

The Profile of American Youth

January 1981

Dear Respondent,

As we promised, here are your results on the Profile of American Youth test. On the enclosed form you will find your scores for each of the ten subtests. We have also included two brochures--one explaining your scores in more detail, the other providing information about jobs, schools, and vocational testing.

In the first brochure, "About Your Test Scores," there is a section on understanding your test scores. When looking at your Profile scores, keep in mind other things that you know about yourself--for example, what you enjoy doing, your scores on other tests, your grades in school, and the things that you feel you do well. Remember that if you were ill or tired or had some personal problem bothering you on the day of the test, you may not have done as well as you could have. Also, keep in mind that your background, both your education and experience, plays a part in how you scored on the test.

In the second brochure information is provided on testing, education, career choices, and resources. These are the areas that you, as a group, identified as being important when you completed the Profile test.

We want to remind you that your test results, like all information you provide NORC, will remain completely confidential. You are the only person who will receive your test results. You may want to share them with someone--your parents, a guidance counselor, or an employment counselor--but NORC will not.

Again, thank you for your time and effort in taking the Profile test. We hope the test scores are useful, and that you find both of the brochures helpful. We look forward to your participation in the next NLS interview.

Sincerely

Mary C. Burich

Mary Cay Burich
Senior Survey Director

The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) is pleased to offer you an opportunity to participate in an important study, one that will have very real benefits for *you*. One of these benefits is the \$50 you will receive for taking part. There's more, but first a few words about the study.

About The Profile Of American Youth

This study is part of a larger research effort in which you have already participated — the National Longitudinal Study of Youth Labor Force Behavior, or NLS. Your participation in the NLS has been a real contribution. You have added greatly to our nation's understanding of the young men and women of today. Now, we ask for your cooperation again, to enlarge and improve that understanding.

The new study, called the Profile of American Youth (or the Profile Study, for short), is designed to do just what its name suggests — to draw a profile of contemporary American youth, in the important area of vocational aptitudes. This profile will show the abilities developed by today's young people in the course of their lives, abilities that they will use as they continue their educations and careers.

The nearly 13,000 young men and women who are participating in the NLS are a carefully selected cross section of American youth. When all of their answers are combined, the results will provide an accurate picture of the entire population of that age. So, as one member of that unique group, your opinions and your experiences and your abilities really count.

To draw this profile we are planning to administer a test to every member of our large study group, and naturally you will be included. We will use a research version of a vocational assessment test developed by the government and based on over 30 years of research and experience. The Profile test will be given to small groups of young people at several hundred locations all over the United States. And in return for your time and effort we will give you that \$50, plus information that you can use in making your education and career plans.

About The Sponsorship And Uses Of The Study

The Department of Labor (DoL) originated sponsorship of the NLS. The Department of Defense (DoD) joined in the sponsorship of the NLS, so the study would include youth in the military, and is also sponsoring the Profile component.

The results of the study will have many important uses. DoL researchers will have new and valuable information about you, the NLS participants, as well as the millions of young people you represent. This information, added to that from the NLS interviews, will help them to create a truly comprehensive profile of American youth today. DoD researchers will be able to use this information to improve the way young men and women who enter the Armed Services are assigned to training and duty. In addition, the Profile data will be made available for use by university scholars and others who are concerned with the abilities of young Americans in the 1980s.

But all of these efforts will be based on the results of the whole group of young people who take the test. Your individual test results will be kept *completely confidential*. No one — not your parents, not your school, not the government — will know your scores. They will be used only as a part of this group portrait.

The profile of American Youth will be important in understanding the young men and women of today and in making plans for education and career programs to benefit them. The study will be conducted entirely in the year 1980, and the results from it will be valuable throughout the decade ahead.

About Your Contribution

You are the very heart of the Profile Study's success. Your effort on the Profile test will represent that of many other young people like you. Without you we cannot obtain an accurate picture of contemporary American youth. And an accurate picture is essential if government planners, educators, and employers are to help the youth of today make the best use of its talents.

Your contribution to this research effort will be to take a test. You will find it very similar to tests you have taken before. It requires no preparation on your part and is easy to take — you will not be asked to write any long responses, only to fill in spaces on an answer sheet.

Because the test normally takes about three hours, we ask that you set aside a morning, afternoon, or evening, go to a testing session in your area, and give the test your best effort. In return, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have contributed to an important research effort that will benefit you and other young people, and you will receive the very direct benefits to you that are described below.

About The Benefits To You

\$50. We recognize that your time is valuable, and we want you to give the test your best effort. So, after you've finished the test, we will give you \$50. What could be simpler? Or better?

Feedback. The results of this test will provide a national profile of the abilities of today's young people. The results of *your test* will be used to give you information about *your own abilities*. We will send you this information in a form that will be useful in making plans for your future.

Again, the information about your own test results will be kept completely confidential. It will be sent only to you, in an envelope marked personal and confidential. You may choose to share this information with persons who can help you to make the best use of it — career counselors, for example — but that will be entirely your choice.

We hope that these direct benefits, coupled with the knowledge that you can contribute to an important national study, will make you a participant in the Profile of American Youth.

Profile of American Youth-1960

NOTE

For a complete explanation of the test, see the booklet "About Your Test Scores."

READING YOUR TEST SCORES

This score sheet contains your results from the Profile of American Youth test. The enclosed booklet, "About Your Test Scores," describes the scores and the subtests in greater detail.

For each subtest you have two scores--the NUMBER RIGHT score and the PERCENTILE RANGE score.

The NUMBER RIGHT score shows the number of questions you answered correctly in that subtest. The NUMBER POSSIBLE column shows how many questions appeared in that subtest. In the subtest on ARITHMETIC REASONING you got 12 right out of 30 possible.

Your PERCENTILE RANGE scores, in the chart to the right of the NUMBER POSSIBLE column, show how you did in comparison to the nationwide group of all persons born between 1957 and 1964. A percentile score indicates the percentage of people who scored below you on a certain test. The percentile scores on the Profile test are presented as PERCENTILE RANGE scores and shown as bands of Xs because they are only approximate. For example, your PERCENTILE RANGE score in ARITHMETIC REASONING is 20 to 35. This means that your percentile score in ARITHMETIC REASONING is probably greater than 20 but less than 35.

SUBTESTS	NUMBER RIGHT	NUMBER POSSIBLE	PERCENTILE RANGE									
			1	5	10	25	50	75	90	95	99	
Paragraph Comprehension	09	15				XXXXXXXXXX						
Word Knowledge	33	35						XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX				
General Science	18	25					XXXXXXXXXX					
Mathematics Knowledge	10	25				XXXXXXX						
Arithmetic Reasoning	12	30				XXXXXX						
Numerical Operations	32	50				XXXXXXXXXXXX						
Coding Speed	15	84	XXXXXXXX									
Mechanical Comprehension	13	25				XXXXXXXXXX						
Auto & Shop Information	17	25					XXXXXXXXXX					
Electronics Information	11	20				XXXXXXXXXXXX						

ABOUT YOUR TEST SCORES

**The Profile of
American Youth**

Interpreting Your Profile Test Results

As a member of the sample for the National Longitudinal Survey, you have taken the ten subtests that make up the Profile of American Youth test. Your test results are enclosed on a separate sheet. This guide explains the scores more fully and describes the skills the Profile test is designed to measure.

How to Read Your Scores

The Profile test consists of ten separate subtests, each focusing on a different skill area. You have received two kinds of scores for each test.

The number right score is simply the number of questions you answered correctly. The total number of questions in the test is also shown; it represents the highest possible score on the subtest. Very few persons receive this maximum score.

Number right scores, in and of themselves, are not very useful without some standard of comparison. For this reason your score is also reported as a percentile range, which allows you to compare your performance with the national group of persons born from 1957 to 1964. A percentile score indicates the proportion of persons in the national group who would score lower than you. A range, rather than a single number, is presented for each test, because percentile scores, like any other test scores, are only approximate. You can be about 70% confident that your percentile ranges include your true percentile scores.

Your percentile range scores are illustrated on the score sheet as bars of X's. This chart will help you compare your scores in the various skill areas. It may help you identify areas of relative strength or weakness. If the percentile range bars from two tests overlap, then you have performed at roughly the same level on both

tests. If one bar is in a higher range than another, you have performed better in that area; that is an area in which you are stronger.

Factors Affecting Profile Test Results

A set of scores on tests like the Profile of American Youth does not present a complete picture of a person's aptitudes and abilities. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that your Profile test results, like any other test results, can only be interpreted in light of your interests, your past performances, and your history of training and education.

What the Profile test does try to measure is a group of skills that are useful in various training programs and occupations. Your performance reflects in part the knowledge and the skills you have acquired in these areas. Such scores may suggest promising directions for further training.

What the Profile test does not try to measure is the wide variety of personal qualities that are a part of success in any occupation or training program—motivation, interest, and creativity, to name a few. Strengths in these areas can overcome deficiencies in specific skills.

Your Profile test scores also reflect factors other than your levels of skill. Low scores, for example, can often be traced to illness, misunderstanding of directions, or improper marking of answer sheets.

Many of the Profile subtests cover skills commonly taught in school, and nearly all of the subtests require the use of the English language. For these reasons, Profile scores may not be accurate indications of the abilities of persons whose schooling is limited, or whose native language is not English.

What the Subtests Measure

The Profile test is a research form of a vocational aptitude test developed by the Government. For over thirty years, forms of this test have been used for occupational counseling in high schools and in the military. The enclosed booklet on tests, careers, schools, and jobs contains more information about the use of scores from vocational aptitude tests like the Profile test. You may consider your Profile test results as one of the many factors to be used in considering your career options. The following sections briefly describe the Profile subtests.

Paragraph Comprehension is a test designed to measure how well you can acquire information from written passages. You were asked to read short paragraphs and then to answer questions about them. Most occupations require this skill to some degree. Some occupations place heavy demands on paragraph comprehension—law, journalism, and management, for example. Most college courses also require this skill. Low scores in paragraph comprehension may be improved through practice in reading—either by increasing the variety and amount of one's reading, or perhaps by entering a program specifically designed to increase reading speed and comprehension.

Word Knowledge is essentially a vocabulary test. Given a word, you were asked to choose one of four other words that most nearly had the same meaning. This test reflects a person's reading range and educational experiences. It is often used as a predictor of success in further training in academic areas. As with paragraph comprehension, low scores in word knowledge may be improved by increasing the variety and amount of one's reading, and by studying vocabulary-building books and guides.

General Science items are drawn from a variety of fields: biology, medicine, chemistry, and physics. This test measures basic factual

knowledge taught in secondary school general science courses. Low scores might be improved by taking courses in science, or through reading general scientific publications.

Mathematics Knowledge scores depend largely on a person's formal training in mathematics. Most of the questions concern subjects that are typically introduced in high school courses, such as geometry, algebra, and trigonometry. Scores on this type of test are often used to predict success in occupations or training programs that require advanced mathematics.

Arithmetic Reasoning items are often called "word problems." You were asked to use arithmetic skills to solve problems described in short passages. These questions do not require advanced mathematics, but rather the ability to translate real-life problems into mathematical terms. These skills are required in varying degrees by scientists, engineers, carpenters, tool-and-die makers, clerks, and accountants.

Numerical Operations items covered basic arithmetic questions, which you were to answer as quickly as possible. Your score on this test depends mainly on your speed and accuracy with simple arithmetic. Clerks and bookkeepers, among others, use these skills in their work.

Coding Speed, like numerical operations, tests speed and accuracy in completing tasks. Given the code numbers for certain words at the top of the page in your test booklet, you were asked to mark the spaces on your answer sheet corresponding to the code numbers of these words. These skills are required by clerks, coders, warehouse workers, filers, bookkeepers, and others.

Mechanical Comprehension showed pictures built around basic machines such as pulleys, levers, gears, and wedges. The questions asked you to visualize how the objects would work together. Relatively high scores in this test suggest that a person might do well in an area where the emphasis is on mechanics—for

example, designing, manufacturing, or repairing machinery. Low scores in this area could probably be improved by working with mechanical devices, such as in shop classes or auto repair.

Auto and Shop Information tests your specific knowledge of the tools and the terms used in the repair and maintenance of vehicles. This type of test is used to predict performance in training for occupations dealing with the repair, maintenance, or operation of mechanical equipment.

Electronics Information is another rather specific test. It measures your knowledge of electrical terms, your familiarity with electrical equipment, and your ability to solve electrical problems. Knowledge and abilities of these kinds are needed by electricians, engineers, electronics technicians, and electrical equipment servicers.

How To Use Your Scores

From these descriptions of the Profile subtests, you can see that your results may be useful in selecting an area of work for which the skills you now have might be helpful. In addition, your results may suggest skill areas that you would like to improve. You should be aware that these scores are only part of the total picture. You'll probably want to consider them together with other information that is available before making any decisions. To help you further in thinking about your future, we have included a booklet with questions and answers on careers, schools, and other tests that you might want to take. Please refer to this booklet for additional information. □

The Profile of American Youth

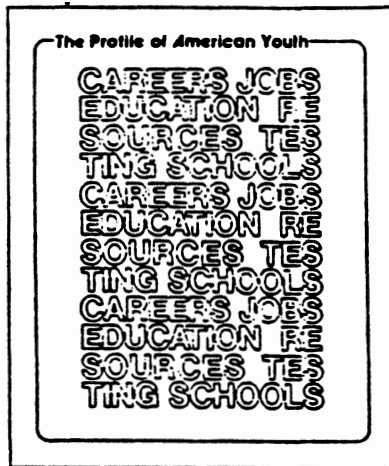
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Introduction

When you participated in the Profile of American Youth Study, you answered some questions to let us know what information you would like to receive along with your test results. We learned that most of you are interested in getting information about colleges and vocational schools. You would also like to know what various people and places can tell you about schools, colleges, and jobs. In this booklet, we have put together some information that we hope will be helpful to you.



TESTING

Many tests are available to help you discover more about your abilities and interests.

Now that you have had some firsthand experience with the Profile of American Youth test, you might be interested in knowing about other tests that have been developed to provide people with information about themselves. Most people take tests for one of two reasons. Some want to apply to schools or for jobs that require applicants to take tests. Others want to learn more about themselves—for example, the kinds of jobs they might do well in, or the subjects they might enjoy in school. We will take a look at several types of tests and the kinds of things they measure.

Q What do vocational aptitude tests measure?

A Vocational aptitude tests measure how well you can be expected to do in some area related to a job. Some of these tests measure your ability in a number of areas and relate to a broad range of careers. There are also vocational aptitude

tests that relate only to specific occupations, such as engineering, music, or accounting.

Two vocational aptitude tests that measure ability in several areas are the Differential Aptitude Tests and the General Aptitude Test Battery. The Differential Aptitude Tests (DAT) are eight paper-and-pencil tests taken as a group: Verbal Reasoning, Numerical Ability, Abstract Reasoning, Space Reasoning, Mechanical Reasoning, Clerical, Spelling, and Sentences. The General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) is made up of twelve tests, eight paper-and-pencil and four dexterity tests. The paper-and-pencil tests measure aptitude in eight areas: general reasoning, verbal, numerical, mechanical, spatial, form matching, clerical, and motor coordination. The dexterity tests measure manual ability.

You can find out more about these tests from your high school or college guidance counselor or an employment counselor.

What is an interest test?

An interest test is designed to measure what you like to do and what you don't like to do. It does not ask questions to find out how much you know, as an aptitude test does, and there are no right or wrong answers on tests of this kind. Instead, interest tests ask questions like, "If you had your choice of listening to music for an hour, swimming for an hour, or working on your car for an hour, what would you prefer to do?"

Based on your answers to many questions like this, your score on an interest test would summarize your major interest and other strong areas of interest. You might be told, for example, that you are most interested in machine work, but also have a strong interest in music.

The names of two interest tests are the Kuder Preference Record and the Strong Vocational Interest Blank. One form of the Kuder Preference Record estimates occupational interests. It provides scores in ten areas: outdoor, mechanical, computational, scientific, persuasive, artistic, literary, musical, social service, and clerical. The Strong Vocational Interest Blank (SVIB) can be scored for any number of vocational interests. Some of the general areas that can be included are: creative-scientific, technical, musical, business, and verbal. If you would like more information on interest tests, a guidance or employment counselor will be able to help you.

If you are thinking of taking vocational aptitude and interest tests to explore career possibilities, keep in mind that your scores

may not match on the two kinds of tests because your abilities and your interests may lie in different vocational areas. For example, you may do very well in mathematics on a vocational aptitude test, while your interest test shows no interest in any career that uses mathematics. Whatever the different kinds of tests show, you may want to use them by looking at the areas where your interests and abilities overlap.

Another thing to keep in mind when using aptitude or interest tests is that testing is only one measure of your abilities and interests. Other things that you know about yourself—what you like to do, what you do well in, your school grades, and other measures—are also indications of your abilities and interests. But interest and aptitude tests may be useful tools, when combined with other information, to help you decide what area or areas to concentrate on for further study, for training, or for job possibilities.

What are academic aptitude tests?

Academic aptitude tests are used to predict how well you can be expected to do in college. Two such tests are the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the American College Testing (ACT) Assessment. You may have heard of these tests before, since many colleges require that you take one of them before you are considered for admission. If you are interested in graduate study, then you may have to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), which is another academic aptitude test. Because these three tests are so often required for college

admission, we will look at each one separately.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) measures ability in both verbal and mathematical areas. Verbal ability is measured by vocabulary skills, reading comprehension, and analogies. Mathematical ability is measured by arithmetic skills, algebra, and geometry. The cost for taking the test is \$9.25, but those who cannot afford the fee are sometimes allowed to take the test at no charge. The SAT is given several times a year at most high schools. If you would like more information, talk to a guidance counselor or write to:

College Board American Testing Program
Box 592
Princeton, New Jersey 08541

The American College Testing (ACT) Assessment includes tests in English, mathematics, social sciences, and natural sciences. It also includes a section on your interests. The cost for taking the test is \$8.50, but if you cannot afford the test fee you may be able to get a fee waiver and take the test at no charge. The ACT is given at various high schools and colleges. To find out more about the ACT, see a guidance counselor or write to:

American College Testing
P.O. Box 414
Iowa City, Iowa 52243

The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is required by many universities and professional schools for students who want to take graduate courses beyond the bachelor's degree. The GRE Aptitude Test covers verbal, quantitative, and analytic skills.

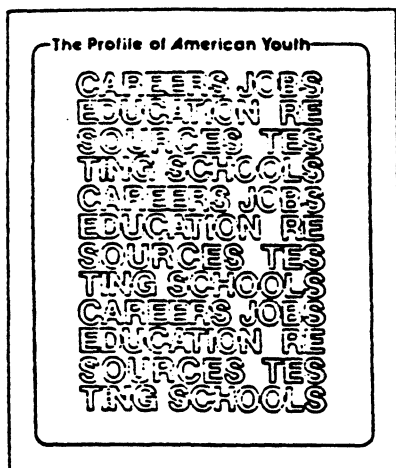
There is another GRE—the Advanced Test — which is given in twenty different areas, including biology, French, engineering, music, and literature. In this GRE you are tested only in your area of study. Not all schools require that you take an Advanced Test, so check with the schools you are applying to for their requirements.

The GRE Aptitude and Advanced Tests are given a number of times during the year at different locations in the United States and in foreign countries. The fee for each test is \$20. If you cannot afford to pay for the tests, you may be able to get a fee waiver. If you would like more information on the GRE, ask a college guidance counselor or write to:

Graduate Record Examinations
Educational Testing Service
Box 955-R
Princeton, New Jersey 08541

Guidance and career counselors may know what tests are required for specific schools. If not, you can contact the schools that you are interested in to find out their requirements.

For most academic aptitude tests, there are practice tests available—either from the organizations that design the test or at major bookstores. A guidance counselor may have some practice questions, or you can write to the organization for a practice version of the test. Bookstores often carry manuals or practice tests that you can purchase on academic aptitude tests, such as the SAT, ACT, or GRE. You may also want to look into courses designed to help you do better on these academic aptitude tests, though these courses are not required before you take the tests.



EDUCATION

There is a wide range of educational opportunities and many ways to finance them.

There are many reasons for continuing your education and many ways to do it. Some people go directly from high school to college, junior college, or vocational school. Others, who didn't finish high school, study to take the General Educational Development test. Some people whose native language is not English take a course in English as a Second Language (ESL). Many people take courses such as ceramics, music, or swimming just because they enjoy them. Still others take courses in order to get better jobs than the ones they have.

This section describes a wide range of educational opportunities, including vocational schools, colleges and universities, non-credit courses, and other educational programs.

What are vocational schools?

Vocational schools offer training in particular skills. They may also be called trade or technical schools. At vocational

schools, courses are taken mainly in your area of specialization. Completing a vocational school program may take from three weeks to three years, depending on the particular program and the school. In some cases, courses that are taken at vocational schools can count toward a degree from a four-year college. Some vocational schools offer these types of programs:

- Acting
- Appliance Repair
- Baking
- Building Maintenance
- Carpentry
- Construction Technology
- Data Processing
- Drafting
- Electronics
- Fashion Design
- Haircutting/Styling
- Heavy Equipment Operation
- Industrial Management
- Legal Secretarial
- Medical/Dental Assisting

Medical Lab Technician
Office Machine Repair
Plumbing
Printing
Real Estate Brokerage

Where can I get more information on vocational schools?

You can ask your librarian or a guidance or career counselor for more information. You can look in the Yellow Pages of the telephone book under "Schools," or you can write for the "Handbook of Trade and Technical Careers and Training." It is available at no charge at this address:

National Association of Trade and
Technical Schools
2021 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

What are two-year colleges?

Two-year colleges, often called junior or community colleges, are schools where a student can earn an associate's degree after two years of study. They generally offer a variety of courses, from auto mechanics to literature. In many cases these courses can be transferred if you decide to attend a four-year college. The major advantages of community colleges are their low tuition and the fact that students can generally live at home rather than on campus. Community colleges frequently offer courses during the evening and on weekends for the convenience of those who work.

Where can I get more information on two-year colleges?

You can ask a guidance or career counselor or librarian, or you can consult reference books. Two that may be useful are:

Barron's Guide to the Two-year Colleges, Barron's Educational Series, 113 Crossways Park Drive, Woodbury, New York 11797.

American Junior Colleges, by Edmund J. Gleazer, Jr. (Ed.) & Jane Follett Cooke (Assoc. Ed.), American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036.

These books are probably available at your high school or public library.

What about four-year colleges and universities?

Four-year colleges differ in many ways. Some are large, some are small; some are located in rural areas, some in metropolitan areas; some are supported by public tax money, some are private; some are very expensive, some are much less expensive. The differences among colleges and universities are so great that making a choice of which to attend is seldom easy. However, there are many ways to gather information that will make your choice easier. This section describes some of the resources you can consult to get information about colleges and universities.

What kinds of programs are offered at four-year colleges and universities?

At college a student works toward a bachelor's degree by taking a number of different courses every term. By the junior or senior year these courses are mostly in a major area of study, such as chemistry, English, nursing, or accounting. The courses and majors that a college or university offers are listed in the college or university catalog. The catalog also describes the admission requirements, the cost of attending the college, and other useful information. The college admissions office will send a copy of the college catalog upon request.

Some of the programs offered at colleges and universities are:

Accounting
Advertising
Anthropology
Architecture
Astronomy
Biology
Botany
Business Administration
Chemistry
Counseling
Education
Engineering
English
French
History
Journalism
Mathematics
Nursing
Nutrition
Physics
Physiology
Political Science

Public Administration
Psychology
Sociology
Spanish
Zoology

Where can I get more information on four-year colleges and universities?

You can get more information from a guidance or career counselor, from a teacher, or from your librarian. You can also write directly to the admissions office of a college in which you are interested. Ask for their college catalog and any other information they have for prospective students. Two books that describe hundreds of colleges and universities are:

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges,
Barron's Educational Series, 113
Crossways Park Drive, Woodbury, New
York 11797.

Lovejoy's College Guide, by Clarence E.
Lovejoy, Simon and Schuster, 1230
Avenue of the Americas, New York, New
York 10020.

What are the admission requirements for two-year colleges, four-year colleges, and universities?

Admission requirements differ from one college to another. Almost all colleges require that your high school send them a copy of your transcript. Most colleges require that you take either the SAT or ACT exam. If you are interested in graduate study, then either the GRE Aptitude or both the Aptitude and an Advanced test may be required. If you are interested in some professions, such as law

or medicine, then another exam is usually required. Some colleges, universities, and professional schools require letters of recommendation from teachers, counselors, or employers. Most also require that you complete an application, and some have an application fee. These fees are usually \$25 or less. Some schools waive fees for those who cannot afford to pay. The best way to find out about requirements is to contact the particular school that you are interested in or ask a guidance counselor.

Q. What kinds of non-credit courses are available?

A. The possibilities are as broad as people's interests. Universities and colleges frequently offer non-credit courses in writing, films, literature, mathematics, basic accounting principles, music appreciation, physics, and many other areas. Some of these courses are taught by members of the regular faculty, others by people who do not usually teach at the university or college. For example, at one university a non-credit broadcasting course is taught by a local TV announcer.

Non-credit courses are also available at places outside of schools. Your local YMCA or community center may offer courses in swimming, typing, dancing, auto mechanics, and a variety of other subjects. Some stores offer courses in connection with the products they sell. A kitchen utensil shop, for example, might offer cooking courses. Hospitals may offer courses in nutrition, churches in theology, women's groups in self-defense. Some non-credit courses are free, others have

a fee, though these are usually not very high.

Q. How can I find out more about non-credit courses?

A. Non-credit courses are often advertised in local newspapers. You can also call community centers or youth centers to find out what courses they offer. You can ask about adult courses, extension courses, or non-credit courses at colleges and universities. If you are employed you can ask your supervisor or someone in the Personnel Department about any educational opportunities available with your company.

Q. What kinds of courses might be available with my company?

A. Job-related courses and job-training programs are offered by some companies. Job-related courses or seminars may help you improve your skills in the job you hold or get a better job. Job-training programs are specifically designed to teach employees new jobs, either when they are first hired or at the time of a promotion. Some companies also offer General Educational Development courses for their employees who did not finish high school. These opportunities may be offered by the company itself or by others. Courses offered by companies for their employees are usually free of charge. Courses offered by others are often paid for by the company when approved.

What is a General Educational Development course?

A General Education Development (GED) course prepares people to take the GED exam. The main reason for the GED exam is to give people who did not finish high school a chance to show that they can do work comparable to that of high school graduates. Many things about the GED test, including minimum score requirements and costs for taking the test, differ by state.

Although it is not necessary to take a GED course before taking the GED exam, many people prepare themselves in this way. Local community colleges, community centers such as the YMCA, and high schools are some of the places that may offer a GED course.

Before you take the GED exam, you may want to take the GED Official Practice Test, which is half as long as the regular GED test. Both the regular test and the practice version cover the subjects of writing skills, social studies, science, reading skills, and mathematics. The questions on the practice version are not the same as those on the regular GED test, but they are similar enough that you will know what to expect when you take the real test. There are two forms of the practice test. Sometimes people take one form before taking the GED course and then take the other form afterward to see if they are ready to take the regular test. You can write to the address below to order either Form A or Form B, or both. The cost for each copy is \$1.75. With the practice test, you also receive a summary sheet with the correct answers, the

minimum score requirements for each state, and other information. The address to write to is:

GED Testing Service
American Council on Education
1 Dupont Circle
Washington, D.C. 20036

You can also write or call your State Department of Education for more details about the GED test and GED courses. They may know where courses are offered in your area, the cost to take the test, and other information.

What is the English as a Second Language (ESL) course?

English as a Second Language (ESL) is a course open to anyone whose native language is not English and who would like to know the language better. These courses are usually free of charge. For further information about ESL courses check with your local high school, community center, community college, church, or place of employment.

How can I get help in paying for my education?

There are a number of programs that may help you pay for your education. Some of these programs are:

Grants and Scholarships. These are awards based on academic or athletic ability or financial need. Grants and scholarships are like gifts and do not have to be paid back.

Grants and scholarships may be given by a school or college, or by the federal, state, or local government. They may also be

given by some public or private foundation, by a corporation, by a civic organization, or by other interested persons or groups.

Two grants administered by the federal government are the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program (BEOG) and the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG). Both of these grants are based on the student's financial need. They range from \$150 to \$1800 a year.

Loans. Loans are different from grants because loans have to be repaid within a certain time period, and interest payments must be added to the amount of money borrowed. The amount of the loan that can be taken and the amount of interest that must be paid differ depending on the particular loan.

One loan program, administered by the federal government, is the National Direct Student Loan Program (NDSL). The interest on this type of loan is very low, 3%, and payments and interest charges start only after the student leaves school.

Another program is the Guaranteed Student Loan Program (GSL), which is offered by banks, savings and loan associations, and credit unions. The interest on this loan is 7%. The federal government pays the interest while the student is in school.

With both the NDSL and the GSL, the student is required to start paying back the loan and take over paying the interest as soon as he or she is no longer going to school.

There are other loan programs administered by schools, by state and local governments, and by other agencies.

Work-Study Programs. Work-study programs are administered by individual schools and sponsored by the federal government. The schools try to find students jobs that they can do while in school, and, whenever possible, they place students in jobs related to their academic interests. The students' salaries are paid in part by their employers and in part by the federal government.

Employers. Some companies have scholarship programs for their employees or their employees' children. You can inquire about these programs at the Personnel Department where you work or where your parents work.

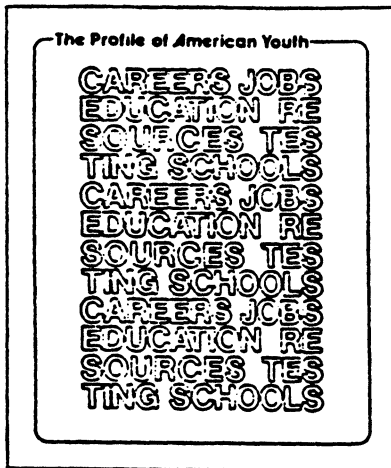
Many employers also have tuition-reimbursement programs for their employees. Through these programs, companies pay for all or some of the costs of taking courses at colleges, universities, vocational schools, and other places where courses are offered. Some companies reimburse employees only for educational costs that are directly related to the jobs they hold, others pay for courses in any area. These programs are generally administered by Personnel Departments.

How do I apply for these programs?
Where can I get more information?

Different programs are administered in different ways. A career or guidance counselor may be able to tell you about the many financial aid programs that are available and to discuss which program would be best for you. A counselor may also know of financial aid opportunities available for your particular career interest. You can also approach individual schools and companies about the financial aid programs they administer. For almost all of these programs you will have to fill out some kind of application which asks about the financial background of you and your family.

If you would like more information on financial aid programs, contact the financial aid department of the school of your choice or your State Department of Education. You may also write to the following address:

Bureau of Student Financial Assistance
P.O. Box 84
Washington, D.C. 20044 □



CAREERS

Career possibilities are everywhere, many people aren't aware of the variety.

There are thousands of career possibilities, and each career offers a whole range of opportunities.

For example, let's look at the field of law. Many people think only of lawyers when they think of careers in law, but in fact there are many more possibilities. There are legal secretaries, court reporters, legal assistants, and judges, all working in the field of law. There are also many careers in one aspect of law—law enforcement: police officers, parole officers, and private detectives, to name a few. Within each of these career possibilities there are many variations. A lawyer for example, might either set up his or her own office or go to work for an already-established law firm. A law officer might choose to work in an urban area or to run for office as sheriff.

Another approach is to look at the jobs involved in the work of a particular organization. For example, the National Opinion Research Center, NORC, brings together people in many careers to do the work of social science research. There are those who design the studies, deciding which issues should be examined. There are people who write the questionnaires used to interview NORC's respondents. Interviewers talk to respondents to get the important information required by each study. And that is only the beginning. There are also secretaries, accounting clerks, personnel specialists, printers, word processors, librarians, receptionists, business managers, keypunch operators, computer programmers, maintenance personnel, and more.

As you can see, there are many more possibilities out there than some people consider when they think about making their own choices.

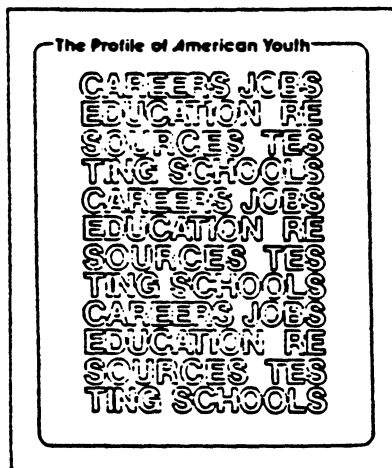
What are some career opportunities?

Account adjuster
Aircraft mechanic
Architect
Bailiff
Baker
Bank cashier
Biologist
Bricklayer
Bus driver
Cabinetmaker
Camera operator
Cardiologist
Cartographer
Chemist
Child care aide
Computer programmer
Customs agent
Dental hygienist
Drafting clerk
Editor
Employment counselor
Farmer
Film technician
Government clerk
Graphics designer
Health technician
Home economist
Inspector
Judge
Key punch operator
Laboratory supervisor
Legal clerk
Lithographer
Machinist
Mail carrier
Management analyst
Nurse's aide

Nutritionist
Occupational therapist
Orthodontist
Painter
Patrol officer
Quality control clerk
Radiologist
Realtor
Secretary
Soil chemist
Steel handler
Surveyor
Tailor
Therapist
Tool and die maker
Vocational counselor
Warehouse clerk
Woodworker
X-Ray developer
Youth program director
Zookeeper

Where can I get more information on careers?

You can talk to a career or guidance counselor at your high school or college, a state employment counselor, or a private employment counselor. Your librarian may be able to direct you to books or reference materials on careers. One very useful book is the Occupational Outlook Handbook. This handbook, published by the federal government, includes information on many jobs. For each type of job there is information on the kind of work involved, employment opportunities, educational requirements, salary, opportunity for advancement, working conditions, future demand, and places to write to get more information. □



RESOURCES

People and places can help you learn more about testing, education, careers, and job hunting.

Making career choices and finding a job can be very challenging. Your interests, abilities, education, and the kinds of jobs that are available all play a part. Some of you may be looking for a part-time job while you are in school, others may be looking for your first job in your chosen career, and still others may already be working but interested in a new job or career.

Whatever your goal, there are many people and places along the way that can help you in your career search. Some of these resources are:

Guidance and Career Counselors. These specialists can help you in many ways. They can tell you more about aptitude and interest tests. They can give you information about school choices and financial aid. They may know what the future demand will be for persons in various jobs. A guidance or career counselor might also be able to direct you to career and job opportunities in your area.

Friends and Relatives. The people you know may be great resources in the same ways that guidance and career counselors are. They may know of schools or financial aid opportunities. They may also know about job openings, either where they work or with people they know or work with. If you think about the people you know, you may find that they represent many jobs and careers. You can ask them about their own work, or if they know any places to go or people to talk to about careers and jobs.

Professional Organizations. A professional organization is just what the name implies—a group of individuals in the same occupational area. Professional organizations are probably in the best position to know what is going on in their fields. They know about schools that offer courses in their fields and they sometimes offer courses themselves. They often know about future needs in their fields and about immediate job openings.

One such organization is the American Institute of Architects. They can tell you which schools provide programs in architecture and the future need for architects. They also have information on organizations that give financial aid to people who want to study architecture.

Another professional organization is the American Nurses' Association. The services they provide are similar to those of other professional organizations. They have information on careers in nursing, loans, scholarships, job opportunities, and other items of interest for those who are thinking of going into nursing.

If you want to know if there is a professional organization for the field that you are interested in, one way of finding out is by looking at the Occupational Outlook Handbook. At the end of each career section, there are places listed where you can write for more information, often including professional organizations. The Occupational Outlook Handbook should be available from your librarian.

Unions. Workers in particular kinds of jobs are often organized into unions. These organizations are often good sources of information about jobs in their fields. For many jobs, they also provide training through apprenticeship programs.

To find the names of unions representing workers in fields you are interested in, you can look in the Directory of National Unions and Employee Associations. This is a government publication and should be available from your librarian.

Government Job Opportunities. Federal, state, and local governments have many job opportunities in almost every field. They also have information on careers, including the skills involved, the future need for employees, and salary ranges. If you would like information on a specific career, you can write to:

Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402

For information on federal jobs, you can call the Federal Job Information Center in your area. The Federal Job Information Center is listed in the white pages of the telephone book under "United States Government." If you contact the federal government about jobs, you can ask about openings in your particular field of interest. You can also ask about the requirements for various jobs, which may include taking a test. If a test is required, the Job Information Center can give you dates, times, and places where the test is offered. These kinds of tests measure how much you know about a particular field. They are like aptitude tests, because they attempt to measure how well you can be expected to do in a particular job. Like the tests we talked about in the section on testing, there are practice tests and manuals available at most bookstores to help prepare you for these tests.

If you would like more information about jobs with the federal government, you can write to this address:

Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20415

If you would like more information on state and local government jobs, you can look in the white pages of the telephone book under the state, county, or city name, then call either the Employment or Personnel Department. Sometimes when you call these departments, including the Federal Job Information Center, you will hear a tape-recorded message on the jobs that are available. They will usually tell you what to do if you are interested in any of these jobs.

Another opportunity for employment with the federal government is the Armed Services. There are a variety of enlistment options including active duty and the Reserves.

The active duty requirements vary from branch to branch. For example, the minimum Army enlistment is for two years active duty.

The Reserve program is an enlistment option provided by some branches of the Armed Services. The distinctive feature of the Reserves is that an enlistee continues to live at home and receives pay for attending weeknight meetings, weekend activities, and summer vacation training camps. Reserves are called to active duty only in the event of a national emergency.

The Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) is another program in the Reserves.

Participants attend a regular four-year college program and, in addition, take certain military-related courses. While in college, people in the ROTC program receive financial assistance. The amount of this assistance varies among the branches of the Armed Services. In exchange for this financial support, one makes a commitment to serve for a certain period of time as an officer in the chosen branch of service.

Further information about enlistment options can be obtained from recruiters for the branches of the Services.

Among other benefits, there are two general types of educational opportunities through the Armed Services: those available while on active duty and those available after the completion of active duty.

While on active duty, members of the Armed Services may take part in programs offered on the military bases where they are stationed. These include courses for the GED test or for a high school diploma, college and graduate-level courses, and vocational training. Members may also use their off-duty time in courses offered at non-military schools in the areas where they are stationed. The Armed Services will pay a percentage of such tuition costs. This percentage varies among the branches of the Services.

For those who complete their active duty requirement, the U.S. government also provides a matching funds educational program. For every dollar you set aside for education during your period of enlistment, the government will provide two additional dollars toward the cost of that education.

The Armed Services, in addition to these educational programs, provide on-the-job training to all enlistees in connection with their regular job assignments in the Services. Job assignments are determined by tests taken at the time of entering the service, the individual's interests, and the needs of the particular branch of the service. A wide variety of assignments means that intensive job training is provided in areas as diverse as computers and cooking.

If you would like more information about any aspect of the Armed Services, career counselors or military recruiters will be able to help you. You can find the telephone numbers of the Service branches in the white pages of the telephone book under "U.S. Government—Armed Services." The minimum age requirement for all branches of the Services is 17.

State Employment Agencies. State employment agencies provide services both for the person who is looking for a job and for the employer who wants to hire someone. These agencies have listings of jobs that are available in your state. Some agencies also provide counseling to those who aren't sure of their abilities and interests, and some administer vocational aptitude and interest tests. All of the services provided are free of charge.

Private Employment Agencies. Private employment agencies have listings of available jobs. They are different from state employment agencies because they do not usually provide job counseling and they sometimes charge a fee. However, private agencies usually do try to match up abilities with job openings. Some agencies work with all fields, but some only work in one field, for example, engineering, accounting, or secretarial. There are also some agencies that work only with people who want a job for a short time, or people who want to work part-time.

Private employment agencies charge a fee for their services. Sometimes this fee is paid by the employer and sometimes it is paid by the employee. Generally, if the employee is required to pay the fee, a contract is signed by the employee agreeing to this. If you're thinking of using this method to try to find a job, it's a good idea to be careful about signing anything that could commit you to paying a fee.

If you would like to know more about private employment agencies, you can find a listing of names and numbers in the Yellow Pages of the telephone book under "Employment Agencies." You can also write for a list of accredited agencies from the National Employment Association. "Accredited" means that an agency has met certain standards set by their national association. The address is:

National Employment Association
2000 K Street, N.W., Suite 353
Washington, D.C. 20006

Yellow Pages of the Telephone Book. In addition to the ways already discussed, the Yellow Pages can be used to call employers directly. To do this, look up the field that interests you and call the employers listed. When you call, you might ask to speak to the head of the department where you would like to work. You can use this approach either to find out more about a particular field or to try to get a job.

As an example, to learn more about repairing typewriters, you might look under "Typewriters" in the Yellow Pages. Then you could call the places listed and ask to talk to the manager. You could tell him or her that you would like to come in to learn more about typewriter repair. You could say that you are thinking of going into this field. Then you could make an appointment. By going in to talk to the manager or someone else in the shop, you would get a direct look at the work one does in typewriter repair. Many people get jobs by going in and talking to an employer and showing interest in that field.

Newspaper Want-Ads. Newspapers can be helpful in a number of ways. They may have a section on career advice, as well as listings of job openings in the want-ads section, often called "The Classifieds." Job openings are usually listed alphabetically by job title. Newspaper ads generally explain how to apply for the jobs listed. The ad will ask you either to telephone or write to the company.

If you telephone, you will probably be asked some questions about your education and work experience. If the company thinks that you may fill its needs, you may be asked to come in for an interview.

If the ad says that you should respond in writing, send the employer a letter that explains clearly how you fit the job description. For example, if the ad says that you need certain qualifications for the position, include a description of the related skills that you have. If the employer feels that you will be a suitable candidate for the job, you may be asked to come in for an interview.

Libraries. Libraries can provide a wealth of information on careers, schools, and jobs. Most libraries have many types of reference materials on each of these areas. Libraries usually have course catalogs and bulletins for vocational schools and colleges. They also have directories for jobs in different areas of the country. These directories include the company name and address, the type and size of the company, and the names and titles of key executives in the company. There are national, state, and regional directories, and directories for particular fields, such as chemistry, rubber, appliances, retail sales, and banking.

In this booklet, we have included some general information on careers, schools, and jobs. We hope it will be useful to you, and we wish you success in your education and career. ■