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Dr. Donald O. Clifton and the StrengthsQuest Team
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StrengthsQuest™ Educator’s Guide
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Introduction

The mission of the StrengthsQuest program is:

- To enable students to discover, develop, and apply strengths in academics, career, and beyond.

The StrengthsQuest program consists of three primary components:

- StrengthsFinder assessment—helps students discover their greatest areas of talent.
- *StrengthsQuest: Discover and Develop Your Strengths in Academics, Career, and Beyond* ("the StrengthsQuest book")—helps students develop their talents into strengths and apply those strengths.
- StrengthsQuest Web site—features the StrengthsQuest Learning Center and the Online Strengths Community.

What do StrengthsQuest educators need to do?

- Know their own talents and strengths.
- Develop and fully apply their own strengths.
- Identify the talents of students and encourage and assist them in developing those talents into strengths.
- Orchestrate opportunities and create activities that challenge students to apply their strengths.

This Educator’s Guide will:

- Help an educator introduce the basics of the strengths approach.
- Provide activities designed for use in a wide variety of settings and courses including college prep., new student, career exploration, leadership, student life, and advising relationships.

Each chapter of this Guide is designed to be used with the chapter of the StrengthsQuest book with the same name. For example, the Educator’s Guide chapter “The Nature of Strengths” contains activities that correspond with the StrengthsQuest book chapter titled “The Nature of Strengths.” All chapters of the Guide suggest how to fully integrate the online StrengthsQuest program. Additionally, a sample lesson plan with chapter outlines is offered.

When used in conjunction with the StrengthsQuest text, it is permissible to reproduce some pages of this Guide for students. The reproducible pages can be identified by this symbol ( ) in the upper-right corner.
Sample Lesson Plan

Session 1:  The Nature of Strengths

I.  The Basics of Strengths
   A.  Talent: The Beginning of Strength
   B.  Talent Versus Other Concepts of Ability
   C.  The 34 Themes of Talent Measured by StrengthsFinder
   D.  What Is a Strength?
   E.  What Do Strengths Produce?

II.  The Beauty of Strengths: Angel Alcoser
    A.  The Best of the Best All Have One Thing in Common
    B.  Findings From Gallup’s Study of the Best
    C.  How Angel Alcoser Uses Three of Her Signature Themes
    D.  The Tragedy of Undiscovered Talents

III.  Your Strengths Quest Begins With You

   In Class:  Picture of Excellence
   Homework:  StrengthsFinder Assessment (on-line)
               Bring Signature Themes Report to next session (on-line)
               StrengthsFinder Reflection (worksheet)
               Read “The Nature of Strengths” and “Gaining Direction for Your Quest”
Sample Lesson Plan (continued)

Session 2: Gaining Direction for Your Quest

I. Your Strengths Quest and Your Motivations
   A. Your quest addresses your questions.
   B. Your quest is an adventure of discovery.
   C. Your quest generates optimism.
   D. Your quest provides a sense of direction.
   E. Your quest generates confidence.
   F. Your quest generates a sense of vitality.

II. Youth Signature Themes Report
   A. What Should You Do With Your Signature Themes Report?

In Class: StrengthsFinder Reflection (discussion in pairs)
   Exploring Your Signature Themes

Homework: Verifying Your Signature Themes
   Read “Affirming and Celebrating Your Talents”
Sample Lesson Plan (continued)

Session 3: Affirming and Celebrating Your Talents

I. Difficulties in Affirming Our Signature Themes
   A. Many people are blind to their own greatest talents, and often to the
greatest talents of others.
   B. Our talents sometimes threaten others.
   C. In some cases, we end up in positions or roles that simply don’t fit our
dominant talents.
   D. The fear of becoming proud and arrogant may interfere with seeing and
affirming our Signature Themes.
   E. Some people have difficulty affirming their Signature Themes because
they don’t see how the talents in them will help them achieve their goals.

II. Questions You Might Be Asking
   A. If a Particular Theme Is Not Among Your Signature Themes, Is It
      Necessarily an Area of Weakness?
   B. What If You Believe You Have Dominant Talent in a Theme That Was
      Not Identified as a Signature Theme?
   C. Is Having Talent Always a Positive Experience?

III. Affirming Your Signature Themes

In Class: Verifying Your Signature Themes (class discussion)
Wall of Talent
Homework: 5 Learning Modules and Affirming Your Signature Themes Action
Plans (on-line)
Read “Insights into Strengths Development”
Sample Lesson Plan (continued)

Session 4: Insights into Strengths Development

I. Principles and Strategies for Developing Your Talents Into Strengths
   A. Know your talents.
   B. You must value your talents and assume personal responsibility for developing them into strengths.
   C. Talents best develop into strengths when inspired by a personal mission.
   D. Healthy, caring relationships facilitate the development of strengths.
   E. Reliving your successes helps develop your talents into strengths.
   F. Practice your talents.
   G. Teaching leads to learning.

II. Developing Your Talents Into Strengths

In Class: Scavenger Hunt
Homework: Developing Your Talents into Strengths Action Plans (on-line)
Begin building Circle of Strengths (on-line)
Optional Learning Modules (on-line)
Read “Considering Strengths When Planning Your Education”
Sample Lesson Plan (continued)

Session 5: Considering Strengths When Planning Your Education

I. Five Facts That Great Learners, Educators, and Leaders Know About Excellence
   A. Our talents hold the key to excellence.
   B. Simply having talents or strengths isn’t enough to produce excellence. Talents must be developed into strengths, and strengths must be applied. This requires practice and hard work.
   C. Excellence requires that you have a clear idea about what excellence is, what it looks like, and what is required to reach it.
   D. Focusing on one area of talent at a time is the best route to excellence.
   E. It is also important to realize that many talents – all working together and strategically applied – are necessary to produce excellence.

II. Question to Help Your Educational Planning
   A. Self-Assessment of Talents
   B. Motivations, Dreams, and Desires About College
   C. Self-Assessments of Intellectual Interest and Curiosities
   D. Vocational, Career, and Graduate School Aspirations
   E. Time and Energy Demands
   F. Self-Assessment of Academic Abilities
   G. Degree Structure and Requirements

III. Final Considerations in Planning Your Education

In Class: Planning for Your Future
Homework: E-mail Signature Themes Report to advisor
          Planning for Your Future (share with advisor)
          Read “Applying Strengths for Academic Achievement”
Sample Lesson Plan (continued)

Session 6: Applying Strengths for Academic Achievement

I. Four Key Factors That Will Determine Your Achievements in Academics, Career, and Beyond
   A. Your beliefs about your strengths to achieve
   B. How well you know, understand, and value your strengths
   C. The extent to which you develop and apply your strengths
   D. Your motivations, desires, and goal-setting practices

II. Strategies for Applying Your Strengths in Academics

   In Class: Applying My Signature Themes to Academic Tasks
   Homework: Applying Strengths in Academics Action Plans (on-line)
               Strengths in Academics Essay
Sample Lesson Plan (continued)

Session 7: Applying Strengths for Academic Achievement (continued)

In Class: Strengths in Academics Essay (class discussion)

Homework: Read “Strengths and Career Planning”
Sample Lesson Plan (continued)

Session 8: Strengths and Career Planning

I. If You Are Struggling With Career Planning, you Are Not Alone.

II. What Makes Career Planning So Difficult?
   A. Career planning challenges you to predict the future.
   B. Career planning makes you question who you will be.
   C. Career planning challenges you to come to grips with your ultimate values.
   D. Career planning forces you to come to conclusions about who you think you are and what you believe about your talents and potential.
   E. At times, some people think it is their right and responsibility to give you “advice” about the career you should enter.
   F. Career planning challenges you to come to grips with philosophical and theological issues.
   G. Career planning involves a “cost-benefit” analysis of your time, energy, and resources.

III. Strengths and the World of Work
   A. Strengths and service or volunteer work
   B. Strengths and jobs
   C. Strengths and careers
   D. Strengths and professions
   E. Strengths and vocation

IV. Organizing Principles for Strengths-Based Career Planning
   A. Your starting point and primary focus in career planning should be yourself, rather than the career.
   B. Career planning begins by taking every important aspect of your inner life seriously.
   C. In your talents, you already have within you the potential to achieve in several careers and professions.
   D. There isn’t a “perfect” career, profession, or vocation that will fit you or all of your talents and strengths exactly.

V. Career Implication of Your Strengths

VI. Applying Your Strengths in Careers

In Class: Exploring a Career
Homework: Applying Strengths in Careers Action Plans (on-line)
   Bring Affirming Your Signature Themes, Developing Your Talents into Strengths, Applying Strengths in Academics, and Applying Strengths in Careers Action Plans (on-line)
   Career Interview
   Read “Let’s Start a Revolution”
Sample Lesson Plan (continued)

Session 9: Let’s Start a Revolution

I. The Impact of a Strengths Revolution on You as an Individual

II. The Impact of a Strengths Revolution on Relationships

I. The Impact of a Strengths Revolution on Families

II. The Impact of a Strengths Revolution on the World of Work

III. The Impact of a Strengths Revolution on Schools and Colleges

IV. The Impact of a Strengths Revolution on Society in General

VII. Some Parting Thoughts

In Class: Being of Service
Homework: Personal Statement of Strength
Action Planning Commitments
Sample Lesson Plan (continued)

Session 10: Conclusion
In Class: Personal Statement of Strength (class discussion)
Action Planning Commitments (class discussion)
The Nature of Strengths

Educator’s Guide Activities
- Picture of Excellence
- StrengthsFinder Reflection

Online Activity
- StrengthsQuest Registration
- StrengthsFinder Assessment

IMPORTANT: Before students participate in the activities contained in this Guide or read the StrengthsQuest book, it is essential that they use their ID code to log on to the StrengthsQuest Web site (http://student.strengthsquest.com) and take the StrengthsFinder assessment. This takes about an hour.

Additional Ideas:
- Have students create name tags to use throughout the sessions. Ask them to label the tags with their Signature Themes.
- Ask students to decorate a three-ring binder that will store their worksheets and print-outs from the StrengthsQuest Web site. They could draw/paint/photograph a cover, or cut out pictures from magazines that represent what success means to them.
- Show or encourage the group to see a movie that depicts the use of talents and then talk about it. If you want to show only a clip, you could ask the students to anticipate the ending. A few suggestions:
  - October Sky
  - Mr. Holland’s Opus
  - Hoosiers
  - Babe
  - Remember the Titans
  - A Beautiful Mind
About StrengthsQuest® Registration

Students need an e-mail address to register. If they do not have one, they can get free e-mail accounts from www.hotmail.com, www.yahoo.com, and others.

For technical problems e-mail strengthsquest@gallup.com or call (888) 211-4049 (7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Central time).

Because StrengthsFinder is designed to obtain top-of-mind responses, a limit is placed on the amount of time the user has to respond to each pair of statements. For instances in which special circumstances such as learning disabilities or “English as a second language” are involved, there is an option to disable the timer. If this option seems necessary, please have the student register at the StrengthsQuest Web site. Once the student is signed in and registered at the site, you (or the student) should call the toll-free StrengthsQuest help line at (888) 211-4049 to request that the timer be disabled. This adjustment can be made quickly, enabling the student to take the StrengthsFinder immediately.

The StrengthsQuest Web site offers answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that may also be helpful.
Activity: Picture of Excellence

Materials
- Poster board or paper to put on a wall for each group.
- Picture of Excellence worksheet for each student.

Directions
- If you have a large group, divide the students into groups of three or four.
- On the Picture of Excellence worksheet, have each student identify an individual who they think is very effective or successful.
- Have students list two or three characteristics of the person that they admire.
- Have a recorder from each group list on poster board or paper the characteristics that were identified by that group’s members.
- Have each group report back to the larger group.
- Have students go back into their small groups and have each student complete the “When You Are at Your Best” section of their worksheet. They can use the combined list that was created by the groups for ideas on some of the questions.
- Have students share what they wrote about themselves with their small group.
Picture of Excellence

Name of an effective or successful individual: ________________________________

Characteristics of that person that I admire: ________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

When You Are at Your Best

A time when I was at my best was _________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

The best thing about me is _______________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

What I enjoy doing the most is _____________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

The best time in my life was _____________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

I earn my best grades when I _____________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

I enjoy learning about ___________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

The best job or project I’ve ever had was _________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

Things I like best about myself are _______________________________________

___________________________________________________________________
Activity: StrengthsFinder® Reflection

Materials
- Each student will need to print his or her Signature Themes Report from the StrengthsQuest Web site.
- StrengthsFinder Reflection worksheet for each student.

Directions
- Hand out the StrengthsFinder Reflection worksheet as homework, or use it for an in-class reflection.
- In pairs, ask students to discuss their reflections and what insights those reflections provided.
StrengthsFinder® Reflection

Which of your Signature Themes describe you best?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

Which of your Signature Themes hold the talents you use most frequently?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

In which of your Signature Themes are your talents most highly developed?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

Which talents do you most want to develop?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
Gaining Direction for Your Quest

Educator’s Guide Activities

- Exploring Your Signature Themes
- Verifying Your Signature Themes

Online Activities

- Ask students to share one of their definitions and examples from Verifying Your Signature Themes to someone with similar themes via the Signature Theme Match. If they receive messages from others, encourage them to differentiate their definitions from others’.
- Have students respond to the Discussion Questions in the Verifying Your Signature Themes activity on the Discussion Group Boards. Ask them to compare their answers with others.
Activity: Exploring Your Signature Themes

Materials
- Each student will need to print his or her Signature Themes Report from the StrengthsQuest Web site.
- Exploring Your Signature Themes worksheet for each student.

Directions
- Ask each student to carefully read the descriptions of each of their Signature Themes and underline or highlight each term, phrase, and sentence that describes them.
- Then, have each student complete the Exploring Your Signature Themes worksheet.
- Next, in a small group, ask each person to share the definitions and examples they created.
- Finally, ask students to share one of their definitions to someone with similar themes via the Signature Theme Match. If they receive messages from others, encourage them to differentiate their definitions from others’.
Exploring Your Signature Themes

Directions

- To complete this activity, you will need to print your Signature Themes Report from the StrengthsQuest Web site.
- Carefully read the descriptions of each of your Signature Themes and underline or highlight each term, phrase, and sentence that describes you.
- Complete the table below by writing a definition and personal example for each of your Signature Themes in your own words.
- Consider sharing one of your definitions and examples with someone with similar themes via Signature Theme Match.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature Theme</th>
<th>Definition and Personal Example of the Theme in Your Own Words</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>
Activity: Verifying Your Signature Themes

Materials
- Verifying Your Signature Themes instruction sheet for each student.

Directions
- If they like, students can e-mail their Signature Themes Report from the StrengthsQuest Web site (Share “Top 5”) to the three people who know them best.
- As homework, each student should complete a Verifying Your Signature Themes interview with each of the three people who know them best.
- Ask students to summarize the interviews for class discussion.

Discussion Questions
Have students post their answer(s) to one or all on the Group Discussion Boards. Ask them to compare their answers with others.

1. How did your interviews go? How did it feel to ask these questions about your talents?
2. What one insight did you get from the Verifying Your Signature Themes exercise?
3. Did some people see your themes differently than you did? How so?
4. Were you surprised by some of their responses?
5. What additional talents did they see in you that aren’t in your top five?
6. What one theme did you use this past week and, in doing so, realized it is one of your Signature Themes?
Verifying Your Signature Themes

Directions
- If you like, e-mail your Signature Themes Report from the StrengthsQuest Web site (Share “Top 5”) to the three people who know you best.
- Complete this interview with each of the three people who know you best.
- Summarize their interviews for class discussion.

Interview
Step 1 Read one of your Signature Themes and its description to the person.
Step 2 Ask: Do you see that Signature Theme in me?
   If yes, ask: Please give me an example of when you have seen it in me.
   If no, move on to the next Signature Theme.
   Repeat Step 2 for each of your five Signature Themes.

Remember to complete this interview with three people.

Discussion Questions
You may post your answers on the Group Discussion Boards. Compare your responses to others.

1. How did your interviews go?
   How did it feel to ask these questions about your talents?
2. What one insight did you get from the Verifying Your Signature Themes exercise?
3. Did some people see your themes differently than you did? How so?
4. Were you surprised by some of their responses?
5. What additional talents did they see in you that aren’t in your top five?
6. What one theme did you use this past week and, in doing so, realized it is one of your Signature Themes?
Affirming and Celebrating Your Talents

Educator's Guide Activity
- Wall of Talent

Online Activities
- Ask students to complete the Learning Modules and Affirming Your Signature Themes Action Plans for their Signature Themes and any other themes the students believe are dominant. (Action Plans for Developing Your Talents into Strengths, Applying Strengths in Academics, and Applying Strengths in Careers can be assigned with the corresponding chapters.)
Activity: Wall of Talent

Materials

- Five copies of the Wall of Talent worksheet for each student.
- Adhesive to post worksheets around the room.

Directions

- Have each student complete the Wall of Talent worksheet on each of his or her Signature Themes. They may want to use adjectives from the definitions they wrote in the “Exploring Your Signature Themes” activity, if applicable.
- Go through the list of 34 themes, and as you announce each theme, ask the students who have that theme among their Signature Themes to quickly say out loud the descriptions they wrote on their worksheet. Then have them post their worksheet somewhere around the room, grouping the same themes together.
- This will create a Wall of Talent where each theme is represented by the students in the room who have that talent among their Signature Themes.
- If there are no students in the class who have a theme among their Signature Themes, you can skip over the discussion around that theme.
- The most important component of this activity is to get the students to describe their Signature Themes for the rest of the class.

The 34 StrengthsFinder Themes Names

| Achiever | Futuristic          |
| Activator| Harmony             |
| Adaptability | Ideation          |
| Analytical | Includer          |
| Arranger | Individualization  |
| Belief | Input               |
| Command | Intelllection       |
| Communication | Learner        |
| Competition | Maximizer         |
| Connectedness | Positivity      |
| Consistency | Relator            |
| Context | Responsibility      |
| Deliberative | Restorative     |
| Developer | Self-Assurance      |
| Discipline | Significance       |
| Empathy | Strategic          |
| Focus | Woo                 |
Wall of Talent

Name: ______________________________________________________________

One of my Signature Themes: ____________________________________________

Adjectives I would use to describe this theme in me: __________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

Optional:

I have used this theme to achieve success in the following area(s):
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

I am currently using this theme in the following area(s):
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
Educator’s Guide Activity

- Scavenger Hunt

Online Activities

- Have students complete the Developing Your Talents into Strengths Action Plans for their Signature Themes and any other themes the students believe are dominant. (Action Plans for Affirming Your Signature Themes, Applying Strengths in Academics, and Applying Strengths in Career; can be assigned with the corresponding chapters.)

- Ask students to begin building their Circle of Strengths. To add someone to their circle, students will select (+) symbol. They will be asked to provide the user name for the individual.

- Remind students that they may complete as many of the Learning Modules in the Learning Center as they would like.
Activity: Scavenger Hunt

**Materials**
- Scavenger Hunt worksheet for each student.

**Directions**
- Have each student complete the Scavenger Hunt worksheet.
- Ask students to share their answers to the Discussion Questions in a large or small group.

**Discussion Questions**
1. What one discovery did you make while doing this exercise?
2. What did you learn about yourself?
3. Were there some students who had themes that you know you could benefit from if you partnered with them?
4. Think about one of the themes that seems least like you. Were you surprised by its benefit?
5. As you work with or develop deeper relationships with the other students in this program, how can you continue to build a better understanding of their unique talents?
## Scavenger Hunt

### Directions
- Locate and interview 10 people who have at least one Signature Theme that is not among your Signature Themes.
- Record the name of each person you talked with, the theme you discussed, and at least one benefit of the theme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person’s Name</th>
<th>Theme Name</th>
<th>One Benefit of the Theme</th>
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### Discussion Questions
1. What one discovery did you make while doing this exercise?
2. What did you learn about yourself?
3. Were there some students who had themes that you know you could benefit from if you partnered with them?
4. Think about one of the themes that seems least like you. Were you surprised by its benefit?
5. As you work with or develop deeper relationships with the other students in this program, how can you continue to build a better understanding of their unique talents?
Considering Strengths When Planning Your Education

Educator’s Guide Activity
- Planning for Your Future

Online Activity
- Suggest that students e-mail their Signature Themes Report (Share “Top 5”) to their advisor.
Activity: Planning for Your Future

Materials
- Planning for Your Future worksheet for each student.

Directions
- Hand out the Planning for Your Future worksheet as homework, or use it for an in-class reflection.
- As a group you may share discoveries from the personal reflection.
- Encourage students to share this information with their advisors and other individuals who assist them with their educational path.
Planning for Your Future

Directions

- Reflect on the questions below and summarize your responses in the space provided. You may want to share this information with your advisor and/or other individuals who assist you with your educational planning.

1 Self-Assessment of Talents

- Which of your Signature Themes describe you best?
- Which of your Signature Themes hold the talents you use most frequently?
- In which of your Signature Themes are your talents most highly developed?
- Which talents do you most want to develop in college?

2 Motivations, Dreams, and Desires About College

- What are you hoping will happen while you are in college?
- What do you want to be able to do as a result of going to college?
- Imagine that you have graduated from college and you feel great. What would make you feel so great about your experience?
- Which of your talents do you believe will be most instrumental in helping you fulfill your dreams and desires for college?
- Which of your talents will you be planning to develop through classes and extracurricular activities?
- What images come to your mind when you think about fully developing your talents into strengths?
3 Self-Assessment of Intellectual Interest and Curiosities

- What subjects do you seem to learn with the greatest ease?
- What have your teachers complimented you about?
- What areas of interest do you have a burning desire to know and/or learn about?

4 Vocational, Career, and Graduate School Aspirations

- To date, what experiences have been your most fulfilling?
- Which careers seem most interesting and attractive to you?
- In what career do you think you would be able to best use your talents and strengths?
- Given your general career interests and vocation, what types of graduate-school training will you need?
- Which courses and college opportunities can help you best prepare for your vocation, career, and graduate school?

5 Time and Energy Demands

- What are your family responsibilities, and how much time will they require each week?
- How many hours per week must you work to meet your financial responsibilities?
- To achieve highly in each of your classes, how much time will be required each week?
- Which of your talents and strengths can you count on to make you time- and energy-efficient?
6 Self-Assessment of Academic Abilities

- In what areas do you feel that you have the greatest academic abilities?
- On what types of tests do you score highest?
- What has been your favorite type of assignment?
- What subjects do you most enjoy studying?
- How have your talents and strengths helped you succeed in the past?
- In which academic tasks do you best apply your talents and strengths?
- In which academic tasks would you like to discover how to better apply your talents and strengths?

7 Degree Structure and Requirements

- What courses must you take to graduate?
- Where do you have flexibility in fulfilling graduation requirements?
- What are the graduate-school entrance requirements for the programs you are considering?
- What classes will best prepare you to enter the career or graduate schools you are considering?
Applying Strengths for Academic Achievement

Educator’s Guide Activities

- Applying my Signature Themes to Academic Tasks
- Strengths in Academics Essay

Online Activity

- Ask students to complete the Applying Strengths in Academics Action Plans for their Signature Themes and any other themes the students believe are dominant. (Action Plans for Affirming Your Signature Themes, Developing Your Talents into Strengths, and Applying Strengths in Careers can be assigned with their corresponding chapters.)
Activity: Applying My Signature Themes to Academic Tasks

Materials
- Applying My Signature Themes to Academic Tasks worksheet for each student.

Directions
- First, ask students to list academic tasks they do with ease in the appropriate column on their worksheets.
- Next, ask students to list their Signature Themes in the appropriate column on their worksheets.
- Then, have them draw lines connecting their academic tasks to one or more of their Signature Themes that they feel drives their ability in this area.
- Finally, ask the students to complete the Discussion Questions and share their answers with a small group.
# Applying My Signature Themes to Academic Tasks

**Directions**

- First, list academic tasks you do with ease.
- Next, list your Signature Themes.
- Then, draw lines connecting your academic tasks to one or more of your Signature Themes that you feel drives your ability in this area.
- Finally, complete the Discussion Questions and share your answers with a small group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Tasks I Do With Ease</th>
<th>My Signature Themes</th>
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Applying My Signature Themes to Academic Tasks (continued)

Discussion Questions

1. What academic tasks do your Signature Themes have the strongest connections to?
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________

2. How can you find more opportunities to “exercise” those talents?
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________

3. Are some of your Signature Themes not being utilized in your academic tasks? If so, which ones?
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________

4. What activities or opportunities could you explore to help you grow those talents?
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________

5. What are some academic tasks you find difficult? How can you use one or more of your Signature Themes to manage that situation? Can a complimentary partner help?
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
Activity: Strengths and Academics Essay

Materials
- Strengths and Academics worksheet for each student.
- Pen and paper or word-processor for each student.

Directions
- Have students write a one-page essay on one of the following:
  A. Their beliefs about their strengths to achieve in academics
  B. Their motivations, desires, and goal-setting practices as they relate to academics
- Ask several students to read their essays to the class.
- Have the students discuss what they learned in the process.
Strengths and Academics Essay

Directions

1. Write a one-page essay on one of the following:

   A. Your beliefs about your strengths to achieve in academics, OR
   B. Your motivations, desires, and goal-setting practices as they relate to academics

2. Be prepared to read your essay to the class and discuss what you learned in the process.
Strengths and Career Planning

Educator’s Guide Activities
- Exploring a Career
- Career Interview

Online Activity
- Have students complete the Applying Strengths in Careers Action Plans for their Signature Themes and any other themes the students believe are dominant. (Action Plans for Affirming Your Signature Themes, Developing Your Talents into Strengths, and Applying Strengths in Academics can be assigned with their corresponding chapters.)
Activity: Exploring a Career

**Materials**
- One copy of the Exploring a Career, What I Do Best, and What I Want Most in the Place I Work worksheets for each student.

**Directions**
- Have students complete the Exploring a Career worksheet.
- Ask students to discuss their findings and the questions with a partner who has similar career interests.
# Exploring a Career

## Directions

1. Read the What I Do Best sheet and circle the 10 statements that best describe the things you would like to spend most of your time doing in a job or career. Put them in order from most important to least important.

2. Next, read the list of What I Want Most in the Place I Work and circle 10 statements that best describe what you want most in the place you work. Put them in order from the most important to least important.

3. Answer the questions below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I Do Best</th>
<th>What I Want Most in the Place I Work</th>
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</table>

What does this tell you about the type of work and the environment in which you would like to work?

How can this help you make better job or career decisions?
What I Do Best

- Volunteer for causes I believe in
- Collect and archive all kinds of information
- Talk with those going through difficult situations
- Think and study
- Let others know, without words, that I know how they feel
- Control my life
- Check people out carefully before revealing confidential information
- Associate with people who appreciate my strengths
- Work hard
- Discuss history and its lessons
- Live for the present
- Help people solve their problems
- Be busy all the time
- Find a new way to do things
- Concentrate until the job gets done
- Learn as much as I can about the people I meet
- Do what is expected of me each day
- Follow up on the details
- Discover patterns in data
- Inspire people about what could be
- Examine the unique qualities of each person
- Be in the “public eye”
- Feel connected with all of life
- Compare my performance to others
- Act according to my beliefs
- Include people who feel left out
- Inspire people to take action
- Create order and safety in my life
- Coach
- Learn new things
- Help others explain their thoughts
- Do things right
- Meet new people
- Use history to explain my position
What I Do Best (continued)

- Treat all people the same
- Take on challenges
- Be persuasive
- Follow through with my commitments
- Keep track of several things at one time
- Establish routines and processes
- Discover new information
- Figure out how different people can work together productively
- Give praise
- Plan new programs
- Have clear rules that everyone follows
- Participate in intellectual and philosophical discussions
- Live for the present
- Create future pictures and plans
- Overcome obstacles
- Take on significant goals and challenges
- Win the approval of others
- Search for the reasons and causes
- Strive to know more
- Tell stories
- Envision the things I want and desire
- Push things to action
- Selectively distribute praise and recognition
- Accept people as they are
- Organize a big event or celebration
- Teach people
- Build bridges between people of different cultures or experiences
- Find experts to help
- Get people committed
- Stay in contact with my friends
- Help others see their strengths
- Choose the best alternatives
- Make work fun
- Prove myself successful
- Join brainstorming sessions
What I Want Most in the Place I Work

This is a list of things that you may or may not want in a work environment. Please list any others you think of.

☐ Step-by-step training at work
☐ Family-friendly environment
☐ Work either on virtual team or with few people
☐ Have strong relationships
☐ Supervisor or manager who cares about me
☐ Working in a company where there are large numbers of people you deal with every day
☐ Recognition for work I do well
☐ Clear career path within the organization
☐ Have a place where I believe in the mission of the company
☐ There is someone always guiding my work
☐ Be my own boss
☐ Have the opportunity to always be working with people
☐ Flexible environment that allows me some freedom
☐ Work alone most of the time
☐ My opinion counts at work
☐ On-call position
☐ Structured environment where rules and expectations are clearly laid out
☐ I have to figure things out on my own
☐ I want to have a set schedule

List others that you think are important:

________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
Activity: Career Interview

Materials
- At least one Career Interview, What I Do Best, or What I Want Most in the Place I Work worksheet for each student.

Directions
- Have students complete the Career Interview with someone in a job or career that they are considering.
- Encourage students to interview more than one person in a job or career. It is important that they understand that not everyone within a given career does exactly the same thing.
Career Interview

Directions
Complete this interview with someone in a job or career that you are considering.

Name ____________________________ Role ____________________________

Tell me about your role. ____________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

What do you enjoy most? ____________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

What do you enjoy least? ____________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Please read the What I Do Best statements and circle the 10 that best describe what you do best.

What is the environment like in which you work? (You may use the list from What I Want Most in the Place I Work.)

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Who do you partner with in your role? ________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Career Interview (cont’d)

What talents do they have? __________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

How does this partnership help you be more effective? ___________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

What are the five most important aspects of your role?

1. _____________________________________________________________________
2. _____________________________________________________________________
3. _____________________________________________________________________
4. _____________________________________________________________________
5. _____________________________________________________________________

If you knew someone was coming into your role, what strengths would they need to have to be effective?
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

Could someone do your job with different strengths than yours? How?
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
Let’s Start a Revolution

Educator’s Guide Activities
- Being of Service
- Personal Statement of Strength
- Action Planning Commitments

Online Activity
- Encourage students to share their Personal Statement of Strength with one or more people with similar Signature Themes using the Signature Themes Match. Have them evaluate any statements they receive from others.
- Have students respond to the Discussion Questions in the Being of Service activity on the Discussion Group Board. Ask them to review others’ responses.
**Activity: Being of Service**

**Materials**
- Being of Service worksheets for each student.

**Directions**
- Ask students to complete the Being of Service worksheets.
- In small groups, have students discuss their answers. Many missions will be evident in your students. Missions could revolve around family, career, social justice, diversity, etc. Ask students to discuss whichever type of mission they feel comfortable sharing.

**Discussion Questions**
Consider having students respond to the questions below on the Discussion Group Boards. Ask them to review others’ responses.
- Who has a mission you admire?
- What is that mission?
- What theme does that individual use most to further his or her mission?
Being of Service

When considering how to be of service, there are five important issues you must address.

1. What is your mission?
2. Whom will you serve?
3. What needs, problems, or concerns will you try to address?
4. What are some ways to serve in which could you use your strengths?
5. How will you be of service?

Part One: What Is Your Mission?

Having a mission refers to the difference you want to make—the impact you want to have. Forming a mission is a demanding task, and you may revise and refocus your mission several times during your life. But you can begin the process now.

Ideally, you will have a career that works together with your sense of mission. Perhaps your career will be the place where you “live out” your mission. Or, your career may be where you earn sufficient money to fulfill your mission with the resources that you generate through your work.

The questions below will help you focus your mission and think about the relationship between your mission and a career.

A. Where would you like to make the greatest contribution?

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

B. What kind of people (age, socioeconomic, ethnic-culture group, problematic conditions, etc.) are you most concerned about? Your family or community?

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

C. If you had the power to make a significant change in the lives of people, what would you change?

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________
D. When you die and someone speaks about you, what do you hope you will be remembered for?

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

E. Beginnings of a Mission Statement:

I want to make a difference in the lives of _______________________________.

I want to increase their ________________________________. I want them to become more _______________________________.

and have more opportunities to _______________________________.

My life will be fulfilled and meaningful if _______________________________.

Part Two: Whom Will You Serve?

After reviewing what you have written above, the next question to ask yourself is this: Given your sense of mission, whom do you want to serve?

I want to serve and make a difference in the lives of

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

Part Three: What Needs, Problems, or Concerns Will You Try to Address?

Now that you have identified whom you will serve, the next issue involves the particular needs, problems, or concerns you will be addressing.

Be specific. As you think about the individuals you want to serve, consider the following:

• What are their needs? _______________________________

• What are their problems? _______________________________

• What are their concerns? _______________________________
Part Four: What Are Some Ways to Serve in Which You Could Use Your Strengths?

Next, we would like you to review your talents and strengths in light of the needs, problems, and concerns you have identified previously. Please think about your particular strengths that could address one or more of the items you identified.

Try to make some specific connections.

• My strength in ________________________________________ could be used to address _____________________________________________________.

• My strength in ________________________________________ could be used to address _____________________________________________________.

• I can see how the following strengths — ________________________________ — could be used to serve and address the following needs or problems:______________________________
  ___________________________________________________________________
  ___________________________________________________________________

Part Five: How Will You Be of Service?

We have two suggestions about how you can be of service. The first is by using your strengths in response to the needs, problems, or concerns of those you are serving. As you answered the above questions, some ideas may have emerged. Also, think about the times when you know you have helped particular groups or individuals. What did you do? How did you serve them? This simple process of reflection can give you considerable insight on how to serve in the present and the future. At this time, please make some notes to yourself in response to these the following questions:

What could give people more hope than coming to see that they have talents that can be used to fulfill some important purpose? What could be more empowering than knowing you have valuable talents and strengths?

So here is a challenge for you: Take on the project of serving other people by helping them become aware of their strengths. Then, encourage them to develop their strengths to the maximum. Finally, encourage those you serve to apply their strengths to the needs, problems, or concerns that they are confronting.

Discussion Questions
You may want to post your answers on the Group Discussion Boards.

• Who has a mission you admire?
• What is that mission?
• What theme does that individual use most to further their mission?
Activity: Personal Statement of Strength

Materials
- Personal Statement of Strength directions for each student

Directions
- Ask students to follow the Personal Statement of Strength directions, create a Personal Statement of Strength, and create an interesting way to express their strengths.
- Give each student the opportunity to share their statement with the group and someone with similar themes via the Signature Theme Match. Have them evaluate any statements they receive from others.
Personal Statement of Strength

Directions

• Combining your five Signature Themes, develop an interesting way to express your strengths to others.

• You can be creative and choose any medium or method. Below are a few ideas.

☐ A written statement
☐ Physical objects/Symbols
☐ Poem
☐ Drawing/Art
☐ Story or personal testimony
☐ Quotes
☐ Skit
☐ PowerPoint®
☐ Video/movie clips or video compilation
☐ Games/Puzzles/Mazes
☐ Song(s) or lyrics
☐ Book

• Be prepared to share your statement and/or symbol with the group and someone with similar themes using the Signature Theme Match. Evaluate any statements you receive from others. The best presentations will enhance the understanding of your themes to others and inspire your own appreciation of who you are. Refer to the following page for examples.
Personal Statement of Strength Examples

Signature Themes
Activator
Arranger
Significance
Individualization
Adaptability

Get up and make it happen.
Today is your day.
New people will meet you today.
Or maybe you will meet new people today.
Find the force that makes the team.
Tomorrow there will be change.
Plan for it, expect it.
Only you will make it happen.
Lets make a plan.
Do you have somewhere to go?
Lets fly, I’ll take you there.
You are a unique person.
You have so much to give.
Lets move away to California.
We’ll find a place to live.
Only when we get there.
Let me know you like me.
Tell me that I am OK.
I will tell you you’re important, if you will tell me the same.
Now is today. Let’s jump into the moment.

Signature Themes
Input
Achiever
Learner
Intellection
Ideation

Talk to me. I like to listen. I can learn so much from what you say. What are you thinking? Listening is only a runner-up to reading and taking in wonderful pieces of information. Now that I have listened, I’ve read, but I am not yet ready to act—let me think a little longer. Give me time to process and get in the middle of everything I am taking in. Let me think through it in new ways and mull it around in my head. When I have time to think, it gives me the chance to let lightning strike me. Bam! Out of all my thinking, it all comes together. I am now ready to act—to do something, make lists, and share all of my connections with someone. Now, I need to talk and do something concrete with all the wonderful information in my head.
Activity: Action Planning Commitments

Materials
- One copy of the Action Planning Commitments worksheet for each student.
- Each student will need to complete their Affirming Your Signature Themes, Developing Your Talents into Strengths, Applying Strengths in Academics, and Applying Strengths in Careers Action Plans online and print them for each of their Signature Themes.

Directions
- Have students complete the Action Planning Commitments worksheet.
- Ask students to share their commitments with the class and/or their advisor.
Action Planning Commitments

Directions
1. Complete the Action Plans online and print them for each of your Signature Themes.
2. Select two or three action items from your Action Plans that you like most.
3. On the lines below, specifically describe how you will commit to them.
4. Share your commitments with the class and/or your advisor.

In the next 30 days I will:

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

In the next three months I will:

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________