



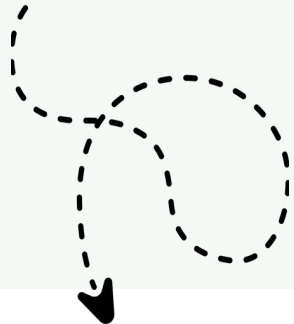
This resource is to encourage and support you on your learning journey; it provides tips and tricks to deepen your knowledge, feed your passion, and build your future-ready skills.



SO...WHAT IS LEAD YOUR LEARNING?

It's a future-forward journey where you:

- Accept the challenge to self-reflect
- Engage in learning to build your knowledge and skill sets
- Identify your passion and priorities
- Design innovative solutions for real-world problems
- Tell the world about your findings and solutions



REFLECT



Think about your aspirations, learning goals, and purpose (Return to this phase throughout your learning.)

STRETCH



Expand your knowledge and skills through active learning.

INNOVATE



Develop and iterate solutions for real-world challenges or needs.

SHOWCASE



Share your innovations and learning journey in a dynamic way.

REFLECT

Self-reflection is a way to begin to know who you are, what you want for your future, and how to plan for success.

Stop and listen to yourself as you answer these questions:

- What do you want as a career?
- What are your special skills, talents, and strengths?
- What are your passions?
- How do you want to serve and contribute to your community?

Watch and replay [The What & How of Self-Reflection](#), and jot down the following:

- 3 things you learned
- 2 aha! moments
- 1 question you still have



Check out more reflection questions in our ["For Learners: Extras"](#) resource!

REFLECT

Gauge your skills and competencies. Knowing where you excel and where you can improve is a key part of being a learner and professional.

Use this tool to **REFLECT** on your professional competencies and Future Ready skills. Rate each one as Discovering, Developing, or Doing, and use your ratings as an invitation to **STRETCH** and grow in these areas. (It's OK to not be perfect at everything but do strive to hone each skill!)

You will rate yourself using this proficiency scale:

Discovering – I am learning more about this skill before I develop and do it!

Developing – I am working on this skill but still have room to grow.

Doing – I excel here and can show what I know!

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES & FUTURE READY SKILLS

COMPETENCY & SKILL	DESCRIPTION	PROFICIENCY RATING		
		DISCOVERING	DEVELOPING	DOING
EMPOWERED LEARNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set personal learning goals and reflect on the learning process to improve outcomes. Use and troubleshoot current technologies and transfer knowledge to explore emerging technologies. 			
DIGITAL CITIZEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of living, learning and working in an interconnected world. Engage in positive, safe, legal and ethical behavior when using technology, including social interactions online. 			
KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curate resources using digital tools to construct knowledge and produce creative artifacts Explore real-world issues and problems, developing ideas and theories and pursuing answers and solution. 			
INNOVATIVE DESIGNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a variety of technologies within a design process to solve problems and create new and imaginative solutions. Exhibit a tolerance for ambiguity, perseverance and the capacity to work with open-ended problems 			
COMPUTATIONAL THINKER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage technological methods to develop/test solutions. Collect data and use digital tools to analyze them, and represent data to facilitate decision-making. 			
CREATIVE COMMUNICATOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate clearly and creatively using the platforms, tools, styles, formats and digital media. Publish or present content that customizes the message and medium for your intended audiences 			
GLOBAL COLLABORATOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use digital tools to connect with people from backgrounds and cultures to broaden mutual understanding. Explore local and global issues and use collaborative technologies to work with others to investigate solutions. 			

Source: [ISTE Standards for Students](#)

STRETCH

Transform your self-reflection into self-action by seeking out and taking part in learning activities or career-based experiences that develop your knowledge and skills.

MOVE FROM DISCOVERING TO DEVELOPING TO DOING

For the competencies and skills you rated as “Developing” or “Doing,” create a game plan to STRETCH your learning so you can move to “Doing” with confidence!

Think about activities you can engage in to further develop each competency and skill. (Explore FREE online courses or seminars, industry certification exams, informational interviews, internships, readings, or videos...then, take your skills for a test drive in your job, classroom, a mock interview, etc.)

YOUR STRETCH GAME PLAN

WHICH COMPETENCY OR SKILL WILL YOU WORK ON?	HOW WILL YOU STRETCH YOUR LEARNING? <i>(You can also add resource links to return to anytime.)</i>	WHO WILL BE YOUR ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER? <i>(Consider a classmate, your educator, employer, or mentor.)</i>	WHEN WILL YOU COMPLETE YOUR STRETCH ACTIVITY?	HOW WILL YOU KNOW THAT YOU IMPROVED?



REMEMBER, it's important that we don't see developing our skills as the end of our learning journey. Career trends are always evolving, so be sure to reflect and re-assess your competencies and skills along the way!



INNOVATE

Think about a Passion Project where you can combine your knowledge, skills, and creativity to solve a problem you see in the world.

It provides an opportunity to:

- Dive deeply into topics that interest YOU
- Think BIG and solve a real-world challenge
- Separate YOURSELF from hundreds of other college or job applicants



SO...WHAT IS
A PASSION PROJECT?

REFLECT ON A -

- real-world problem that you want to solve
- passion project that aligns with your purpose
- a social, political, economic, or industry-related issue you can impact with your voice (the possibilities are endless)



STRETCH YOURSELF BY -

- exploring and investigating various mediums to learn more about your topic
- expanding your understanding of diverse perspectives on a problem
- becoming an agent of change

INNOVATE BY -

- generating ideas through big-picture thinking
- implementing design thinking
- collaborating with peers, mentors, employer partners, and/or alumni
- using the Innovate Choice Board on pg. 5



SHOWCASE YOUR WORK BY:

- sharing your solutions and innovations to a panel or audience (think advisory board members, mentors, alumni, and/or community and business leaders)
- publishing your presentation (social media, webpage, digital portfolio)
- considering the ideas on the Showcase choice board on pg. 6



Check out these videos on Passion Projects and how they enhance your Future Ready journey:

- [Passion Projects for High School](#)
- [The Key to College Acceptance](#)
- [What is Project-based Learning](#)



INNOVATE

Using the choice board below, select a Passion Project where innovation becomes an action! You can combine your knowledge, skills, and creativity to solve a problem you see in the world.

A CHOICE BOARD is intended to:

- personalize the learning experience by giving you multiple options
- inspire ideas for how you can innovate
- tap into your voice and what you love to do



SO...WHAT IS
A CHOICE BOARD



DEVELOP A PRODUCT	Create a new product (digital or non-digital) that would solve the problem you have identified. (Consider designing, wireframing, or prototyping using platforms like Lucid , ProtoPie , or Figma , or code an app in MIT App Inventor .)
FIX A FLAW	Perform some user testing on an existing product and think of ways to remix and improve it for diverse users. Is there a practice or product that has a flaw you'd like to fix? Consider diverse users, then use that feedback to improve and recreate a product.
BE A CHANGE-MAKER	Create a movement at your school or community to amplify this industry or the skills sets needed to succeed in this field. You can start a chapter for a Career & Technical Student Organization or professional organization related to this industry, host a college/career fair or local competition to highlight this industry. How about doing community outreach using or teaching creative coding? The possibilities are endless!
HELP A LOCAL BUSINESS OR ENTITY	In your community there may be small businesses or community centers that need your prowess. How can you support them be more sustainable, marketable, successful, so your community continues to thrive? You can build your skills and support small businesses at the same time!
COMPLETE A NAF EXPEDITION	Complete an authentic learning project called a NAF Expedition that ties your favorite career pathway. (Check out our NAF Expeditions in Finance , Tech , Engineering , Hospitality & Tourism , and Health Sciences .)
CHOOSE YOUR OWN FORMAT	If there is something else you would prefer to do, that's OK! Talk it over with your educator or mentor, then GO FOR IT!



SHOWCASE

Showcase your innovations in a captivating and powerful way, whether that's to your class, a group of industry leaders, your community, or a global audience.

DIGITAL PORTFOLIO OR SITE	Create, code, or build a simple webpage to highlight your innovation, project, and learning journey. Consider bulb digital portfolios, Replit, GitHub, Google Sites, or Wix. Once it's developed, present it to an audience, and solicit feedback.
DEVELOP A SOCIAL MEDIA SERIES	Elevate your voice and innovations through digital content on a social media platform of your choosing. Raise awareness around your problem and solution through a steady series of text, graphics, and data. Create #hashtags that relate to your theme to generate more buzz and highlight your innovation, project, and learning journey.
PITCH IT!	Pretend your audience is a group of investors. Pitch your innovation to them, sharing what you learned in the process. Allow for a Q&A, then solicit feedback on the quality of your project and/or pitch.
CHOOSE YOUR OWN FORMAT	Showcase your project in a way that would best amplify your learning and your innovation. (Think about apps, AR posters, 3D product, PechaKucha , TedX Talk, a competition, etc.)

PRO TIPS:



- Level up your project by entering a school or district competition or challenge. (Think the science fair, Career & Technical Student Organizations, hackathons, etc.)
- Take a look at the Passion Project Resources in our [For Learners: Extras!](#)



We'd love to see what you created! If you would like to share it with NAF, email curriculum@naf.org. Please obtain your educator's permission before sharing (or have them email it on your behalf).



SHOWCASE

No matter how you choose to showcase your passion project, you should also share your product and learning journey in a digital portfolio.



SO...WHAT IS A DIGITAL PORTFOLIO?

A digital professional portfolio is an online collection of:

- professional documents and media that highlight your knowledge, skills, abilities, and academy experiences.
- your best work samples and projects
- multimedia that SHOWS how you learn, innovate, and share your work with others
- evidence of improvement or proficiency in work-related competencies



1

Create a digital portfolio using

[bulb](#), [Google Sites](#), [Git Hub](#), [Equedi](#), or the like.

(They each have their own nuances and limitations, so pick one that works best for you.)



Click [here](#) to watch a video of a sample digital portfolio!

2

Upload assets in different media. Think about passion projects, favorite classroom projects, reflections, internships or other work-based learning, extra-curricular activities, etc.



Take a look at the Professional Portfolio Checklist in our ["For Learners: Extras"](#) resource!

3

Add your portfolio link to your resume, business card (or cell phone contact), college essays, or job applications.