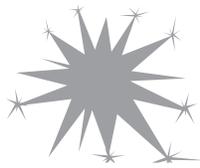


Explorer's Manual



This manual is the property of

Sparks Explorer

Definitions



We're going to use two *metaphors* to begin to discover what your strongest interests are and what new things you might like to try.

Metaphor (noun)

- A figure of speech in which a word that literally means something physical is used for something else to show a likeness or similarity
- A symbol

Spark (noun)

- A small burning ember
- A trace of life or energy
- A flash of light
- Something that makes you feel excited

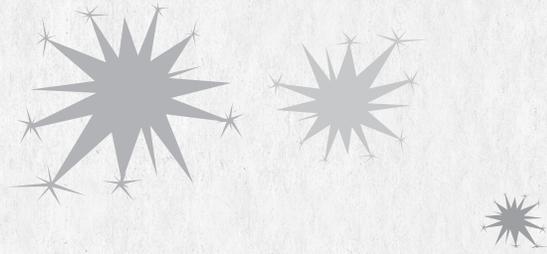
Explore (verb)

- To study, search, or investigate
- To become familiar with by testing or experimenting
- To travel over new territory for adventure or discovery
- To look closely at

We will use the word *sparks* to mean your strongest, most passionate interests. Why is that a good metaphor?

We will use the word *explore* to mean looking into new hobbies or interests and figuring out the ones you want to try and work on. Why is that a good metaphor?

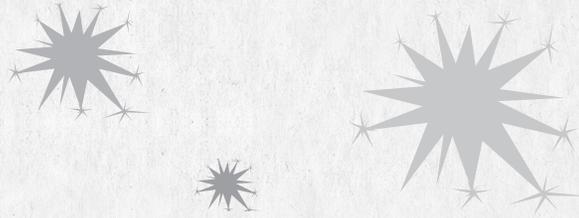
Sparks Galore!



Everyone has at least one spark. Before explorers set out, they first look around for somewhere interesting to explore. Before you begin to explore a spark, take a few minutes to see what's out there. The following is a list to help you imagine options to explore. Check the ones that sound interesting, and then answer the questions on the next page.

- Adopt a dog rescued from a puppy mill
- Start my own business
- Ride on the space shuttle
- Learn to do the latest dance steps
- Create a new video game
- Get a bad law changed
- Write the lyrics to a popular song
- Read every book written by my favorite author
- Build a hideaway in the woods
- Be captain of a sports team
- Edit a fashion magazine
- Grow my own fruits and vegetables
- Own a '57 Chevy with a two-tone turquoise finish
- Ride a horse on a beach in Costa Rica
- Learn a foreign language
- Travel to all 50 United States
- Teach in an inner-city school or be a principal
- Do scientific experiments with chemicals
- Compete in the national spelling bee
- Be president of something
- Raise money to help feed hungry people
- Compete in the Olympics
- Climb a mountain
- Discover a cure for cancer
- Have a set of maps for the whole world
- Start lifting weights
- Keep a journal for a full year
- Do color commentary for a TV soccer match
- Volunteer at an elephant sanctuary in Africa
- Have one of my paintings hang in a museum
- Invent a new use for the Internet

Spark Clusters



1. Write here in colored pencil four of the spark ideas you checked off on the previous page.

2. Now look over this list of popular clusters of sparks:
 - Doing art, music, or writing
 - Building or making things, or taking things apart
 - Playing sports, dancing, doing karate
 - Helping people or the environment
 - Being outside in nature or taking care of animals
 - Using computers
 - Thinking of ways to start a business or make money
 - Learning, reading, practicing
 - Teaching other people how to do things
 - Leadership (being captain of a team, taking charge of a group)
3. Do any of your chosen spark ideas fit into one of the popular clusters of sparks? Neatly draw an orange or yellow line from the idea to the cluster it fits into.
4. Look at the clusters again and choose the cluster that is most interesting to you right now. What are some the spark activities that would fit in that cluster? Brainstorm with your team as many activities as you can think of.

Congratulations! You've begun to explore your sparks!

Thinking about My Sparks



For number 1, write the name of a spark. For number 2, write some questions about that spark. For number 3, draw a picture of yourself doing that spark.

1. When I think about my own sparks, I think one of them is or might be:

2. Here is what I want to know about this spark:

3. Here is what it looks like to do this spark:

Explorer Pairs: Spark Interview



The spark I learned about was: _____

1. Is your spark something that makes you physically active or can you do it without moving much?
2. Does your spark use any of your five senses? Which ones? (Touch, smell, sight, hearing, taste.)
3. Do you need to be inside or outdoors for your spark? Or can it be either?
4. Is your spark something that makes a lot of noise or is it a quiet activity?
5. Do you have to wear special clothes? (A uniform, protective gear, an apron, goggles.)
6. How would you describe your spark? (Use adjectives.)
7. Is it in one of the spark clusters we learned about on page 4? If yes, which one?



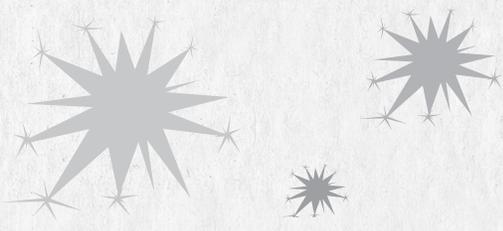
Explorer Teams: Spark Interview



The spark I learned about was: _____

1. Is your spark something that makes you physically active or can you do it without moving much?
2. Does your spark use any of your five senses? Which ones? (Touch, smell, sight, hearing, taste.)
3. Do you need to be inside or outdoors for your spark? Or can it be either?
4. Is your spark something that makes a lot of noise or is it a quiet activity?
5. Do you have to wear special clothes? (A uniform, protective gear, an apron, goggles.)
6. How would you describe your spark? (Use adjectives.)
7. Is it in one of the spark clusters we learned about on page 4? If yes, which one?

Exploring My Past



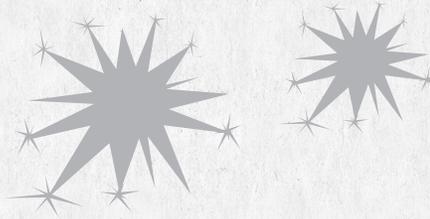
(An interview with someone who knew me when I was younger.)

The person I interviewed was: _____.

This person knew me when I was _____ years old.

1. When I was younger, what did I like to do?
2. Where did I like to go?
3. When I was younger, what always made me smile or laugh?
4. When I was younger, what did I want to be when I grew up?
5. When you think about two or three things I loved to do, were they alike in some way? (For instance, were they all related to sports? Were they all quiet activities? Did they all involve me playing with other people?)
6. What else can you tell me about who I was when I was younger?

Spark Guides



When explorers go to find out about a place that is unknown to them, sometimes other people already know that place well and help the explorers by serving as their guides.

The same is true for sparks explorers. While there can be sparks that are brand new, most sparks have been explored and developed by other people, and those people can help you now. Who are your guides?

1. Who already helps me with my sparks?
2. Who else might help me with my sparks?
3. What do they do that helps?
4. Where could I go to find another adult to be a spark guide?
5. How could I help someone else with his or her spark?
6. Who will I help today?