## Using CIS Occupation Sort

**Summary**  
Students explore career options using CIS Occupation Sort.

**Objectives**  
*Students will . . .*
- Discuss the concepts of preferences, factors, prioritizing, and compromising.
- Complete Occupation Sort.
- Research at least three and up to six occupations of interest from their Occupation Sort list.

**Preparation**  
Be familiar with CIS Occupation Sort. Review the Occupation Sort chapter in the *CIS Reference Guide*. Read the *Understanding Occupation Sort Factors* Instructional Note.

Students can save their Occupation Sort responses in *My Career Planning Portfolio* in CIS for Internet. The portfolio must be set up before the student begins Occupation Sort. Be prepared to have students set up their portfolios prior to using Occupation Sort or know how to instruct them to log into their previously set-up portfolios.

Make copies of the *Matching Dreams to Realities* and *My Occupations of Interest* worksheets — one each per student.

Option: If students are using *My Plan* in CIS for Internet’s *My Career Planning Portfolio*, the *Matching Dreams to Realities* worksheet used in this activity can be replaced by the activity of the same name in the Research and Goals section.

**Materials**  
*Matching Dreams to Realities* worksheet  
*My Occupations of Interest* worksheet

**Computer Use**  
CIS Occupation Sort, Occupations

**Subject Areas**  
Any

**Time Required**  
90 minutes

**Group Size**  
Class, individual

**Steps**

1. Facilitate a class discussion on the topic, “The characteristics of an ‘ideal’ job are . . .”. Record the responses on chalkboard or flip chart. Encourage discussion about the differences in “ideals.” Discuss what affects perceptions of what is “ideal,” such as personal experiences, gender, and cultural issues. Encourage students to focus on their own experiences, what they have done, what they enjoy doing, and what they like and do well. Discussion time will vary.

*continued*
Explain that occupations can be described using common characteristics or factors and that these factors can help us evaluate and select occupations that interest us:

*Occupations can be described using common factors, such as working conditions, work activities, skills used, education levels required, and wages. Just as people can be described by different features, occupations can be described by different characteristics. A person may have the feature of blonde hair, while an occupation may have a characteristic of a high wage. Occupation Sort uses 28 common factors to describe and sort 530 occupations.*

2. Explain to the students that Occupation Sort can help them to discover occupations that have characteristics that are important to them. Use the metaphor of looking for a house that is described in the *Understanding Occupation Sort Factors* Instructional Note. Explain that they can select any of the 28 characteristics as factors for finding occupations of interest but that this time they will start with the “Recommended List.” Explain that Occupation Sort is not a test, not does it make decisions for them. On the basis of the factors they select, they will create a list of occupations that match their preferences and priorities.

3. Hand out the *Matching Dreams to Realities* worksheet. Ask the students to read My Dream Occupations section and then write occupation titles in the spaces provided. They can list as few or as many as they want.

4. Continue on the worksheet to Occupation Sort section. Using a computer projector if possible, demonstrate the use of Occupation Sort. Tell the students that they will be starting with the “Recommended List” of factors. They will have the option of accepting the factors on this list, or they can change them. You can show how the level of education (the first factor in the “Recommended List”) affects their list of occupations. You can also demonstrate the concept of compromising using the “Click all levels you are willing to consider.”

5. Have students complete Occupation Sort for themselves. They may begin to have short lists of occupations before they complete sorting on all of the factors. Once they have a list of 10 to 25 occupations, they may want to stop sorting. If they have not completed all of the factors, they can click the “On Your List” link next to the bar graph to get their results. Instruct students not to print their lists at this time but to save the information in their portfolios.

6. Go to the Dreams and Realities section of the worksheet. Explain to students that they can alter their selections. If an occupation they are interested in does not appear on their list, the “View Occupations Not On Your List” feature will help them identify the criteria that removed the occupations from their list. To change their selections, they can return to the factor and change their preference.

7. After students are satisfied with their lists, have them save their Occupation Sort responses one more time to their portfolios. (They can overwrite the responses they saved previously.) Have students use the Occupations file to complete the *My Occupations of Interest* worksheet. Students should identify their top three to six occupations of interest to research.

8. Have students write a short paragraph summarizing what they liked about their chosen occupations at the bottom of the worksheet. Optional: Have students save comments in their portfolio detailing why they had an interest in each of the occupations they researched.

continued
9. Facilitate a class discussion about what the students learned while using Occupation Sort.

VARIATIONS
1. Ask students to conduct informational interviews with two individuals who work in occupations that are on their lists and interest the students. The Industry Visit activity is a useful resource. After these interviews, ask students to Restore their original lists and change any answers based on learning from the informational interviews.

ALLIED ACTIVITIES
- Clusters - Career Families
- Follow My Heart
- Gaining Work Experience
- I Have Skills
- Juggling My Career Options
- Occupation Odyssey
- Priorities
- Ten Things I Love to Do
- The Bobilator
- What Happens after High School?
- Where Am I Going?
- Work, Study, and Leisure
- Workplaces and Conditions

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTE
Understanding Occupation Sort Factors

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES
Students will:
- Complete the Occupation Sort process and obtain a list of occupations.
- Complete My Occupations of Interest worksheet.

STUDENT WORKSHEET
Matching Dreams to Realities
My Occupations of Interest

PORTFOLIO
CIS Occupation Sort printout

SORTING
- Subject: English, Social Science, Advisor/Advisee, Career-Related Learning, Guidance
- Grade Levels: 7, 8, 9
- CIS Components: Occupations, Occupation Sort
STANDARDS

Career-Related Learning Standards:
- Problem Solving, Communication, Employment Foundations

SCANS:
- Resources, Information, Personal Qualities

NCDG:
- Skills to locate, understand, and use career information; Understanding the process of career planning

ASCA:
- Academic Development, Career Development

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Bloom’s Taxonomy: Analysis

Intellectual Operation: Reiteration, Summarization
If students are having difficulty understanding the decision “factors” used in CIS Occupation Sort and the reasons for prioritizing and compromising, try this metaphor:

Using Occupation Sort to find occupations you might like is similar to asking a real estate agent to help you find a house. When you work with the agent, you first provide a list of desired features for the house. Let’s imagine your list includes these criteria: two stories, a corner lot, three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a laundry room, a family room, a dining room, a fireplace, landscaped yard, and a two-car garage with a workshop area.

The agent returns with the following information:

“There are 100 two-story houses. Twenty-five are on corner lots, 75 have three bedrooms or more, 65 have two or more bathrooms, 35 have laundry rooms, 35 have both family and dining rooms, 16 have fireplaces, all have yards with various degrees of landscaping, 30 have two-car garages, and 10 have workshop areas. Can you be more specific about which factors have priority?”

The real estate agent can only select houses based on your preferences and priorities. By clearly stating what you need and want, you enable the agent to choose possible fits. However, by being too specific and demanding that the house have all of the criteria you have listed, you may eliminate a wonderful option. Somewhere in the middle, you will find some great houses to consider. To help find those great houses, you might need to prioritize your criteria, that is, select the most important factors for your decision. You may also want to suggest some alternatives, or ranges, for your criteria — for example, a garage is critical, a two-car garage is preferable, but you will consider a one-car garage.

Occupation Sort works in much the same way. It matches your preferences or decision “factors” with characteristics of an occupation. Choosing the factors you want to consider, the order of their importance, and the ranges you are willing to consider will produce a list of occupations that fit your preferences. During the process you may decide to revise your factors, alter your priorities, or make some additional compromises.

Like buying a house, you aren’t finished when you have your list. The list simply helps you focus your research efforts. Once a list of possible houses is narrowed down, the buyer needs to get a description of the properties, see photographs, do research about the community, and visit the houses before making a decision. No one can do that except the prospective buyer.

Researching and selecting occupations for your career goals is much the same. In doing the research on occupations in your list, you may find occupations that do not really match your interests or needs, and you may find that you should consider other factors. You continue the process of researching and evaluating and modifying your criteria until you have located some occupations that you want to pursue in your career plan.
Matching Dreams to Realities

Name ____________________  Date _______________

My Dream Occupations

Pause for a moment and let yourself imagine your future. What would be your ideal occupation? List below any occupations you have thought about. Include occupations that you have actually talked about with friends and family as well as those that are dreams.

Occupation Titles

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Occupation Sort

One way to learn about your options is to use Occupation Sort in CIS. Occupation Sort can help you discover occupations that match your preferences — for example, work activities you would like to do, skills you want to use, and other factors influencing you, such as education level and wages. It helps you explore careers by asking you to think about what is most important to you.

Occupation Sort is a computerized sorting tool. It does not test your abilities. It does not tell you what you should become. It will help you find occupations to explore further because they match criteria that you have chosen.

Follow the instructions on the computer. For this exercise, we recommend that you start with the “Recommended List.” Ten factors will be selected for you. You will be able to accept the list or change it. If you think about the questions and are honest with yourself, you should find some interesting occupations on your list. If you don’t like your first list of occupations, you can reconsider and change your responses to get another list. When you have completed the process, save Occupation Sort to your portfolio. You may also want to print your list.

continued
Dreams and Realities

Look back at Your Dream Occupations. How does your Occupation Sort list compare to your dream occupations? Are all of your dream occupations on your Occupation Sort list? If an occupation on your dream list is not on your Occupation Sort list, find out why not.

Click on View Occupations Not On Your List in the upper left of the page, find the occupation’s title, and click on the Why Not button next to the title. Note below which of your responses dropped it from your Occupation Sort list.

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<th>My Dream Occupations Not on My List</th>
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You can change your answers for any of the factors to get a new list.

Ask yourself, “Am I willing to change my expectations about that aspect of my life?” For example, if the Education and Training characteristic you selected was “A few hours to a few months,” but the requirement of your dream occupation is “4 years,” are you willing to compromise and select four years of education after high school? Record your changes in the spaces below.

I changed the “__________________” factor because __________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

I changed the “__________________” factor because __________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

I changed the “__________________” factor because __________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

I changed the “__________________” factor because __________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Save your final Occupation Sort responses. You can now research some of these occupations.
My Occupations of Interest

Name ____________________  Date _____________

Research three to six occupations from your Occupation Sort list. Complete the following information about each:

**Occupation 1**

Median national wage ____________________________
Median Oregon wage ____________________________
Preparation required ___________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
Oregon outlook ______________________________________________________
National outlook ______________________________________________________
Related program of study _______________________________________________
Oregon school that offers the program _____________________________________

**Occupation 2**

Median national wage ____________________________
Median Oregon wage ____________________________
Preparation required ___________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
Oregon outlook ______________________________________________________
National outlook ______________________________________________________
Related program of study _______________________________________________
Oregon school that offers the program _____________________________________

**Occupation 3**

Median national wage ____________________________
Median Oregon wage ____________________________
Preparation required ___________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
Oregon outlook ______________________________________________________
National outlook ______________________________________________________
Related program of study _______________________________________________
Oregon school that offers the program _____________________________________

continued
Using CIS Occupation Sort

Occupation 4

Occupation 5

Occupation 6

Which of these occupations would you like to explore further? Why?