at15.com

MAKE SPARKS FLY

Prioritize and Focus

Set your priorities: Think about the things that are most important to you in your life. In the chart below:

1. List up to 10 things in your life that matter to you most. (You can list time with family and friends, participation on a team, practicing an instrument and performing, babysitting, community service projects, earning money through a job, etc.)

2. Next to each item, record the average number of hours you spend doing it each week.

3. Rank the items from 1 to 10 ("1" being the most important in your life and "10" being the least important). Only use each number ranking once.

Things that matter most	Time spent	Ranking
Ex. Playing soccer	*5 hours*	*2*

Sometimes we try to do so many things that we become overwhelmed or discouraged. Learning to prioritize the interests and passions in our lives is an important skill to develop. Look at the chart you completed above and analyze the data.

1. Are you spending time on a spark or two? Or do you need to set aside some time for exploring potential new sparks?
2. Do you want more time for the activities you ranked as your top three priorities?
3. What can you do to focus on your top priorities?

Analyze priority stories: Each day there are hundreds of stories that a newspaper could feature. A newspaper editor determines which stories should be included in the newspaper and then prioritizes these stories. The top priority stories will generally be on the front page. Take some time to look at the front page stories in USA TODAY. Choose one story to read and fill in the information below.

Title of article: _____

Summary of the story: _____

Why do I think this story was chosen to be on the front page today? _____

Examine the priorities of your peers: There are teens throughout the country who have identified their sparks and have begun to develop them. Go to at15.com and become a member so you can see what priorities your peers have identified. Specifically, click on "The @15 Short Film Contest" and then click on "view films" to see a number of videos created by teens across the U.S. These videos reveal many of the priorities American teens embrace.

New members: Use the promo code usatoday15 when you register on at15.com and receive an extra 150 points to give to the @15 charity of your choice!

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This lesson is based on the Sparks & Thriving research of Search Institute, Minneapolis, MN.