

PART III

DEVELOPING RELATED SKILLS

A GAME PLAN FOR COLLEGE

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PART III: DEVELOPING RELATED SKILLS

A Game Plan for College

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ASSESSING YOUR TALENTS AND INTERESTS



AGENDA

- Starter
- My Time
- We Have Skills
- Interests + Skills + Learning Styles = Careers
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will identify the relationship between their interests and how they spend their time.

Students will identify the skills that relate to their interests.

Students will identify and categorize personal, career, and professional skills.

Students will use their skills and interests to determine career options.

Materials Needed

- A dictionary (Parts I and II)
- One copy of the “Real Time” activity sheet for each student (Students should complete this activity sheet for homework during the week prior to this class.) (Part I)
- One copy of the “Real Time Tally” activity sheet for each student (Parts I, II, and III)

- One copy of the “Skills” activity sheet for each student (Parts II and III)
- One copy of the “Three Skill Groups, Many Occupations” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- Several pairs of scissors (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Lead students through the following calculations:

1. Start with the number of hours worked each day at a nine-to-five job. (8)
2. Multiply by 5 (number of workdays in a week). (40)
3. Multiply by 52 (number of weeks in a year). (2,080)
4. Multiply the answer to step two by 2 (two-week vacation). (80)
5. Subtract step four from step three. (2,000)
6. Subtract 80 (number of federal holidays multiplied by 8). (1,920)
7. Subtract your current age from 65. (for a 16-year-old: 49)*
8. Multiply the answer to step seven by the answer to step six. (94,080)

Tell students that the final answer is the approximate number of hours that they will probably work at a job. Students are likely to be surprised by the final number. Lead students to recognize that it is important to have jobs, careers, or professions that they enjoy. Remind them that they have already thought about their dreams and goals. Tell them that in today's lesson they will look at their interests to see how they can be translated into careers and professions.

*Step seven of this calculation assumes that students will work 40 hours a week starting at their current age. You may want to adjust this step depending on your students.

Part I My Time (5 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize the connection between their interests and how they spend their time.

1. Students define “discretionary time.”

Write the word “discretion” on the board. Ask the class to suggest the meaning of the word. Then, instruct a volunteer to find the definition of “discretion” in the dictionary. (Merriam-Webster defines “discretion” as “individual choice or judgment.”)

With this definition in mind, ask students to consider what might be meant by “discretionary time.” Lead them to recognize that discretionary time is free time to use as they see fit, to pursue an activity of personal interest that they find fulfilling.

Instruct students to take out the “Real Time” activity sheet, which they completed during the week preceding this class. Ask for volunteers to share how they spend their discretionary time. Write student responses on the board. Elicit reasons why students find their activities worthwhile; write the reasons next to the items on the list.

2. Students calculate how they spend their time.

Distribute the “Real Time Tally” activity sheets and have students use the information from their “Real Time” activity sheet to fill in the top half.

Then, ask students to circle the five activities that they enjoy most and order the activities from one to five, with one being the most enjoyable and five being the least enjoyable. Ask students why they enjoy the noted activities. Point out to students that often people most enjoy doing the things at which they excel.

Part II We Have Skills (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students define the concept of skill and identify the skills that relate to their interests.

1. Students define “skill.”

Write the word “skill” on the board. Have the class brainstorm a definition for the word. Then, have a volunteer read a definition from the dictionary. (Merriam-Webster defines “skill” as “a developed aptitude or ability.”)

Select one of the discretionary time activities that students listed earlier. Elicit from students the skills needed for that activity. For example, coordination; the ability to jump, move fast, throw, catch, and aim; and teamwork are needed to play basketball.

Point out to students that almost all of their discretionary time activities demonstrate specific skills. Explain that the skills people bring to a job are the talents, gifts, and abilities that they possess. Tell students that knowing their gifts, talents, or abilities—and how these things translate into jobs—will help them target potential careers and professions.

2. Students identify the skills that relate to their favorite activities.

Divide the class into groups of three or four students and distribute one copy of the “Skills” activity sheet to each student.

Tell students to look at their top five favorite activities from the “Real Time Tally” activity sheet and choose three activities to consider. Instruct students to work with their groups to identify the skills needed to excel at each activity they wrote on the top half of their “Skills” activity sheet.

After students have finished working, discuss the skills they listed. Encourage students with similar interests to add skills that they had not thought of. List several skills on the board and have students brainstorm a variety of activities and interests that might utilize those skills.

Tell students to leave the bottom half of the activity sheet blank for now.

3. Students explore the three skill groups.

Distribute the “Three Skill Groups, Many Occupations” activity sheet to students.

Explain to students that most skills can be categorized into one of three different groups: people/animals, things, and information. Define each group and discuss as needed. Elicit suggestions from the class for completing the activity sheet and have students fill in the blanks. Student responses may include some of the following:

- People or Animals: serving, counseling, advising, managing, performing, consulting, persuading, communicating, supervising, negotiating
- Things: fixing, operating equipment, physical/athletic effort, handling objects, working with the environment
- Information: planning, developing, creating, improving, designing, organizing, researching, visualizing, adapting, evaluating, computing, observing

Instruct students to brainstorm occupations or careers for each skill group.

Have groups share their occupation lists with the class.

4. Students identify and evaluate their skills in terms of the three skill groups.

Refer students to the bottom half of the “Skills” activity sheet. Explain that they are now going to complete this activity sheet by categorizing the skills they listed in the three columns. Have them list each skill under its appropriate heading.

When students have finished working, have them total the number of skills in each group. Ask students to share what they think that information reveals about their interests.

Point out to students that, usually, the profession that would be most interesting to them is the one at which they would do best. Remind them of the calculation that they made in the starter and suggest that their profession should be something that interests them a great deal.

Part III Interests + Skills + Learning Styles = Careers (30 minutes)

Purpose: Students connect learning styles to the three main skill groups.

1. Students review the different learning styles.

Ask students to recall the learning style activities that they did in *Module Six: Skills for School and Beyond*. Elicit the following list of learning styles from the class and write it on the board: athletic/body, musical, visual/spatial, mathematical/logical, verbal/linguistic, social/interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

2. Students evaluate interest categories in terms of learning style profiles.

Divide students into groups of four or five and distribute scissors. Have students cut out the learning style labels on the bottom of their “Real Time Tally” activity sheets from Part II. Then, have them match the learning styles to the skill groups on the “Skills” activity sheet. Tell them that more than one learning style may be appropriate for each skill group.

When students have finished working, have the groups share their results.

3. Students evaluate their personal data.

Tell students that they are now going to put their interests, their learning styles, and the skill groups all together. Tell students to complete the following sentences independently:

- My favorite activity is _____.
- My learning style is _____.
- My preferred career skill group category is _____.

Have students consider if the categories complement or clash and if their learning styles are compatible with their activity preferences and the career categories. Discuss what they can conclude if the three answers complement each other and what they can conclude if they clash.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to summarize why it is important to assess our talents and interests. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Work is a large part of our adult lives; therefore, it is important to choose a career or profession that we enjoy.
- Our interests, hobbies, and favorite activities involve skills that can be applied to jobs or careers.
- Identifying our interests, skills, and learning styles gives us important information about the kinds of work or careers we should explore.

Student Assessment

1. List one of your favorite after-school activities and the skills that you use for it.
2. How does your learning style complement your skills and interests?
3. How can knowing your skills, interests, and learning styles help you in the future?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“I never did a day’s work in my life. It was all fun.”

Have students read and interpret this quote. Have them discuss careers that would be “all fun.”

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students create flowcharts that depict the progression of strengths and interests to careers.

Have students share their charts with the class or hang them on the walls.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about why it is important to choose a career based on their talents and interests.

Have students discuss careers that they know they are not interested in pursuing.

Using Technology

Have students choose careers that interest them and that match their skills. Ask students to access and list websites that might be used as resources for people in those careers.

Have students share their lists with the class. Create a “master list” of website resources for students to use.

Homework

Ask students to list their interests and talents. Have them look at a college catalog and choose three classes that match their listed talents and skills.

Have students write a few paragraphs describing how these classes and their skills/interests are related.

Additional Resources

Have students review the list of 18 very odd jobs from *The Book of Lists* by David Wallechinsky and Amy Wallace.

Have students categorize each job based on the categories presented in this lesson.

REAL TIME

For one week, record the amount of time you spend on each activity you do. Write in after-school or part-time jobs, sports or other hobbies, chores, reading for pleasure, talking on the phone, dates, and so on.

[illegible]

REAL TIME TALLY

There are 168 hours in the week. Here is how I spend my time:

sleeping: _____

other activities: _____

school: _____

eating: _____

watching TV: _____

talking on the phone: _____

TOP FIVE FAVORITE ACTIVITIES:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

LEARNING STYLES (To the teacher: Save for Part 3.)

Cut out each learning style. Tape them to the bottom of the appropriate skill category on the “Skills” activity sheet.

Athletic, Body	Musical	Visual, Artistic	Mathematical, Logical	Verbal, Linguistic	Social, Interpersonal	Intrapersonal
Athletic, Body	Musical	Visual, Artistic	Mathematical, Logical	Verbal, Linguistic	Social, Interpersonal	Intrapersonal
Athletic, Body	Musical	Visual, Artistic	Mathematical, Logical	Verbal, Linguistic	Social, Interpersonal	Intrapersonal

Pick three of your favorite activities. List the skills needed for each below.

Activity: Skills:	Activity: Skills:	Activity: Skills:

List each skill above under the appropriate heading below. Count the number of skills and write the total below each box.

PEOPLE (or ANIMALS)	THINGS	INFORMATION
Learning Style(s): 	Learning Style(s): 	Learning Style(s):

TOTAL: _____

TOTAL: _____

TOTAL: _____

With the skills I have, I might enjoy a job, career, or profession working with _____

THREE SKILL GROUPS, MANY OCCUPATIONS

<p>A. People (or Animals)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • helping or caring for • entertaining • teaching • coaching <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Occupations</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p>	<p>B. Things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repairing • operating vehicles • using tools • working with nature <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Occupations</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p>	<p>C. Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning • creating • designing • organizing <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Occupations</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p> <p>• _____</p>
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COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES, AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS



AGENDA

- Starter
- Two-Year Colleges, Four-Year Colleges
- Narrow the Field
- The Right Stuff
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students identify the differences among universities, colleges, community colleges, and technical schools.

Students will clarify their postsecondary education needs in terms of schools' strengths, requirements, tuitions, and locations.

Materials Needed

- A local road or transit map (Starter)
- An assortment of college descriptions, brochures, and catalogs from your school library, enough for each pair of students (Include four-year, community, and technical colleges, with an emphasis on local schools.) (Part I)
- One copy of the “College Survey” activity sheet for each student (Parts I and II)

- One copy of the “Narrowing the Field” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- One copy of the “Prep for College” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- One copy of the “Bronx Roots Still Nurture Career Paths” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Show students a local road or transit map. Point out the locations of the school and another landmark. Ask, “How would you get from the school to this landmark?” Let the class discuss various routes and options. Ask, “What is the best way to get there? What do you need to know in order to make the trip?” (The best way is probably the most direct route. You need to know the roads and/or transportation options in order to identify the most direct or best route.)

Tell students that rewarding careers are the destinations and colleges, universities, and technical schools are the different options for getting there. Explain that they will begin to explore the different post-high school roads available.

Part I Two-Year Colleges, Four-Year Colleges (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students understand the differences between two-year colleges and four-year colleges.

1. Students read about different types of colleges.

Tell students that they are going to investigate some of the postsecondary education options available to them. Divide the class into pairs and give each pair of students a description, brochure, or catalog from a local college.

Explain to students that each pair are going to present their college to the rest of the class. As students read about their colleges, have them underline or circle any words or terms that need defining or further discussion. Discuss and define the following, along with any other terms students may be confused about, as needed:

- **Community colleges:** These are local colleges that offer associate’s degree programs that usually take two years of full-time study. Many students transfer to a four-year college to earn their bachelor’s degree.
- **Technical/occupational/vocational schools:** These schools provide occupational training that leads to a diploma or certification in a field. Some community colleges offer joint programs with technical schools so that students can earn college credits along with their vocational training.
- **Four-year colleges:** Four-year colleges offer bachelor’s degree programs that require approximately 120 credits to graduate and usually take four years of full-time study.
- **Universities:** Universities are large institutions that include a college of arts and/or sciences, professional schools, and graduate studies. Like four-year colleges, universities also offer undergraduate degrees.

In their presentations, students should include information on degree programs, tuition, location, transportation options, entrance requirements, clubs, facilities, and sports. Give students a few minutes to prepare their presentations.

2. Students share information about different colleges.

When students are finished working, distribute the “College Survey” activity sheet. Have each pair present its school to the class. As students listen to their classmates, have them use the activity sheet to note information they think is important or interesting.

3. Students match careers/professions with two-year and four-year colleges.

Have students use the notes on their “College Survey” activity sheet to find one or more colleges that fit the jobs, careers, or professions that interest them. Tell them to mark career-appropriate colleges on their activity sheets. Have students consult with their partners to verify their choices and answer any further questions.

Part II Narrow the Field (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify factors that influence school choice, including tuition, location, and requirements.

1. Students compare tuition and other costs.

Distribute the “Narrowing the Field” activity sheet. Have students select three colleges from their “College Survey” activity sheets and write the names of these colleges at the top of each column on the “Narrowing the Field” sheet. Direct each pair to compute the cost of a degree at the colleges in which they are interested (generally 60 credits for associate’s degrees and 120 credits for bachelor’s degrees). Have students discuss the information with their partners and write it on their “Narrowing the Field” activity sheets. Students will be surprised and probably discouraged by the cost of higher education. Tell them that in future lessons they will learn about different ways to pay for their education, including scholarships, grants, and loans.

2. Students consider location and transportation factors.

Ask pairs to analyze their colleges in relation to where they live. Could they commute? Is there public transportation? Would they need a car? Would they have to live on campus or close to the school? Have each pair review the transportation information on their “College Survey” sheet and add it to their “Narrowing the Field” sheets.

3. Students compare college entrance requirements.

Write the following terms on the board: “SAT scores,” “GPA,” “class rank,” and “personal interview.” Explain these terms to students as needed. Because there are limited facilities, colleges have requirements such as these in order to select students from among those who apply. Direct students to research the specific requirements for the schools in which they are interested. Then, distribute the “Prep for College” activity sheet to students. Have students check off the courses that they have already taken and make note of the requirements that they have yet to complete. Have students add the new information to complete their “Narrowing the Field” activity sheets.

4. Students consider other factors related to choosing a college.

Write the following terms on the board: “campus,” “facilities,” “sports,” and “clubs.” Elicit from students a definition for each term. Discuss with students why these factors should be considered when choosing a college. Point out that though it is very unlikely that one school will meet all of their needs, they should still look for a school that has as many of their ideal characteristics as possible. Have pairs review their “College Survey” sheets for this information. Give students a few minutes to add this new data to their “Narrowing the Field” activity sheets.

5. Students rank the colleges in which they are interested.

Point out to students that they now have considerable information about the colleges in which they are interested. Tell students to number the colleges in their survey from one to three in order of preference (one being the top preference) and to share their results with their partners. Encourage them to ask questions about their classmates’ choices, pointing out, for example, any factors that may have been overlooked.

Part III The Right Stuff (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students listen to and discuss a real-life success story and apply what they have learned.

1. Students read a real-life success story.

Distribute the “Bronx Roots Still Nurture Career Paths” activity sheet. Have students read the article alone or in small groups.

2. Students discuss the story and how it might apply to their lives.

Begin a discussion of the article by asking questions such as the following: “What do you have in common with Mr. Cappelli? With Ms. Cruz? Why did Mr. Cappelli give Ms. Cruz a job? How do you think Ms. Cruz’s schoolwork changed after the first summer she worked for Mr. Cappelli?”

Ask students to consider how a young Louie Cappelli might have benefited from this module.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Have students review the activity sheets that they completed in this lesson. Ask, “What can you do next semester or this summer to make you better prepared for college?” Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- There are different kinds of colleges, each offering different degrees.
- Select a college that offers degrees or programs in your field of interest.
- Factors to take into account when choosing a college include tuition, location, and entrance requirements.

Student Assessment

1. List four factors that are important in choosing a college.
2. Where can you get information on colleges in which you are interested?
3. What steps can you take toward being accepted by the college of your choice?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“In all things, success depends upon previous preparation, and without such preparation there is sure to be failure.”

Have students write a paragraph about how this lesson will help them when choosing a college.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students write songs or poems that describe their ideal institute of higher learning.

Have students recite their poems or lyrics to their song.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about what they hope to get out of the institution they choose to attend.

Have students describe why they think they want to attend certain institutions.

Using Technology

Have students take “virtual tours” of colleges by visiting the websites of the schools in which they are interested. Have students describe what they saw and what they liked most about each school.

Homework

Ask students to research which schools have good reputations for programs in the field of study they wish to pursue. Ask them why the school has a good reputation (e.g., because of faculty, research, curriculum, etc.).

Have students make a list of five schools that they could possibly attend.

Additional Resources

Have students research books and articles on applying to college and ask them to share their findings with the class. Compile a list of resources and provide each student with a copy.

COLLEGE SURVEY

<i>Technical Schools</i>	<i>Community Colleges</i>	<i>Four-Year Colleges/Universities</i>
Name: Notes:	Name: Notes:	Name: Notes:
Name: Notes:	Name: Notes:	Name: Notes:
Name: Notes:	Name: Notes:	Name: Notes:

NARROWING THE FIELD

COLLEGE A:	COLLEGE B:	COLLEGE C:
_____	_____	_____
Tuition: \$ _____ per credit	Tuition: \$ _____ per credit	Tuition: \$ _____ per credit
Cost of _____ degree: \$ _____	Cost of _____ degree: \$ _____	Cost of _____ degree: \$ _____
Location: _____	Location: _____	Location: _____
Requirements: _____	Requirements: _____	Requirements: _____
Other Information: _____	Other Information: _____	Other Information: _____

PREP FOR COLLEGE

9 TH GRADE	10 TH GRADE	11 TH GRADE	12 TH GRADE
English: _____ Grade: ____	English: _____ Grade: ____	English: _____ Grade: ____	English: _____ Grade: ____
Math: _____ Grade: ____	Math: _____ Grade: ____	Math: _____ Grade: ____	Math: _____ Grade: ____
History: _____ Grade: ____	History: _____ Grade: ____	History: _____ Grade: ____	History: _____ Grade: ____
Science: _____ Grade: ____	Science: _____ Grade: ____	Science: _____ Grade: ____	Science: _____ Grade: ____
Foreign Language: _____ Grade: ____	Foreign Language: _____ Grade: ____	Foreign Language: _____ Grade: ____	Foreign Language: _____ Grade: ____
Art (Visual and Performing): _____ Grade: ____	Art (Visual and Performing): _____ Grade: ____	Art (Visual and Performing): _____ Grade: ____	Art (Visual and Performing): _____ Grade: ____
Electives/other courses: _____ Grade: ____	Electives/other courses: _____ Grade: ____	Electives/other courses: _____ Grade: ____	Electives/other courses: _____ Grade: ____

BRONX ROOTS STILL NURTURE CAREER PATHS

by David Gonzalez

When Louis J. Cappelli graduated from William H. Taft High School in 1949, he ended up doing what most of his buddies in the Bronx did: not much. There was a recession, and jobs were tight. He would walk from his home at Courtlandt Avenue and 160th Street, cross Park Avenue and head to their hangout on Morris Avenue and 165th, where the biggest attraction some days was watching the street get paved.

"None of us was working," he said. "We had a nice time hanging out on the corner, shooting pool, listening to music and going to the movies. We made a few dollars delivering orders."

Then came another order.

"My father said, 'Louie, get a job,'" Mr. Cappelli said. "My father only had to tell me once." So Louie dressed himself up in his high school graduation suit, bought the New York Times and looked in the classifieds under "Office Boy," because that was "what I thought I was capable of doing."

One ad led him to the Standard Factors Corporation.

"I was instantly offered the job," he said. "I started working the same day. And I've been here ever since."

Has he ever. Louie, the iceman's son, has gone from the street corner to the corner office as the chairman and chief executive officer of Sterling Bancorp, the successor to Standard Factors. His 50-year journey left him grateful for life's many blessings, starting with his parents' work ethic. So when he goes to his Park Avenue office, he remembers that road's northern reaches in his old neighborhood.

"I never forgot where I come from," he said. "I tell my colleagues, when you look in the mirror, don't kid yourself about who you are. Don't try to be anything else."

There was a time when others told him to forget about being much of anything. He admits to having been an average student, one who sometimes sassed the teachers. Back then, his family lived at Morris Avenue and 162nd Street, near Yankee Stadium....

His father, Peter, who came to America as a teenager, made his living hauling hunks of ice. Though he was not educated, he kept track of accounts in his mind. He taught his children the value of respecting family and community. Mr. Cappelli's two brothers and sister taught him the value of education, urging him to get an academic diploma at Taft, rather than go to the vocational schools that his friends attended.

He rose through the bank's hierarchy while earning a degree from City College at night. He studied accounting, a discipline that he speaks of reverently. The numbers on a spreadsheet, he says, tell stories of businesses and the people who work for them, including his bank. He feels a responsibility to them, he said, because at one point or another in his career, he probably had their job....

BRONX ROOTS STILL NURTURE CAREER PATHS

(CONTINUED)

"I traveled through the ranks, so I know what it's like. I didn't come out of Harvard Business School and start as a vice president...."

"If you're smart enough," he said. "It's not luck. It's timing. You need to be in the station at the right time."

Or the classroom. A few years ago he was Principal for a Day at Taft High School....In one sophomore class, Noemi Cruz listened to his corporate success story.

"How do I get a job at your bank?" she asked, half joking.

He hired her. She began working summers, and continued after graduation. She is now an administrative assistant, working full time while going to New York University at night, courtesy of the bank.

"I want to stay right here," she said. "Hopefully, I'll get his office...."

"I can relate to her," he said. He snapped his fingers. "Like that, I can relate to her."

**This article is excerpted and reprinted from The New York Times.*

APPLYING TO COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES, AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS



AGENDA

- SESSION 1
 - Starter
 - Step One: Apply
 - Step Two: Take My Application, Please!
- SESSION 2
 - The Write Stuff: Why?
 - The Write Process
 - Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will identify the benefits of applying to a range of schools.

Students will practice completing college applications.

Students will write model entrance essays.

Materials Needed

- Session 1: One copy of the “A+ Applications” activity sheet for each student (Part I)

- Session 1: Scissors and tape (Part I)
- Session 1: One copy of the “College Application Planner” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- Session 1: College catalogs and brochures (Part II)
- Session 1: Highlighters (Part II)
- Session 1: One copy of the Common Application for each student (Part II and Session 2, Part I)
(Note: If your guidance department does not have the Common Application, you may contact the College Board directly or find it online at www.commonapp.org.)
- Session 2: One copy of the “Apply Yourself” activity sheet for each student (Part I)
- Session 2: Copies of a sample essay, one for each group of four or five students (This essay may be taken from a book on college essays in the school library or guidance office.) (Part I)
- Session 2: One copy of the “Topic Brainstorming” activity sheet for each student (Part I)
- Session 2: Four or more index cards for each student (Part II)

SESSION 1

Starter (3 minutes)

Write these advertising slogans for a state lottery on the board: “Hey, you never know” and “You’ve got to be in it to win it.” Ask students how these ideas could connect to applying to and going to college. (Students may answer: if you don’t try, you’ll never know what you could accomplish.)

Explain to students that the next two sessions will take them through the step-by-step process of applying to colleges.

Part I Step One: Apply (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify the benefits of applying to a range of schools and the appropriate steps to filling out applications.

1. Students learn the purpose of applications.

Divide the class into groups of three or four. Instruct students to consider the following situation:

Suppose that we as a class decided to let five new students join us. We can select whomever we want. Much to our surprise, 100 students want to join our class! How will we choose from among them? What would we want to know about them? What criteria will we use to select the new students?

Give groups five minutes to develop an application or other admissions screening ideas. Then, have them share their ideas with the class.

Ask students to consider the process that they developed to identify some of the reasons for the college application process. Write student responses on the board.

2. Students organize the steps to filling out college applications.

Distribute copies of the “A+ Applications” activity sheet, scissors, and tape to the groups. Explain to students that these are the steps they should follow when filling out applications, but that they are out of order.

Instruct students to cut along the dotted lines and arrange the steps in the order they think is best. Have them tape their steps together to share with the class.

Discuss the different organizational plans. Have students revise within their groups. Tell students to write these steps in their journals or to save the activity sheets to use as reminders when they begin the application process.

Part II Step Two: Take My Application, Please! (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify a range of schools to apply to and determine how to request admissions applications.

1. Students identify a range of schools to apply to and contact for applications.

Explain to students that many guides suggest applying to four to six schools in three different categories: “reach schools” (less than 50% chance of being accepted), “good-shot schools” (50/50 chance), and “safety schools” (better than 50% chance). In the previous lesson, students identified three schools that interested them. Have them work with partners to review their notes and reexamine catalogs/brochures as needed in order to identify their reach schools, good-shot schools, and safety schools.

Distribute the “College Application Planner” activity sheet to each student. Have students write their three school choices (from Lesson 3 in this module) in the first column.

Read through the steps on the activity sheet to be sure students understand each one. Then have students check college catalogs to find out how to request applications. As a homework assignment, have students contact the schools they listed for applications and write the date of their request on their activity sheets.

2. Students review the Common Application.

Explain to students that many colleges use the Common Application—a standardized form that students fill out once and send to multiple schools. Distribute copies of the Common Application for students to use as practice.

Give students highlighters and have them work in small groups to read through the Common Application. Let them highlight unfamiliar terms or questions. If the group cannot answer the questions, bring the class together. Here are some terms that may need explanation:

- Early Action or Early Decision Candidate
- SAT or SAT I
- SAT II or Achievement Tests
- ACT: American College Test
- TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language

Tell students that the next session will focus on the essays that many schools require as part of the application process.

As a homework assignment before beginning Session 2, ask students to find interesting first sentences from their favorite books.

SESSION 2

Part I The Write Stuff: Why? (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students understand the purpose of the personal essay and prepare to write a model admission essay.

1. Students discuss why a personal essay is part of the application process.

Have students look at the information they've written on their practice Common Applications. Ask, "How would you feel if a decision about your future were made using just this information?" (Students might respond: the information is just numbers; it doesn't tell anything about them as people.)

Explain that the purpose of the essay is to give all applicants the opportunity to present themselves as the unique individuals that they are. Point out to students that the essay is not a test; rather, it allows colleges to get to know students personally.

Distribute copies of the "Apply Yourself" activity sheet. Give students a few minutes to read the article. Have them summarize the information by asking them to describe some of the essay-writing tips given in the article. (Students may answer: write about something personal, describe the event as it happened, don't try anything off-the-wall unless you are a strong writer.)

2. Students read and discuss sample essays.

Tell students that they are now going to review an essay.

Divide the class into groups of four or five. Distribute copies of a sample essay from a library or guidance office resource to each group. Ask students to imagine that they are admissions officers reading the essay. Then, give them about 10 minutes to read and discuss the essay. Discuss the following questions as a group:

- What topic did the writer choose?
- What are some examples of sentences that are personal or that contain vivid descriptions of an object or action?
- What did you learn about the writer?
- Would the writer fit in at our school?

3. Students explore essay themes and topics.

Refer students to the Common Application. Have them read the directions for writing the essay. Distribute copies of the "Topic Brainstorming" activity sheet to students in their small groups.

Explain to students that it is important to look for an original topic for their essays. Interesting or unusual topics make for interesting and unusual essays that will stand out. Give groups 10 minutes to brainstorm topics for each category on the activity sheet.

When the class is finished, have one group read its list for the first category, “Personal Relationships and Influences.” Have the other groups cross out the same topics if they appear on their lists. Then have another group read its list, and so on. Repeat for “Life Experiences” and “Personal Qualities.”

Students may be surprised by the number of repeated ideas. How many unusual topics did the class come up with? The answer could be none! If time allows, regroup students and repeat the activity, or try it again on another day. Work until students have brainstormed interesting, unusual ideas to write about.

Part II The Write Process (25 minutes)

Purpose: Students explore the writing process: looking for topics, choosing the important first sentence, and organizing a first draft.

1. Students explore personal resources for essay topics.

As students work through the following activities, remind them that the purpose of the essay is for them to express themselves. You may want to make signs in the shape of keys with the following reminders written on them: be yourself, be honest, and tell a story rich in details.

Explain to students that the best topic for their essays will be one that is meaningful to them and about which they know a great deal. Distribute four or more index cards to each student. Have students write one extracurricular activity, hobby, and work experience on each card. Then, give them five minutes to free-associate a list of thoughts, ideas, phrases, and images for each card.

Have students look through their journals and old essays for topics and ideas about which to write. Encourage them to discuss their ideas with other students using questions such as “Does this topic or theme sound interesting? What does it tell you about me?”

Tell students that top-10 lists are another way to generate ideas for topics. Have students brainstorm a variety of top-10 lists (e.g., 10 most important personal experiences, 10 most important people, 10 best movies, 10 book characters you’d like to meet, and so on).

You might also encourage students to draw clusters around a theme. For example, a student might put “work experiences” in a center circle and draw a web about their job experiences. Students should see one area of the cluster that looks particularly rich and for which they provided many details.

2. Students discuss sample first sentences.

Ask volunteers to share the first sentences from some of their favorite books. Instruct students to tell what they enjoyed most about the book.

Then ask students, “Why is an interesting first sentence important for your personal essays?” (Students might respond: you want to grab the attention of the admissions officer reading your essay so you stand out.)

3. Students review the steps of the writing process.

Explain to students that the process of writing their personal essays can take many months. The more time they allow for it, the better their essays will be. Review these writing steps:

- Take notes, writing stream of consciousness. Use index cards or pieces of paper folded into sections. Write one idea on each card or in each section. Don’t worry about mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and grammar).
- Organize your notes. Put your index cards or cut-up sections in order.
- Create an outline. Add specific details for each main point.
- Write a first draft.
- Rest the first draft by putting it away for a day or two.
- Revise and rewrite several days later.
- Rest the second draft, then revise and rewrite.
- Get feedback from peers, teachers, and school counselors.
- Revise and rewrite.
- Repeat draft writing, resting, and revising.
- Proofread. Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Make a final copy of the essay.

Suggest that when students begin to write essays, they work with writing partners. If necessary, remind students of the guidelines for constructive feedback and to use I-Messages and questions when critiquing someone else’s work. List appropriate questions or phrases partners can use when reading each other’s work, such as the following:

- I’m not sure what you mean in this sentence.
- I like these words together—they make me see X.
- I don’t understand how Y led to Z.
- How did X change the way you look at Y?
- I don’t get a sense of how this made you feel.

Conclusion (3 minutes)

Ask students to summarize the steps they must take to apply to college. Elicit from them the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Apply to a range of colleges, including reach schools, good-shot schools, and safety schools.
- Applications can be obtained over the internet, by phone, or by mail.
- Filling out the application takes time and patience.
- The essay is important because it is your chance to make a personal impression.

Student Assessment

SESSION 1

1. List the steps to filling out a college application.
2. List one reach school, one good-shot school, and one safety school to which you are considering applying. Explain why each is either a reach, a good-shot, or a safety school.
3. What is the Common Application?

SESSION 2

1. List three of your most important personal experiences, three of the most important people to you, and three of your favorite characters from a book or movie. Explain why each experience, person, and character is significant for you. Which of these topics can be expanded into an essay that would interest you?
2. Describe the steps of the writing process.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Never let the fear of striking out get in your way.”

Discuss how this quote relates to applying to colleges, universities, and technical schools.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students create graphs of schools in which they are interested. Have them include information such as degrees conferred; whether the school is a reach, good-shot, or safety school; requirements; tuition; location; etc.

Have students display their graphs on poster paper and hang them around the room.

Writing in Your Journal

Tell students to brainstorm challenges they have faced, why they want to pursue a certain course of study, what an application won't tell admissions staff, etc.

Have them outline a possible college essay on one of these topics.

Using Technology

Have students bring in their favorite song—one that they would write about in a college essay because it represents them. Play the songs for the class.

Have students describe why their chosen song represents them.

Homework

Have students obtain applications for the schools to which they wish to apply.

Have students compare and contrast the applications they receive.

Additional Resources

Have students refer to *The Best College Admission Essays* by Mark Alan Stewart and Cynthia C. Muchnick and *Essays That Will Get You into College* by Amy Burnham, Daniel Kaufman, and Chris Dowhan.

Have students describe the elements of a great essay.

A+ APPLICATIONS

Answer all the questions in detail.	Write or type neatly.
Proofread and revise.	Mark the deadline on a calendar.
Reread the application before mailing. Be sure that the necessary signatures and application fee are enclosed.	Consider submitting supplemental materials that illustrate long-term hobbies, describe part-time work, include an audio or video recording of original music or dance performances, or contain published poetry or other writing.
Read the entire application.	Copy your final draft.
Write a cover letter that draws attention to particular strengths or explains a situation that the application did not cover.	Make copies of the application for rough drafts.
Follow directions carefully.	Plan to give yourself plenty of time to complete each application.

COLLEGE APPLICATION PLANNER

Directions: Write the name of one of your top college choices in each column. Fill in the dates as you complete each step.

APPLICATION STEPS	COLLEGE	COLLEGE	COLLEGE
<i>Application requested</i>			
<i>Application received</i>			
*APPLICATION DUE			
<i>Personal data completed</i>			
<i>Educational data completed</i>			
<i>Test information completed</i>			
<i>Family information completed</i>			
<i>Honors, extracurricular completed</i>			
<i>Work experience completed</i>			
<i>Short essay draft 1</i>			
<i>revised</i>			
<i>final</i>			
<i>Personal statement outline</i>			
<i>draft 1</i>			
<i>draft 1 revised</i>			
<i>draft 2</i>			
<i>draft 2 revised</i>			
<i>draft 3</i>			
<i>draft 3 revised</i>			
<i>final draft</i>			
<i>proofread</i>			
<i>completed</i>			
APPLICATION MAILED			

APPLY YOURSELF

Every night this fall, Jenna Arnold, 17, rehearsed for her high school musical. But whenever Jenna had a spare moment, she worked on the story of her life. The senior from Elkins Park, Pa, doesn't want to be a writer—she hopes to be a set designer one day. But to achieve her goal, she knew she had to perfect a single, hugely important essay.

Like millions of college-bound seniors, Jenna has to wow admissions officers with her grades, SAT scores, activities—and a personal essay. “It’s the only part of the application where you have to express yourself and tell them who you are,” says Josh Berezin, 19, of Shaker Heights, Ohio, who turned the essay that helped him get into Yale University into the book *Getting into Yale* (\$14, Hyperion). “It’s your chance to be creative.”

But that can be tough if you haven’t had much practice writing.

Parke Muth, assistant dean of admissions at the University of Virginia, has seen plenty of essay triumphs—and failures. “One of the major problems is a lack of focus,” he says. “People think they have to come up with a huge, important topic—the Middle East, abortion. That’s much too large.”

To help you find your focus, check out these tips from Muth, Jenna and Josh:

- **Think small.** Choose a topic that allows you to write from a personal perspective and use specific details. Jenna focused on her bout with a rare disease, alopecia areata, which causes baldness. “There I was, trying to live a normal life and wanting to date boys,” she says. “And

I was always worrying about my wig falling off.” Jenna chose a single, traumatic episode to describe—the moment a friend accidentally knocked her wig off.

“I felt my wig slide slowly backward down the back of my head, like chocolate syrup rolling down a scoop of ice cream. My deepest fear became a reality; I was exposed. In the sunlight, out in the open, my secret was revealed, as were the few patches of hair I had remaining on my head.”

- **Write vividly.** And let the action flow naturally. Here’s how Josh described himself on the field:

“Even I have to laugh sometimes. Here I am, at 5-foot-8, surrounded by my fellow offensive linemen, who average 6-foot-2. It must be a sight to see. Me, in the back of the huddle, clawing my way back within earshot

of the quarterback, or stretching up on the tips of my toes, straining to read his lips.”

- **Be willing to take a risk.** Some applicants attach cartoons, write movie scripts or ignore the question and take off on fantasies of their own.

“Of course, you can crash and burn, too,” Muth says. “Someone who isn’t a strong writer probably should not take a risk.”

But sometimes a risk pays off big. Published author Josh says he never imagined himself to be much of a writer. “The only piece of advice I can think of is to be yourself,” he says. “It sounds stupid and clichéd and everything, but that’s the only way it’s gonna be good.”

—Joseph D’Agnese

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TOPIC BRAINSTORMING

Write one idea in each box.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND INFLUENCES	LIFE EXPERIENCES	PERSONAL QUALITIES

DISCOVERING MONEY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS, AND LOANS

AGENDA

- Starter
- Scholarships, Grants, and Loans! Oh My!
- Treasure Hunt
- More Forms!
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will determine the differences between scholarships, grants, and loans.

Students will identify scholarships, grants, and loans available from colleges, technical schools, the government, and the private sector.

Materials Needed

- Index cards with financial aid terms written on them and a large bag (Part II)
- Books or catalogs on financial aid and/or internet access (Include sources of information for about 14 groups to do research.) (Part II)
- One copy of the “Here’s the Money” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- One copy of the “Statement of Educational Purpose/Registration Compliance” activity sheet for

each student (Part II)

- One copy of the FAFSA form for each student (available from your guidance office or on www.studentaid.ed.gov) (Part III)
- Highlighters, one for each pair of students (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Say to students, “You want to buy a new pair of sneakers, but you don’t have the cash. How many different (legal) ways can you think of to get the money for the sneakers?” Have the class brainstorm ways to raise money. (Among other things, students might suggest: ask a parent for cash, do chores or find a job to earn the money, borrow money.)

Tell students that just as there are different ways to raise or earn money for sneakers, there are different ways to raise or earn money to pay for a college education.

Part I Scholarships, Grants, and Loans! Oh My! (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students determine the differences between scholarships, grants, and loans and identify questions about financial aid to guide their research.

1. Students understand the differences between scholarships, grants, work-study programs, and loans.

Tell students that the cost of college should NOT be the deciding factor in their selection of schools. Point out that two of the most expensive schools, Harvard and Stanford, give financial aid to more than half of the students they accept. Tell them that close to half of all college students receive some sort of financial aid. Also, many students work while going to school.

Divide students into eight groups and assign each of the following words to the groups (two groups will work on each word): “scholarship,” “grant,” “work-study,” and “loan.” Instruct each group to develop a definition for their word as they think it relates to financing college.

When students have developed definitions, ask each group to share their results with the class. You may want to have prepared definitions for each of these terms.

2. Students brainstorm financial aid questions.

Instruct each group to develop a list of questions that they have about financial aid and getting money for college. When groups have finished, ask a volunteer from each group to write their questions on the board or chart paper. Display the list for students to refer and add to throughout this lesson.

Part II Treasure Hunt (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students research and report on sources of financial aid.

1. Students research financial aid sources.

Divide the class into pairs or small groups (about 14 groups). Have the following written on index cards and placed in a bag:

- Federal Stafford Loan
- Federal PLUS Loan
- Federal Perkins Loan
- Federal Pell Grants
- Federal Work-Study Program (FWS)
- Military and Veterans' Programs
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL)
- [Name of your state] aid programs
- Athletic scholarships
- Aid for women
- Aid for people with disabilities
- Aid for ethnic minorities
- Local banks

Have each group pick a card from the bag. Then, have groups become financial aid “experts” about the program, group, or source of aid they have chosen. Tell each group that they are to find as much information as they can and that they will present that information to the rest of the class.

The following websites and books from the school library or guidance office will get students started on their research:

- www.fastweb.com
- www.finaid.org
- <https://studentaid.gov/>
- www.collegeboard.org

Give each group one or more copies of the “Here’s the Money” activity sheet to complete. Tell students to fill out this sheet with the information they find. Explain to students that at the end of class, you will photocopy all of the activity sheets, creating a class set for each student to use for reference in the future.

2. Student groups share their findings with the class.

Give each group time to prepare and present the results of their research to the class. Remind them to address the list of questions from Part I.

Students will discover that every federal financial aid program requires the Statement of Educational Purpose/Registration Compliance. Distribute copies of the “Statement of Educational Purpose/Registration Compliance” activity sheet. Read through the activity sheet with students and give them time to complete it.

3. Students learn about scholarship contests.

Tell students the story of Benjamin Kaplan, who won \$90,000 in scholarship contests. He discovered that most scholarship applications asked for an essay, a list of activities, an academic transcript, and letters of recommendation. Kaplan wrote several essays and adapted them for each scholarship. His themes included college plans, career goals, and future contributions to society. He entered large national contests and contests available to local students or members of organizations. His hunt began in his senior year, but he discovered that there are contests for younger students, too.

Part III More Forms! (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students examine the FAFSA form.

1. Students work with partners to read through the FAFSA form.

Give each pair of students one FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form and a highlighter. Tell students to read through the form and highlight any lines or directions that need clarification. Then instruct students to use the resources from Part II to answer each other's questions.

When students have finished working, have each group share what they found. Clarify for students as needed.

2. Students begin to fill in the FAFSA form.

Help students begin to fill in the form to the best of their ability. If they do not finish the form in class, or if students need help discovering some of the information on the form, have them complete it at home with their parents or guardians. Remind students that their parents/guardians may not want to share their financial information with them. When the time comes to submit the FAFSA to schools, parents/guardians might choose to complete and submit it without sharing it with students. Tell students to keep these forms in a safe place so they can use them when they are applying to college.

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Elicit students' opinions regarding how this lesson has changed their thinking about pursuing a college education. Elicit from them the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- There are many different ways to pay for a college education.
- There is money for college available from schools; local, state, and federal governments; and the private sector. There are also scholarship contests that students can enter.
- Applying for any kind of financial aid involves research and filling out forms carefully, honestly, and on time.

Student Assessment

1. What is financial aid? Why is it important to start thinking about financial aid now?
2. Explain the differences between scholarships, grants, and loans.
3. List and describe five sources of financial aid.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Analyzing the Numbers

Have students visit <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=31> and identify the statistics that they find interesting or surprising. Alternatively, you might select some figures from this site ahead of time and present them to the class.

Discuss the implications of these numbers and the opportunity that exists as a result.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Ask students to create a time line of the college application and loan processes.

Discuss the importance of deadlines in these processes.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students begin a journal entry with, "A college education is worth...."

Have students discuss the importance of being able to access the money that is available in scholarships, grants, and loans.

Using Technology

Have students research sources of scholarships online.

Ask students to list these sources on index cards and share them with the class.

Homework

Ask students to create a budget for one semester of college, including tuition, books, room and board, and entertainment.

Have students share the budgets they have created.

Additional Resources

Have students review a book about scholarships or visit www.fastweb.com.

Have students discuss their options for financing a college education.

HERE'S THE MONEY

Program name: _____

Program description:	
What you must be to be eligible:	
What you must do while in school:	
Loan or grant amount or limit:	
Repayment begins as follows:	
How to apply:	
When to apply:	
Notes:	

STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE/REGISTRATION COMPLIANCE

I hereby affirm that any funds received under the Pell Grant, the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, the College Work-Study, the Perkins/Stafford Loan, the Supplemental Loans for Students, or the Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students will be used solely for expenses related to attendance or continued attendance at the institution below. I further understand that I am responsible for repayment of a prorated amount of any portion of payments made which cannot reasonably be attributed to meeting educational expenses related to attendance at the institution. The amount of such repayment is to be determined on the basis of criteria set forth by the U.S. Secretary of Education.

I affirm that to the best of my knowledge, I do not owe a repayment on a Pell Grant, a Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, or a State Student Incentive Grant previously received for study at any institution. To the best of my knowledge, I am not in default on a Perkins/Stafford Student Loan or a Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students.

☐ I certify that I am registered with the Selective Service.

or

☐ I certify that I am NOT required to be registered with the Selective Service because

☐ I have not reached my eighteenth birthday.

☐ I am a female.

☐ I am in the Armed Services on active duty. (Members of the National Guard and the Reserves are not considered on active duty.)

☐ I am a permanent member of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands or the Northern Mariana Islands.

Notice: You will not receive Title IV financial aid unless you complete the statement and, if required, provide proof that you are registered with Selective Service. If you state falsely that you are registered or that you are not required to register, you may be subject to fine, imprisonment, or both.

I certify that the information contained in this application is true and complete. I will notify the Director of Financial Aid of any change in my family's financial status in writing.

WARNING: If you purposely give false or misleading information on this form, you may get a fine, a prison sentence, or both.

Signature

Date

Parent or Guardian's Signature(s)

Date