



Activity 2: Discover Your Passion: “In My Wildest Dreams” 12.15

Overview:

In this activity, students will identify the things they love doing and brainstorm their “wildest dreams” for the future in order to discover their passion(s) and set themselves on a path to achieve their goals. They will create mind maps to help them visualize, organize and illustrate their future pathways. They then will translate this information into goals for themselves, with written action plans to help them achieve them.

Grade Level: 7-12

Power Skills:

- Self-Advocacy
- Positive Self Perception
- Empowerment

Suggested Time: 1-2 class periods

Objectives:

Students will:

- create a mind map that illustrates how they envision their futures.
- identify short-term, mid-range, and long-term goals.
- write action plans for accomplishing one or more of their goals.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts/Anchor Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5: Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

Materials:

- Students' journals, notebooks, or paper and pen/pencil
- Student handout: “My Wildest Dreams” (one per student)
- Student handout: “Mindmapping My Wildest Dreams” (one per student)
- Colored pencils, markers, highlighters
- Large pieces of paper, such as butcher paper, newsprint, easel pad paper, or 11” x 17” copy paper: (one per student)



Procedure:

1. Write the two quotes below on the board, and invite students to select one of them. Give students a few minutes to free-write what they think the quote means and whether they agree with it:
 - a. "Choose a job you love and you'll never have to work a day in your life."
 - b. "I get to play golf for a living. What more can you ask -- getting paid for what you love."
2. Invite students to share their interpretations with a partner. Explain that the first quote is from philosopher Confucius, and the second is from Tiger Woods. Tiger has shared that golf wasn't "cool" when he was a kid but he kept doing it because it was his passion. Invite student discussion about how the quotes relate to one another and if they change the way that students think about "work". Ask: What does it mean to be passionate about something? Do you think you can be passionate about your work? If so, how?
3. Distribute the student handout, "My Wildest Dreams," and ask students to answer the questions to help them figure out what they are passionate about. Invite student volunteers to share an answer that most surprised them.
4. Give each student a large piece of paper and art materials. Tell students they will use these materials to generate a mind map. **Teacher's Note:** Mind mapping is a non-linear note-taking technique that awakens the mind's creative side. It is a particularly useful tool for getting students out of "ruts," or habitual modes of thinking. A mind map is typically centered around one central theme that sits in the middle of the paper with many ideas coming from it. In this case, the center of the paper could say "My Wildest Dreams" and students could create lines or branches from that central idea using categories from the "My Wildest Dreams" handout. Examples of branches could include career, hobbies, dreams, experiences, family, education, accomplishments, talents, and experiences. Many samples of mind maps can be found online. Before students get started, you may want to show or demonstrate a simple example.
5. Distribute the "Mindmapping My Wildest Dreams" student handout for additional directions. It's important to let students know that there's no one "right" or "wrong" way to create a mind map. For their mind map, students can write words and/or draw symbols or pictures, or any combination of both. Give students ample time to create their mind maps.
6. When their mind maps are complete and students have exhausted the material from their journal exercise, ask them to do the following:
 - Place a #1 by dreams they'd like to accomplish in the next six months.
 - Place a #2 by dreams they'd like to achieve in the next two to four years.
 - Place a #3 by dreams they think are more reasonable to achieve in five years or more.
6. Explain to students that one way to help make their dreams come true is to write goals and action plans to achieve them. Encourage students to choose three of the "wildest dreams" from their mind maps. They can be short- or long-term goals. For each dream, challenge students to write a goal statement and two possible actions they could take to achieve that goal.
 - A goal statement should be SMART. SMART goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and include a timeframe. For example, "I want to audition and earn a speaking part in the March school play" is better than "I want to try out for a play." For more information about SMART goals, go to <https://www.umassd.edu/fycm/goalsetting/resources/smartgoals/>.
 - The action steps for this goal could include:
 - Study my lines every night for 30 minutes.
 - Practice my lines with a partner or family member three times each week.



- Encourage students to consider who can support them as they try to achieve their goals. It's important to have support from those around us as we make our short- and long-term dreams come true.

7. Encourage students to write out their goals, action steps, and supporting team members and hang them in a place where they can see them frequently.

Extension Activity: Invite students to develop a Creativity Board, and consider inviting them to bring their completed boards in for display in the classroom:

- Start by getting a large poster board and putting “My Wildest Dreams” in the center. Put the one sentence you wrote that sums up who you are, what you’re about, and what you want to accomplish in your life under this label. Note: Creativity boards can also be created using a variety of digital tools.
- Around this center, create a collage of images, pictures, symbols, sayings, articles, quotes, poems, and other inspirations that depict your intention. You can draw the images yourself or cut them out from magazines, or print them out from online sources.
- Post the finished collage over your desk at home, or perhaps in your classroom.



My Wildest Dreams

Answer the following questions to help you learn more about what you are passionate about.

When you were little, what did you want to be when you grew up? _____

What activities did you enjoy the most? What did you play with the most? What is your super power?

Recall any “peak” experiences you’ve had. What are you doing when you lose track of time? Ask yourself: What am I doing when I feel most alive? _____

Name something you strongly believe in. What fascinates you about this? Why do you feel so strongly about it?

What do you love? What makes you happy? What do you do without thinking?

What’s your hidden talent? What are your hobbies? What is it that you can’t wait to do as soon as you get home from school? _____

What do you enjoy reading about when you don’t “have” to (i.e. when it’s not for an assignment or for school)? When you go into a bookstore, which area(s) are you drawn to?

What are you most curious about? _____

What experiences do you want to have in your life? Is there any place in particular you’ve always wanted to live and/or visit? Are there any activities you’d like to try? Anything you’ve always wanted to do?

If you could be famous for one thing, what would it be? Why? _____

What is your sentence? In one sentence, sum up who you are, what you’re about, and what, more than anything, you want to accomplish in your life. Label this sentence “My Wildest Dreams”.
My Wildest Dreams: _____



Mind Mapping My Wildest Dreams

For this activity, you will create a mind map of your passions and dreams for the future! A mind map is a powerful visual/graphic technique that helps to unlock your creativity and organize information. You will need a blank sheet of paper and art materials to create your mind map.

1. Start by writing “My Wildest Dreams” or an image that represents that idea in the middle of your paper.
2. From that central idea/image, draw branches for each important area of your life. You can use information from the “Wildest Dreams” activity sheet for ideas about the branches. Examples of possible branches include education, hobbies, family, what I want to be when I grow up, what I want to learn, what I’m curious about, my home, traveling, fun experiences, what I want to own, accomplishments, bucket list, etc. For each branch, you may use words and/or images, or any combination of both to list *everything* you have ever wanted in your “wildest dreams” related to that category.
3. You can also create smaller branches from the larger ones. Remember that you can incorporate words, images, numbers and color in your mind map.
4. When someone looks at the finished product, they should be able to get a great snapshot about what you envision for your future!