



Frequently Asked Questions

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How is YouScience different from other assessments?

YouScience Snapshot is not self-reported like many current assessments. These other assessments make you do the work by asking directly “How interested are you in teaching/business/interior design/science”. These assessments can only tell you what you already know about yourself. Often the reason you take an assessment is because you don’t know what you want and need new information and insights. Self-reports are subjective, and your current mood and attitude can affect how you respond to these assessments. If you just had a really great day at work, you might respond to questions about how much you enjoy working in your field differently than you would if you just had a really bad day.

YouScience gets past what you already know about yourself and gets under the hood to identify your natural strengths and underlying potential.

The YouScience Snapshot uses engaging exercises, (or ‘brain games’ as some students call them), to deliver real data about students’ aptitudes or natural abilities that are set around 7th grade and remain stable throughout their lifetime. Our exercises are based on over 90 years of research behind the science of aptitudes. We then combine that aptitude information with their passions to show them where they are most likely to find satisfaction in education and their career.

How to Explain an Aptitude

Each of us is made up of a combination of innate qualities, or aptitudes. Think of it as our hard-wired potential. Some people call these talents or strengths. Aptitudes reflect how quickly and easily one can learn skills and abilities in particular areas. When we say that aptitudes are natural abilities, we mean that they do not seem to be acquired simply through training or experience. Anyone can improve with practice, but one’s speed and ease in improving is reflected in their aptitude level. Having a high aptitude means it’s easy to learn tasks that rely on that aptitude, and once they do, they’ll be able to perform them faster and more accurately. Aptitudes can also reflect one’s tendency to approach projects one way or another. Research shows that these aptitudes form a definable pattern and are stable by about 7th grade.

It is important to understand that abilities are distinct from interests, skills and personality traits, all of which can change over time. Because of their stable nature, aptitudes serve as a reliable navigational tool throughout a lifetime of decisions. When we are using our aptitudes we are most happy and satisfied as we feel we are 'in the zone' rather than engaged in a frustrating, uphill battle.

Understanding our aptitudes arms us with special knowledge to confront an ever-changing set of circumstances and challenges. For instance, how easily and quickly do you discern relationships between seemingly unrelated objects? How easily can you arrange information in a logical order? Do you make plans in your head or do you need pen and paper to see things clearly? How do you translate two-dimensional pictures into three dimensions to conceptualize problems? In a team environment do you best add value as a specialist with specific skills, or as a generalist who can manage the big picture? All of these questions and many more can be answered when you are offered a scientifically valid evaluation of your innate abilities.

Pursuits for which we do not possess a strong aptitude are still achievable. Nothing trumps motivation and effort. Understanding where your natural abilities lay however, is a blueprint for maximizing ones chances for satisfaction and success in many of life's endeavors.

The Stability of Aptitudes

Research shows that around 7th grade, the aptitudes measured in Snapshot are generally stable. Over a lifetime, aptitudes fluctuate slightly, but typically don't change in relation to others in the same age range. This is in contrast to interests that usually change over short timeframes based on exposure to information, experiences, and the people who influence us. Interests tend to shift frequently - especially in the formative years of Middle School, High School and College.

Why is it important not to cheat?

YouScience aims to identify what your natural strengths are, so that you can find a major or a career that allows you to do your best work in a way that feels naturally easy for you. Wouldn't you want your everyday to feel like you've done great work without stress or frustration? The name of the game is what is the best fit for you.

If you were to fold a real piece of paper during the Spatial Visualization section – sure, you'd probably get a high aptitude score – but would you want it? You'd then be recommended careers that require a high level of Spatial Visualization. If you're not actually high in those aptitudes, those careers would be stressful – and you'd probably not be very happy. So, definitely try your best, but remember – this is about what you naturally do well, and about how you fit with potential majors and career. Knowing what's challenging for you is just as important as knowing what's easy. Let the natural you shine through. Your future self will thank you for it.

How does YouScience find a match between my Aptitudes and Careers?

YouScience suggests careers based on the best fit between your aptitudes and the aptitudes important for that career, with the aptitudes that are most important for success in that career taken into consideration.

To determine which aptitudes are most important for each career, we partnered with experts in job performance and utilized the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration's O*NET Career Database. What are the common tasks within each career path? What do people do each day? What are characteristics of successful people in this career? Combining several different sources of information, we translated the tasks or requirements of each career into an aptitude profile that reflects a successful person in that career. This aptitude profile is then matched against a student's aptitude profile to suggest best-fit careers where the student will likely be most successful.

Are Aptitudes different than Personality Traits?

Yes. While personality assessments provide for interesting conversation, they rely on self-reported information. They more often reflect recent experiences, and do not reliably predict ones career fit. Personality inventories are useful in many settings, but should be viewed as a piece of the career puzzle rather than a key to unlock real information and guidance.

Are Aptitudes different than Skills?

Yes. Aptitude is the potential to acquire a skill. Skills are developed from practice and experience. Aptitudes reflect how much practice and experience it will take to develop those skills. In other words, aptitudes reflect how quickly and easily you can master and utilize particular skills. They also provide a gauge on the ultimate level of proficiency with that skill you are likely to achieve. If you know where your aptitudes lay, you can select career paths that require learning the types of skills that come more easily.

Are Aptitudes different than Intelligence?

Yes. Two individuals who score the same absolute number on an intelligence test or SAT may score wildly differently on an aptitude assessment. A standardized test score does not provide insight to any given career.

If I work really hard can I improve an Aptitude?

You can work really hard to 'overcome' a lack of aptitude to develop a skill, but it won't come easily and you will be left feeling exhausted and like you are climbing uphill. Additionally, you will likely never get as good at the skill as those who begin with a good aptitudinal fit. Focusing your energy on careers that are a natural fit for you will provide an inherent ease and satisfaction in your day-to-day work life. An aptitude is a natural ability or 'gift' that you are born with. Why not make excelling a little easier?

I don't think I did my best. Can I take the test over again?

Your natural abilities or aptitudes reveal themselves in a subtle but powerful way when you are performing under pressure and stress. While you might feel pressure and stress during the assessment, know that it's a result of your aptitudes being worked. Part of the science of the YouScience Profile is the ordering of the assessments within the Profile to ensure the tasks are delivered in the best way to measure your abilities. You may be surprised to find that your results are different than you think.

What if my student underperforms? Is this a 'dream killer'?

No, and there is no such thing as 'underperforming' in our assessments. The profile results are all about affirmation and options. No amount of measurement of aptitudes can trump a person's motivation and will to pursue a dream. We offer real information to enable a person to get there whatever the advantages or obstacles. This information is completely private and is to be used by a young adult and shared at his or her discretion with parents, counselors, or other collaborators.

My student is a high achiever. Do they need YouScience?

Absolutely. Many times, young adults that have the highest aptitudes and are the best performers have the toughest time deciding what career to pursue. They have the tyranny of choice! YouScience will give a talented young adult real information and a framework for exploring career options.

How does this work for individuals with learning differences?

Our aptitude assessments require some motor skills, good vision and intense focus for each 5-10 minute assessment. If a student can perform standard middle school work, most likely he or she will find it useful. If your student has a learning difference that may prevent this level of work, we encourage setting up the experience for the student. Use your personal knowledge of the student to maximize their confidence and ability. Discuss how this is supposed to be difficult at times, in order to find the level at which the student performance best. It is completely normal to feel frustrated or anxious. Yes, there are time limits, but if a student does not finish a section, that is completely okay. Reinforce that this is not an achievement test – it is simply determining where the student's natural strengths are. Encourage the student to take as many breaks between assessment sections as they need. So long as the student is focused within each assessment set, they can use as much time as they'd like to complete the whole thing.

If you would like to discuss your individual situation, please give us a call. As always, professionals with expertise in learning differences are always the definitive resource.

I didn't learn anything new from my YouScience Profile.

Congratulations on your high level of self-awareness! Even confirming your own opinions of your abilities, the YouScience Profile gives you a language to help express that to others, and deep information about how those traits are relevant in the workplace.