



Wandering Map Instructions

Adapted from: Brooks, K. (2009). You Majored in What? Mapping Your Path from Chaos to Career. New York: Penguin Group

1ST STEP

Take a big sheet of blank (unlined) paper and write your name in the middle. 11"x17" and colored pens or markers are ideal, but use whatever works for you!

2ND STEP

Think about all the interesting and significant things you've done or have happened to you. Go back as far as you'd like. (Note: This part is just thinking. Don't write anything down quite yet!) Have any unique or unusual jobs? Memorable summer experiences? Most proud or accomplished activities? Hobbies? Learned valuable lessons? Did a certain experience or person have a significant impact on you?

3RD STEP

Start writing. Quickly write whatever comes to mind. Don't worry about spelling. Don't waste time erasing. Use short words or phrases. Don't try to organize your thoughts, write them down anywhere.

Examples:

Favorite Memories
Heroes or Mentors
Past Jobs

Classes you enjoy
Hobbies
Volunteer Activities

Awards/Honors
Places you've lived/traveled
Interests, Favorite Books

4th STEP

Take a step back and look at your map. Do any of the experiences on your map seem to fit into certain categories? Can you find any connections between the categories, even ones that may not be as obvious at first? Is there a thread that follows you? Is there a pattern to the jobs you have held? What did you learn or what strengths/skills did you acquire?

Spend some time identifying common **themes** (patterns or categories) and **competencies** (combination of knowledge, skills, and personal attributes) that are a common link between different experiences and write them down. Then, draw lines connecting the different experiences between common themes and competencies.

Example Themes:

Achievements/awards
Tools/equipment
Family
Fun
Indoors/outdoors

Internally or externally
rewarding
Knowledge
Learning
Locations
Music

Reading
Research
Risky/Sake
Roles
Problem Solving
Types of People

Example Competencies:

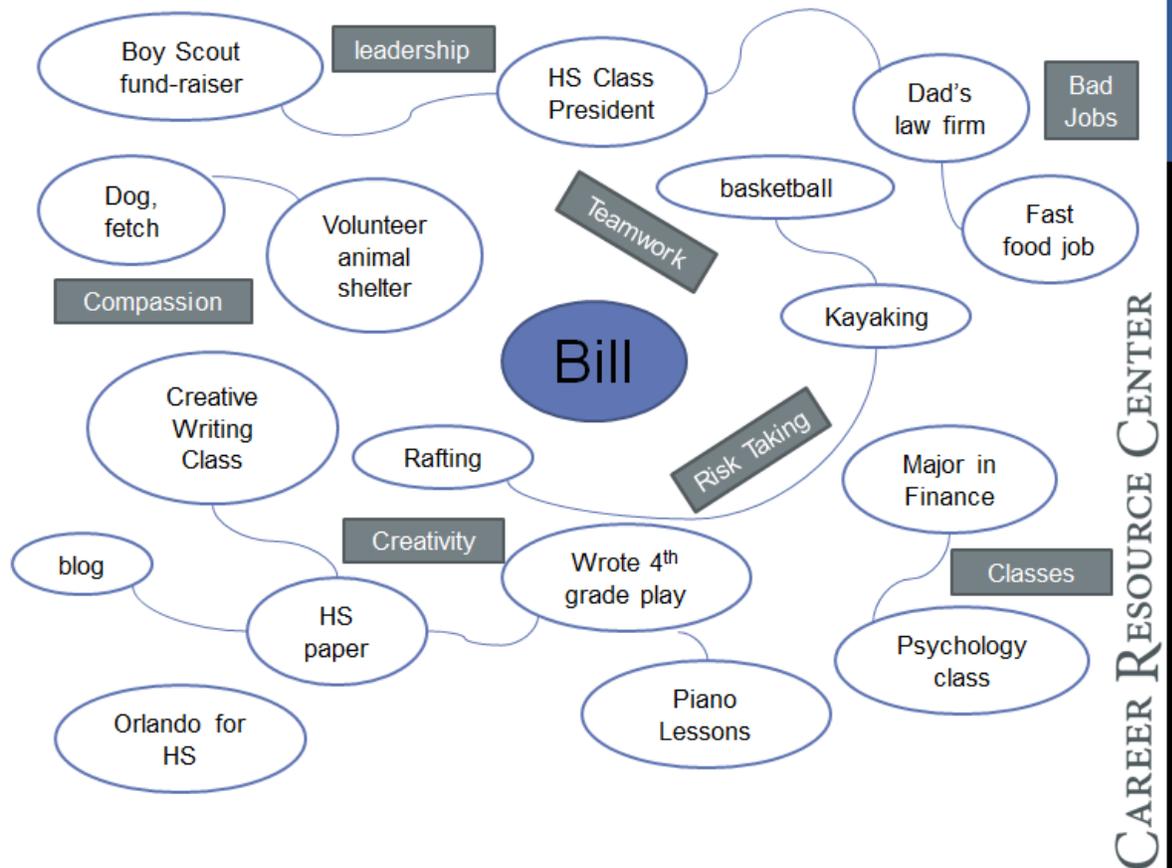
Analytical
Artistic
Communication
Computer
Counseling/Serving

Creative thinking
Detail oriented
Interpersonal
Research/investigation
Leadership/management

Teamwork
Negotiating
Mathematical/financial
Organizational
Presentation/performing



EXAMPLE:



Reflection:

1. How do these themes or categories align with your values, interests, and personality? How might they align with your major or career interests?
2. Which themes or categories energize you the most?
3. What 2 or 3 items are you most proud of? What skills or behaviors were needed to accomplish them? Can you think of ways to connect those skills to work?
4. If you can't see any themes, what would happen if a miracle occurred and the themes suddenly appeared? What would do you think they would be?

Next Steps:

1. Identify how these themes or skills may connect to a career. What do you still need to learn?
2. How can you continue developing or gaining experiences related to themes or competencies?
3. If you knew you couldn't fail, which themes or competencies would you continue to work towards?
4. How can you use this new insight in your career decision making process?
5. How can you use this reflection to communicate about yourself in a cover letter, personal statement, or interview?