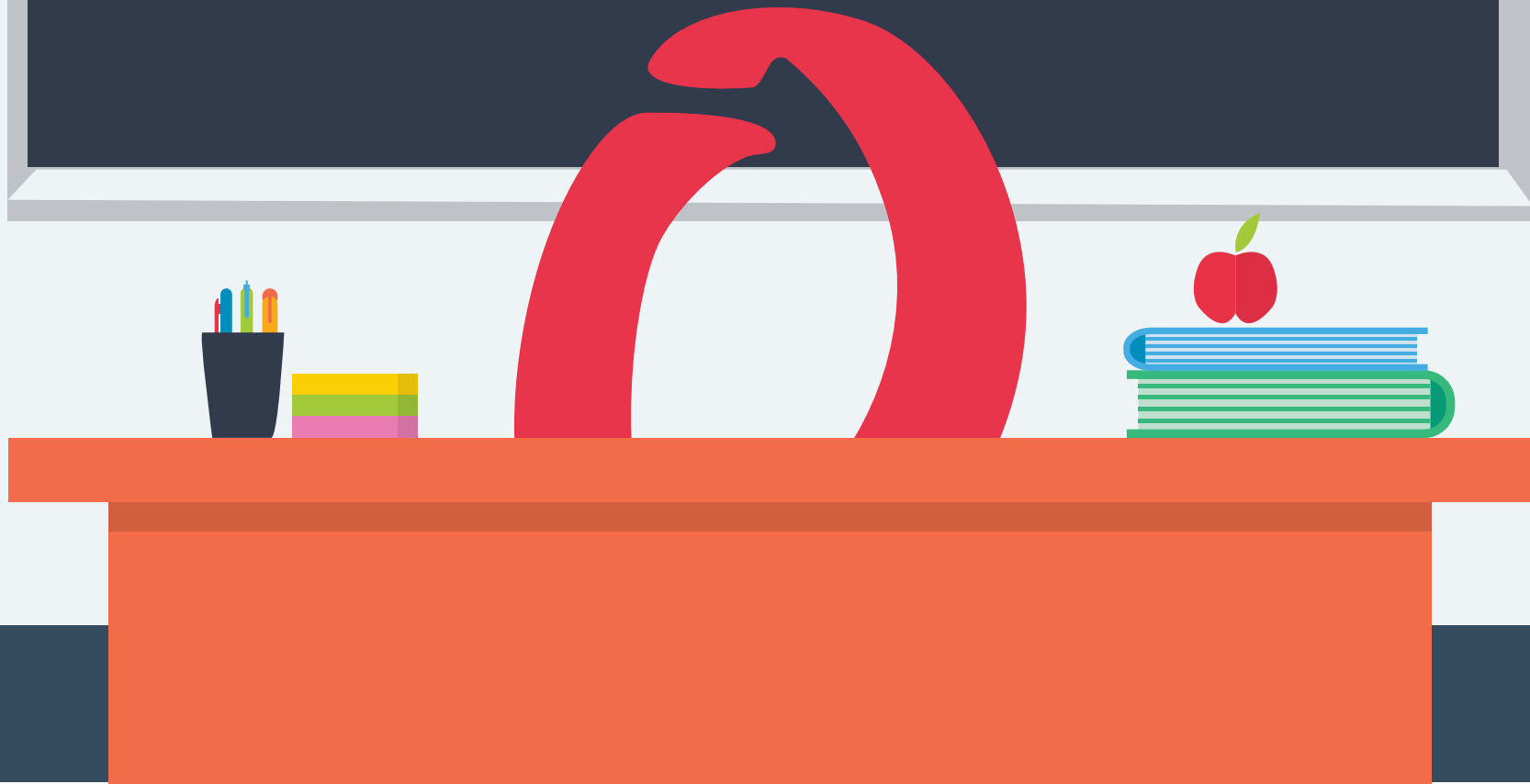


# GRADE 9

## HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS

A comprehensive, interactive guide for students, teachers & parents



# How to Choose the *Right* High School Subjects

*"Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it."* - Steve Jobs

In South Africa, each Grade 9 student comes face to face with the decision of choosing specific subjects that they will continue to study until the end of Matric. It's a time where Grade 9 students need to **match up their interests** and figure out where they see themselves in the years to come. How exciting, yet so nerve-wrecking!!

**Read this guide to understand the steps you need to take as a Grade 9 student to choose responsible high school subjects.**

It's important for you to tackle these decisions in a positive, interactive and informative way. No need to panic, we're here to guide you all the way :)



To be able to qualify for your NSC Matric, **you will need 7 subjects in total**, and you'll need to obtain the minimum pass rate for each.

4 of these subjects are compulsory:

**1 Home Language**

**First Additional Language**

**Life Orientation**

Choose between Pure Maths and Maths Literacy.

The remaining 3 are yours to choose.



## REMEMBER

- **Make responsible choices.** Chat to your teachers & parents.
- Choose subjects to provide you **access to various job opportunities.**
- **Be wary** of choosing subjects purely dependent on what you're good at.
- **Take note of admission requirements** for courses at different institutions.

# What Steps Do I Need to Take?

Before you choose your subjects you'll want to take these steps into consideration.

**STEP 1:** First off, ***figure out your interests and get to know yourself.***

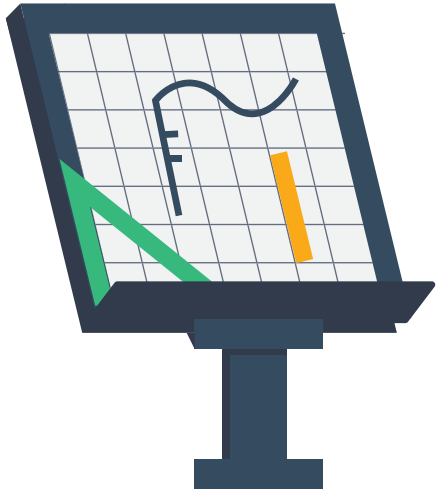
**STEP 2:** *Explore career opportunities* and gather information about the options available.

**STEP 3:** *Decide between Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy.*

**STEP 4:** *Choose your subjects responsibly.*

**STEP 5:** *Ask yourself these questions.*

***Now let's start the journey together !***



## STEP 1:

# Understanding My Interests



Before choosing your Grade 9 subjects you need to understand your interests and values before you jump the gun. It's easy to choose any subjects and get on with it. But the subjects you choose will have a huge influence in the long run.

## I HAVE NO IDEA WHICH SUBJECTS TO CHOOSE. WHAT DO I DO?

Stay calm and carry on. Okay, no but really. You may be tempted to just choose subjects based purely on personal interest, preference or ease of the subject. Of course, this is your choice, but if you have no idea what you want to do after school, here's some advice before you choose your subjects.

1. **Talk to a school or career counsellor who can assist or advise you.** Have a look at an article from a **Career Guidance Expert at the University of Witwatersrand.**
2. **Try to contact someone in the profession you wish to pursue** and ask them about their education and the steps they took to get to where they are.
3. **Job shadowing!** Have a look at our **Career Advice section** for more information.

## I WANT TO STUDY AND I KNOW WHAT I WANT TO BECOME. NOW WHAT?

For students who plan to go to university and who know exactly what they want to study, the subjects chosen in high school can have an important, if not essential, impact on your varsity career.

1. Make 100% sure you know what you want to study.
2. Enquire about what requirements are needed for the courses you're interested in.
3. Need to figure out what marks you need to get into certain courses?

**Take a look at our EduMatch page.**

# What are your interests?

**Take note: Explore and understand your interests to help you figure out which career is of interest to you.** This test is based on the Holland interest test. The results are not 100% accurate. Once you have completed each set of colour questions, tally up the amount of times you answered yes. The colour you have the most yes's to is your strongest interest type. You can have more than one as your highest type. Use this quiz as a guideline and have fun!

Do you place importance on success in business and being admired by those working below you?

Do you enjoy using your imagination to create music/literature/painting/etc?

Do you enjoy systematic, routine work?

Do you grasp maths and science concepts easily?

Do you make decisions mainly based on facts?

Do you perform well in drama/art/crafts/music/etc?

Do you dislike work revolved around machinery and tools?

Do you enjoy helping people find solutions to tough situations?

Are you generally an energetic person?

Do you enjoy operating machinery?

Are you a natural leader?

Do you have a need to be successful in your career?

Do you enjoy working with your hands?

Do you enjoy helping people?

Do you enjoy working with hypotheses and scientific methods?

Can you see yourself working to help people and their situations in your future?

Do you prefer practical and logical activities?

Do you enjoy working with numbers?

Are you good at persuading people?

Do you see yourself as friendly and trustworthy?

Do you express yourself well through creativity?

Do you avoid persuading and leading people?

Would you partake in a science or maths competition?

Do you avoid too much social interaction?

Do you perform better if you follow a set plan?

Do you find routine tedious (boring)?

Are you seen as 'different' by your peers?

Do you avoid unplanned situations like last minute plans?

Do you enjoy solving maths and/or science problems?

Do you interact well with people?

# RESULTS

## Mostly Blue:

You're the artistic type. This means you enjoy using your creativity and imagination to express yourself. You generally keep yourself busy by being creative and find motivation and energy from other artistic works.  
**vgraphic designer.**

## Mostly Orange:

You're the Investigative type. You enjoy problem solving and using your intellect to reach these solutions.

**Example careers are dentists, scientists, biologists, mathematicians.**

## Mostly Green:

You're the realistic type. This is the most dominant personality type. You value practical and realistic environments.

**Example careers are mechanics, engineers, electricians.**

## Mostly Yellow:

You're the enterprising type. You're very ambitious, social and energetic. You enjoy leading people and persuading them to buy or do things.

**Example careers are sales, law, manager.**

## Mostly Purple:

You're the social type. You value people, especially those who are friendly and appreciative. You find your energy from helping those in need.

**Example careers are teaching, nursing, counsellor.**

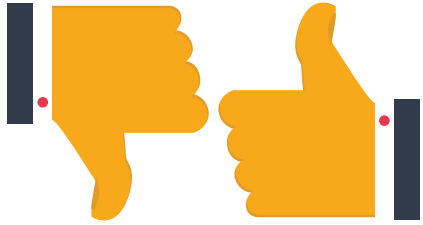
## Mostly Red:

You're the conventional type. You thrive in routine work and following set plans. You're generally good with numbers and working in a systematic way. You like your environment to be neat and well organised.

**Example careers are accountant, banker, bookkeeper**

# What type of personality do you have?

Take note that this is a guideline based on the Myers Briggs personality test. It's not in way in-depth or conclusive. It is merely a guideline to help you understand yourself better. For more conclusive test go here.



## Judgement vs. Perceiving

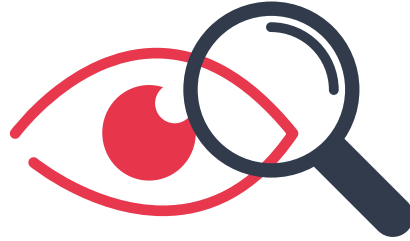
Do you enjoy spontaneity and last minute decisions?

**Yes**      **No**

Do you avoid routine and regularly try new things?

**Yes**      **No**

If you answered mostly yes, you're more perceiving. This means you like spontaneity and enjoy trying out new and different things and making quick decisions. If you answered mostly no, you're more of a judgement type. This means that you prefer routine, using logic in decision making and like things to be orderly.



## Sensory vs. Intuitive

Do you enjoy methodical, step-by-step problem solving?

**Yes**      **No**

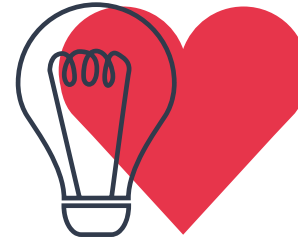
Do you become anxious if something disrupts your routine?

**Yes**      **No**

Do you enjoy facts over ideas?

**Yes**      **No**

If you answered mostly yes, you're more sensory and enjoy facts and routine. You make decisions based on the facts and enjoy routine. If you answered mostly no, you're more intuitive. This means you make decisions based on your 'gut feeling' and enjoy trying new things.



## Feeling vs. Thinker

Do you make decisions based on fact over emotion?

**Yes**      **No**

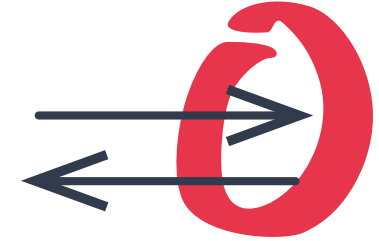
Do you consider the whole big picture when making a decision?

**Yes**      **No**

Do you struggle to form connections with people?

**Yes**      **No**

If you answered mostly yes, you're a thinker. You make decisions by considering all facets and facts involved. You sometimes struggle with social interaction. If you answered mostly no, you're a feeler. This means that you're very aware of your own feelings and of those around you. You make decisions based on your feelings.



## Introversion vs. Extraversion

Do you build relationships quickly and easily?

**Yes**      **No**

Do you draw energy from being around people?

**Yes**      **No**

Do you enjoy communicating via phone calls?

**Yes**      **No**

Do you speak before thinking about what you're going to say?

**Yes**      **No**

If you answered mostly no, you're more extraverted. This means you thrive from being around people. If you answered mostly no, you're more introverted and prefer being alone. You can be interactive but need alone time to re-energise.

## STEP 2: WHAT CAREER OPTIONS DO I HAVE?

*“Everyone can rise above their circumstances and achieve success if they are dedicated to and passionate about what they do.”*

- Nelson Mandela

When you're in high school you can be overwhelmed with information and it's easy to feel out of your depth. The best thing to do is explore what career opportunities are out there for you.

**Below you'll find careers suited to specific fields of study, as well as the preferred subjects for each.**

**For a more comprehensive explanation on what careers are out there, head on over to our [Career Section](#).**



# Human & Social Studies

## Preferred High School Subjects:

Geography  
History  
Religious Studies

### Careers

Journalist  
Academic Researcher  
Human Rights Activist  
Filmmaker  
Anthropologist  
Creative Writer

# Arts & Culture

## Preferred High School Subjects:

Dance Studies  
Design  
Drama  
Visual Art

### Careers

Fine Art  
Photography  
Drama & Theatre  
Acting  
Dance  
Design (e.g. Fashion, Graphics)  
Architect

Fine Artist  
Musician  
Performer  
Entertainer  
Graphic Designer  
Fashion Designer





# AgriScience

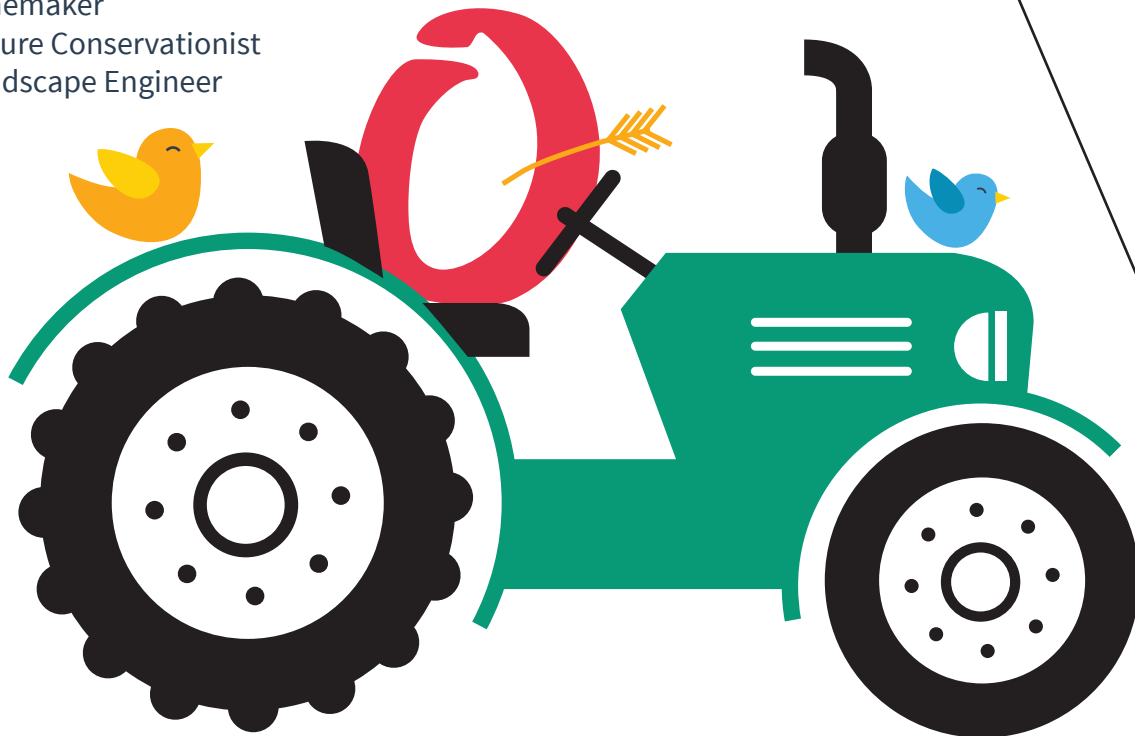
# Service

## Preferred High School Subject Choices:

Agricultural Sciences  
Agricultural Management Practices  
Agricultural Technology

## Careers

Agricultural Studies  
Farmer  
Winemaker  
Nature Conservationist  
Landscape Engineer



(FYI, services imply jobs where you help or work for someone, e.g. banking, cleaning, chauffeuring)

## Preferred High School Subject Choices:

Consumer Studies  
Hospitality Studies  
Tourism

## Careers

Tour Operator  
Chef  
Hotel Manager  
Guesthouse Manager  
Airline Crew  
Cruise Ship Cabin Crew



# Sciences & IT

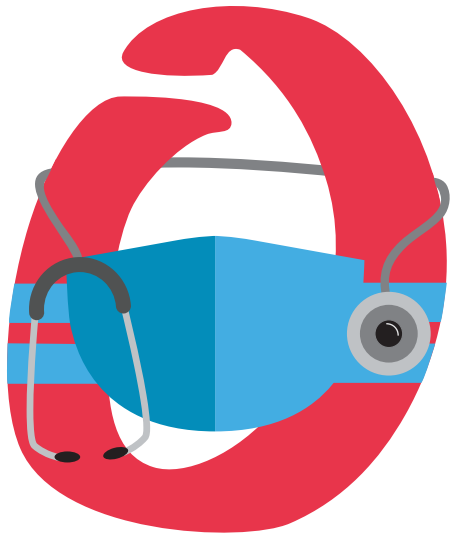
## Preferred High School Subject Choices:

Life Sciences  
Physical Sciences  
Computer Applications Technology  
Information Technology

## Careers

Computer Sciences and Technology  
Physiotherapist  
Speech Therapist  
Engineer

Doctor  
Biologist  
Program Developer  
Software Technician



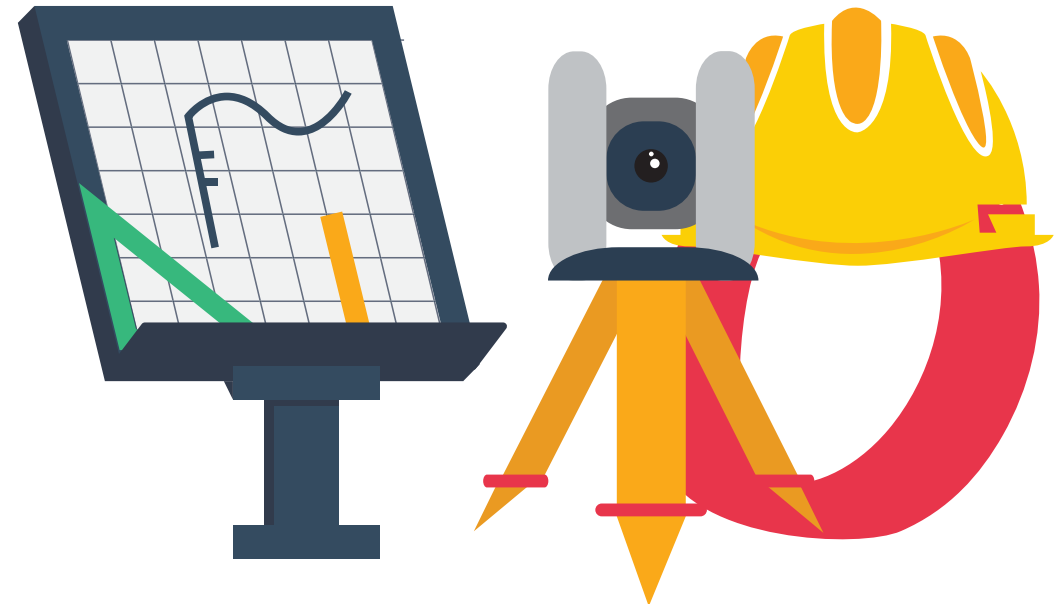
# Engineering & Technology

## Preferred High School Subject Choices:

Civil Technology  
Electrical Technology  
Engineering & Graphic Design  
Mechanical Technology

## Careers

Engineer  
Medical Technologist



# Business, Commerce, & Management Studies

## Preferred High School Subjects:

Accounting  
Business Science  
Economics

## Careers

Financial Advisor  
Chartered Accountant  
Politician  
Lawyer  
Advocate  
Human Resources



## STEP 3:

# Decide Between Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy

Here are your study options based on which stream of maths you decide on. As you can see below, choosing mathematics opens many more doors than Maths Lit.

## WHICH STREAM SHOULD YOU CHOOSE?

### MATHEMATICAL LITERACY

#### Humanities

Excludes: All Economics modules, Statistic modules, Psychology & Socio-Information

#### Military Science

Only some degrees

#### Education

All Education degrees

#### Commerce

Some universities may accept Maths Lit for a few degrees, but your options will be limited

#### Theology

All Theology degrees

#### Law

Only LLB and BA Law

#### Maths Lit + Life Sciences as a SUBJECT

#### AgriSciences

Only Agricultural Production and Management

#### Health Sciences

Some universities, but not all, will accept Maths Lit for Speech Therapy, Oral Hygiene and Nursing.

#### Humanities

All Humanities degrees.

#### Education

All Education degrees.

#### Commerce

All Commerce degrees.

#### Theology

All Theology degrees.

#### Law

All Law degrees.

#### Maths + Physical Science and/or Life Science as a SUBJECT

#### AgriSciences

All AgriSciences degrees.

### MATHEMATICS

#### Engineering

All Engineering and Architecture degrees.

#### Health Science

All Health Science degrees.

#### Military Science

All Military Science degrees.

#### Veterinary Science

All Veterinary Science degrees.

#### Science

All Science degrees.

# STEP 4: Choose Your Grade 9 Subjects Wisely

Once you've gone through your interests and have a better understanding of what careers are out there, it's time to connect the dots.

**REMINDER:** You need to matriculate with 7 subjects. 4 of these 7 subjects are compulsory.

These are:  
Home Language  
First Additional Language  
Life Orientation  
Mathematics or Maths Lit

With all your compulsory subjects **you have 3 remaining subjects you can choose from.**

**You can choose from the following 20 subjects:** (Keep your interests and tertiary studies in mind when choosing).

**Accounting:** Here you'll learn the basics of accounting that will help you if you want to pursue accounting as a career after school.

**Business Studies:** This subject is based on economics and management in the context of business. You'll learn about business plans, proposals and you'll learn about on how a consumer thinks and acts.

**Agricultural Management Practices:** You'll be taught about the different methods and strategies used to manage and ensure the best productivity and sustainability of agricultural activities.

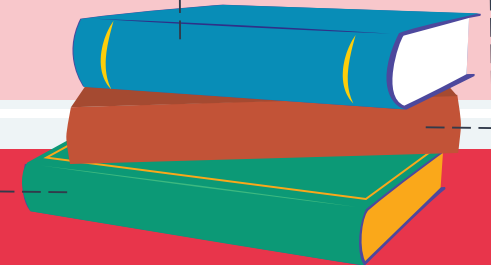
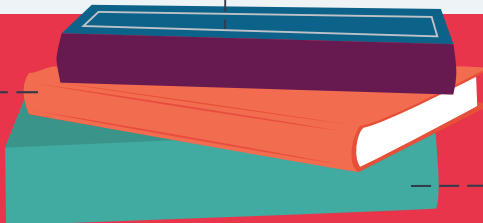
**Agricultural Sciences:** You'll learn about the biology that is involved with the natural, economic and social science aspects of agriculture.

**Economics:** Here you'll learn about how money is used in the world, specifically South Africa. Find out how it's produced, how it gets consumed and used by the nation and how the country decides how to distribute its wealth.

**Geography:** You'll learn all about the different physical features of the Earth and atmosphere, how it works and how human activity affects the natural workings of both.

**Dramatic Arts:** You'll learn about theatrical performance, the history of the dramatic arts and you'll be equipped with the basic skills needed as a performer.

**Engineering Graphics and Design:** The basics of designing systems and processes using symbols, signs and lines will be taught.



**History:** As the name implies, you'll study the events of the past which have had an effect on South Africa and the rest of the world.

**Hospitality Studies:** This is focused on the cooking terminology, etiquette, techniques, how to manage and run a kitchen and the front-of-house in the hospitality industry.

**Dance Studies:** You'll learn different dancing techniques and styles, the history of dance and performers and how to choreograph your own dances that will relay a message and meaning.

**Consumer Studies:** This subject is not just about cooking, although you will learn the terminology and etiquette on a basic level. You will learn about the different strategies used by businesses to read and understand consumers to increase sales and productivity.

**Tourism:** You'll gain the knowledge and know-how required to pursue a career in tourism.

**Religion Studies:** All of the different religions are included here. You'll learn about each of their values, history, cultures and practices.

**Music:** If you play an instrument you can take music as a subject. Your music teacher will assist you with your theory and practical knowledge and will help you prepare for the music exams to improve your level of music education.

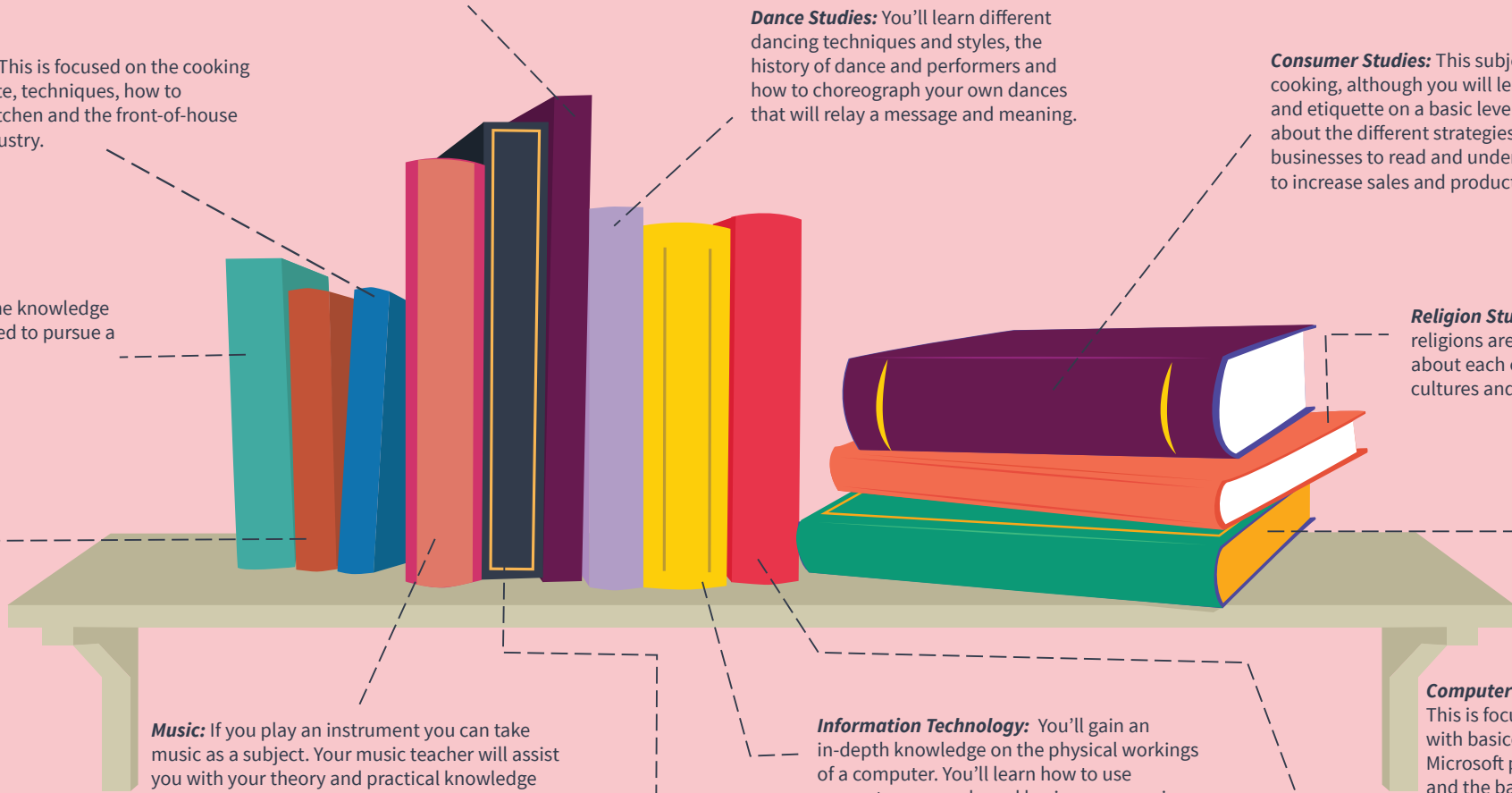
**Information Technology:** You'll gain an in-depth knowledge on the physical workings of a computer. You'll learn how to use computers properly and basic programming skills.

**Computer Applications Technology:** This is focused on equipping you with basic computer literacy in Microsoft programmes like Word and the basic functioning and controls of a computer.

**Physical Science:** Physics and chemistry is combined to make this one subject. You'll get the foundations to prepare you for tertiary level science.

**Visual Arts:** You won't just stick to your strength, you'll learn about the various mediums of art through experimentation and practicing. This is a time consuming subject and will need passion and motivation to work after school hours.

**Life Sciences:** This is the study of the life around us which includes plants, animals and humans.



Does what I want to study require me to take subjects I don't enjoy?  
Am I willing to work hard in those subjects to get to my end goal?

Am I choosing subjects to get good marks and pass easily or am I choosing my subjects based on what I want to study?

Are my weaker subjects due to not being able to understand the work or because I'm not interested and don't work at it?

Which subjects compliment my hobbies and interests?

What subjects am I good at? Even if I don't necessarily enjoy them.

Am I choosing my subjects based on what other people (family, friends, teachers, etc.) want or am I choosing them based on my own interests and wants?

Are my friends' opinions on nerdy or uncool subjects swaying my decision?

Will I be able to receive extra support from my school or parents if I choose a subject I may need help with?

Am I happy with my decision?

Can my interests turn into a potential career in the future?

Have I discussed my decisions with friends, family and teachers to get their views?

## STEP 5:

# Questions to Ask Myself ?

Before making a final decision make sure you ask yourself these questions (just to make double sure you're making responsible choices).

Do I enjoy it but find it hard?  
Can I get extra lessons?

What are my current interests?  
Are there any subjects that will cover my interests?

Which subjects are my weaknesses?

Which subjects are my strengths?

# Your Personal Checklist

To make absolutely sure you understand this guide and complete all the steps, here's a quick checklist you can use to help you make the right choices

- Have I read through the steps I need to take to choose my subjects responsibly?
- Do I know what my interests are?
- Do I have an idea of what careers are out there?
- Do I understand the difference between Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy?
- Have I read through the different subjects?
- Have I read through the steps I need to take to choose my subjects responsibly?
- Have I chosen which subjects I need to take?
- Have I chosen 3 options of what I would want to study one day?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- Have I done the interests quiz?
- Have I done the personality quiz?  
Results: \_\_\_\_\_

It's good to take your parents, family members, friends and teachers opinions into consideration, but don't let them pressure you into choosing subjects that they think is best.





# RESOURCES

**Discovering Your Career**

**What Qualifications are Out There?**

**How Can I Finance my Studies?**

**What Career Options do I have?**