

# Imagined Futures

## SUMMARY

Our identities are fluid and formed as we move through our lives— influenced by the activities we engage in, the things we learn, and the places we pass through and spend time in. This activity asks participants to think about their future selves and use maps to identify places, identities, and practices they might be engaged in, in five and ten years.

## Materials

- Paper atlases or maps of the city, state, US, and world (one set of maps for each small group, 2 to 6 participants)
- Markers
- Sticky notes
- Medium-size dot stickers (preferably two different colors for each participant)

## Time for entire activity

20 to 40 minutes

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## PURPOSE

### For participants

- Encourage personal reflection about participants' current identities and how they might change based on future choices
- Prompt thinking about how learning today can influence future choices, pathways, identities, and learning opportunities
- Help explore interactions among places and identities

### For facilitators

- Extend understanding of the goals and identities of program participants
- Facilitate the design of individualized, interest-driven programming or curricula based on participants' current identities and future goals
- Help assess participants' thinking about connections between programming and their future learning opportunities and identities

## OBJECTIVES

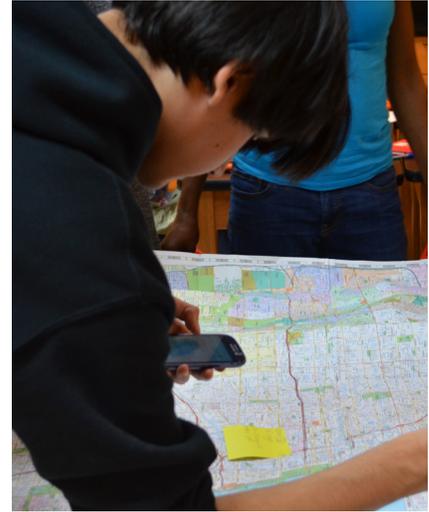
### Participants will:

- Think about their identities in a place-based way
- Be encouraged to reflect on their current identities and how they might change based on choices spanning space and time
- Consider the ways identities develop and are shaped by experiences "on the move" and "in place"



## DIRECTIONS

- Spread out the paper maps on large flat surfaces where pairs or small groups (2 to 6 participants) can interact with them.
- Ask each participant to:
  1. Write your name and “5 years” at the top of a sticky note.
  2. Imagine your life five years from now:
    - a. Where might you be?
    - b. What might you be doing in life, learning, and work?
  3. Write your name and “10 years” at the top of a second sticky note.
  4. Imagine your life ten years from now:
    - a. Where might you be?
    - b. What might you be doing in life, learning, and work?
  5. Using the answers from question 2, place one dot sticker on that location of your map and the corresponding sticky note close by.
  6. Repeat using the answers from question 4.



## REFLECTION

**In small groups**, ask participants to share their responses to the following:

1. What did you learn about yourself or others by participating in this activity?
2. What factors influenced the future you imagined?
3. Has participating in this program shaped how you view different locations? If so, how? If not, why?
4. Were you surprised by any other participants’ imagined futures? Why or why not?

## WRAP UP

**With the whole group**, ask each small group to share at least one takeaway from their conversation. As a facilitator, follow up on connections to the purpose of and goals for this activity. For example, draw out connections between:

- Participants’ current identities and future goals and learning possibilities
- Places and identities
- Realizations that identities develop across space and time

The GeoConvos team explores connections between place and identity to develop tools for understanding youth learning pathways. Follow along at [GeoConvos.org](https://GeoConvos.org). Share feedback, questions, and comments at [GeoConvos@gmail.com](mailto:GeoConvos@gmail.com).