

## Grade 11 March Part 2

### The 'I know I can' principle to a rewarding career

There is a children's story about a little engine that had to pull a long train to a distant town.

On the way, the train came to a big mountain. No one believed the engine could make it over. But the train began to chug up the difficult climb, "I ... think ... I ... can. I ... think ... I ... can."

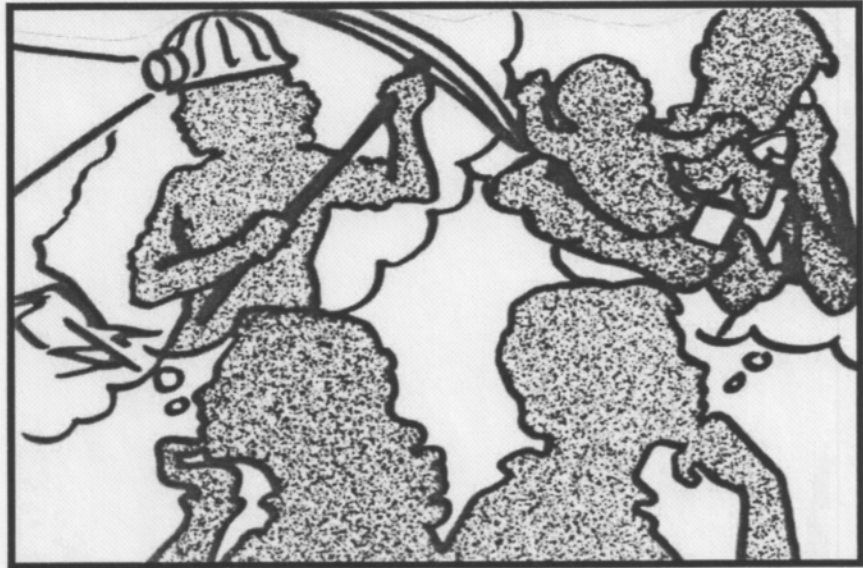
Once over the top and clickity-clacking down the other side, the engine whistled, "I knew I could! I knew I could!"

Like that little engine, we each have long journeys to distant career destinations. Along the way, we'll run into our own personal mountains.

People's prejudices! Stereotyping! Friends, neighbors, sometimes, even parents try to steer us away from careers which don't fit their accepted patterns.

"Girls don't become miners!" "Boys can't get married and stay home!"

We need to recognize these social pressures. But, we should not omit careers just because they are not "usual." We must choose for ourselves.



### How to choose?

Begin by focusing on the forest and not on the trees. Look to a career field rather than to a specific job. Once trained in the broad field, you are prepared for the various jobs within it.

Once you've chosen your large field, narrow it down.

- Look at your interests and temperament. Do you like working as part of a group? Or, are you more comfortable working on your own project? Are you an indoors or outdoors type of person?

- What about your education? How many more years would you like to spend in school? How many more would you be willing to spend? What kind of education will you get? Will it be college, apprenticeship, or on-the-job-training?

Now, start to find out more about careers you're interested in. Talk to your guidance counselor, your teachers, your parents. Talk to your friends and to their parents.

We are all different. No two of us have exactly the same dreams or goals. Each of us is unique. Each of us must create our own lifestyle.

No matter our age, today, we can begin our journey toward our goals.

As children we thought we could be anything we wanted to be. As adolescents, we know we can. And, who knows, while working toward our personal goals, in choosing, in daring to be different, we may just help bring about social change for others.

*"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined." --- Henry David Thoreau*