



GCSE Options

Series: Making Choices

Time needed: 60 minutes

Help and inspiration for students making their GCSE option choices.

Aims

- To support students in thinking about their GCSE option choices
- To support students in thinking about their future careers and how that links with the decisions they make

Key learning outcomes

By the end of the activity students will:

- Understand how Plotr can be used to help explore careers and understand the pathways available to them
- Have a clear understanding of the options they might choose or where they might go for additional support

Resources

- Internet access for every student or group
- A pen and a copy of the Key Questions

Use me during:

- GCSE Options Choices

Task

1. Introduce Plotr

- Introduce Plotr as a place to find out about careers and jobs, and to hear from companies about what it is like to work there.
- Ask students if they've used the site when researching jobs/opportunities? What tools have they used, if any?
- Explain that plotr.co.uk allows you to play the **Game** to find out what jobs you're suited to, and that it allows you to look at specific **Career Industries** and **Career Worlds**.
- Plotr can be a helpful resource when making decisions about GCSE options as it can provide careers ideas and advice on what subjects are important to different careers



Refer to the Quick Start Guide for more detailed information.

2. Introduce the topic of GCSE options and the task within this lesson

- Set the scene re: GCSE options - what the school deadline is, how students will be asked to make their choices and what is available.
- This lesson aims to get students thinking about their choices and how they can impact the career decisions students want to make.
- Some careers require students to have studied certain subjects at A-level or GCSE and so these choices are important when thinking about long-term plans.
- In today's task students will be asked to interview each other using the **Choosing GCSE options: 19 questions to ask yourself** article and then explore Plotr to look at careers and the advice about qualifications for certain careers.

3. Interviews

- Students are going to work in pairs or small groups and use the **Key Questions sheet** to interview each other with.
- Allow students 10 minutes for this activity which means that they may not get to ask all questions, so can pick questions at random from the sheet. Each student should try and ask at least 3 questions of their team mates before swapping roles. Students should avoid asking the same question.
- Students can go onto the article **Choosing GCSE options: 19 questions to ask yourself** on Plotr and find out what Plotr said about these questions; do the students agree, had they already talked about the points Plotr makes?

4. Use Plotr

- Students should go to www.plotr.co.uk. They are going to look at careers they may be interested in and see what the job profile suggests in terms of qualifications.
 - If they know what career or field they are thinking of they can research these using the search bar.
 - If students do not know what sort of career or field they want to work in they can play the careers game to give them some inspiration or explore by **Worlds, industry or browsing careers**.
- What did they find out about the different careers and pathways?

Plenary

Do students have a better understanding of the links between GCSE choices and careers? Did they think it was so important? Where can they go for more support at school, how can they get their parents involved?

Follow on activities

- Connect each GCSE to related careers - **[download posters for each option here](#)**
- See **www.plotr.co.uk** for more lesson plans and careers inspiration
- Play the full Plotr psychometric **game** with your students
- Share the activity with form leaders in the school
- Invite a speaker in to talk about their career and the impact of making educational choices
- Follow the #GCSEOptions campaign from Plotr for more resources and inspiration

Key Questions

Questions to ask yourself about GCSE's

1. Should I base GCSE options on what I enjoy?
2. Should I choose a GCSE subject because I like the teacher?
3. Should I choose a GCSE subject because my friends are doing it?
4. How much should money and future salary be a factor when I'm choosing GCSEs?
5. Whose advice should I listen to when choosing GCSE options?
6. Should I go for more or fewer GCSE subjects? What's more impressive?
7. Are my A-Level choices affected by the GCSE choices I make now?
8. Do universities care about which GCSE options you choose?
9. Should I think about how courses are marked when choosing my GCSE options?
10. What's the difference between Triple, Double or BTEC sciences?
11. How important is it to get good grades in my GCSEs?
12. What's the difference between 'hard' and 'soft' subjects?
13. Should I take subjects which aren't GCSEs?
14. How useful is GCSE advice from online student forums?
15. Once I've come up with a final list of GCSE options, does it look balanced?
16. Does it matter if I'm in a lower set for my GCSEs?
17. Will I ever regret my GCSE choices?
18. How can I cope with the immense stress of choosing GCSE options? On some days I don't even know what I want to have for breakfast!