



HELPING YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR STUDENT'S STRONG RESULTS

Your student recently took the *Strong Interest Inventory*® assessment as part of the exciting process of career exploration. The *Strong* is a career inventory that shows your student's different interest areas. Since people tend to succeed at what they like to do, identifying interests is important to career planning. The *Strong* compares your student's interests to those of thousands of men and women who work in more than 120 different careers. Your student's results show how similar his or her interests are to the interests of those employed people. Your student's pattern of interests as shown on the *Strong* can be used to find groups of similar careers to explore, and to choose educational courses, programs, and settings that fit him or her. You have an important role to play in your student's career planning process. You are invited to get involved—to learn about your student's results on the *Strong* and to think about what those results mean as you make educational and career plans with your student. Below are explanations of your student's *Strong* results. After you review them, please refer to the career exploration activities on the next page, which you and your student may enjoy doing together.

GENERAL OCCUPATIONAL THEMES

Your student's interests probably fit into one, two, or perhaps three of six broad areas of interest. On the *Strong*, these are called the General Occupational Themes (GOTs). You can find your student's highest interest levels on these Themes on the High School Profile and also on the summary page of the *Strong* Profile. The GOT information listed on your student's results suggests educational and career options your student may want to explore during and after high school.

BASIC INTEREST SCALES

Your student's results on the Basic Interest Scales can help expand the list of school subjects, training programs, and careers he or she may want to explore. Basic Interest Scales information appears on page 3 of the Profile and on the last page of the High School Profile, where your student's interests are identified and linked to the values, career fields, and work tasks associated with those interests.

OCCUPATIONAL SCALES

You may also want to review the Occupational Scales results found on pages 4 through 7 of the *Strong* Profile. As with the Basic Interest Scales, these scales can help expand the list of school subjects, training opportunities, and careers your student may want to explore.

PERSONAL STYLE SCALES

Your student's results on the Personal Style Scales are shown on the first page of the High School Profile and also on page 8 of the *Strong* Profile. These scales explain the classroom and work settings in which your student may feel most comfortable. This can help you and your student find work and educational settings that fit his or her personal style.

REALISTIC

- Courses in computer networking, physical education, horticulture, military science, earth science, drafting, and auto body
- Educational or training programs that are practical, action oriented, and hands-on
- Careers that involve physical activity in outdoor settings, working by themselves, and using hands or tools to make products or complete projects

INVESTIGATIVE

- Courses in math, science, electronics, anatomy, psychology, and astronomy
- Educational or training programs that are academic, idea oriented, and open ended
- Careers that involve solving abstract problems, conducting research, and working independently

ARTISTIC

- Courses in journalism, creative writing, music, drama, and art
- Educational or training programs that are flexible, encourage freedom of expression, and foster individual creativity
- Careers that involve creating, designing, writing, and performing

SOCIAL

- Courses in sociology, foreign languages, education, child development, and health
- Educational or training programs that encourage group projects and teamwork and emphasize helping others
- Careers that involve teaching, training, counseling, and supervising

ENTERPRISING

- Courses in speech, debate, marketing, business management, law, and civics
- Educational or training programs that are business oriented and foster entrepreneurship
- Careers that involve competition, assuming leadership roles, and influencing others

CONVENTIONAL

- Courses in accounting, computer operations, office practices, consumer economics, and medical administration
- Educational or training programs that offer structure, organization, and clear direction
- Careers that provide guidelines to follow and involve paying attention to details and using data to make decisions



BEGINNING THE CAREER EXPLORATION PROCESS

You and your student now have a lot of information about his or her educational interests, job interests, and preferred personal styles. You can use these pieces of information to help your student put together a personal “career puzzle.” You may find it useful to follow the steps found on the Putting Together Your Career Puzzle page available from your student’s counselor. These steps and some further ideas for gathering information are summarized below.

STEP 1: HELP YOUR STUDENT LEARN ABOUT HIMSELF OR HERSELF

Your student has been asked to make a list of things, related to both home and school, that are important to him or her. You may want to help your student think about what to include in the list. Or you may want to discuss the list your student has made and find out what he or she has discovered from this activity.

STEP 2: HELP YOUR STUDENT IDENTIFY CAREER POSSIBILITIES

Your student has been asked to make a list of jobs she or he is interested in exploring. You may be able to suggest some additions to this list that have grown out of your knowledge of your student and your experience in the world of work. Or you may want to read the list your student has made to discover which jobs seem interesting to him or her at this stage of development.

STEP 3: HELP YOUR STUDENT GATHER CAREER INFORMATION

Your student has been asked to do some research on the jobs he or she listed in Step 2. You may enjoy working with your student to complete some or all of the exploration activities listed on the Career Puzzle page. For example, you may have an acquaintance or friend your student can interview or “shadow” for a day. Once your student has finished researching the jobs of interest, you may want to discuss this new information together.

STEP 4: HELP YOUR STUDENT FOCUS ON CAREER SPECIFICS

Most high school students know little about the specific working conditions, benefits, and drawbacks of many jobs. You may want to help your student find answers to the questions in Step 4 on the Career Puzzle page by:

- Using the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (found in most public libraries) or the O*NET™ database at <http://online.onetcenter.org/>
- Helping him or her set up informational interviews
- Working with computerized career exploration programs (found in many career and counseling centers)
- Encouraging him or her to do volunteer work, get a part-time or summer job, and sign up for work-study programs
- Using the Internet or the library to learn more about jobs and activities that fit his or her interests

STEP 5: HELP YOUR STUDENT GATHER EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Since many careers require education or training beyond high school, your student has been asked to find out the educational requirements of the jobs she or he is exploring. You may also find it helpful to review with your student his or her Personal Style Scales results to see whether the educational requirements of the jobs being considered fit his or her personal style.

STEP 6: HELP YOUR STUDENT FIT THE PUZZLE PIECES TOGETHER

Your student can benefit from making a chart like the one shown on the Career Puzzle page. Helping your student put together the information you have both collected can bring the puzzle pieces together into a clear picture. And this clear picture can help your student choose the next step in his or her future.

CONTINUING THE CAREER EXPLORATION PROCESS

As you continue to explore educational and career options together, encourage your student to plan with flexibility in mind. If your student is uncertain of a career or educational choice, look for programs that offer a lot of variety and opportunity for change. If your student feels certain of a career or educational choice, you may still want to remind her or him that as people grow and gain experience, they often change course and make different choices.

In any case, with the information your student has about her or his broad areas of interest, preferred personal styles, and specific careers, he or she is well prepared to make good choices about careers now and throughout life.

