

Choose Your Own Adventure: Your Future After High School

Name: _____ Graduating year: _____ Date submitted: _____

This choose your own adventure is to help guide you so you have a plan for life after high school. It is up to you to decide what you will do with your future. Start with the first decision. Based on your decision you will either be required to make more decisions or complete a list of actions. Failure to complete the actions will drastically reduce your ability to be successful. For best results, darken in the square when a decision is made or an action is completed.

Decision 1: Do I want an unskilled job or do I want a career that will require a skill?

- Unskilled jobs include many service-related activities like working at a restaurant, a clothing store, the movie theater, telemarketing. If you chose this option, you do not need to continue with this form.
- Skilled jobs require additional education after high school but tend to pay more money and have more benefits than unskilled labor. Proceed to **Action 1**.

Action 1: Take a personality assessment to help you determine what do you want to do after high school?

- Go to <https://majorclarity.com/> to take personality and learning style assessments.
- Review the career recommendations based on your personality type
- Select a few career options from the list that interest you
- Research each career option to determine the skills required for those career options
- Proceed to **Decision 2**

Decision 2: How will I learn the skills needed for my career? **Note 1:** "Certification" means that you have demonstrated by testing that you have learned the required skills for a career and you receive a certificate of completion. Much like a diploma for graduating high school

- On the job training (OJT):** Learn by watching others. Expect to do the least skilled work at first and work your way up. Typically, you are paid to learn the skill but at a reduced rate. Once you have learned the skill, your pay increases. Additional testing or certifications may be required at your expense. Proceed to **Action 2**.
- Attend a trade program:** Learn by watching others in a more formal setting. This is a blend of classroom learning and OJT. The completion of the training usually leads to certification but the training cost money. Trade schools cost money while you usually get paid during apprenticeships. Proceed to **Decision 3**.
- Attend college:** The end result is a degree. The degree is a certificate indicating you have the knowledge needed to do a skill and you have the capacity to learn other skills. This can be very expensive. Proceed to **Decision 3**.
- Join the military:** The military will train you in a formal classroom setting and with OJT so you learn the skills needed to do a particular task for the military. Often, those skills can be transferred to the skills required in the civilian sector. Many people join the military, complete 4 years of service and then use the MGIB to pay for their college while others choose to stay in and make the military a career. The choice is yours. Proceed to **Decision 4**.

Action 2: How do I find a job that offers OJT

- See Mrs. Mayes in guidance to schedule job fairs and conduct job research
- Use the results from the personality assessment to narrow the job search
- Visit the TCC Apprenticeship Center: <https://www.tcc.edu/programs/specialty-programs/apprenticeship/>
- Visit individual company websites for job descriptions and applications

Decision 3: Will you graduate high school with a standard or advanced diploma?

- Standard diploma means you have met the minimum education requirements to graduate high school. You will be required to take additional classes to prepare you for college level courses. This is not the best decision for someone who plan to attend college. Proceed to **Decision 4**.
- Advanced diploma means you have met the requirement to graduate high school and you will have the course requirements that colleges are looking for. Proceed to **Decision 4**.

Decision 4: Determine how you will pay for the education since trade school and college are expensive. Check all that apply

- I will need to obtain students loans. Proceed to **Action 3**.
- I will earn scholarships or student grants. Proceed to **Action 4**.
- Parents have put away money in a college savings plan. Proceed to **Action 5**.
- Join a college ROTC program (Army, Navy, Air Force each have a program)- Completing this program will require military service. Proceed to **Decision 5**.
- Join the military. Proceed to **Decision 5**.

Decision 5: Determine if you want to go active duty or reserve. **Note 2:** If you plan to join the military, it is in your best interest to get a sneak peak of what the military will be like. You should consider taking the NJROTC class where you will be exposed to a military like environment. If you complete 3 years on NJROTC, you will automatically increase to a higher paygrade. This means you will get paid extra for the time you spent in NJROTC. Contact LCDR Houser or Chief Malone is you have any questions.

- Active Duty:** You work in the military full time. You attend boot camp and then your advanced skill training. Once you have an advanced skill, you live where the military needs you to live and you perform the skill on a nearly daily basis. You may find time to attend night school or online college, but your work must come first. You receive full time pay and benefits. Proceed to **Action 6**
- Reserve:** You work in the military part-time. You attend boot camp and then your advanced skill training. Once you have your advanced skill, you work for the military once a month on a weekend and for two full weeks out within each year. This allows you to attend college or work a different job. You receive part time pay and limited benefits, but it is not enough to live on. Proceed to **Action 6**

Action 3: Obtain student loans and grants

- Set up a meeting with your guidance counselor.
- Complete and submit the FASFA form. This should be completed by Oct of your senior year of high school. Failure to complete on time will result in less opportunities in the future.
- Ideally, you want to borrow as little money as possible. Why pay full price when you can get it for a discount? Proceed to **Action 4**.

Action 4: Obtain scholarships and student grants

- Complete Academic Resume – See Mrs Cook in room 239 for more assistance
- Obtain 3 or 4 teacher letters of recommendation
- Visit the following sites to apply for scholarships. See Mr. Valmond in guidance for more assistance.
<https://www.scholarshipsharing.org/> <https://www.fastweb.com/> <https://www.scholarships.com/>
https://www.npsk12.com/Scholarship_Station
- Proceed to **Action 5**

Action 5: Apply to a college

- Complete SAT or ACT and submit scores to colleges of choice
- Go to college application websites, fill out one application and apply to many colleges: <https://www.commonapp.org/>
<http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/> <https://commonblackcollegeapp.com/>
- Go to individual college websites to complete college applications

Action 6: Get ready to enter the military

- Take the ASVAB exam while in high school. Higher score on the ASVAB means more job choices the military will off you.
- Consider NJROTC to have an idea of what the military is like. See LCDR Houser or Chief Malone in room 136 for details.
- Speak to a military recruiter. Keep in mind that the goal of every recruiter is to get you to join their branch of service. LCDR Houser and Chief Malone only want what is best for you. It is recommended that you bring your recruiter to school so you, the recruiter and either LCDR Houser or Chief Malone can sit down and discuss your options. Take advantage of their experience before you sign a contract.
- Prepare your body for boot camp and the physical training requirements. This may take weeks to get ready. NJROTC cadets are trained on the requirements within the course. The standards vary depending on the branch of military. See LCDR Houser or Chief Malone in room 136 for details.