

Unit 1

My life, my way



After learning this unit, you will be able to:

- talk about different choices you faced when you graduated from high school;
- describe the differences between university and vocational college;
- make a decision tree for different choices.

Look at the picture and discuss:

- 1 What is the biggest choice you've made in your life so far?
- 2 How did that choice influence you?

Warming up

Read the first part of the poem “The Road Not Taken”. Then discuss the symbolic meaning of “road” and try to predict what the poet will describe in the following part. 🎧

The Road Not Taken

by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

...

Listening and Speaking

- 1 Listen to the dialogue between Sally and Wallace. The following words, expressions and sentences may help you. 🎧

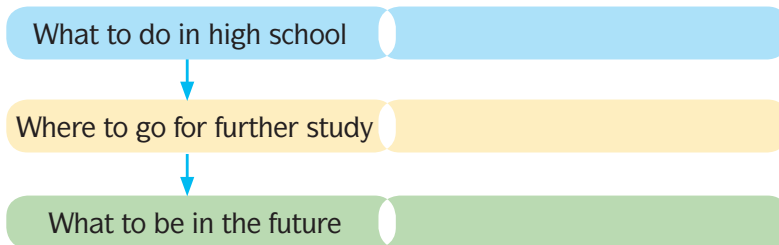
4S shop sound like vocational college
mechanic have the guts

I got a part-time job at an FAW-Volkswagen 4S shop.
I'm not doing very well at school, so I have to improve my grades.
University rarely teaches practical skills.

Tips

4S shop指汽车销售服务4S店，包括整车销售 (Sale)、零配件 (Spare part)、售后服务 (Service)、信息反馈 (Survey)。
FAW是中国第一汽车集团的英文缩写 (First Automotive Works)。

2 Listen again and fill in Wallace's choices. 🎧



3 What is the choice made by Wallace's parents? Do you think it is proper for them to make a decision for Wallace? Discuss with your partner.

4 Read the following words, expressions and sentences. Then listen to the dialogue between Chris and Jim. 🎧

drop out information technology code
pursue artistic career stable

He dropped out of university.
He couldn't even imagine himself writing code all his life.
He said he'll pursue an artistic career.


5 Listen again and choose the reasons why Clifford dropped out of university. 🎧

- He didn't like his major.
- He failed the examinations.
- He was unable to afford the tuition fees.
- He didn't want to waste his parents' money.
- He wanted to pursue his dream.
- He didn't get used to college life.

6 Work in pairs and answer the following questions.

1. If you were Clifford, what would you do? Why?
2. Why did you choose your major at college?

Reading and Vocabulary

- 1 Read the following passage about the true picture of universities and vocational colleges. The following words and expressions may help you. 

ignore misconception clear up myth figure out
 goal-oriented bachelor's degree potential rate
 sociology impersonal variety pros and cons

While universities often seem the obvious choice, depending on your career path, vocational colleges also have lots to offer. They sometimes get ignored due to some common misconceptions. Let me clear up some of these misconceptions for you.

Myth 1: People go to vocational college only because they are unable to get into university.

Truth: Many of my friends from university seem to change majors and degree programmes more often than their socks. While that may not be saying much, the point is that many university students have no idea what they want to do with themselves and are paying thousands of dollars a year to figure it out.

Vocational colleges, on the other hand, are far more goal-oriented. Their students tend to realise earlier that what they really want to do requires more specific training. Therefore, I would remind you that, while people may go to university because they can, they go to vocational college because they choose to.

Myth 2: I'll get a better job and make more money if I go to university.

Truth: The results of a latest survey show that students from vocational colleges are more likely to be employed after graduation than those graduating with a bachelor's degree from a university.

Salaries may be generally higher for jobs requiring a university degree, but vocational colleges have the potential to get you out of school and into the workforce sooner. Besides, vocational college graduates have a higher rate of employment.

Myth 3: The quality of education at universities is better than that at vocational colleges.

Truth: I could also tell you about my first-year sociology class, which had 350 students in it, over 40% of whom failed the course. Universities can be too large and impersonal. Vocational colleges, however, tend to have much smaller class sizes and a wider variety of instructors who are proven experts in particular fields.

Like I've said, sometimes a university is an obvious choice. You can't become a doctor or a lawyer if you attend a vocational college. But if you are weighing your options and trying to consider all possibilities before making a decision, it's important to know the facts and be informed about the pros and cons of each type of programme.



2 Read again and write down the truth of each myth about universities and vocational colleges.

Myth	Truth
1. People go to vocational college only because they are unable to get into university.	
2. I'll get a better job and make more money if I go to university.	
3. The quality of education at universities is better than that at vocational colleges.	

3 Fill in the following table with the missing words.

noun	verb	adjective
		graduated
	employ	
variety		
	×	possible
	inform	

4 What is your view about universities and vocational colleges? Do you agree with the author? Discuss with your partner.

Grammar for Use

Read the following sentences and pay attention to the underlined parts.

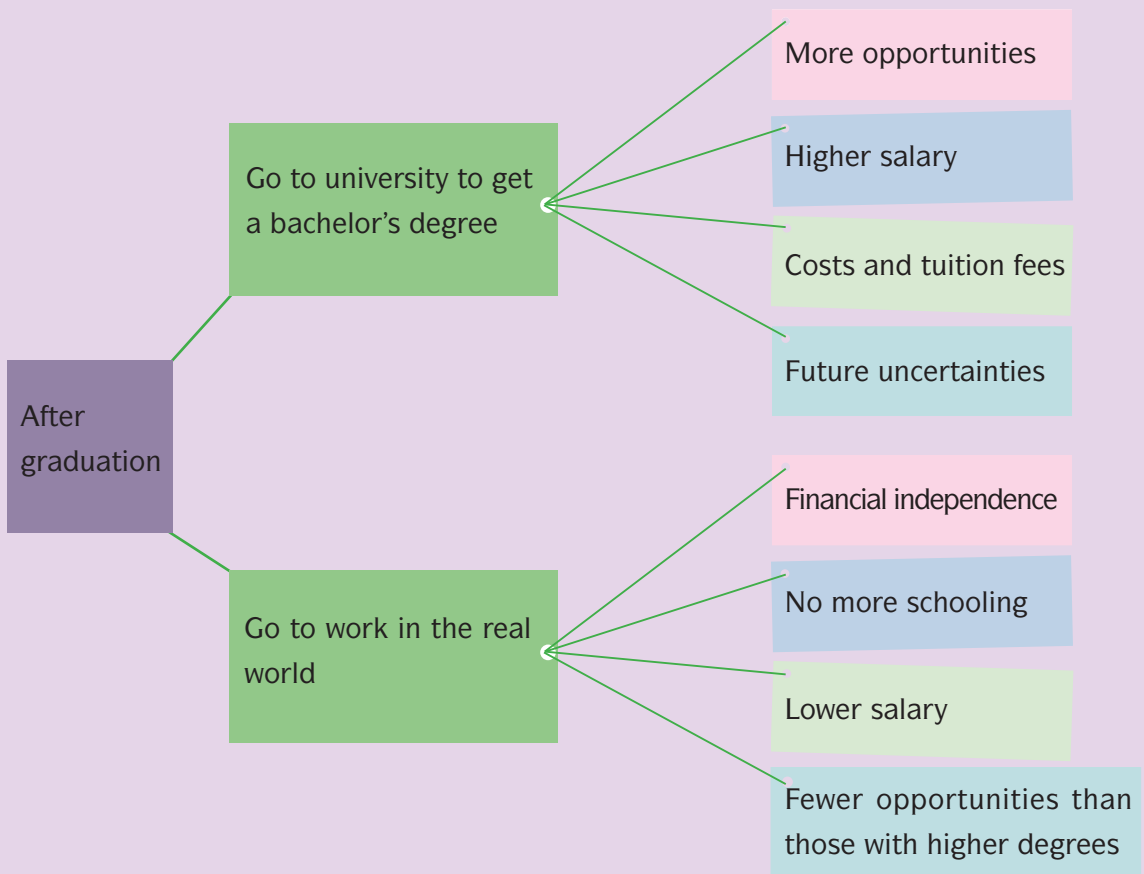
1. ... the point is that many university students have no idea what they want to do with themselves and are paying thousands of dollars a year to figure it out.
2. But if you are weighing your options and trying to consider all possibilities before making a decision...

上面两个句子中，画线部分都是“动词 + 名词”的结构，是英语习惯用语的一种常见构成方式。动词 have, make 和 take 在构成习惯用语方面尤其多产，如 have a look, make use of, take a walk 等。恰如其分地运用习惯用语有助于提高英语表达的流利性和地道性。

Practical Reading

1 Read about Bob's situation and examine his decision tree.

Bob will graduate from vocational college in June and is now facing a hard decision. He has a job offer and has, at the same time, been accepted by a university. So, what should he choose? To make things clearer, he draws a decision tree.



2 If you were Bob, what decision would you make? Why? Add more pros and cons.

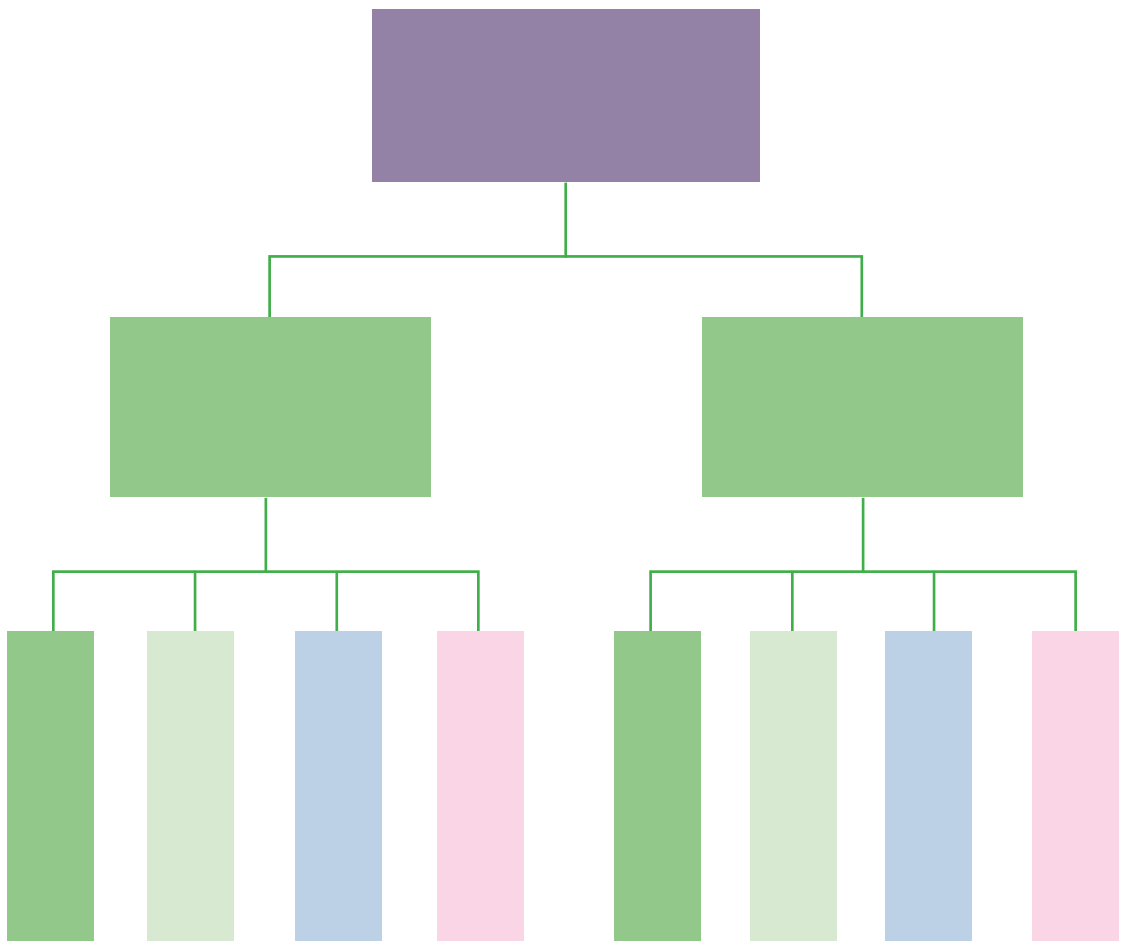
Tips

decision tree (决策树) 是一种简单实用的决策工具，它以树形图的方式表明，一旦你做了某种选择，接下来可能发生的一系列情形。

Practical Writing

Read the following description about Jenny's situation. Then work in pairs and make a decision tree for Jenny.

Jenny just finished the national college entrance exam. Since her score is only a few points above the minimum criterion for universities, there aren't many choices for her. But if she chooses vocational education, she can choose whatever major or college she likes. Her parents want her to go to university yet she prefers vocational college. What should she do?



Project

1

Work in groups of four.

2

Each member of the group interviews 3 people of different age groups (one of your age, one of your parents' age and one of your grandparents' age) about the biggest decisions they once made. You may refer to the following questions.

1. *What's the biggest decision you once made?*
2. *What made it your biggest decision?*
3. *Are you happy with that decision or not?*

3

Share your interview result with your group members and discuss the following questions.

1. *When making decisions, what factors influence them most?*
2. *What are the differences in the decisions made by the three age groups?*

4

Share your findings with the whole class.

Around the World 🎧

The Road Not Taken (Part II)

by Robert Frost

...

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.

My Progress Check

Listening Comprehension

1 Listen to the dialogue and choose the information you hear.

- Brad graduated from the best journalism school in the country.
- Brad left the university two weeks before graduation.
- Brad realised he was not ready for journalism, so he dropped out.
- Brad didn't finish the university because he had no directions.

2 What are the advantages of going to a vocational college in your opinion?

1. They offer more specific training. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Vocabulary and Structure

1 Complete the sentences with the proper form of *have*, *make* or *take*.

1. Mr Brown's remarks revealed that he _____ no idea what he was talking about.
2. I _____ advantage of the good weather to paint the house.
3. I didn't _____ time to stop and talk just now.
4. Why did she do a thing like that? It doesn't seem to _____ sense.
5. I hope you've _____ good use of your time.
6. The government must _____ action now to stop the rise in violent crimes.

2 Complete the sentences with the proper form of the given words or expressions.

ignore improve instruct various be likely to clear up

1. Students are offered a wide _____ of courses in this department.
2. You can't _____ the fact that a university education doesn't guarantee success.
3. Young drivers _____ more _____ have accidents than older drivers.
4. They were given little _____ on how to take notes.
5. Obviously, the misconception about vocational education will have to be _____.
6. The school is performing well, but we recognise the need for further _____.

Translation

Translate the sentences into English using the given words or expressions.

1. 由于某些常见的误解，职业院校有时会被忽视。(ignore)
2. 职业院校的学生通常更早地认识到他们真正想要做的事情需要专门培训。(tend to)
3. 职业院校的学生毕业后要比大学毕业生更容易找到工作。(employ)
4. 职业院校拥有更多样化的教师资源，他们都是各自领域里的专家。(a wide variety of)

Reading and Writing

Read the paragraph and complete the following tasks.

Like I've said, sometimes a university is an obvious choice. You can't become a doctor or a lawyer if you attend a vocational college. But if you are weighing your options and trying to consider all possibilities before making a decision, it's important to know the facts and be informed about *the pros and cons of each type of programme.*

1. Translate the underlined sentence into Chinese.
2. Write down your understanding of the italicised part in about 80 words.