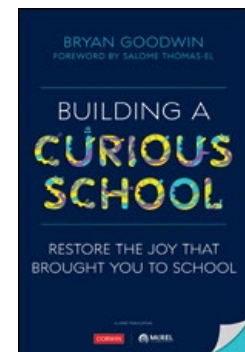


# Student Interest Inventory

Key  
Idea

Passion is key to persistence. Teachers can help students find interests that can then grow into passions that motivate them to pursue deep, broad learning about that area of interest.

“ Beyond fleeting episodes of curiosity, students have **greater well-being, goal orientation, and motivation when they have a passion worthy of pursuit** that makes their lives meaningful. However, for many students, suggesting they find their life’s passion can feel overwhelming, as they may not have sufficient interests to know what they’re passionate about. So it’s often easier to help them to identify things that hold their interest—areas they want to explore or master that provide the joy of discovery or moving closer to a goal. Over time, such interests can grow into passions worthy of pursuit. ”



p. 159, *Building a Curious School* (Corwin & McREL)

Student interest inventories are brief surveys teachers can use with their students to get to know their academic and extra-curricular interests. By knowing more about their students, teachers can plan lessons and activities that tap into these interests and help students make personal connections with their learning.

On the following page is a sample student interest inventory with some questions teachers can ask their students to help identify their interests. Teachers can modify the list of questions to best fit their student population and needs.

After students answer these questions, invite them to review their answers, looking for themes that reveal their natural curiosity—the things that make them curious, motivated, and excited to learn. Then, ask students to write down three curiosity quests (areas, skills, challenges, mysteries, etc.) they’d like to explore in the next three months (and in doing so, experience joy and excitement).

## Student Interest Inventory

- What subjects or classes do you most enjoy in school?
- What topics/subjects/skills have you really enjoyed learning about in school?
- What skill have you taught yourself, on your own, outside of school?
- What was the last thing you felt curious enough about to investigate on your own?
- What kind of books, magazine articles, blogs, or websites do you read, or podcasts you listen to, for enjoyment?
- If you could ask a remarkable person for advice, who would it be? What would you ask?
- If you could plan a field trip to anywhere, where would you go? What would you learn?
- Which of these challenges do you find most engaging? Rank them in order from 1 to 7.
  - \_\_\_ Figuring out how things work to fix them (for example: electronics, cars, appliances)
  - \_\_\_ Understanding what makes people tick—their motives, experiences, and values
  - \_\_\_ Engaging in creative, imaginative thinking (creating a story, song, recipe, etc.)
  - \_\_\_ Helping others with problems (for example: relationships, health, emotions)
  - \_\_\_ Working with numbers and statistics to analyze information or solve problems
  - \_\_\_ Practicing hard to get good at something
  - \_\_\_ Exploring deep questions (for example: about the universe, the meaning of life, society)