



Pathfinder Quest: Pathways to Possibilities

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Essential Question(s)

- What factors should I consider when choosing a major that supports my career goals?

Summary

Pathfinder Quest: Pathways to Possibilities helps students explore how their interests connect to real careers. Through online activities and reflection, students learn that choosing a major isn't about being perfect, but rather finding a path that fits who they are and where they want to go.

Learning Goals

- Students will be able to identify how different college majors can lead to a variety of career paths.
- Students will use online career exploration tools to research potential jobs, employers, and salaries related to a chosen major.
- Students will reflect on how their perceptions of careers and majors have changed.

Materials

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Engage

Explore

Explain

Extend

Evaluate

Research Rationale

First Generation College Students (FGCS) lack the social capital of their middle-to-upper-class peers and thus struggle in their college and career readiness experiences (Almeida, D et al., 2019). Social capital is defined as the relationships you develop in your personal and professional life that provide support and guidance. Research indicates that FGCSs struggle to build social capital due to a lack of experience and knowledge stemming from their familial, social, and economic background. Structured programs on post-secondary institution campuses that are readily available and convenient help bridge the gap between FGCSs and their peers (Dernberger, 2025).

Social Capital

At the post-secondary level, social capital refers to the relationships and interactions that students build with peers, faculty, and professionals. These connections provide valuable resources and support, such as information about career opportunities and access to academic and extracurricular activities. Thompson et al. (2023) explain that students had better academic and career opportunities after utilizing their campus Career Services than those who did not. However, students from lower socioeconomic families are less likely to possess valuable information about college success, leading to less access to campus resources than their higher socioeconomic peers (Dernberger, 2025; Almeida et al., 2019). Studies suggest that developing social capital between students and faculty is essential for students' development, positively impacting academic achievement and retention. (Almeida et al., 2019). Students often have difficulty with the career decision-making process, and campus resources, such as Career Services departments, help ease this process by considering the student's personality, interests, and background.

Resources

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- K20 Center. (n.d.). Fiction in the Facts. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/60>
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