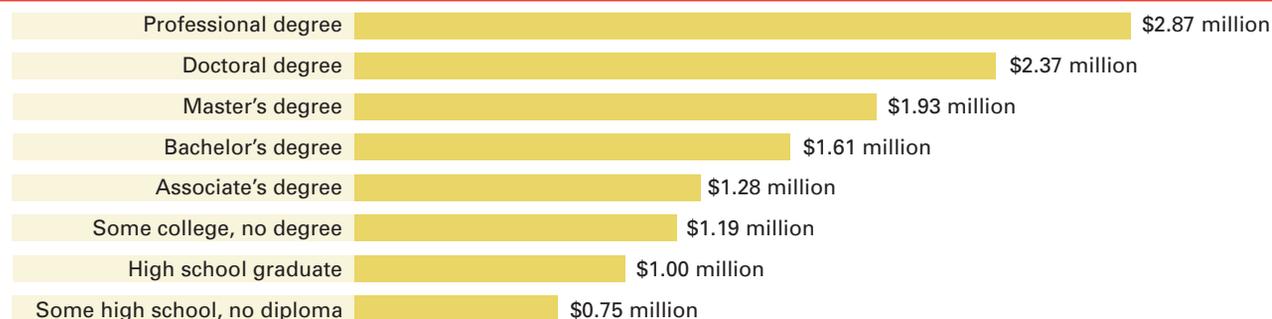
<i>January</i>	<i>February</i>	<i>March</i>	<i>April</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	
_____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	
<i>July</i>	<i>August</i>	<i>September</i>	<i>October</i>	<i>November</i>	<i>December</i>	Total
+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	= _____

Option B

<i>January</i>	<i>February</i>	<i>March</i>	<i>April</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	
_____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	
<i>July</i>	<i>August</i>	<i>September</i>	<i>October</i>	<i>November</i>	<i>December</i>	Total
+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	+ _____	= _____

Going to college is a lot like choosing the second option. The initial expenses may leave you with less money at first, but you can expect to earn more later. The chart below shows that more education usually leads to higher lifetime earnings.

Average Lifetime Earnings



Source: The College Board, Education Pays, 2007

Career Clusters

Have you ever heard of a career cluster? A career cluster is a group of jobs that are similar to each other. If you are interested in several careers, you may find that many of them are in the same cluster.

Here are the names of the 16 clusters. Try to think of one job that would fit into each cluster.

Career Cluster	My Guess	Was I Correct?
Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Architecture and Construction		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Arts, Audio-Video Technology, and Communications		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Business, Management, and Administration		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Education and Training		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Finance		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Government and Public Administration		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Health Science		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Hospitality and Tourism		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Human Services		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Information Technology		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Manufacturing		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Marketing, Sales, and Service		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Check your guesses by returning to CFNC.org/MS and looking at the careers in each cluster. If you look at a cluster but do not see your guess, write in another answer.

In November and January, you were asked to write down some careers that interest you. Write them again here, but also try to identify the career cluster where you could find each one. You may find that several of the careers that interest you are in the same cluster.

Name of Career	Name of Cluster

Since jobs in a cluster are similar to each other, try using the clusters you identified to find more careers that look interesting that you have not explored before.

Name of Cluster	Another Career in the Cluster	Why Does It Look Interesting?