

# More Successful Transition Planning



**20 Top Questions and Ways to Answer Them**

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Achieve Education and Career Success

# Transition Planning

## 20 Top Questions and Ways to Answer Them

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Bridges.com  
33637-B Highway 97 N., Oroville, WA 98844  
Phone: 250-869-4200 or 800-281-1168 Fax: 250-869-4201 or 888-349-3437

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## About the Contributors

*The materials contained in this booklet were prepared by Charles Robinson and Jodie Schmon. LeeAnn Bemier-Clarke created student worksheets for selected activities. See page 9 for details.*

### Charles W. Robinson, Ed. D., CRC

Charles Robinson is a consultant in careers and vocational rehabilitation. A certified rehabilitation counselor, he has a doctorate in counseling from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling from Springfield College.

His employment in rehabilitation and education spans four decades and includes increasingly responsible employment as a rehabilitation counselor, vocational evaluator, program director, educator and consultant.

He has taught career assessment, job analysis, job placement, community-based employment, and counseling at the graduate level and in a wide range of short-term training programs. He was founder and president of a software company providing case and caseload management systems to schools and agencies.

His current activities focus on new approaches to job/person matching, informed choice, case management, career assessment and job analysis, with an emphasis on school-based assessment for students with disabilities. His current customers include public schools as well as both public and private rehabilitation agencies in a number of states.

Dr. Robinson has authored a number of text and software publications, most recently Career Planning Tools. Based on Ten Questions for Career Planning, this software program identifies areas in which individuals feel unready for career decision-making. Staff can then select from a range of paper, software and Internet resources to develop a career assessment plan.

### Jodi Schmon, M.S. in Special Education

A transition coordinator for the Central Bucks School District in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Jodi Schmon assists students in special education with making in-district transitions and preparing for desired post-secondary outcomes.

Ms. Schmon has taught in special education for nearly 14 years and holds both a bachelor's and a master's degree in special education. Her graduate work at Penn State University under the Preparation for Adult Life Initiative provided a solid base for teaching students with a variety of disabilities.

Her certification as a special education supervisor, as well as cooperative vocational certification, has enabled a broader perspective in system-wide initiatives that support post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. Past work experiences include direct service in supported employment and residential supported living, work experience coordinator, life skills teacher, and learning support teacher.

Ms. Schmon is involved in local Transition Coordinating Councils and working on state supported interagency communities of practice. She is currently supporting school district goals by facilitating secondary staff development, career education for students in special education and vocational opportunities with secondary students.

### LeeAnn Bernier-Clarke M.Ed., NCC, NCCC

LeeAnn Bernier-Clarke is a career counselor, organization development and career education consultant with Successful Transitions, a private practice that specializes in career transition and change management, based in Louisville, Kentucky. She has provided counseling to clients in career transition, as well as career education and organization development consulting services to clients from business, industry, government, educational institutions, professional and community organizations. Her experience spans over 15 years, in a variety of settings.

A National Board Certified Counselor (NCC) and Career Counselor (NCCC) with a master of education degree in counseling psychology from the University of Louisville and a bachelor's degree from California State University at San Bernardino, Ms. Bernier-Clarke has an extensive background in higher education administration and executive level management.

She has an established reputation in media, a professional presentation and has authored numerous articles, sections of government publications and several workbooks on various career development topics. She is the former director of the University Career Center at the University of Louisville, where she taught career development and counseling psychology courses. A mother of two, her career includes several years as a middle school teacher and executive director of a non-profit corporation.

Ms. Bernier-Clarke has been actively involved in educational reform for over 10 years in Kentucky, where she has served on the governor's School-to-Work Task Force and the Kentucky Occupational Information Coordinating Committee. A committed parent advocate, she has held several offices, including president, in the Parent Teacher and Student Association at her children's high school and is a parent representative on its School Based Decision Making Council.

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# Transition Planning

## 20 Top Questions and Ways to Answer Them

### Introduction to Transition

This booklet has just one major purpose: to answer questions most often asked by students and teachers about preparing for transition to post-secondary education or employment. While this booklet will help provide similar assistance to any student, our focus is on those students with special needs for whom state and federal laws set specific requirements for transition planning.

#### I. How is this booklet organized?

In our experience, most of the resources needed for good transition planning already exist in schools. Therefore, this booklet is organized around a two-step process.

First, it is necessary to identify the need for assistance as seen by the student and their family. One way to do this is to listen to the questions being asked. For example:

- \* *“How is this course going to help me in my career?”*  
(The need: to establish the relationship between the content of the course and the student’s career goals.)
- \* *“I’d like to be a teacher, but how can I afford college?”*  
(The need: to locate information about financial aid.)
- \* *“We want Johnny to go to college, but what should he study?”*  
(The need being expressed seems to be about relationships between skills and majors; additional information might also be needed in this instance.)

By using the “frequently asked questions” (FAQ) format for this booklet, you can simply skim the table of contents to find the question you want answered. For each question, we will give you specific suggestions for transition activities. In the upper right-hand corner of each activity box, we provide an estimate of the average amount of time, in minutes, that students will need to complete the activity.

Second, once you know the need, the right resources must be identified and used. For each question, we will identify resources in two Bridges products: CX Online and Choices. At least one of them is very likely to be available to students and families for most questions you ask. A few questions require use of alternative resources, however. We have included several such resources that are both useful in transition and low-cost or free.

Most of the activities encourage the student to create a printout or some permanent product. Some of the activities suggest that the student discuss ideas with a teacher or parent. Using the activity boxes will work well for a student who is capable of using the computer, follows written directions easily, works independently to get an answer and is able to process the results.

For students who require more explicit step-by-step instructions and process time, consider using the worksheets rather than the activity boxes to answer the questions. The worksheets will support the student with a process-oriented fill-in-the-blank format. This will result in a permanent product to share with the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team.

## 2. What are the transition requirements for students with special needs?

Transition services are defined as “a set of coordinated activities based on the needs, preferences and interests of the student.” (P.L. 101-476, 34 CFR 300.29) Transition services are provided to assist the student in preparation for employment and other post-school, adult objectives.

Identification of needed transition services for each student is based on assessment of:

- Present level of performance,
- Preferences and interests, and
- Student needs, which are the differences (gaps) between the post-school objectives and present level of performance.

Active student participation in assessing transition needs is paramount. Selecting assessment tools that fit their individual needs increases the likelihood that students will use the resulting information to refine and further develop their goals. In turn, this means that assessment should be an ongoing process rather than a one-time event. Finally, assessment tools must be appealing to students. They must be presented in ways that are within their capabilities and that encourage understanding of themselves and the world of work. Carryover to classroom activities is also very important. Therefore, suggestions are included with every section.

Any assessments on which transition planning is based must be student-centered and ongoing. Active participation by students helps them understand the relevance of school. This results in greater academic gains. As they gain knowledge of themselves and the world of work, they will modify their objectives. Such changes reinforce the need to see assessment as an ongoing process.

Using information from assessments, the student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP) then describes the coordinated set of activities to be provided in terms of:

- Instruction and other in-school interventions and activities
- Community experiences
- Adult services, acquisition of activities of daily living skills and assessment of functional behaviors (as needed)
- Relationships between services and post-school goals, resources required to achieve the objectives, and the responsibilities of IEP participants

### 3. Who are the stakeholders in transition, how do they benefit and what is the role of special educators in that process?

Everyone has a vested interest in – and benefits from – successful transition:

- \* **Students** develop a “map” that connects what they will do during high school with what they want to do later. That map helps students see the relevance of activities included in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Understanding that relevance is apt to result in more academic and transition-related gains.
- \* **Families** benefit from opportunities to share and examine their goals for their student in light of needed and available resources. Getting everyone on the same page increases the likelihood of success.
- \* By focusing on the big picture, **educational staff** can better link instructional activities with preparation for adult life.
- \* **Employers** benefit when students develop skills and behaviors appropriate to jobs they understand and want.
- \* **Taxpayers** benefit by recouping much of the cost of special education when students contribute to the economy.

Special educators with case management responsibilities have unique opportunities to assist everyone in developing transition goals and services. They have a very broad and thorough understanding of the student and services they receive. They generally coordinate the three-year evaluations and synthesize information from all sources into the present level of performance statements. They also coordinate Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings and ensure that decisions of the team are implemented and reported. They are thus in a good position to hear the questions being asked and to suggest activities.

Case managers may need to consider five major constraints in selecting assessment activities:

- A. Student time for transition planning may come from other activities such as class or support time. Selecting and fitting activities into student schedules requires careful planning by the case manager. As much as possible, assessment data should be part of mainstream activities. For example, if all ninth graders take the Choices Interest Profiler, extra time for interest assessment may not be needed for a student with special needs.
- B. Each student’s learning style should be considered in selecting assessment activities. For many students, combining both visual and auditory styles work best.
- C. Similarly, the level at which a student comprehends written material must be compared with the requirements of activities. Bridges products include activities with a range of reading levels.
- D. An increasing percentage of career planning activities – and both the Bridges products discussed in this booklet – involve use of computers. Therefore, it is important to gauge student computer usage skills.
- E. All of the above contribute to the final constraint: available time from special education staff. Becoming skilled in refining transition planning questions and selecting from the range of assessments available will conserve that valuable resource.

## 4. What knowledge base is required for good transition planning?

Matching characteristics of a chosen career with those of a student is central to carrying out transition planning. Information about both careers and students can be obtained in various ways. A common language to describe both is essential. Regardless of the assessment approach used, the inevitable gaps between the goal and the student can then be identified and addressed in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Once the gaps are known, they can be addressed in a number of ways:

- A. Enhance the student's skills through instruction and community experiences. ("Change the person")
- B. Select another goal with characteristics closer to those of the student and/or through job modification, reasonable accommodations, etc. ("Modify the goal")
- C. Rehabilitation technology, job coaching, etc. may be used to reduce the gap without modifying the characteristics of the goal or student. ("Address only the gap")

Regardless of the approach, helping students develop and work toward transition goals begins by identifying the knowledge areas in which members of the IEP team need assistance. This assistance generally falls within three broad areas:

- A. Knowledge of the world of work – including the rewards and requirements of careers and post high school educational programs. (See section II for related questions.)
- B. Knowledge of the student as a (potential) worker – including their abilities, skills, knowledge, behaviors, values and reward needs. (See section III.)
- C. Knowledge of the student's decision-making skills – their ability to clearly state options, identify and assign weights to appropriate criteria, and then gather information needed to choose between options. (See section IV.)

To get the most out of this booklet, begin by asking questions in each of the three areas above. If your questions are not addressed herein, log onto CX Online and click on "Talk to us" or send it to your Bridges representative.

## 5. Where can I get information about Bridges.com products?

For a complete listing, go to [www.bridges.com](http://www.bridges.com). The products featured in this guide are similar in that they focus on two aspects of post-secondary life in which most students are interested: careers and education.

Brief descriptions of all options on the main screen of Choices are available by clicking on the "Introduction" at the bottom left of the screen. For a more complete overview, go to [bridges.com/usa/support/teachertls/resources/choices.htm](http://bridges.com/usa/support/teachertls/resources/choices.htm). Contents of CX Online are available by clicking on CX Professional and then choosing the "What's in CX" link in the Using CX section.

## 6. What topics are covered in this booklet?

**I. Knowledge of World of Work** (The focus is on having sufficient, accurate information about careers and occupations and how they relate to secondary and post-secondary education.)

1. I am thinking about a career in X. What do workers actually do (tasks), and what are the requirements and rewards (abilities, knowledge, earnings, benefits)?
2. If I major in X in college, what careers will that prepare me for?
3. Everyone keeps asking “What are you going to be?” and I just don’t know. What should I do?
4. If I want to go to college, what courses do I need to take in high school?
5. If I don’t go away to college, what careers are still open to me?

**II. Knowledge of Self as Worker** (The focus is on having sufficient, accurate and career-relevant knowledge of personal factors such as interests, values, abilities and functional limitations.)

1. I know what I like. How do I find careers that match my interests and values?
2. How do I figure out what I would be good at doing?
3. I know there are some things I am not very good at. What changes do I have to make? What things can I avoid or work around in my career planning?
4. How do my work behaviors match up with those required of most workers?
5. What skills do I need to live independently?

**III. Knowledge of Career Decision Making** (The focus is on being able to use a known, structured process for making career decisions and explaining them to others, particularly when support from others is needed.)

1. What information do I need about careers and myself before choosing an occupation or job?
2. After learning about careers and myself, how can I organize the information to help me decide between my options?
3. What information do I need about schools and myself before deciding on college or training?
4. After learning about schools and myself, how can I organize the information to help me decide between my options?
5. If I decide to get a job right out of high school, how can I pick one that will help me with long-range goals?

**IV. Questions Teachers Ask** (The focus is on helping staff clarify relationships between subjects and careers, and identify resources needed for successful transition planning.)

1. How can I show students the relationships between the subjects I teach and their career goals?
2. Many of my students have difficulty reading. How can I use CX Online and Choices with them?
3. Some students have difficulty using a computer. How can I use CX Online and Choices with them?
4. How can I get families appropriately involved in transition planning?
5. Can transition activities be part of lesson plans for my courses?

### **Student Worksheets**

Each question addressed in this booklet has at least one printable student worksheet and can be used in an IEP or in a paper-based portfolio. Download them from the Web at [www.bridges.com/worksheets](http://www.bridges.com/worksheets).

# Guide to Questions

## I. Knowledge of World of Work

### 1. I am thinking about a career in \_\_\_\_\_ actually do and what are the requirements?

**To the student:** It is important to be sure the career you are considering is actually what you think it is. What day-to-day tasks would you perform? What abilities and skills are required? Will you be satisfied with the salary and working conditions? Completing activities to be sure you know the details of careers you are considering will prevent being disappointed later on. If you know the major you want to pursue after high school, you can use it to find possible careers.

**To the teacher:** Students often have too little or inaccurate information about careers. Activities that help help verify or reject these ideas by providing accurate and thorough information is much preferable to other approaches, such as looking in a directory.

**CX ONLINE** 90 minutes



1. Type a career name in the Search box.
2. Locate and click on it in the search results.
3. Read all five sections of the article: What They Do, Salary and Outlook, Education, Interview and Get Started.
4. Complete all three activities under Get Started.
5. List the new things you learned about the career.
6. Make another list of the things you do and do not like about the career.
7. Discuss your lists with a teacher or family member. Tell them why the career appears to be a good or poor match for you.

**CX ONLINE** 90 minutes



1. Click Check Out Majors.
2. Click Alphabetical List under Find Majors by. Select a letter, then click on an article.
3. In the box to the right, click on Related Careers.
4. Select at least two related careers and read all five sections: What They Do, Salary and Outlook, Education, Interview and Get Started.
5. Complete all three activities under Get Started for the career that seems like the best fit for you.
6. List the new things you learned about the career.
7. Make another list of the things you do and do not like about the career.
8. Discuss your lists with a teacher or family member. Tell them why the career appears to be a good or poor match for you.

### Intended Audience

While our ultimate goal is to reach students with special needs, teachers are most likely to be the primary users of this booklet. Therefore, we begin with suggested phrases teachers might use in introducing the activities. Then, comments about issues of importance to teachers are provided. Taken together, the two sets of statements will help teachers decide: a) what to emphasize with a particular student and b) which of the activities to select.

### Suggested Times

The clock icons represent the estimated time an average student will require to complete each activity. A variety of factors, including the amount of assistance needed, will influence the actual time required.

### Activity Directions

All directions for activities have reading levels below 7th grade. Many are at a 5th grade level. When a student needs assistance, see the suggestions in Questions Teachers Ask" #2 and #3.

### IEP Statements

Consider these suggestions if you need to include these activities as measurable, short-term objectives in an IEP. Suggestions are also provided for using the results of activities to increase communication with parents, tracking student progress and documenting IEP outcomes. Storing completed activity and worksheets in a paper-based portfolio keeps them together and easily accessible.

### Connections to Classroom Activities

For each question, this section includes suggestions for related classroom activities

### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

"(Name) will demonstrate ability to locate information about the requirements of various occupations."

"(Name) will develop and carry out interviews with workers employed in a preferred occupation."

- For interested parents: Send "products" home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- \*\*\*\*\* Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives. \*\*\*\*\*

### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Ask students to identify post-secondary education programs related to the course being taught.
2. Examine the classified section of the local newspaper to identify occupations related to the course being taught.

# I. I am thinking about a career in \_\_\_\_\_. What do workers actually do; what are the requirements and benefits?

**To the student:** It is important to be sure the career you are considering is actually what you think it is. What day-to-day tasks would you perform? What abilities and skills are required? Will you be satisfied with the salary and working conditions? Completing activities to be sure you know the details of careers you are considering will prevent being disappointed later on. If you know the major you want to pursue after high school, you can use it to find possible careers.

**To the teacher:** Students often have too little or inaccurate information about careers they are considering. Activities that help verify or reject these ideas by providing accurate and thorough information are critical. And letting them gather the information is much preferable to other approaches, such as looking it up for them or correcting their misperceptions.

## CX ONLINE 90 minutes



1. Type a career name in the Search box.
2. Locate and click on it in the search results.
3. Read all five sections of the article: What They Do, Salary and Outlook, Education, Interview and Get Started.
4. Complete all three activities under Get Started.
5. List the new things you learned about the career.
6. Make another list of the things you do and do not like about the career.
7. Discuss your lists with a teacher or family member. Tell them why the career appears to be a good or poor match for you.

## CX ONLINE 90 minutes



1. Click Check Out Majors.
2. Click Alphabetical List under Find Majors by. Select a letter, then click on an article.
3. In the box to the right, click Related Careers.
4. Select at least two related careers and read all five sections: What They Do, Salary and Outlook, Education, Interview and Get Started.
5. Complete all three activities under Get Started for the career that seems like the best fit for you.
6. List the new things you learned about the career.
7. Make another list of the things you do and do not like about the career.
8. Discuss your lists with a teacher or family member. Tell them why the career appears to be a good or poor match for you.

## CHOICES 30 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Select Occupations with Post-Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Locate a career of interest by typing its name or scrolling through the list.
4. Click on the occupation to view the description.
5. Print and read the description, especially tasks, skills, abilities, earnings and outlook.
6. Put a "+" next to the sections of the description that seem to be just what you thought and a "0" next to descriptions that are different from what you thought.
7. Repeat with other occupations you are considering.
8. Discuss the results with a teacher or family member.

## CHOICES 30 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Select Occupations with Post-Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Locate a career of interest by typing its name or scrolling through the list.
4. Check both earnings and outlook for the occupation.
5. Click Job Bank and select criteria to see listings for one or more occupations. (Note: Many employers do not list openings on this site. See below.)
6. Go to [www.bls.gov/oes](http://www.bls.gov/oes) for average wages and the number employed. (Replace "nat" with two-letter abbreviation to view state data, e.g. "nh.")

## CHOICES 90 minutes



1. Log onto Choices and open your session file.
2. Click Planner in the green Portfolio box.
3. Click Job Search Activities.
4. Click Know the Job Market Activities.
5. Click Conduct an Information Interview.
6. Click Worksheet and print several copies.
7. Check the local phone book to find businesses likely to hire in careers you are thinking of. Or ask your teacher or parent for other suggestions.
8. Complete worksheets with every person you interview.

### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- "(Name) will demonstrate ability to locate information about the requirements and rewards of preferred occupations."
- "(Name) will develop and carry out interviews with workers employed in a preferred occupation."
- For interested parents: Send "products" home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Ask students to identify post-secondary education programs related to the course being taught.
2. Examine the classified section of the local newspaper to identify occupations related to the course being taught.

## 2. If I major in \_\_\_\_\_ in college, what careers will that prepare me for?

**To the student:** Before picking a major, it is a good idea to know the careers that are most likely to result. Some majors, such as business, prepare people for many different careers. People with other majors, such as chemistry, are apt to enter a smaller number of careers. But it is also smart to think about the high school subjects you like and are good at. By looking at what comes both before and after a major, you'll make a better career decision.

**To the teacher:** Choosing a major is often – but not always – an important step in career planning. Students need to know that preparation for some careers requires a specific pattern of education. Several paths may be taken for other careers. Finally, like careers, majors are best selected when students consider what they like and are good at doing.

### CX ONLINE

90 minutes



1. Click Check Out Majors.
2. Select one of the 14 major zones that interests you.
3. Click on the major you are considering.
4. Read the Profile and Talking to Students sections to be sure this is the major you are thinking of.
5. Look at Related Careers. Pick two that interest you.
6. Read all five sections of the career articles: What They Do, Salary and Outlook, Education, Interview and Get Started.
7. Complete all three activities under Get Started.
8. Create a like and dislike chart for each occupation.
9. Discuss your work with a teacher or parent.

### CHOICES

20 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Select Occupations with Post Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Click Search. Select Post-secondary Programs/Majors and click Use or Change.
4. Click on the folder for a list of programs within a major.
5. Select programs in which you are interested. Click OK.
6. Click on one of occupations listed.
7. Click on the Programs/Majors and Training title to the right of the Occupations tile. Depending on your Occupation choices, more than one major may be shown. Alternatives such as apprenticeships may appear in a yellow box.
8. Print the occupations that go with the major you selected and discuss them with a teacher, parent or someone working in the careers.

### CX ONLINE

90 minutes



1. Click Check Out Majors.
2. Under Your School Subjects, click on the school subject that you like most and have done best in.
3. Click on one of the articles.
4. Read the Profile and Talking to Students sections to be sure this is the major you are thinking of.
5. Look at Related Careers. Pick two that interest you.
6. Read all five sections of the career articles: What They Do, Salary and Outlook, Education, Interview and Get Started.
7. Complete all three activities under Get Started.
8. Create a like and dislike chart for each occupation.
9. If you also did the activity above, compare the two charts. Do they suggest more than one major?
10. Discuss your work with a teacher or parent.

### CHOICES

30 minutes



The above activity is useful for learning the contents of a major. More highly focused majors may signal job placements in a more concentrated group of occupations.

1. Follow steps one to eight in the above activity. Select one of the Programs/Majors and Training and click on the Post-Secondary Schools title to the right.
2. Click on a school or college from the list that offers a major being considered.
3. Select Report from the lower left of the screen.
4. Click Programs/Majors to be sure the major is offered under the same name. Click the website.
5. Search the site for information about the major. It is usually found by department or in the college catalog. Print out the information.
6. Underline the names of courses that are similar to those you have already taken. Did you like them? Did you do well? Discuss with a teacher or parent.
7. Write the college and ask for a list of occupations obtained by graduates in this major.

#### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- “(Name) will learn about college majors and how preparation in one program may lead to several career opportunities.”
- “(Name) will identify high school courses related to careers and college majors.”
- For interested parents: Send “products” home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

#### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Describe two post-secondary majors that students who like and do well in this course might consider.

### 3. Everyone keeps asking, “What are you going to be?” I just don’t know. What should I do?

**To the student:** *It’s OK to be unsure about your career. When people who know you ask, tell them you are working on it. You may want to ask them what they think are the best careers. Or maybe they know someone you could interview about a career you are considering. Remember that you need to learn about both careers and yourself. Actually, the more you learn about careers, the easier it will be to decide which are right for you.*

**To the teacher:** *Career planning is made easier when built on a good understanding of the world of work – clusters of occupations, industry structures, tasks, requirements and rewards. As they learn about careers, students will also be learning about themselves, particularly their preferences, strengths and needs. Helping them learn how to find career information quickly and easily is a major contribution that will serve them throughout their lives.*

#### CX ONLINE

Variable



1. Enter “research a company” in the Search box at the top right of the screen. Click Go.
2. Click on the first entry and read the Introduction and How To sections. Focus on the Industry and Company sections of How To.
3. Next, read the Resources section. Ask your teacher or librarian for help in identifying information about industries or companies that interest you.
4. Make a short list of companies you would like to visit and discuss the list with a teacher or parent.
5. Use the phone book or contact the local Chamber of Commerce for names of people to call for an appointment.
6. Before you go, make a list of questions you want to ask.
7. After the interviews, decide whether there are jobs at the companies you visited that you would like to consider in your career.

#### CHOICES

30 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Select Occupations with Post Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Locate a career you want to research by using the Find icon or scrolling the list. Select Report to see the description.
4. Click on the occupation and print the entire description.
5. On the printout, highlight the basic SCANS skills requirements.
6. Next, locate and highlight the average earnings, both nationally and for your state if available.
7. Finally, locate the educational requirements and types of training required for the occupation.
8. Repeat the above steps for a different occupation.
9. Discuss with a teacher or parent which of the two is most appealing to you.

#### CX ONLINE

Variable



1. Enter “job shadow” in the Search box at the top right of the screen. Click Go.
2. Click on the first entry and read the Introduction.
3. Click on the How To section for specific suggestions on identifying a company, arranging the interview and preparing for it. Ask a teacher for help and suggestions.
4. Click on Resources and then choose Questions to ask at the Informational Interview.
5. After completing at least two job shadows, make a list of the tasks you saw the workers doing, how much preparation is required for the jobs, and which parts you did and did not like. Print and discuss the results with a teacher or parent.

#### CHOICES

45 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Select Occupations with Post Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Locate a career you want to research by using the Find icon or scrolling the list. Select Report to see the description.
4. Click Compare on the left side of the screen.
5. Highlight a second occupation and click on the green down arrow in the right-hand box at the bottom of the screen.
6. Go to File, Print, select Compare two Occupations and print them. Review each of the reports and put a check next to the occupation you prefer for each section.
7. Write a summary of the features you prefer and share it with a teacher or parent.

#### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- “(Name) will demonstrate the ability to locate and discuss information about industries, companies and occupations.”
- “(Name) will demonstrate ability to observe and interview workers to identify tasks involved in jobs of interest.”
- “Given two occupational titles, (name) will identify, compare and discuss the tasks, SCANS skills, average pay levels and educational requirements.”
- For interested parents: Send “products” home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

#### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. List five or more careers where the content of this course is used in performing tasks.
2. Using a comparison of two occupations, have students identify all the relationships to class content.
3. Examine the classified section of the local newspaper to identify occupations related to the course being taught.

## 4. If I want to go to college, what courses do I need to take in high school?

**To the student:** You are wise to make the connection between courses in high school and getting into college. Most colleges expect that you will have taken certain courses. If you want to major in a certain subject, you will probably need to take additional courses. Most college courses will be more difficult than anything you take in high school. So, it is a good idea to take upper level courses in English, math and science. They are more challenging, but also more like college courses. Pick up a course catalog from your teacher or guidance counselor. It usually has a list of courses most colleges require.

**To the teacher:** Many students need help understanding the importance of course selection in high school. They also need encouragement to take more challenging sections of courses and explanations why this is important. Taking courses required by most colleges keeps options open. Such courses also result in more salable skills for the job market.

### CX ONLINE

60 minutes



1. Click on Check Out Majors. In the Student Planner box on the right of the screen, click Introduction. Then click on the tab for '9th Grade'. It contains a list of the minimum courses most four-year colleges expect you to take in high school. Read the list carefully and then go back and read the information on the rest of the tabs in this section.
2. Some careers require additional courses. So, as you read about careers, always check in the boxes at the right under Getting Ready.
3. On the Check Out Majors page, choose a major zone you might be interested in studying.
4. Click on one of the articles. Read both the Profile and Talking to Students tabs.
5. Check out the Related Careers box and the Experience and Interests section in the Getting Ready box. They can give you clues whether you would like this area of study.
6. If you decide the program is interesting, add it to your portfolio. Keep a list of the ones you save and discuss them with a teacher or parent.

### CHOICES

30 minutes



1. Log onto Choices and open your session file.
2. In the green Portfolio box, click on Planner.
3. Click on Post-secondary Plans, then Continue, then College Planning Timeline.
4. Read the introduction and then click on Grade 9/Freshman Year. It gives the best answer to your question about what courses to take.
5. There are three suggestions for things to do to find out more about courses, and what you will need. As you do each one, come back here and put a checkmark next to the completed item.
6. Print out this page and discuss it with a teacher or parent.
7. Save your session before quitting.

### CHOICES

90 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Select Occupations with Post Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Click an occupation you are considering.
4. Click the icon for Focus and on Add to Focus List.
5. Print the description and circle the amount of education required.
6. Repeat steps three to five for at least one other occupation.
7. Go back to the Start menu.
8. Click Planner in the green Portfolio box.
9. Click Education and Training Plans, click Continue twice and then click "work with my focus list as it is." Read and follow the instructions for the activity.
10. Print out the activity and discuss it with a teacher or parent. Do the occupations you are considering require college? If so, which high schools courses are the most critical? Were they on the list from the previous activity? Should you add other courses?
11. Save your session before quitting.

### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- "(Name) will identify and plan high school courses that match post-secondary and/or career requirements."
- "(Name) will demonstrate ability to develop a college planning timeline for discussion with a teacher or parent."
- For interested parents: Send "products" home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Identify college entrance requirements satisfied by this course.
2. Discuss the requirements and activities of this course in relation to content of courses at the post-secondary level.

## 5. If I don't want to go away to college, what careers are still open to me?

**To the student:** *Going to college doesn't have to mean going away! Most communities offer college courses locally. And the Internet makes college programs available no matter where you live. Many careers are entered through apprenticeships, short courses at trade schools or by correspondence. Employers also offer training to their workers.*

**To the teacher:** *Many students need help identifying careers that don't require four-year degrees. Help them identify local resources for post-secondary education. Provide information about financial aid. Discuss the relationships between earnings and education. Discuss the pros and cons of postponing further education.*

### CX ONLINE

30 minutes



1. Click Explore Careers.
2. Choose a career zone and select a career.
3. Read the What They Do and Salary and Outlook sections.
4. Check if there is a Multimedia box on the right with a video showing what the occupation is like.
5. If you like what you have learned so far, click on Education to see the requirements.
6. If training beyond high school is required, go to one or more of the websites for the career (listed in the Get Started section) and find sources for training programs. Then search for locations near you.
7. If you are still interested in this occupation, add it to your portfolio and discuss it with a teacher or parent.
8. Repeat from step two.

### CX ONLINE

60 minutes



1. Click Explore Careers.
2. Under Career Quiz, click Career Finder and complete the quiz to find careers that match both your interests and skills.
3. Click a Career Link that interests you. Note the Interests and Skills graphs and determine if your yellow line is close to or above the blue career line. If the lines are close, this may be a good choice.
4. Click 'More information about...' and read all the sections, watch the video, etc. As you find careers that might satisfy your needs, add them to your portfolio or print them.
5. Pay particular attention to careers that mention apprenticeships. Those careers are more likely to be ones that you need not go away to learn. (Note: Hold down the Control key and press the letter F. Then type "apprenticeship" to find the word anywhere on the screen.)
6. Discuss the list with a teacher or parent. Be sure to find out about local training programs.

### CHOICES

30 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Select Occupations with Post Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Click on Search on the lower left of the screen.
4. Select Education, Training and Work Experience. Click Use or Change. Click on High School Completed. Click OK.
5. Click Search on the lower left of the screen. The 366 occupations listed include both those that do and do not require a high school diploma. To see just those that require high school graduation or a GED, go back to step four. Check the box marked "only search the selected factors."
6. Print the list. Underline five interesting occupations.
7. Go back to step four and move the check from "High School..." to "1-2 years post-secondary..." and click Search again.
8. Print the list. Underline five interesting occupations.
9. Discuss the two lists with a teacher or parent.

### CHOICES

30 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Select Occupations with Post Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Click the Post-Secondary Schools title, then click Find at the top of the screen.
4. Type the name of the town or city in which you expect to live after high school (for example, "Rochester, NY.")
5. Review the list of schools to find ones with courses in which you might be interested. If no schools appear on the list, search for another, larger town or city near where you expect to live. Print the list.
6. Click Search on the lower left of the screen.
7. Search the college list using two concerns you have about going to college (for example: cost and enrollment difficulty). Check the colleges you prefer.
8. Discuss the list with a teacher or parent.

#### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- "(Name) will identify careers where apprenticeships are the typical entry path."
- "Given a career goal, (name) will identify locally available educational options."
- For interested parents: Send "products" home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

#### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Interview a variety of people about their educational experiences since high school.
2. Develop a career ladder in a career area, showing education and earnings for each "rung."

## II. Knowledge of Self as Worker

# I. I know what I like. How do I find careers to match my interests and values?

**To the student:** *Knowing what you like is important. You can use that information in several ways. What work tasks do you like? What school subjects do you enjoy? What work values do you want from working? When you try any of these activities, the result will be lists of careers (occupations) you might like.*

**To the teacher:** *Helping students with these activities can be a useful way to begin the transition planning process. These activities can help students see the relevance between school activities and what they want to do later on. By asking them questions about the results of those activities, you point out some very important connections between school and life. Combining two or more activities typically yields shorter, more lasting indications of career preferences.*

### CX ONLINE

45 minutes



1. Click Explore Careers. Under Career Quiz, click Career Finder. Click Start Now.
2. Answer each question under interests and skills.
3. First, check to see which interests and skills you rated highest and lowest. (If you have questions, ask your teacher to help you understand your results.)
4. Second, look at the list of occupations that best match your skill and interest ratings. Print the list.
5. Click on a few occupations to see how they match your ratings.
6. If you want to know more about an occupation, scroll down and click on More. Print out at least two.

### CX ONLINE

20 minutes



1. Click Explore Careers.
2. Under Your School Subjects, read the list of school subjects and click one you enjoy.
3. Click on at least one career related to that subject. Read about it and print it out if you are interested. If not, keep looking until you find one to print out.
4. Go back and do the same thing with another school subject. Print out two careers of interest.

### CX ONLINE

20 minutes



1. Click Explore Careers.
2. Under Choose a Career Zone, read the list of career zones and click one you might enjoy.
3. Read the list of occupations in that cluster and click one to learn more. Print out at least one occupation from each of two clusters.

### CX ONLINE

20 minutes



1. Enter a personal interest such as “football” in the Search box at the top right of the screen.
2. Click at least one listing to learn more. If it is interesting, print it out. If not, try another. Keep trying until you have printed two occupations of interest.

### CHOICES

60 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Click Interest Profiler from the purple Assessments box.
3. Answer the questions “like, unsure or dislike” as they apply to you.
4. After answering all 180 questions, you will receive your Interest Profiler Results. Click Exit.
5. To see the occupations that match, select Occupations With Post-secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box. Click Search, select Interests and click Use or Change. Click OK at the message prompt. Then click the OK button.
6. Pick at least two occupations that interest you and read about them. Print results and discuss with a parent or teacher.
7. Save your session before quitting.

### CHOICES

90 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Select Occupations With Post-secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Click Search, select School Subjects and click Use or Change.
4. Check off the boxes of the school subjects that interest you and click OK.
5. Pick at least two occupations of interest and read about them. Print results and discuss with a parent.

### CHOICES

90 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Click Work Importance Locator from the purple Assessments box. Click Continue three times and then Start the Survey.
3. Place all the statements so they show the ones you value most on the left side of the screen. Click the Finish button. Click Exit.
4. To see the occupations that match, select Occupations With Post-secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box. Click Search, select Work Values and click Use or Change. Click OK at the message prompt. Then click the OK button.
5. Pick at least two occupations that interest you and read about them. Print results and show to a teacher.
6. Save your session before quitting.

### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- “(Name) will learn about different types of interests and how to use resources to identify matching occupations.”
- “(Name) will demonstrate ability to relate preferences and interests with a range of occupations.”
- Saved session files or printouts are “products” that demonstrate competency.
- For interested parents: Send “products” home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Describe the differences in two of the occupations you read about. (Written work, class presentation, etc.)
2. What arithmetic/math/reading/writing/listening/team work is required of workers in those occupations?

## 2. How do I figure out what I would be good at doing?

**To the student:** What you are good at doing is just as important as what you like to do. It helps to look at both things separately. Actually, there are two kinds of ability. The basic skills you learn in school – reading, writing, math, etc. – make up the first kind. Then there is the special knowledge and skill required by the careers you are thinking about.

**To the teacher:** Helping students balance skills and interests may require considerable tact. One approach is to begin by asking students to look at the requirements of careers they are considering. Then, ask them to self-rate on the most important skills, followed by standardized assessments of the same skills. Search for occupations based on assessment results. When self-ratings and assessment results differ markedly, situational assessment may be required. You and the student first need to agree that the selected activity will allow them to demonstrate the skill in question.

### CX ONLINE

45 minutes



1. Click Explore Careers. Under Career Quiz, click Career Finder. Click Start Now. Answer the Interests questions and click Next.
2. Answer the Skills questions and print your answers using the Print This link. Then click Next. Write examples of things you have done that show your skills in each area.
3. Look at the top two occupations that best match your skills. Which skills might you need to improve? How might you improve them? Do you have skills above what is needed for those occupations? If so, would you be bored doing that job after a little while?
4. Repeat step three with careers you are considering.
5. Discuss your answers with a teacher or parent.

### CHOICES

60 minutes



1. Log onto Choices and open your session file.
2. Click Basic Skills Survey in the purple Assessments box. (There are 10 different skill areas. Your teacher will help you decide the skills you should rate.)
3. When you are finished, match your skills to those required in occupations you are considering or look at the occupations that best match your skills.
4. Are the skills you rated below what is required for occupations you are considering? If so, ask yourself these three questions: a) Do I want to put in the time and hard work to improve my skills? b) Would that time and hard work pay off in better skills? c) Would I best learn the skills in school or on the job?
5. Save your session before quitting. Share with a parent.

### CX ONLINE

45 minutes



1. Enter a career or interest word in the Search box at the top right of the screen. Click Go.
2. Click a career title from the results list.
3. Was it difficult for you to get the right answers? Did it take a long time? Would you find it difficult to do these activities several times a day?
4. Repeat these steps for two more careers you are considering. Then, discuss the results with someone.

### CHOICES

90 minutes



1. Log onto Choices and open your session file.
2. Click Transferable Work Content Skills Checklist in the purple Assessments box.
3. Check the skills you have in the 25 skill areas. Then, print out the list of skills you checked.
4. Click Occupations with Post Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
5. Use Find to identify occupations you are considering.
6. Do they require skills you have? Ones you could learn? Ones you are willing to spend the time to learn?
7. Talk with a teacher or parent about your work.
8. Save your session before quitting.

### CX ONLINE

60 minutes



1. Search for a career and click on it.
2. Click the Education tab and read about the training programs and courses that are typically required. Are these subjects in which you do well?
3. Now read the information in the At a Glance box and the Related Majors box. Do you think you would do well in these subjects?
4. Finally, click on a video in the Multimedia box (if there is one) and listen for descriptions of training and knowledge requirements.
5. When you are done with these activities, make a list of the skills and knowledge requirements and discuss them with someone who works in the career to be sure your list is complete and accurate.

### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- “(Name) will learn about different skills required in careers and use resources to identify matching occupations.”
- “(Name) will demonstrate ability to identify skill gaps and training options for addressing them.”
- Remember: Session files and printouts are “products” that demonstrate competencies and completion of IEP activities.
- For interested parents: Send “products” home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. What school subjects and post-secondary programs address the skills students want/need to learn?
2. Write a paper discussing the skills needed in two careers you are considering and ways you can learn those skills.

### 3. I know there are some things that I am not very good at. What changes do I have to make? What things can I avoid or work around in my career planning?

**To the student:** It is good to be able to see both strengths and weaknesses; everyone has them! Sometimes you can plan a career to avoid things you don't do well. Other times, it is better to improve a skill because it is the only thing that will make a plan work. Good career planning means looking at both strengths and weaknesses.

**To the teacher:** Helping students recognize their strengths and weaknesses is important in getting them on a path that leads to enjoyment and not frustration. Help students see their strengths and encourage them to continue working on their weaknesses. Early discoveries and realizations in career planning can keep students focused on their efforts in school. Remind students that gaps can be addressed in several ways: change goal, change self, accommodation.

#### CX ONLINE

45 minutes



1. Click Explore Careers. Under Career Quiz, click Career Finder. Click Start Now.
2. Be sure to look carefully at the "What are your skills?" questions as this will help you avoid careers that would emphasize your weaknesses.
3. Look at the career suggestions that match your skills and interests.
4. Select an occupation and examine the Skills graph to be sure your skills are close to or better than the occupation requires.
5. Examine the rest of the list to find occupations that match your skills the closest.

#### CHOICES

90 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Click on Transferable Work Content Skills Checklist under the purple Assessments box.
3. Complete the checklist by choosing the skills you have in the 25 skill areas.
4. Click Continue to look at the occupations that match your skills.
5. Select five occupations and print the reports.
6. Put the occupations in order starting with your most preferred.
7. Scan the printout for "For More Information."
8. Write a letter to a contact listed for more information.

#### CX ONLINE

30 minutes



1. Click Check Out Majors.
2. Under Major Finder Quiz, click on Major Finder. Click Start Now.
3. Click the area that interests you, then click Continue.
4. Click on a suggested major.
5. Read the profile to see if it matches your talents and abilities.
6. Repeat this activity several times until you find one that is the best match.

#### CHOICES

60 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Click Occupations with Post-Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Click Search. Select Interests and click Use or Change. Click OK at the message prompt. Then click the OK button. Note the occupations listed.
4. Select Basic Skills under search topic. Click Use or Change. Select a low level in the areas that are your weakest. Then click the OK button.
5. Print the list of occupations.

#### CX ONLINE

20 minutes



1. Log on.
2. Do a search by using words or phrases that describe your talents/hobbies/interests. (example: video games, biking)
3. Scroll through the search results until you find a career that sounds interesting.
4. Click on a career and print the information.

#### CHOICES

30 minutes



1. Log on to Choices and open your session file.
2. Click Occupations with Post Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Click Search. Select Physical Abilities and click Use or Change. Check off the ones you want to avoid because they are difficult for you. Then click the OK button.
4. Select Aptitude and click Use or Change. Rate yourself in the bottom 10 percent in any area that you know you have difficulty with. (Ask your teacher if you need assistance.) Then click the OK button.
5. Print the list of occupations.

#### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- "(Name) will research career opportunities that do not emphasize recognized weaknesses."
- "(Name) will examine careers in the areas where talents and hobbies may support career efforts."
- For interested parents: Send "products" home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

#### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Assist students with understanding that everyone has weaknesses. Show students how many more opportunities present themselves when they have better skills.
2. Examine occupational reports and help students understand skills and aptitudes and how important they are in choosing a career in which they can be successful.

## 4. How do my work behaviors match up with those required of most workers?

**To the student:** Poor behaviors cause more problems for workers than do poor skills. So it is smart to think about what employers expect. Work behaviors are what people do on the job. They can be seen and observed. One set of behaviors relate to what you do to get a job. Another set of behaviors include those needed to keep the job. You show work behaviors on a job. You also show them at school, and at home.

**To the teacher:** Helping students improve and expand their repertoire of skills is a valuable part of career planning. Bridges products focus on job-getting behaviors with some attention to “soft” skills needed to keep jobs, such as managing bosses. The self-rating activity focuses on job-keeping behaviors. Remember: behaviors are not always consistent between settings. In general, the more severe the disability, the less transferable the behavior.

### CX ONLINE

60 minutes



1. Click Get the Answers. Under Work, click Job Hunting.
2. First, read the four articles on resumes under the Applying for Work section. At the bottom of each article, there are several websites containing more information about resumes. Some jobs don't require resumes, but it is a good way to get ready for an interview.
3. Under Looking for Jobs, read the article called Researching a Company, as it should come before you decide to apply for any job.
4. Finally, read the articles under Interview Advice. Use your work from resumes and researching a company to write out questions you want to ask and those you will likely be expected to answer in an interview.
5. Ask a teacher or parent to practice a job interview with them. Tape it and play it back to see how you did.

### CX ONLINE

60 minutes



1. Click Get the Answers. Under Work, click Surviving in the Workplace. Read at least these articles: Dressing for Success, Achieving Success on the Job and How to Monitor Your Performance. All three stress the importance of being in charge of your behavior. The more you take charge of yourself, the less other people boss you around.
2. Make a list of the suggestions in these articles and then rate yourself. Do you follow those suggestions in school? On any jobs you may have? When doing chores at home? Discuss your answers with a teacher and a parent. Do they agree?

### Self-Rating Activity

Rate your job-keeping behaviors. Use this scale:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5  
 Not like me                  Somewhat like me                  Just like me

1. Attends work/school regularly (misses less than a day a month)                  1...2...3...4...5
2. Is punctual (late less than once a month)                  1...2...3...4...5
3. Behaves toward workers/students in ways that:
  - a. do not irritate, anger, distract                  1...2...3...4...5
  - b. do not attract abuse/victimization                  1...2...3...4...5
4. Behaves toward supervisors/teachers in ways that:
  - a. show acceptance of worker/student role                  1...2...3...4...5
  - b. do not require special attention                  1...2...3...4...5
5. Produces enough work:
  - a. remains at workstation as appropriate                  1...2...3...4...5
  - b. maintains adequate production speed - neither too slow nor too fast                  1...2...3...4...5
  - c. sustains effort and shows adequate stamina and willingness to continue exertion against work demands                  1...2...3...4...5
6. Meets appropriate quality standards:
  - a. recognizes and accepts quality standards as reasonable demands                  1...2...3...4...5
  - b. maintains quality standards                  1...2...3...4...5
  - c. recognizes “good enough” and doesn't sacrifice speed to needless perfection                  1...2...3...4...5

Also ask a teacher and parent to rate you. Discuss any differences in the ratings.

#### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- “(Name) will research and practice steps in preparation for job seeking.”
- “(Name) will self-rate critical work behaviors and discuss areas that need improvement with a teacher or parent.”
- For interested parents: Send “products” home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

#### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Help students understand the relationships between work behaviors, school and work.

## 5. What skills do I need to live independently?

**To the student:** Success in working and living independently are related. It is difficult to live on your own without a job. And it is difficult to keep a job if you don't take care of the other parts of your life. Independent living doesn't mean living by yourself. Instead, it means taking care of things outside work that can interfere with job success. It is like being sure to get enough sleep and having your clothes ready so you get to school on time and ready to learn.

**To the teacher:** The two activities below differ primarily in the number of questions and amount of detail. Students, families and staff can use either to compare views of student readiness for independent living. When this is a Transition Goal area, the more detailed approach on the left may be preferable. The Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) is an evaluation of youth independent living skills. Instructional materials are included. All assessments, scored reports and instructional materials are free of charge. Staff should visit the site and read "Important Information for Agencies and Organizations" and "Data and Reports" before using the programs with students.

### ACLSA

1. Log on to:  
<https://www.caseylifeskills.org/ACLSA/default.htm>
2. Click the tab marked Ansell-Casey Live Skills Assessment. Scroll down and click "proceed to assessments."
3. Select the assessment you and your teacher have chosen, then click on Begin. You will be asked for two more pieces of information. Your teacher will tell you what to enter.
4. Follow the instructions and answer all the questions. When you are finished, your teacher will give you feedback about how you answered the questions. You will also learn how your answers compare with those other people who know you well gave.

### Self-Rating Activity

Rate your independent living behaviors. Use this scale:  
1.....2.....3.....4.....5  
Not like me      Somewhat like me      Just like me

#### Social Living Competencies:

1. Uses leisure time so that they are:
  - a. Appropriately engaged and not at loose ends      1...2...3...4...5
  - b. Satisfied and reasonably content with leisure time activity      1...2...3...4...5
2. Manages money so that spending does not exceed income      1...2...3...4...5
3. Demonstrates acceptable grooming and appearance consistent with setting      1...2...3...4...5
4. Manages legal problems to avoid wage attachments or adverse publicity as representative of employer      1...2...3...4...5

#### Community Living Competencies:

1. Finds and maintains housing      1...2...3...4...5
2. Secures medical services:
  - a. Has a personal physician or has links to public health service      1...2...3...4...5
  - b. Takes reasonable care of health, exercise and dietary needs      1...2...3...4...5
3. Is mobile in community, using personal or public transportation for work, personal or recreational travel      1...2...3...4...5

#### General or Personal Living Competencies:

1. Copes with family/marital relationships so that they do not interfere with employment      1...2...3...4...5
2. Demonstrates personal adjustment and stability to ensure employability      1...2...3...4...5

Also ask a teacher and parent to rate you. Discuss any differences in the ratings.

#### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- "(Name) will self-rate independent living skills and discuss areas that need improvement with a teacher or parent."
- "(Name) will demonstrate knowledge of social, personal and community living skill areas."
- For interested parents: Send "products" home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

#### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Help students understand the relationships between independent living skills, school, school subjects and work.

## I. What information do I need about careers and myself before choosing an occupation or job?

**To the student:** Choosing an occupation or job should indeed be based on good information. Actually, two sets of information are needed. First, you need information about at least two occupations. For each, you need to know both the requirements made of workers in each occupation. You also need to know the rewards that generally come from working in the occupations. The second type of information you need is about yourself. It also includes the skills and abilities that an employer will expect of you.

**To the teacher:** Age, transition date and disability influence career goal selection. Broader career clusters (e.g. business, health services) are appropriate for younger students. When transition is imminent, occupational decisions (e.g. receptionist, health aide) may be needed. For students with very severe limitations, decisions may involve positions with specific employers, job modifications, etc. In the activities below, the term "occupation" is used to describe all levels. Check student work to be sure they have corresponding information about careers and themselves.

#### CX ONLINE

60 minutes



1. Click Get the Answers.
2. Click Career Planning under Work, and then Career Planning Guide under Activities.
3. Go to page 119, Career and Life Inspections. The activities will help you develop your skills in gathering career information.
4. Do the activities on Job Card A (page 120) and Job Card B (page 122). Then do one of the activities in Job Card C (page 123).
5. Look at what you have saved from previous CX Online activities. Are the descriptions of occupations in which you are interested complete? If not, go back and use your new skills.
6. Print out copies of your work. Show them to a teacher or parent.

#### CX ONLINE

30 minutes



1. Sort the printouts you kept from previous sessions with CX Online. Put everything you saved about careers in one pile. Put information from the assessments you did on yourself in the other pile.
2. Make a list of all the occupations you still think are interesting to you. Did you print out each of the tabs, such as What They Do and Salary and Outlook? Did you try the real-life problems? Did you watch the career videos? If need be, go back and get more information.
3. Now, look in the other pile. It should contain results of Career Finder and careers that matched, as well as a list of favorite school subjects and careers that matched. You may also have information from Major Finder and the careers that matched.
4. How do the two piles match up? Do the same careers, school subjects and majors show up? Do the careers from pile one show up in Career Finder? Discuss your findings with a teacher or parent.

#### CHOICES

30 minutes



1. Open your Choices session
2. Select Occupations with Post-Secondary Schools in the yellow Databases box.
3. Click on the Focus icon and Show Focus List. (If the list is blank, click the All icon. Identify occupations of interest. Add them to the Focus List.)
4. Select the two occupations that are most interesting to you. Use the Compare option to review information about these occupations. Highlight one of the occupations. Click Compare. Highlight the other occupation. Click the green down arrow in the second box to the right.
5. Look at each of the sections of the report. The sections down through Physical Abilities describe requirements that workers have to meet. The remaining sections generally describe rewards that workers get from the occupations. Print out the reports using the print icon.
6. These are the major types of information needed about occupations to make good occupational decisions. Discuss the printout with a teacher or parent.

#### CHOICES

60 minutes



1. Open your Choices session.
2. Check the Assessments box for skills and preferences you have completed. Print the results for any of the following you have completed: Interests Profiler, Work Importance Locator, Career Aptitude Survey, Basic Skills Survey and Transferable Work Content Skills.
3. You may also rate other things about yourself as a worker that are important to you. To do this, click on Occupations in the yellow Databases box. Select an occupation. Within the Report select any of the following: SCANS Skills, Career Pathways, Earnings, Outlook, School Subjects, Work Hours and Travel. For each of these, type your selections in a word processor and print them out.
4. Add occupations that interest you to the Focus List.
5. These are the major types of information needed about yourself to make good occupational decisions. Discuss your work with a teacher or parent.

#### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- "(Name) will demonstrate ability to contrast two occupations of interest."
- "(Name) will demonstrate ability to gather and organize information about career-related preferences and abilities."
- For interested parents: Send "products" home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

#### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. What school subjects and post-secondary programs address the skills students want/need to learn?
2. Write a paper discussing the skills needed in two careers you are considering and ways you can learn those skills.

## 2. After learning about careers and myself, how can I organize the information to help me decide between my options?

**To the student:** You have gathered the information about yourself and careers that interest you. Next, you need a way to organize information to help you make some decisions. That means comparing each career you are interested in with your abilities and interests. There are always some gaps. We can only do something about gaps or problems after we figure out what they are. And the whole purpose of transition planning is to identify and address gaps.

**To the teacher:** Students need lots of help understanding three things about career/person matching. First, although both employees and employers have to be reasonably happy, perfect matches are rare indeed. Second, gaps can be addressed in several ways. Finally, both people and occupations change; therefore, matching and gap analysis are constants. These truths about career decision making are not easily learned. They require practice – and support from others such as you.

#### CX ONLINE

90 minutes



1. Click on Get the Answers.
2. Click Career Planning under Work, then Career Planning Guide under Activities.
3. Scroll down to page 129 and read the introduction to Making Connections to the World.
4. Complete Job Card A (page 130). It will show you how to make simple decisions. Those are ones where there are only two choices.
5. Now complete Job Card B (page 132). It explains the idea of responsible decision-making skills.
6. Job Card C (page 133) will help you understand how to compare the information about careers that interest you and information you have gathered about yourself. This activity begins by having you compare that information to someone else. After you have completed it, share the results with a teacher, parent or another student. Did you put checkmarks next to the same items they would?  
Notice that no one career is a perfect match for Waldo.
7. Print out the worksheet on page 135. Complete the same activity for yourself. Use the information you have gathered about careers and yourself.
8. When you are finished, make a list of all the areas where there are no checkmarks. Don't worry if there are lots of such areas. What counts is if you can and want to do something about them. Which might you change with extra time, training and work? Can you think of a way to remove the gap in some other way?
9. Repeat steps six to eight with another career.
10. Show your work to a teacher, counselor or family member.

#### CHOICES

90 minutes



1. Open your Choices session.
2. Select Occupations in the yellow Databases box. Click on the Focus icon and Show Focus List. Pick one occupation that you are considering.
3. Now get the information you have collected about yourself. That includes assessments such as your work values and interests. It may also include a word processing file you made in the previous activity.
4. Make a worksheet with three columns. Label the columns Occupation, What I want/need, and Gaps.
5. Make sections in column one for (at least) this information: Name, Tasks, Education, Skills, Abilities, Work Values, Interests, Outlook, Earnings, Courses. Copy information about the occupation into each section.
6. Now copy the information about yourself into column two. If there is information in column one that you haven't considered about yourself, do it now. (Ask a parent or teacher for help if you need it.)
7. For each section, go back and look at the information in both columns. Are there gaps (differences) between what is in them? Put "yes" in column three when you think those gaps are important. Otherwise, put "no." Remember, a gap only means it is something you would want to work on if you pick that career.
8. Repeat steps three to seven for other careers on your Focus List.
9. It is very important that you discuss your worksheets with a teacher, counselor or family member.

#### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- "(Name) will demonstrate ability to identify specific gaps that can be addressed in their IEP before transition."
- "(Name) will demonstrate ability to search for accommodations for gaps that cannot be overcome."
- Remember: Session files and printouts are "products" that demonstrate competencies and completion of IEP activities.
- For interested parents: Send "products" home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

#### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Give students examples of how other people address gaps – both by overcoming and working around them.
2. Meet with students several times over the course of several weeks/months to help them with these activities.

### 3. What information do I need about schools and myself before deciding on college or training?

**To the student:** *The best place to start is with you and your career goals. Will they require more skills and training than you will have after transition? How long are you willing to continue your education? How do you learn best? The answers to these questions will help you choose between the many types of educational programs.*

**To the teacher:** *Students may need help seeing college as a step along the way, not an end in itself. It helps to know about majors and careers that typically result. Changing majors is less likely and costly if the student knows these connections. Note, however, that using the word “college” to describe post-secondary education may put off students. Instead, help them understand the many types of educational programs. They may begin with a different type of program that better meets their goals and abilities. Make sure they know about trade schools, apprenticeships, OJT, etc.*

#### CX ONLINE

60 minutes



1. Click Check Out Majors.  
Important: In CX Online, “major” includes any course of study. That means what you learn in apprenticeships, trade schools and in on-the-job training as well as in college.
2. Find the results of activities you may have done earlier in Major Finder, Alphabetical List of Majors, Major Zones, etc. Make a list of the majors in which you are interested.
3. The first type of information you need about each major on your list is whether the training is provided by an apprenticeship, a college or some other type of program. Include the typical training time required.
4. For each major, list some careers that people enter after their training. List the careers that are of the greatest interest to you.
5. The next type of information you need is a list of high school courses related to the major. Would you be happy studying these subjects a lot while training?
6. Finally, you also need to know where you could get the training you want and the entry requirements you will have to meet. The Get Started section lists schools and other websites. Use Choices as another source of good information.
7. Print your list of majors, along with the careers they prepare you for, course lengths, related school subjects and the location of schools offering the majors.
8. Discuss the list with a teacher, counselor or parent.

#### CHOICES

30 minutes



1. Open your Choices session.
2. Click Occupations in the yellow Databases box.
3. Click Post-Secondary Schools and then on Search.
4. Click Institution Type and click Use or Change. Select one or more of the categories that describe your preference and click OK.
5. Click Geographic Location and click Use or Change. Select one or more locations that describe your preference and click OK. You may want to add other search items to the list. The result will be as many schools of interest as possible.
6. After looking at details about the schools, add a few schools to the Focus list. Print the resulting list of schools using the print icon.
7. Discuss the list with a teacher or parent.

#### CHOICES

45 minutes



1. Open your Choices session.
2. Click Occupations in the yellow Databases box.
3. Click on the red Search button and then on Education, Training and Work Experience. Click Use or Change. Check one of the five boxes to show the longest period of time you are willing to spend in training or school after transition. (If you are not willing to spend additional time, check one of the top two boxes.) Then click OK.
4. Click School Subjects and/or Career Pathways and click Use or Change. Select the options that best describe your interest and abilities in subjects. Then click OK.
5. Print and search the resulting list of occupations to see if the ones you are most interested in appear. If an occupation you are considering is not on the list, click on the All icon, locate and highlight the occupation. Then click on Why to find the reason it is not on the list of occupations matching your educational preferences.
6. You may want to add other search items to the list. The result will be a shorter list occupations that meet your preferences. Discuss the list with a teacher or parent.

#### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- “(Name) will demonstrate ability to identify a range of post-secondary education opportunities related to career goals.”
- “(Name) will demonstrate ability to organize and present information about training options to staff and family.”
- For interested parents: Send “products” home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

#### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Show students the range of training options (e.g. college, apprenticeship) for the subject matter being taught.
2. Show how subject matter of high school courses serves as a foundation for more specialized training.

## 4. After learning about schools and myself, how can I organize the information to help me decide between my options?

**To the student:** *OK, you've gathered information about training opportunities and yourself. Now you need a way to lay out the information to help you make some decisions. That means comparing what you want for training with what is available. The match between those two things is not going to be perfect. But you can't do anything about gaps until you find out what they are. And the whole purpose of transition planning is to identify and address gaps.*

**To the teacher:** *Students need help with their plans for post-secondary education. First, they need to understand that education after high school is likely to be more focused on a subject or major. Second, many students assume that the help provided through special education in high school will continue. Finally, students need specific suggestions about areas they can strengthen and focus on to improve their chances for success. Students first need to agree that the selected activity will allow them to demonstrate the skill in question.*

#### CX ONLINE

90 minutes



1. In a previous activity, you made a list of majors, related careers, training times, school names and locations. Find that list and review it again. If you want to make any changes, look at CX Online to get additional information.
2. Make a worksheet with three columns. Label the columns: Major, What I want/need and Gaps.
3. Make a section in column one for these categories of information: Name, Training Type, Training Time, Related Careers, High School Courses and Training Sites.
4. Complete this column with the information you have on one school.
5. In column two, write your preferences for the type of training shown, whether the time it takes for the training is satisfactory, whether the related careers are really interesting to you, how well you like and do in the related high school courses, and whether you would like the training locations.
6. For each section, go back and look at the information in the first two columns. Are there gaps (differences) that are important? If so, put "yes" in column three. Otherwise, put "no." Remember, a gap only means it is something you would want to work on if you pick that school.
7. Look at any sections that have "yes" in column three. Can you think of ways to change that to a "no" by improving a skill? By selecting another training site?
8. Repeat steps three to six for other majors of interest.
9. It is very important that you discuss your worksheets with a teacher, counselor or family member.

#### CHOICES

90 minutes



1. Open your Choices session.
2. Go to Occupations in the yellow Databases box. Click Post-Secondary Schools and click the Focus icon and Show Focus List. Pick one school that you are considering.
3. Now get the information you have collected about your preferences for schools. That includes Institution Type, Programs/Majors, etc. It may include other preferences about a school, such as geographic location.
4. Make a worksheet with three columns. Label the columns: School, What I want/need and Gaps.
5. Make sections in column one for (at least) this information: Name, Geographic Location, Degrees, Institution Type and Entrance Difficulty Level. Add other sections that are important to you in picking a school. Copy information about one school into each section.
6. Now copy your preferences for one school into column two. If there is information in column one that you haven't considered about yourself, do it now. (Ask a parent or teacher for help if you need it.)
7. For each section, go back and look at the information in both columns. Are there gaps (differences) between what is in them? Put "yes" in column three when you think those gaps are important. Otherwise, put "no." Remember, a gap only means it is something you would want to work on if you pick that school.
8. Repeat steps three to seven for other schools on your Focus List.
9. It is very important that you discuss your worksheets with a teacher, counselor or family member.

#### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- "(Name) will demonstrate ability to search for post-secondary education opportunities of various lengths and types."
- "(Name) will demonstrate ability to identify problems that might arise in selecting educational goals after transition."
- Remember: Session files and printouts are "products" demonstrating competencies and completion of IEP activities.
- For interested parents: Send "products" home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

#### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Show students relationships between current subjects and those being considered as post-transition majors.
2. Meet with students several times over the course of several weeks/months to help them with these activities.

## 5. If I decide to get a job right out of high school, how can I pick one that will help me with long-range goals?

**To the student:** Starting out at the bottom of your career ladder is fine. Just be sure it is the right ladder! Nearly any job can help you get ahead. A steady, successful job history is valuable for anyone. But you do better if your first job experiences are related to your long-range goals.

**To the teacher:** Be sure students understand the idea of a career ladder. There are many jobs where previous experience is nearly as important as formal training. Other careers require both formal training and experience. Encourage students to learn about the steps required for their long-range goals. In addition, stress the value of having demonstrated the ability to hold jobs with good work behaviors.

#### CX ONLINE

90 minutes



1. Click Explore Careers.
2. Find the career zone that contains the career that is your long-range goal. Click on that career and then on Education to be sure that it requires more preparation than you will have when you leave high school.
3. Go back to the list of careers in that zone and locate ones that you might get without further education. (For example, Hotel Desk Clerk is in the same zone as Hotel Manager.)
4. Look at the video for the entry career, if available under the Multimedia heading. Check out the real-life activities and websites in the Get Started section to be sure this is a job you would like.
5. Interview someone who has a job that you want someday. Ask them how they began and what jobs you might get after high school that would be a good start. Also ask what school subjects are important and whether you could come back for a job shadow.
6. Discuss your findings with a teacher or parent.

#### CHOICES

30 minutes



1. Open your Choices session.
2. Select Occupations in the yellow Databases box.
3. Locate occupations that best match your long-range goals and add them to your Focus List by clicking the Focus icon and Add to Focus List. Once your occupations have been added, click the Focus icon and Show Focus List. Print the report for each occupation using the print icon and highlight the Career Pathway for each.
4. Click the All icon. Click Search, select Career Pathways and click Use or Change. Enter the Career Pathways from your printed occupation report and click OK.
5. Select the Education, Training and Experience search option, click Use or Change. Check High School. Click OK.
6. If the resulting list is still too large, select Transferable Skills... and/or School Subjects and enter the skills you expect to have when you begin job hunting. This will further reduce the list.
7. Print the resulting list of occupations. It will contain the entry-level jobs that you might want to search for.
8. Ask a teacher, counselor or parent to help you identify employers in your area who may hire for these jobs.
9. Try to arrange a job shadow or interview to be sure the job has the requirements as shown in your printout.
10. Highlight titles from your list and click on Job Bank. Select a state or ZIP code and search for actual job openings. NOTE: Do not be discouraged if no jobs are listed. This list changes frequently and many employers do not list openings in the job bank. Most people get jobs by personal contact. Ask people you know if they are aware of any openings and follow up yourself.

#### CX ONLINE

90 minutes



1. Click Get the Answers.
2. Click Surviving in the Workplace under Work. Read several articles, such as the ones about evaluating your performance, teamwork, cross-training, negotiation skills and dealing with difficult workers.
3. Click Get the Answers and select Career Planning under Work. Read the articles about job hopping, transferable skills and good planning.
4. Make a list of the key points in the articles. Pay special attention to sections that address getting ahead. Show the list to a teacher or parent and get their suggestions for the most important points.

#### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- “(Name) will demonstrate ability to identify entry-level jobs consistent with long-range goals.”
- “(Name) will demonstrate ability to relate school subjects with requirements for entry-level jobs.”
- Remember: Session files and printouts are “products” that demonstrate competencies and completion of IEP activities.
- For interested parents: Send “products” home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

#### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Show students career ladders related to the subject being taught. Emphasize how skills and experience relate.
2. When you arrange for outside speakers in a specialty, encourage them to discuss various pathways that can be taken.

# I. How can I show students the relationships between the subjects I teach and their career goals?

**To the student:** *It helps to see how a subject you are taking is related to what you want to do. Sometimes that is easy but sometimes it isn't. Since carpenters measure, it is easy to see how fractions are related. It may be harder to see how other courses are connected to what you want to do. These activities will help.*

**To the teacher:** *“Relevance” is important to many students. If they can make a connection to the subject being taught, they tend to work harder and perform better. Those relationships are easier to establish for some subjects than others. However, all subjects develop basic skills in reading, writing, thinking and/or math. First, look for the obvious relationships between subject and career. Next, examine the relationships between high school courses and post-secondary requirements. Finally, relate basic skills to student career plans. All courses will appear on at least one list.*

## CX ONLINE

Variable



Staff Activity

1. Click Explore Careers.
2. Under Your School Subjects, click on the subject you teach. Review and print the list of careers that is displayed. They are examples of those for which the subject is important.
3. Make the list available to show students.

## CX ONLINE

Variable



Staff Activity

1. Click Check Out Majors.
2. Under Your School Subjects, click on the subject or subject area you teach.
3. Review the list of majors displayed and select the ones that seem most closely related.
4. Look at the Related Careers box, if available, on the right to see a list of occupations related to that major.
5. Print either or both of the lists from steps three and four. Highlight the careers and majors that seem most closely related to the subject being taught.
6. Ask students to list the careers and/or college majors they are considering and compare them to the lists.

## CX ONLINE

Variable



Staff Activity

1. Click Get the Answers. Under College, click Preparing for College and then click 9th Grade in the Student Planner box along the right.
2. Review the list of courses typically required for college. If the subject being researched is listed, print the list to show students.
3. Ask students to list the college majors they are considering and identify whether the course being taken is related.

## CHOICES

Variable



Staff Activity

1. Log on and “Jump In.”
2. Select Occupations in the yellow Databases box.
3. Select Search, then School Subjects. Click Use or Change.
4. Select the subject being taught.
5. Click OK.
6. Review the list of occupations displayed since they are examples of those for which the subject is important.
7. Print the list and have it available to show students.

## CHOICES

Variable



Staff Activity

1. Log on and “jump in.”
2. Select Occupations in the yellow Databases box.
3. Select Search, then Career Pathways. Click Use or Change.
4. Select one of the six pathways and click OK.
5. Click on one of the occupations displayed.
6. Click School Courses.
7. Review the display of recommended high school courses. If the subject being researched is present, print the screen and the list of matching occupations.
8. Repeat steps four to seven for each of the other five Career Pathways.

## CHOICES

Variable



Staff Activity

1. Log on and “jump in.”
2. Select Occupations in the yellow Databases box.
3. Highlight any occupation and click Report.
4. Click Skills. Scroll down until you see Basic SCANS Skills.
5. Hold the cursor over each of the 10 SCANS skill areas and read the description. Jot down a tentative rating of the level required in the subject being researched. Print a list of the levels you consider involved in the subject and discuss it with each class.
6. Ask students to compare the levels required in this course with those of occupations they are considering.

### Need to record this in the IEP? Here are some suggestions:

- “(Name) will compare courses/subjects and occupations being considered.”
- “(Name) will show the required courses and career pathways for occupations being considered.”
- For interested parents: Send “products” home for discussion. Students can e-mail them directly from CX Online!
- Saved session files or printouts demonstrate both competency and achievement of IEP objectives.

### Connections to Classroom Activities:

1. Ask students to identify post-secondary education programs related to the course being taught.
2. Examine the classified section of the local newspaper to identify occupations related to the course being taught.

# 2. Many of my students have difficulty reading. How can I use CX Online or Choices with them?

**To the teacher:** *This is a very good question that applies to most career exploration and assessment tools used in special education. Unfortunately, it also applies to most jobs and post-secondary training options.*

*Chances are good that if reading is a problem, it is already a major component in IEPs for your students. Therefore, our focus here will be on helping you anticipate when a student is likely to encounter reading-related difficulty using Bridges products and what you can do about it.*

*We all need to keep in mind that no single exploration or assessment approach is sufficiently valid and reliable to be used exclusively as the basis for career decision making. So combine career exploration in the classroom with job shadows, interviews, etc. And cross-check computerized and paper-based assessment techniques with work samples and work-based learning experiences. Your students need that protection.*

## GENERAL COMMENTS

Let's begin with some general comments on reading levels:

1. All Bridges products are checked for reading requirements. The Flesch-Kincaid reading test found in Microsoft Word is used. In general, shorter words and shorter sentences result in a lower reading grade scores. The same components are used to identify a "reading ease" score. (Check out "Readability" under Microsoft Word Help to see how these scores are calculated.) Caution: The formula used by Word stops at grade level 12. So when you see that number, the actual level could be higher!
2. Content written for students in CX Online is aimed at a reading level of just under 9th grade. In Choices, the goal is under 11th grade. Occupational names and the names of people working in them are just two of the reasons why these goals are sometimes exceeded. Other Bridges products are designed for lower reading requirements.
3. Frequently, the tested reading level of a student won't predict their ability to comprehend material shown to be at the same – or even lower – grade level. The degree of familiarity with the subject matter is one reason. The abstract concepts involved in even short words is another, for instance: "value" and "ability".

## ACCOMMODATION SUGGESTIONS

Accommodation suggestions when students can't read assigned activities:

1. Observe the student as they begin using one of the Bridges products. If they seem to be having difficulty, decide whether it is using the computer or understanding the text. If the problem is related to reading, see the suggestions below.
2. Ask the student to make a list of all the words or sentences they don't understand. By using copy and paste, they can create the list in a word processor and then use the thesaurus to look them up. (This makes a good activity assignment, too.)
3. Have the student work with someone else on the assignment and share the reading.
4. Teach the student to use a screen reader. For example, ReadPlease has a free, easy-to-use version that works almost anywhere. (<http://www.readplease.com>)
5. In a very few sections of Choices (e.g. Work Importance Locator), screen readers will not work. In those situations, type the text into a word processor so that use of the screen reader is possible. When finished, have the student copy their answers back into Choices for scoring.
6. Kinesthetic learners will benefit from having the Work Importance Locator presented as a board game in which they physically sort the values printed on cards or slips of paper.

For many students, accommodation needs to be learned and practiced. Encouraging them to think about ways around problems is very valuable. (But we'll also keep working on accessibility!)

### Is it a computer-use problem, or a reading issue?

Teachers need to distinguish between the two. See Questions Teachers Ask No. 3 for details and suggestions about the computer skills needed to use Bridges products

### 3. Some students have difficulty using a computer. How can I use CX Online or Choices with them?

**To the teacher:** Fortunately, this is a problem for fewer and fewer students of all ability levels. Widespread availability of computer literacy courses in middle and high schools generally include students with special needs. If they have completed such courses, they are likely to be able to use all Bridges products without difficulty.

If problems do arise, the first step is to categorize them into one of three broad problem groups:

- A. Physical ability to enter and extract information
- B. Knowledge and skill in use of hardware and software
- C. Problems in cognition that impair following instructions or using output

Each of these problems are addressed in the next section. In each category, the most desirable approach is instruction to increase proficiency. Next comes adaptive equipment or rehabilitation technology. Assistance from another person should be a last resort.

#### STRATEGIES

- A. **Physical ability to enter and extract data.** Major operating systems (e.g. Macintosh, Microsoft) pay increasing attention to accommodation issues. For example, the latest versions of Windows come with alternatives for data entry (on-screen keyboard), screen enlarger and screen reader. A number of vendors address the same functions with a wide range of approaches that meet the needs of most students. Using a search engine such as [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) will locate resources in your area. However, with just the three Windows tools mentioned above, users can have total access to CX Online and to nearly all parts of Choices.
- B. **Knowledge and skill in use of hardware and software.** Computer usage at most schools is via networks where hardware support (on/off, printer maintenance, Internet access, etc.) is not expected of students. Therefore knowledge and skill primarily relates to software. Bridges products minimize the need for complicated commands by making extensive use of icons and auto-save functions. Being able to use copy, paste, save, find and search functions nearly completes user requirements. See Questions Teachers Ask No. 1 for a discussion of reading issues.
- C. **Cognition problems.** Most such problems occur when students try to read information such as on-screen instructions or output. See below for suggestions.

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

No-cost suggestions for addressing computer usage issues:

- A. **Physical abilities:** When students have difficulty using a standard keyboard but can use a mouse or other pointing device, try the on-screen keyboard (Windows). It allows typing by just pointing and clicking. Results appear wherever the cursor is located. This works particularly well when text, including username and password, must be entered. Students with limited vision can use the screen enlarger to expand the size of everything underneath the cursor. When a person's learning style is primarily aural, the screen reader will speak highlighted text. (Speech quality can be enhanced using [www.readplease.com](http://www.readplease.com)).
- B. **Knowledge and skill in computer usage:** Some students will benefit from knowing a few simple shortcut commands. Skill in using Find is universally helpful. Here are two websites that have a range of commands and useful lessons:  
[http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/windows\\_XP\\_shortcuts.htm](http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/windows_XP_shortcuts.htm)  
<http://www.nald.ca/nald-nb/english/innosucc/facilit/Computer/Title.htm>
- C. **Cognition problems.** While learning ability may be the source of problems students have during career exploration, learning style may also be an issue. Even with accommodations and instruction as suggested above, students may not gain a full understanding of career information from materials that are primarily visual in nature. Assessment of learning styles can be addressed at many Internet sites. Here is one:  
<http://www2.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/ff/felder/public/ILSpage.html>

For many students, both accommodation and remediation need focus.

#### Is it a reading problem, or a computer-use issue?

Teachers need to distinguish between the two. See Questions Teachers Ask No. 2 for details and suggestions about the reading skills needed to use Bridges products.

## 4. How can I get families appropriately involved in transition planning?

**To the teacher:** *Involving families is not only helpful, it is required. Families have perspectives not available to school staff. They also have resources and opportunities that enrich the transition planning process. The first step in family involvement is to keep them informed about transition planning and career related activities. Each of the activities in this booklet contain suggestions for sharing results of activities with parents.*

*Some parents will be well versed about careers and occupational requirements. Others will have only limited career information. Sending home results of student activities updates their knowledge of the world of work and their student's preferences and needs. Sometimes parents worry that career planning results in narrowing career options. Actually, transition planning broadens career options and provides information needed for informed decision making. Better informed parents will be more appropriately involved parents!*

### CX ONLINE

Variable



#### Staff/Parent Activity

1. Select Parent Guide from the column on the right side of the home page.
2. From the three columns of activities for parents, select an article relevant to current student/parent interest and need.
3. Review the article and the related activity at the bottom of each article. Print your selection(s) and give to the parent.
4. Follow up as needed. Ask the parent to bring results for inclusion in the student's transition records and to present results of the activity at the IEP meeting.

### CHOICES

Variable



#### Staff Activity

1. Log on to Choices.
2. Click Support and Resource Materials under Professional Tools.
3. Click Professional Manual (requires Internet access).
4. Scroll down to page 72 for a discussion about parental involvement and specific suggestions for two evening sessions for parents. One session involves parents and students working together to review career planning activities. The other session is for parents to address some of their own career planning needs.

### PARENT ACTIVITY

Variable



1. Go to [www.careerparent.com](http://www.careerparent.com)
2. At the bottom of the screen, there are three groups of items of interest to students of various ages. Select the group for your student. Then select Activity.
3. Each activity is described in terms of time required, preparation, what gets done, etc. If you find the activity relevant to your student's present situation, help them with it.
4. When the activity is completed, be sure to get the results included in the student's transition records at school. Talk with a teacher about other activities you could assist with.
5. The activities in Career Parent are changed regularly. Subscribe to this free magazine.

### CHOICES

Variable



#### Parent Activity

Your student may be considering different occupations than the ones you are thinking of. This activity will provide basic information about each option. Use the activity as the basis for discussion. Either of you can gather the information or do it jointly.

1. Log on to Choices and "Jump In."
2. Select Occupations in the yellow Databases box.
3. Highlight one of the occupations. Click Compare.
4. Highlight the other occupation. Click the green down arrow in the second box to the right.
5. Print the report.
6. Read the report together. Put a check next to each section if you both agree that the information presented is correct. Put an X where you do not agree on the accuracy of the information.
7. Go to another source to check out accuracy. Ask a teacher or guidance counselor for sources as needed.
8. Once you both agree on the accuracy of all the information about both occupations, discuss the differences between them in light of your student's preferences and needs. Make a note of the areas where there are still differences about how the occupations match the student.
9. Be sure the results of the activity are included in the student's transition records at school.

All of the above activities are designed to increase parental involvement in transition planning:

1. They involve sharing information between parent and student.
2. They are likely to clarify differences in viewpoint between student and family – a first step to resolving those differences.
3. They are also likely to clarify differences in viewpoint between IEP team members – a first step in transition planning.

## 5. Can transition activities be part of lesson plans for my courses?

**To the teacher:** *Of course. And transition activities are appropriate for all students. Most are thinking about what they will do after high school. Those who deny it often feel unable to come up with a career plan and will (silently? reluctantly?) welcome the connection between course work and what they will do after graduation.*

*Both Bridges products contain lesson plans that directly relate subjects and careers. All lesson plans adhere to national standards and are cross-referenced to SCANS skills. These lesson plans are available to all users of Bridges products without additional cost and can be printed or downloaded. All you need is a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader.*

### CX ONLINE

CX Online contains many lesson plans. Locating them is as easy as clicking CX Professional. The lesson plans are organized into nine categories:

Careers Class	Math	English and ESL
Business	Physical Education	Social Studies
Theater, Art & Music	Foreign Languages	Science and Technology

Most of the categories have at least one subdivision. For instance, Business is further divided into Entrepreneurship, Business Research and Business Communication. In turn, the Business Research option has four student activities.

Each lesson plan includes an overview, list of required materials, suggested strategies and examples. Most lesson plans can be completed in one or two class periods. Some require field trips. All incorporate aspects of career planning.

Also note the “real-life” series of activities that accompany each career article on the Student side of CX. By clicking the Get Started tab for any career, a student can experience examples of math, communication and decision-making activities workers in that career might face. At least one of these skill areas is required in every course. Ask students to select a career they are considering and then complete at least one of the activities. Then, they can share their reactions with the class or another student.

#### Student Worksheets

Each question addressed in this booklet has at least one printable student worksheet and can be used in an IEP or in a paper-based portfolio. Download them from the Web at [www.bridges.com/worksheets](http://www.bridges.com/worksheets).

### CHOICES

Lesson plans are also available through Choices. From the main screen, click on Support and Resource Materials under Professional Tools. Then click Bridges-to-Careers under Lesson Plan Packages. You will be taken to a Web site labeled Grade 6 – 12 Activities.

All lesson plans and activities are stored in Adobe Reader. The User Reference Guide gives examples of the lesson plans that are available under each of seven grade levels. Those levels are somewhat arbitrary and may not apply to a particular group of students.

Each activity level contains cross-reference tables to the National Career Development Guidelines and SCANS Skills. These tables are very useful in describing which of the various guidelines and skills are being addressed by a lesson plan.

Each activity level contains at least 10 specific activities. Detail about each includes details about: preparation time, implementation time, materials needed, learning objectives and activity steps. The table of contents lists all activities and shows likely connections to subject areas. Finally, the lesson plans include specific suggestions for activities, inside both Choices and CX Online.

#### Student Worksheets

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**Achieve Education and Career Success**

Bridges.com Co.  
33637-B Highway 97 N., Oroville, WA 98844  
Phone: 250-869-4200 or 800-281-1168 Fax: 250-869-4201 or 888-349-3437