

TITLE: Finding your passions
RELEVANT H.S SUBJECT AREAS: Advisory, Careers, Life Skills, Homeroom, English, Social Studies, CTE
GRADE LEVELS: 9-12
SP TAB/CONTENT AREA: Choosing your path

GOALS:

Students will discuss ways to explore their life passions and vocations

STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

- C:C1.3 Identify personal preferences and interests influencing career choice and success
- PS:A1.2 Identify values, attitudes and beliefs
- C:C2.1 Demonstrate how interests, abilities and achievement relate to achieving personal, social, educational and career goals

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:

No special prior knowledge is necessary to complete lesson.

MATERIALS:

Many students may enjoy reading Po Bronson's book, "What Should I do with my life?"

Here is an excellent site with information on how to find your passion in life:<http://www.theonequestion.com>

LESSON OVERVIEW:

All too often students and instructors ignore the topic of determining what is important in life and pursuing dreams. We assume this is why students go to school and fail to engage them in the ever-evolving questions about worthy purposes in life. This discussion is an opportunity for instructors to introduce students to the various ways a person pursues their passions in life.

LESSON PROCEDURE:

This is a free flowing discussion, and the instructor may want to have a few stories from Bronson's book or the one question website to further spark student interest in this subject.

For the first part, distribute the article, Finding your Passions, and read it aloud as a class. (10 minutes)

Begin a discussion about the article by asking how the author, Kalsey Larson, suggests a person can find their passions. Tom Nelson and Anastasia Balfany are two examples Larson uses. (5 minutes)

Describe people you know in life who are passionate about what they do. Have the class brainstorm all the people they know and know about who live fulfilling lives of purpose. (10 minutes)

How do you think these people found and pursued their passion? Discuss the ways people find their passion in life, and continue the discussion introduced in the article (10 minutes).



What are you doing to explore your interests in life? Ask students to share things that they have done to find what they like to do in life (5 minutes).

Conclude this discussion by reminding students that finding your passion is a lifelong journey. Adolescence is the first time most people begin wrestling with this question, but most adults still reflect and work to find inspiration in life.

Finding YOUR passions — by Kelsey Larson

Do what you love and never work another day in your life

Imagine never having to work a day in your life. Sounds pretty good, right? Unfortunately, it's not likely you can survive without any type of career. But what if you felt so passionately about your job that you never felt as though you were working?

In order to wake up every day feeling excited about what lies ahead, you first must wake up to your passions.

"Go explore a few things," said Tom Nelson, who found his passion on the journey to owning his own business, Shield Technologies. "It's unrealistic for a 15-, 18-, 20- or even 22-year-old to know where that passion is. You might have some idea, but until you experience the world, you can't be sure."

Not about the money

Nelson graduated from college, earned his master's degree and began working at a Fortune 500 company. He was quickly moving through the ranks and showed great potential to be successful there, but after 13 years of employment he became frustrated and yearned to make a bigger impact and enjoy his day-to-day life more.

"You are in control of your own destiny," Nelson said. "If you're doing something for money or prestige, it's probably not your passion. Sometimes people believe their passion is there because the rewards are there, but more times than not passion has nothing to do with money."

After leaving the Fortune 500 company, Nelson bought a business – it failed. He then started a business – it, too, failed.

They say third time's the charm and, for Nelson, that was the case. His company is now four years old and is a successful and enjoyable endeavor for him. He advises students to be unafraid of failure be-



cause you don't learn anything from success.

Many adults can provide insight to aid you while you search for your passions. Find a mentor, ask questions of people who are in careers you might be interested in and listen to stories that people share about their journey to finding their passions.

Interests can be careers

"I always knew that art was my passion," Anastasia Balfany, of Lakeville, Minn., said. "But it took me awhile to discover I could pursue it as a career and not just as an interest."

Balfany is now an artist and illustrator who said she has been blessed with the opportunities that life has presented her. She began looking at art and design colleges, but was receiving backlash from friends and family.

"When it came time to make a decision, I knew that even if I did fail, I would rather try to pursue my passion for art than look back with regret and wonder," she said.

Balfany attended the Rhode Island School of Design. She says that at a few rough times she was concerned that she might not have made the right choice, but she now knows that her life would feel purposeless if she weren't able to work with her passion every day.

As you think about what your passions may be, keep a positive attitude. Take unique classes. Strike up conversations with different people and, if a friend invites you to an event

you know nothing about, don't hesitate to go.

Most importantly, get involved. Experiences can lead to a better understanding of who you are and what you enjoy. By keeping an open mind, seizing opportunities and living fearlessly, you'll discover where your true passion lies. 

