Finding Your Personal Compass Points

When students come to this session, they will have taken the *Kuder® Career Search with Person Match* interest inventory and the *Kuder® Skills Assessment*. These instruments measure the interests and self-perceived skills of individuals related to the 16 clusters of occupations. Each provides a report with a rank-ordered list of the clusters, from highest to lowest, as indicated by the student’s responses to the inventories. A composite report of interests and skills results is also generated automatically after completion of both assessments. These reports help teachers and counselors link students’ interests and/or skills with occupations, high school curricula, and postsecondary majors.

Objectives

At the end of this session, students will be able to:

- State their highest areas of interests and skills as related to career clusters.
- Describe what their personal profiles of interests and skills mean.
- State the titles of occupations filled by others who have very similar interests to their own.
- State the titles of clusters in which both interests and skills are high.
- List occupations that they want to explore in depth.
Module 6: Overview

Components

- **Introduction: Interpreting the Kuder® Career Search with Person Match and the Kuder® Skills Assessment**
  5 minutes
- **Interpreting the Kuder Career Search Report**
  30 minutes
- **Interpreting the Kuder Skills Assessment Report**
  10 minutes
- **Discussion of Student Reports**
  10 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Read the lesson plan and resource material.
- Duplicate materials for Activity 12: Self-Assessment Summary Sheet and Handout 4: Taking the Super’s Work Values Inventory-revised for high school students.
- Arrange for a computer and display device to show the PowerPoint® presentation. This presentation can be accessed online from the Kuder® Administrative Database Management System.

Homework Assignments

For Middle School Students
Middle School students will be asked to complete Activity 12: Self-Assessment Summary Sheet and Activity 13: Your Dream Job, and bring them to the next session.

For High School Students
High school students will be asked to complete Activity 12: Self-Assessment Summary Sheet, and to utilize Handout 4: Taking the Super’s Work Values Inventory-revised to take the Super’s Work Values Inventory-revised online in Kuder® Navigator.

National Career Development Guidelines Addressed

- Indicator PS1.K2: Identify abilities, strengths, skills, and talents.
- Indicator PS1.R1: Assess how interests and preferences are reflected in career goals.
- Indicator PS1.R2: Assess the impact of abilities, strengths, skills, and talents on career development.
- Indicator PS:A1.10: Identify personal strengths and assets.

ASCA National Standards for School Counseling Programs Addressed

- Indicator A.B2.2: Use assessment results in career planning.
- Indicator C:A1.3: Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills, interests, and motivations.
- Indicator C:B1.2: Identify personal skills, interests, and abilities, and relate them to current career choice.
- Indicator C:B1.6: Learn to use the Internet to access career planning information.
- Indicator C:C1.3: Identify personal preferences and interests influencing career choice and success.
- Indicator C:C2.1: Demonstrate how interests, abilities, and achievement relate to achieving personal, social, educational, and career goals.
Introduction: Interpreting the Kuder® Career Search with Person Match and the Kuder® Skills Assessment
(5 minutes)

As homework for today, you took two assessments – one that measures your interests and one that measures your skills – that can give you direction for your future. These assessments may reveal that you have developed skills in the same areas as your interests or that you do not yet have skills to support your interests. Either way it’s OK because you still have time to develop skills through courses and work.

Provide an overview of today’s lesson by presenting the following points:

• Two of the most important things to consider when planning for future work are your work-related interests and skills.
• For that reason, you have taken the Kuder Career Search with Person Match and the Kuder Skills Assessment.
• There are no right or wrong answers to the questions in these inventories. The purpose is to find out what your interests and skills are so that we can relate these to groups of occupations you can explore.
• You will be able to use the results to identify occupations you may consider, courses you might want to take in high school, and majors you might pursue in schools after you finish high school.
• The primary purpose of these assessments is to guide your exploration of occupations so that you can limit your options to your probable areas of future work.

Interpreting the Kuder Career Search Report
(30 minutes)

Students should have their personal reports to refer to as you explain the sample report. Explain the report, using the PowerPoint® slides provided for this lesson.

Cluster Scores

Using PowerPoint slides provided, display the Kuder Career Search with Person Match sample profile of the 16 (your state may use fewer than 16) career clusters in rank order.
Then make the following points:

- Occupations or jobs can be grouped into one or more of the 16 areas, called career clusters, that we learned about in the last class session. First, you will find a section that lists the top five clusters of your interest in rank order. Then, to the right of each cluster name, you will note that there is a number between 1 and 99. This number is called a percentile score. Your interests have been compared to those of a large norm group. The number represents the percentage of those whose interests in a particular area is lower than yours. For example, if your score on Hospitality & Tourism is 97, it means that you have more interest in that area than 97 percent of those in a large representative sample of students.

- Your interests are being compared to those of approximately 8,000 students and adults, both male and female, nationwide.

- The 16 clusters are listed in rank order, starting with your highest interest cluster and ending with your lowest.

- Pay particular attention to the clusters with the highest scores, especially those with percentile scores above 75.

- Now look at your report and see what your clusters of highest interest are.

- If you have not already done so, save your favorite clusters in your portfolio the next time you are online. You can always view your favorite clusters by selecting the top tab titled My Portfolio, then Career Goals.

- By selecting a cluster name, you will be directed to a screen that includes a definition, related occupations and postsecondary majors, a sample career plan of study, and access to a video.

- Listen as I read a short description of each of the clusters. Pay particular attention to those in which you have the highest interest.

**Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources**

In this part of the work world, people like to work with their hands. They may work outdoors, indoors, or some combination of both. They are likely to work with some kind of tool or equipment. They may be processing a plant or animal product of some kind, or designing environmental or natural resource systems. They may be interested in agribusiness – growing food and taking care of animals.

**Architecture and Construction**

People who work in this part of the work world like to use their creativity and problem-solving abilities to design, build, and maintain buildings. They may work outdoors or indoors. They are good at computer skills, science, and math.
Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications
People who work here express themselves through writing, singing, dancing, acting, or doing drawings or graphic designs. They typically work inside in studios, offices, or on the stage. They may perform directly for others, or they may produce work that is enjoyed by others. They enjoy being able to create something that is beautiful and artistic. They have special skill in doing this.

Business, Management, and Administration
People who work here enjoy planning, organizing, and directing business operations. These people are very important because they keep good track of details, keep things operating smoothly, and account for money carefully. Almost without exception, they work indoors with computers, printed reports, and files. They enjoy making sure that objects, numbers, and records of all kinds are organized properly. They have special skill in working accurately with detail, and in some jobs, with mathematics.

Education and Training
People who work in this area are interested in planning, managing, and providing education and training services. They like to work with people and to help them learn new things.

Finance
People who work in this cluster are interested in the management of money and how it can be used to help people. They may be in banking, insurance, or business financial management.

Government and Public Administration
In a democratic society, government is the means of expressing the public will. This includes virtually all occupations; however, some activities are unique to government. This work area includes everything from foreign service to revenue and taxation.

Health Science
These are the people dedicated to keeping you healthy. They work in all aspects of medicine but also include those who develop the tests to diagnose your problem or research cures for diseases.

Hospitality and Tourism
People in this area of work like to help visitors feel at home. They work in restaurants, hotels, and recreation or amusement attractions. They get along well with other people and want to help them enjoy their place of business.
**Human Services**
People who work in this area want to help families and individuals to lead more satisfying lives. They may work as mental health counselors, work with the development of young children, or provide personal care services.

**Information Technology**
Workers in this field design and develop computer hardware, software, and systems to collect and use information. They understand how computers work and how to organize information on them.

**Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security**
Workers in this area are interested in the enforcement of laws and the protection of the public. They may work in emergency services such as police and firefighters, or they may deal with people who need legal services or possibly in the corrections field.

**Manufacturing**
People in this area take raw materials and turn them into finished products. They are not only involved in the planning and processing of materials but also in ensuring that the products meet quality standards.

**Marketing, Sales, and Service**
These are the people who figure out ways to make products more attractive to customers. They may create the plan for selling the products or be the salespersons that make the actual contacts. They are good communicators and enjoy being with others. They have special skill in talking with people and convincing them in a pleasant way.

**Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics**
People in this area are the problem solvers of our world. They figure out how to make things work as well as explore the limits of science and math.

**Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics**
Did you ever wonder how the products you buy got in the store? Or maybe who figures out the airline schedules? This cluster involves the planning, management, and movement of people, materials, and products by road, air, rail, and water.

**Person Matches**
Now, look at the part of your report called Top Person Matches. Person Match compares your results with nearly 2,000 people who say that they are happy in their jobs. They represent over 90 percent of the occupations available in the United States today. They come from all walks of life and all regions of the U.S. They are people who have
responded to the items on the interest inventory in the same way you have. You can find out about them by reading their job sketches, which are included in this section of your report.

Notice that there are three Person Matches for each of your five highest clusters. These are the three people in the Person Match database who responded to the items on the interest assessment most like you did.

This comparison of your responses on the interest inventory to those of others does not mean that you should enter the same occupation that they did. It does, however, mean that their occupation is one that you should consider along with others.

You may save the Person Match occupations to your Favorites List by clicking on the star at the bottom of the sketch.

**Related Occupations**

In this section of the report, you will see a list of occupations for your five top clusters that can be entered at the education level you select. You can change the level on this screen when you use the system again in order to see how differing amounts of education affect the list. You can also select the title of any occupation and see its description.

**Sample Plans of Study**

In this section of the online report, you can display suggested four-year high school plans for the top five clusters of your interest. These plans may be generic ones suggested by the States’ Career Clusters Initiative (www.careerclusters.org), or they may have been customized with your school district’s course openings.

**Interpreting the Kuder Skills Assessment Report**

(10 minutes)

Ask students to refer to their report from the Kuder Skills Assessment. Then, provide an interpretation as follows:

- Similar to the interest inventory report, you will find a section that lists the 16 clusters comparing your self-rated skills in each cluster to those of a national norm group.
- The 16 clusters are listed in rank order, starting with your highest skill cluster and ending with your lowest.
• Pay particular attention to the clusters with the highest scores, especially those with percentile scores above 75.

• Now look at your report and see what your clusters of highest skill are.

• If you have not already done so, go online and save your clusters of highest skill to your Favorites List by clicking on the star. You can review these clusters any time you return to your portfolio.

• The online version of this report allows you to select a cluster name. You will go directly to a screen that provides a description of the cluster, including a definition, related occupations, a sample high school plan of study, and access to a video. High school students are also able to view related postsecondary majors.

• A composite report of interests and skills results will be automatically generated upon completion of both assessments. You can look at this report in four ways:
  ○ Clusters that are of both high interest and high skill.
  ○ Clusters of high interest, but less skill.
  ○ Clusters of high skill, but less interest.
  ○ Clusters of low interest and low skill.

Compare the results of your two inventories by looking at your composite report. As you are still in school and have plenty of time to develop skills in the areas of your highest interest, we suggest that you explore the clusters of your interest first. You can gain the skills you need through coursework and other learning experiences.

**Discussion of Student Reports**

(10 minutes)

Invite students to ask questions about their own reports, and respond to them. Then, engage students in discussion, using questions such as the following:

• Were any of your five highest areas of interest also areas of high skill?

• Based on what you know about yourself, do these results seem accurate? If so, why? If not, why?

• Is there anything about your reports that surprised you? Why?

• What kinds of activities have you done that gave you an opportunity to confirm your interests (skills) in the clusters that were highest for you?

• What courses have you taken that relate to your five highest areas of interest (skill)?

• How could you develop more skill in the areas of your interest?

• What kinds of occupations have you thought of, and do they fit into one of the five highest areas of your interests and/or skills?
Homework Assignments

During the next class session, we will use the results of your reports to select some occupations that you may want to learn more about. Please use the worksheet I am giving you (Activity 12: Self-Assessment Summary Sheet) to summarize the results of these two inventories, as well as to list occupations you have thought about and those your parents or other adults you admire have suggested for you. Be sure to bring this activity and your reports to the next class session.

**Middle school students**, in addition to the first assignment, should be given **Activity 13: Your Dream Job** for completion.

**High school students**, in addition to the first assignment, should be given **Handout 4: Taking the Super’s Work Values Inventory-revised** for completion. You may need to provide the students with a code to take the assessment (this code begins with a capital “N”).

*Using Handout 4, take the assessment in Navigator titled Super’s Work Values Inventory-revised. Print out your results and bring them to the next class session.*
One of the challenges students face in making career decisions is to identify a personal list of occupations for exploration that is of manageable length. It is impossible to consider all of the more than 1,000 occupations detailed on the O*NET web site and in Kuder® Navigator. For this reason, it is necessary to help students identify a short list of occupations that may be most appealing to them and to lead them in exploration of these.

Occupations that students should consider can come from many sources – work experience, suggestions of parents and other significant people in their lives, chance opportunities, coursework, and assessment. Assessment is one important source as satisfying career choices emerge from knowledge of interests and abilities or skills. Many students are unaware that these are the most important criteria for development of the “short list” and, beyond that, do not know how to categorize their interests and abilities/skills in ways that help them make an easy move from self-information to occupational titles.

One way to assist with the move from “psych-talk” to “occ-talk,” as Dr. Super described it, is to administer instruments that assess these characteristics. Since interests are relatively stable by the middle school and high school years, they can serve as a guidepost for developing the short list of occupations that merit in-depth exploration. The Kuder® Career Search with Person Match, one of the two assessments that students took in preparation for this lesson, measures interests as they are related to the 16 career clusters.

In order to get these results, students have been asked to rank-order 60 sets of activities, marking one of the three that they like most, one they like least, and leaving one for the middle position. Their responses are compared to those of a large national norm group. Sixteen clusters of occupations are rank-ordered based on these responses, starting with the cluster of highest interest and ending with the cluster of lowest interest. Information about this classification system is included in Module 5.

Logical exploration would be to begin with the cluster listed first and to move on down the list. Ideally, students would find occupations that appeal to them in the first two or three clusters. Students should also look at the jobs being filled by the 15 real persons listed.
under the *Person Match* section of the report. These persons are rank-ordered 1-3 under each of the student’s five highest clusters. This ranking reflects the similarity of the item responses of persons in the database to those of the student. The report also links the student to a wealth of information on each cluster, including a detailed definition, related occupations, a sample education plan, and a video. Additionally, high school students are able to view related postsecondary majors.

The important things to emphasize to students about the results of the interest inventory are as follows:

- These results are one piece of information that needs to be considered when making a career choice. Interests are quite stable by the middle school and high school years. Thus, the results should be considered carefully.
- The best way to use these results is to **guide exploration**. In other words, instead of trying to learn about hundreds of occupations in a random fashion, the results of this inventory suggest that students begin their exploration with occupations in the career clusters of their highest interest.

Interest in the work tasks of a cluster of occupations is not enough. The interests must be supported by skills. Skills can be learned through education and training if the student is motivated to do so.

While the *Kuder Career Search with Person Match* measures interests, the *Kuder® Skills Assessment* measures students’ self-perceived skills. In considering the report from this assessment, be mindful that students may be unrealistic about their skills – either overrating or underrating themselves. Students are asked to respond to each item (such as “change the oil in a car”) in one of the following ways:

- I have done this task well.
- I have done this task, but could improve.
- I haven’t done this task, but could easily learn.
- I haven’t done this task, but could learn with some effort.
- I haven’t done this task, and it would be hard for me to learn.

Their responses are compared to those of 8,475 students and adults, both male and female, nationwide. Similar to the interest inventory, the *Kuder Skills Assessment* reports the 16 clusters in rank order, from highest to lowest, related to the student’s self-perceived skills (or capability to acquire the skills) in each.
Once students have completed both assessments, a composite report of interests and skills results will be automatically generated. This report may show an overlap of clusters that are high (above the 75th percentile) in both interests and skills, or it may identify clusters that are high in one and not the other. Given that the students you are working with are still in school, it is recommended that you encourage them to explore the clusters of their highest interest first. There is plenty of time to gain the skills needed to perform well in these clusters through coursework, work experience, and other learning experiences.

References


Activity 12: Self-Assessment Summary Sheet

You have taken the Kuder® Career Search with Person Match interest inventory and the Kuder® Skills Assessment and have the results in your personal report. You are now going to use these results to identify possible routes as you begin to think about future occupations.

1. In the spaces below, list the titles of the five clusters (in order from highest interest to lowest) that were highest for you on the Kuder Career Search with Person Match interest inventory.

   HIGHEST
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.

   LOWEST

2. List the five clusters below that were highest on the Kuder Skills Assessment. Note which, if any, of these five clusters appear on the list of five clusters above.

   HIGHEST
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.

   LOWEST

3. Now, put an asterisk (*) in front of the title of any clusters listed in questions 1 and 2 that you want to explore further.

4. List below the titles of any occupations from these clusters (from the Person Match section of your interest inventory report, or from the lists you have seen) that you want to learn more about. (Use the back of the sheet if you need more space.)

   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
Activity 13: Your Dream Job

Have you ever wondered what kind of work you would do as an adult? Maybe you haven't been able to imagine it exactly, but you probably have some ideas about what you would like – or not like – in a job. Now you have the opportunity to dream a little while creating your dream job. Don’t worry about reality; that will come later. Just imagine yourself in your dream job by answering the following questions:

1. Do you work for yourself, or are you employed by someone else? Do you manage other employees?

2. What kind of work do you do each day? Do you do the same things every day, or are your work tasks quite different from day to day?

3. Where do you work? Outdoors? In a laboratory? A combination of indoors and outdoors?

4. Do you work regular hours (Monday - Friday, eight hours a day)? If not, what is your work schedule?

5. How many years of education or training (after high school) are required for you to qualify for this job?
Activity 13: Your Dream Job, cont’d

6. Are you required to have a license or to be registered to do your job? If so, what kind of license or certification is needed?


7. If you are not your own boss, what are the opportunities for advancement in the company?


8. How much demand is there for the kind of work you do? Will there still be the same demand 10 years from now?


9. How much money would you make annually in this job at the beginning of your career and later when you are experienced?


10. What kinds of employee benefits are you likely to have with this occupation? (Paid vacation, holidays, health plan, retirement fund?)


Handout 4: 
Taking the Super’s Work Values Inventory-revised

• Log into Kuder® Navigator at www.kudernavigator.com (or your state-specific site), using your personal user name and password.

• Select the tab Learn About Yourself from the top of the home page.

• Then choose Take an Assessment.

• Next, choose Super’s Work Values Inventory-revised and enter the code that your teacher or counselor gave to you (it starts with a capital “N”). Click on Start Assessment.

• Take the entire assessment.

• Look at your score report, and click on the names of your most important values to view their definitions.

• Print out your score report to take to the next class session.

• In the Learn About Myself section of Navigator, choose View Occupations Suggested by Assessments. Notice whether you have any occupations marked under all three columns – interests, skills, and values – and note the occupations that are marked under the Values column only.

• Print this screen and take it to the next class session.