

Lesson 2.2: Traits, Strengths, and Interests

Unit: Unit 2, Me, My Goals, My Money (Individual Growth and Life Readiness) **Topic:** 2.1 Who I Am **Grade:** 6 to 8 (written at grade 7; see Differentiation for the grade 6 support and grade 8 stretch) **Days:** 2 class periods of 40 minutes (days 37 and 38 of the year) **Room:** Classroom or FACS lab, tables that seat four

Standards

- NYS module line: NYS IGLR 1. Personal Development b) Discover and evaluate personality traits and strengths
- NYS module line: NYS IGLR 1. Personal Development c) Predict areas of personal interests relating to the future
- CTE theme line: CTE CCO 4. Career Plans b) Assess personal characteristics such as interests, abilities, and aptitudes in relation to characteristics associated with careers of interest
- CTE theme line: CTE CCO 2. Career Clusters d) Identify clusters for further investigation based on personal interests
- NYS FACS Learning Standard 3 (Intermediate), Key Idea: Students will understand and be able to manage personal resources of talent, time, energy, and money and make effective decisions in order to balance their obligations to work, family, and self.; Performance Indicator: Students identify their own abilities and interests as possible guides to career choice.
- CDOS Standard 1: Career Development. Students will be knowledgeable about the world of work, explore career options, and relate personal skills, aptitudes, and abilities to future career decisions.
- National FCS 3.0: 1.2.1 Examine possible careers to find what each one requires and offers in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and openings.
- National FCS 3.0: 13.2.1 Examine how personal characteristics affect relationships.

(The task asked for a 12.1.x self-concept competency. None exists: 12.1.1 to 12.1.3 are about development across the life span, not self-concept. The crosswalk row for IGLR 1. b) gives 13.2.1, which is printed in the IGLR module block, so it is cited instead.)

Enduring understanding and essential question

Big idea: A trait is how you usually are. A strength is something you do well. An interest is something you want to do more of. Careers fit people best when all three line up, and you can find out yours now, not in high school. **Essential question:** What am I good at that I also like, and where in the working world does that combination show up?

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. (Low) Given the three terms, distinguish a trait from a strength from an interest by sorting twelve example statements correctly, and identify at least three strengths of their own from the inventory.
2. (Mid) After answering the 30-item interest quiz, compute a score for each of the six interest types, identify their top two letters, and compare the sample careers for those two letters against their own strengths from Day 1.
3. (High) Evaluate a peer's strength from evidence by writing two "I noticed you are good at" cards that name a specific thing the peer did, and select two careers to explore, each justified in one sentence that names a strength or interest.

Vocabulary

Tier 2 (general academic): trait, evidence, inventory, category Tier 3 (FACS): strength, interest, aptitude, interest type (realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, conventional), career. See the unit vocabulary list for Turkish, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Materials and setup

- Day 1: Handout 02.02 - Strengths Inventory and Notice Cards.md, one per student; the notice cards on the last page cut into strips before class, three per student
- Day 2: Handout 02.02 - Interest Quiz.md, one per student
- Slides: Slides 02.02 - Traits, Strengths, and Interests (Day 1 and Day 2 labeled)
- Twelve trait, strength, interest sort statements on slide 4 (Day 1) for the whole-class sort
- Students' Lesson 2.1 sort sheets, from the FACS folder (Day 2, for the last step)
- Timer visible to the class
- Setup notes: seat in the same fours as Lesson 2.1 so the notice cards go to people who have seen the student work for at least two days. Day 2 needs no setup beyond the quiz. If the room has devices, the quiz can be a form, but paper is fine and faster. *[Sal: if your students have used the O*NET Interest Profiler in a counseling class, say so on Day 2; the six types are the same and the quiz here is a paper version, not a replacement.]*

Pre-assessment

Lesson 2.1's exit cards show who still confuses a value with a like. On Day 1, the do now asks for one thing the student is good at; the number who write a school subject ("math") versus an action ("explaining math to my cousin") tells you how much Step 1 has to push toward specifics. On Day 2, a hand vote: "Who has taken a quiz that tells you what job you should have?" Most have, online. Use that to say what this quiz is and is not.

Do now and hook (Time: Day 1, 5 min; Day 2, 4 min)

Day 1, on the board: "Write one thing you are good at, and one time you did it. Two sentences." Debrief: cold call four. Then the hook: "By the end of today, three people at your table will each tell you something you are good at. Some of it you already know. Some of it you do not."

Day 2, on the board: “Would you rather fix a bike, figure out why it broke, paint it, teach someone to ride it, sell it, or keep the records of who rented it? Pick one and write why.”
 Debrief: show of hands per choice. Say: “You just took the first question of the quiz. There are six ways to like a bike.”

Procedure

Step	Teacher will	Students will	Time
Day 1, 1. Direct instruction: trait, strength, interest	Show slide 3 with the three definitions and one example each. Then slide 4: twelve statements. Read each; the class votes trait, strength, or interest with one, two, or three fingers. Settle the arguable ones (a trait can become a strength: “patient” is a trait; “calms down a crying kid” is a strength).	Vote with fingers. Copy the three definitions onto the handout header.	7 min
Day 1, 2. Learning activity: the strengths inventory	Assign Part 1 of the handout: 24 strengths in four families (Thinking, Doing, People, Character). For each, mark “yes, often,” “sometimes,” or “not yet.” Then pick the top three and write one piece of evidence for each: a time it happened. Circulate; push feelings toward events.	Mark all 24. Choose three. Write evidence for each.	10 min
Day 1, 3. Practice: notice cards	Explain the rule: a notice card names something the person did, not something they are. “I noticed you are	Write three cards. Hand them over. On “go,” read the three cards they received. Copy the one that surprised them	10 min

	good at explaining because you re-explained the recipe to me on lab day” counts. “You are nice” does not. Each student writes one card for each of the three other people at the table. Cards are handed over face down; nobody reads theirs until the teacher says go.	most into Part 2.	
Day 1, 4. Share and debrief	Ask: “Whose card named a strength you did not put in your own top three?” Take four. Ask why other people see strengths we miss. Close with: “Tomorrow you find out what you like doing. Today was what you do well. They are not always the same, and that is fine.”	Four students share the surprise card. Write the exit line (see Closure).	4 min
Day 2, 1. Direct instruction: the six interest types	Show slide 3 (Day 2): the six types with one line and two careers each. Say what the quiz is: a paper version of the interest quiz counselors use, six types, thirty yes or no questions, five per type. Say what it is not: a fortune. Say the rule: answer for the you of today, not the you that would look good.	Copy the six letters and one word each onto the quiz header.	5 min

Day 2, 2. Learning activity: the interest quiz	Start the timer. Read the first three items aloud so the pace is set. Circulate. No help on what an item “really means”; the student decides.	Answer all 30 items yes or no. Fill the scoring grid: count the yeses for each letter. Circle the top two letters. Break a tie by the do now answer.	12 min
Day 2, 3. Practice: careers for my two letters	Show slide 7: the six type descriptions and sample careers per type. Assign Part 3 of the quiz: read the description for your top two letters and write “fits” or “does not fit” with one reason each. Then pick two careers from the lists (one may be from a third letter if nothing fits) that you would explore, and for each write one sentence that names a strength from Day 1 or an interest from today. Then open the Lesson 2.1 sort sheet and answer the last question: “Would this career let me keep my top three values? Which one might it fight?”	Read the two descriptions. Judge fit. Choose two careers. Write the strength or interest sentence for each and the values check.	13 min
Day 2, 4. Share and debrief	Whip around: every student says their two letters and one career in five words or fewer. Tally the letters on the board. Ask: “Which letter is the class’s biggest?”	Whip around. Look at the tally.	3 min

	Which is the smallest? What jobs would this room be short on?"		
--	--	--	--

Questions to ask

Monitor understanding:

- “Shy” is a trait. What strength could a shy person have that a loud person might not?
- Your top letter is S. Read the S description. What one word in it sounds like you? What one word does not?
- You picked “chef” as a career to explore. Which strength from your top three does a chef need? Which interest type does it match?

Deepen learning:

- Three people at your table said you are good at organizing, and you did not put it in your top three. Who is right?
- If your two letters are R and A (building and making), and your family expects you to be a doctor (I and S), what do you do with that information at age 12?
- The class tally shows almost nobody is C (conventional). Who would do the payroll and the records in a town where nobody is C? What does that tell you about how much the world needs each type?

Check for understanding

Day 1: clipboard walk during Step 2. Yes or no on “three strengths chosen” and “evidence is an event, not an adjective.” A “got it” evidence line reads “I fixed the chain on my brother’s bike without a video,” not “I am good at fixing things.” Day 2: while circulating in Step 2, spot check three scoring grids for arithmetic; then in Step 3 read one career sentence per table and ask “which strength?” if it names none.

Closure (Time: Day 1, 4 min; Day 2, 3 min)

Day 1: exit line at the bottom of the strengths handout: “A strength I put in my top three: . **A strength someone else saw in me:** . Are they the same? Yes or no.” Three students read theirs. Collect the handouts and the notice cards (the cards go back to the student with the handout on Day 2, and they use them in the one-pager).

Day 2: exit card on the bottom of the quiz: “My two letters: ____ . **Two careers to explore:** and ____ . One thing I want to know about one of them.” Two students read one line. Collect. Sort into “got it” (two letters, two careers, each with a strength or interest reason) and “needs more.” The “needs more” pile gets a two-minute conference at the start of Lesson 2.3 before the one-pager draft.

Differentiation and supports

- ELL: the strengths inventory and the quiz items are short, single-clause sentences; the six type names have a picture each on the slide (a wrench, a magnifying glass, a paintbrush, two people, a megaphone, a checklist) and are printed on the quiz; a word bank in Turkish, Portuguese, and Spanish for trait, strength, interest, and career sits on both handouts; the notice card has a sentence frame ("I noticed you are good at ___ because ___"). Read the 30 items aloud for any table that asks; pair with a bilingual peer.
- IEP and 504 (general): the inventory and quiz are check marks, not writing; a student may dictate evidence and career sentences to a partner; extended time by finishing Part 3 as homework; the notice cards can be written by a scribe with the student choosing the words; fidgets allowed; a student who finds the notice cards hard to receive may read them privately with the teacher instead of at the table.
- Grade 6 support: on Day 1, the inventory uses 16 strengths (drop the eight marked in the teacher key) and asks for a top two; on Day 2, the quiz uses the first 18 items (three per type) with the shortened scoring grid, and Part 3 asks for one career, not two.
- Grade 8 stretch: on Day 1, write a fourth notice card for someone at another table you have worked with in a lab; on Day 2, find the career cluster for each of your two careers (the 16 clusters are on slide 9) and write what education each career needs (this previews Lesson 2.22 and CTE CCO 2. c)).
- UDL checkpoint used: multiple means of engagement (every result is about the student; peer feedback comes from three people, not one); multiple means of representation (the six types are given as a letter, a word, a picture, a paragraph, and a list of jobs).
- No-kitchen or no-machine alternative: not needed; no equipment is used. If devices are available and a form version of the quiz exists, the scoring is automatic and Step 2 on Day 2 shrinks to 8 minutes; give the time to Step 3.

Assessment

Objective	Standards met	Learning task	Assessment (formative or summative; tool)
1. Distinguish trait, strength, interest; identify three own strengths	IGLR 1. b); Std 3 PI E	Day 1 Steps 1 and 2	Formative; finger vote during the sort; clipboard check that three strengths have event evidence
2. Score the quiz, find two letters, compare careers to strengths	IGLR 1. c); CCO 4. b); CCO 2. d); CDOS 1; National FCS 1.2.1	Day 2 Steps 2 and 3	Formative; quiz scored complete, partial, or missing for daily work (complete means grid filled, two

			letters, two careers with reasons, values check)
3. Write evidence-based notice cards; justify two careers to explore	IGLR 1. b) and c); National FCS 13.2.1; Std 3 PI E	Day 1 Step 3; Day 2 Step 3	Formative; notice cards checked for an event ("because ____"); career sentences checked for a named strength or interest

The strengths, the notice cards, the two letters, and the two careers all feed the All About Me one-pager (Lesson 2.3), which is the Topic 2.1 formal check. The two careers come back in Topic 2.5 (Lesson 2.22, the career research card).

Homework

None. Optional after Day 2: ask an adult who works what their two letters would be, and whether their job matches. Be ready to report in one sentence.

Connections

Inside the building: the school counselor, who may run the O*NET Interest Profiler or a similar tool in grade 8; agree on the six type names so students hear one vocabulary. Community: none needed this lesson; the career research card in Topic 2.5 is where a guest speaker fits.

Sources

- NYS Middle Level CTE FACS Content Module 01, Individual Growth and Life Readiness (nyctecenter.org, June 2018), lines 1. b) and 1. c). Copy in 02 Standards/NYS Module PDFs/.
- NYS Middle Level CTE Theme Module, Career and Community Opportunities, lines 2. d) and 4. b). Same folder.
- NYS Learning Standards for Health, Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences (1996), Standard 3, Intermediate, FACS strand. Wording per 02 Standards/STANDARDS SOURCES - web research.md, section 2. *[Sal: confirm against the NYSED PDF.]*
- NYS CDOS Standard 1, Intermediate. Same file.
- National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education 3.0 (LEAD FCS Education, 2018), competencies 1.2.1 and 13.2.1.
- The six interest types (realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, conventional) are John Holland's RIASEC categories, public descriptors used by the U.S. Department of Labor's O*NET Interest Profiler (onetonline.org). The 30 quiz items in Handout 02.02 - Interest Quiz.md were written new for this course and are not taken from any published instrument.

- Sal's own materials: the Holland Code Decoder packet (Lesson Dups/Unit_2_Career_Exploration/education_teachingwork_the_holland_code_decoder_2026_04.docx) supplied the yes-count-by-column scoring idea and the top-letters-to-careers step; the What Do You Want to Be packet (same folder) supplied the interest-to-careers matching table and the "clues" framing; the Soft Skills Superpower packet supplied the rate-yourself inventory pattern. All rewritten here with new items, the trait vs strength vs interest distinction, the notice cards, and the values check added.

Teacher notes

- If Day 1 runs short, cut the twelve-statement vote to six statements. Never cut the notice cards; they are the part students talk about at dinner.
- If Day 2 runs short, the values check at the end of Step 3 becomes the exit card. Never cut the whip around; the class tally is the fastest way to show that every type is needed.
- Common mistake on the inventory: students mark "yes, often" for everything in Character because it feels like the right answer. Say once: "Not yet is not an insult. It is a to-do list."
- Common mistake on the quiz: students answer for who they want to be, or for who their friend is. The rule on slide 3 ("the you of today") helps; so does seating them so they cannot see a friend's page.
- Notice cards can hurt if a student gets three thin ones. Watch the quiet student at each table. If you see a table struggling, drop a card of your own into that student's pile; you have seen them work for 37 days.
- Ties in the top two letters are common. The do now question breaks the tie; if that does not settle it, both letters stay and the student reads three descriptions.
- *[Sal: your Holland Code Decoder packet used a three-letter code. Two letters is enough at this age and keeps the career lists short. If you prefer three, the scoring grid works the same way; add a line.]*
- The class tally by letter is worth keeping. Compare it with the career cluster choices in Lesson 2.21; the classes that are heavy in S and A usually pick the same three clusters, and that is a conversation about what the town needs.