

NACAC

National Association for
College Admission Counseling

Step by Step: College Awareness and Planning

Elementary
School
Curriculum

Grades K-5



STRIVE
FOR
COLLEGE

Introduction

Introducing students to career and college exploration in elementary school will provide them the opportunity to establish a foundation for more in-depth conversations and exploration about their futures in later years. At this stage, a counselor's role should include the following:

- Guiding students to identify personal interests
- Supporting students in linking their interests to possible careers
- Encouraging students to express their initial thoughts about college
- Prompting students to list some characteristics they might look for in a college
- Helping students understand basic college-related terms
- Encouraging students to incorporate aids that match their preferred learning styles

The following two-session curriculum encompasses a comprehensive foundation to address all of the above.

Note: While the curriculum is written in a practical order, keep the needs of your students in mind. Change the order of the sessions if necessary.

Elementary School Sessions

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Session 1:
What Do I Want to be When I Grow Up? . . . 8

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How Can College Help Me? 22

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Session 1: What Do I Want to be When I Grow Up?

The purpose of this session is to introduce students to the topic of career exploration and help them identify the connection between interests, abilities, and job options.

Objectives

By the end of this session, students will have:

- Identified personal interests and related them to current career choice
- Described one or more jobs they find interesting
- Identified different types of job environments
- Discussed occupations held by adults in their community

Activities/Handouts

Activity #1: Job Possibilities (Grade level: Kindergarten)

Handout: When I Grow Up

Activity #2: Different Job Environments (Grade level: First Grade)

Handout: I Work with Penguins

Activity #3: In the Future (Grade level: Second Grade)

Handout: Today/Someday

Activity #4: What Do You Like? (Grade level: Third Grade)

Handout: Careers by Degrees and Jobs I Like

Activity #5: Career Interests (Grade level: Fourth Grade)

Handout: Career Research

Activity #6: Making a Name for Myself (Grade level: Fourth or Fifth Grade)

Handout: Career Exploration

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Session 1: What Do I Want to Be When I Grow Up?

Activity #1: When I Grow Up

Activity/Handout

When I Grow Up

Materials

When I Grow Up by Tina Louise and Oliver Corwin, crayons, and community helper cards (teacher supply store)

Instructions

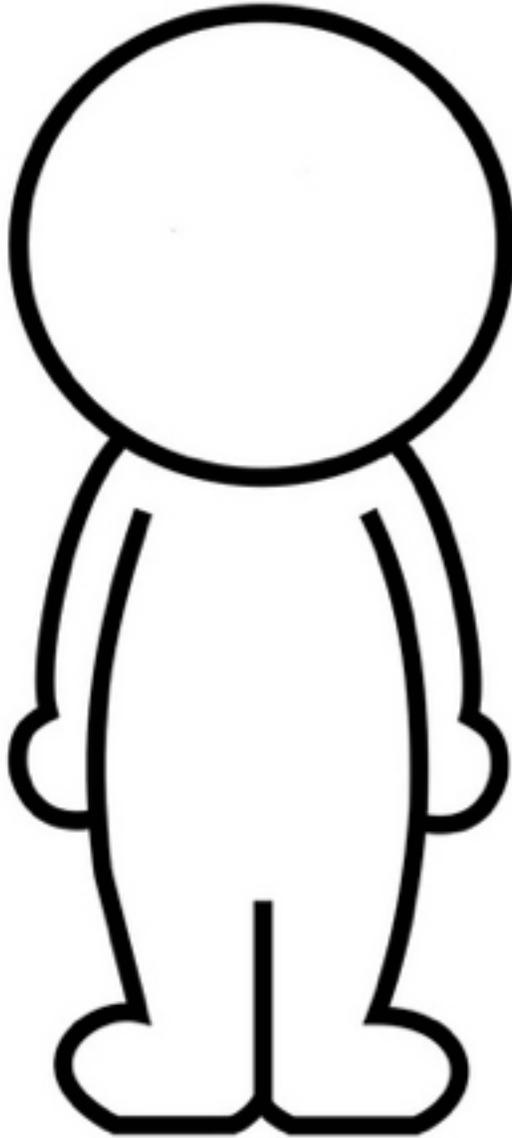
1. Introduce the topic by explaining that today we are going to talk about finding a job. We are going to explore different job possibilities and think about different job environments.
2. Read *When I Grow Up*.
3. Discuss the fact that many jobs in this book are non-traditional careers such as a scuba diver. Discuss career interests and jobs available in your hometown.
4. Introduce the Community Helper cards. Pass out helper cards to each student. Ask the students to raise their hands and share if they have a community helper who:
 - Works outside
 - Wears a uniform
 - Works in dangerous environment
 - Works with animals
 - Works with medicine
5. Pass out the “When I Grow Up” sheet. Instruct students to imagine themselves as an adult with a career and draw how they imagine themselves in that career. Help them with spelling. Tell them to add a hat or uniform if their career requires it.

When I Grow Up

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Imagine yourself in a career that excites you. Draw what you think you might look like in that job. Do you have a uniform? Do you have to wear a hat or a certain type of shoes?

My career is: _____



1

Session 1: What Do I Want to Be When I Grow Up?

Activity #2: Different Job Environments

Activity/Handout

I Work with Penguins

Materials

Who Counts the Penguins? Working in Antarctica by Mary Meinking, and crayons

Instructions

1. Read *Who Counts the Penguins? Working in Antarctica* to the class and discuss the following questions:
 - What jobs related to penguins or their habitat would you like to do (e.g., digging for fossils in the ice, making movies about penguins, writing books about penguins, taking care of penguins at the zoo, etc.)?
 - What will you have to learn how to do after high school/in college to do that job?
2. Pass out the “I Work with Penguins” sheet and have the students draw themselves doing their “penguin job.”
3. Have students discuss their drawings in small groups or with the whole class.

1

Session 1: What Do I Want to Be When I Grow Up?

Activity #3: In the Future

Activity/Handout

Today/Someday

Materials

Someday by Eileen Spinelli and crayons

Instructions

1. Read *Someday* with the class.
2. Identify the job titles and required education connected to the today/someday activities in the book (e.g. marine biologist who will study dolphins someday and feeds goldfish today, etc.).
3. Have students identify their own today/someday activities and the education they will need.
4. Have students draw a today/someday picture.

Name _____

Today/Someday

Today I...

Someday I will...

1

Session 1: What Do I Want to Be When I Grow Up?

Activity #4: What Do You Like?

Activity/Handout

Careers by Degrees and Jobs I Like

Materials

When I Grow Up by Al Yankovic and pencils

Instructions

1. Read *When I Grow Up* with the class.
2. Distribute the “Careers by Degrees” handout. Explain to students that most jobs today require some form of education or training after high school (e.g., certificate program, two-year college, four-year institution, etc.). Ask the class to point out at least two jobs they see on the handout that were mentioned in the book. Have a brief discussion about the level of education required for those jobs.
3. Distribute the “Jobs I Like” sheet and read through the instructions with students. Allow students time to complete their charts.
4. When students are done with the sheet ask for volunteers to share their responses. Below are some questions to help guide the discussion:
 - What are some of your favorite hobbies?
 - What are some jobs that sound interesting to you?
 - Can you tell us what level of education you think might be required to do that job?
 - What job(s) on your list are most related to your hobbies?

Careers by Degrees

A major benefit of a college degree is having more jobs to choose from. Below are just some possibilities available to college graduates.

Not sure what one of the jobs is? Do a little investigating at www.bls.gov/ooh. Check out the in-demand jobs!

Certificate	Two-Year College (Associate degree)	Four-Year College (Bachelor's degree)	More than Four Years (Graduate degree)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chef/culinary arts^{1,2} • dental assistant • emergency medical technician or paramedic¹ • heating, air conditioning, or refrigeration mechanic or installer¹ • licensed practical or licensed vocational nurse • medical assistant¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • computer and office equipment repairer • dental hygienist • disc jockey (deejay) • firefighter² • fitness trainer • mechanic • medical assistant • physical therapist assistant • restaurant manager • web developer/administrator² • zookeeper² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accountant • athletic trainer • chemist • computer programmer • engineer • financial planner • FBI agent • graphic designer • interpreter/translator • pilot • pharmacist • photographer • registered nurse • social worker • sportscaster/news reporter • teacher • writer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • architect • dentist • lawyer • minister, priest, or rabbi • nurse practitioner • physical therapist • physician • physician assistant • psychologist • scientist • university professor • veterinarian

1—You can also train for these jobs at a two-year college. Why? Because more education usually means more earnings!

2—You can also train for these jobs at a four-year college. Why? Because more education usually means more earnings!

Jobs I Like

Instructions: Fill out the table below. In the far left column, list all of your favorite hobbies, or things you like to do. In the middle column, list any jobs that sound interesting to you. These can be jobs that were mentioned in *When I Grow Up*, jobs we discussed in previous activities, or any other job that interests you! In the column on the far right, write down what education you think a person might need for that job. You can get some hints by looking at the Career by Degrees handout.

My favorite hobbies	Jobs that sound interesting	Education required for the job
Example: Riding my bike	Example: Chef	Example: Certificate or two-year college

1

Session 1: What Do I Want to Be When I Grow Up?

Activity #5: Career Interests

Activity/Handout

Career Research

Materials

Computers or tablets, and pencils

Instructions

1. Inform students that they are going to take an online career test that will give them an idea of the types of work environments and occupations that might be a good fit for them. Students will visit <https://www.123test.com/career-test> to complete the test.
2. After completing the test students should review their results, write down their six letter Holland code, and pick two to three careers from their list of suggested occupations to explore.
3. Students should use the below websites to gather the information they need to complete the Career Research sheet.
 - <http://careersighted.com>
 - <https://www.bls.gov/ooh>
 - <https://www.mynextmove.org>
4. As a follow-up activity you could have each student present one career from his or her sheet.

Career Test Instructions:

- It will take you between five to ten minutes to complete this career test. You will see four pictures at a time. Out of those four pictures you will need to click the green ✓ for the work activity that appeals to you the most and click the red ✗ for the work activity that appeals to you the least. Don't choose a work activity based on the status or money associated with it. Don't make your choice based on gender or race. Just imagine yourself performing the task shown and decide if you would like to do it or not.
- After you complete the picture section, "select all" for the education level so that you can see a variety of jobs with different education requirements.

Career Research

Websites to Explore

<http://careersighted.com>

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh>

<https://www.mynextmove.org>

Career/Job #1: _____

Median salary (How much money you will make): _____

Degree needed (Entry-Level Education): _____

Job outlook (Will a lot of jobs be available?): _____

Work environment (Do you work inside or outside? How many hours do they typically work? Is it dangerous?): _

Career/Job #2: _____

Median salary (How much money you will make): _____

Degree needed (Entry-Level Education): _____

Job outlook (Will a lot of jobs be available?): _____

Work environment (Do you work inside or outside? How many hours do they typically work? Is it dangerous?): _

1

Session 1: What Do I Want to Be When I Grow Up?

Activity #6: Making a Name for Myself

Activity/Handout

Career Exploration

Materials

Pens or pencils, colored pencils

Instructions

1. Distribute the “Career Exploration” sheet and explain to students that they will work in pairs to interview one another, responding to statements one through four.
2. Demonstrate how students should ask one another questions that allow them to gather the information requested on their sheets.
3. After students have finished the interviews, ask each pair to share with the class.
4. Following the brief presentations, or for homework, students should design a business card using the blank box on their sheet for the career that interests them the most.
5. As a follow-up, have students present their business cards to the class, asking them questions throughout.
6. Encourage students to think of people they know who are working in the career fields that interest them and ask those individuals some important questions. You can make this an assignment by requiring students to record answers to the questions and/or have them present their findings.
 - What did you dream about doing when you were in middle or high school?
 - How did you decide on this career?
 - How much education did you need for this career?
 - What is the best thing about your career?
 - What would you change about your career?
 - Would you recommend this career?
 - How might this career change in 10–20 years?

Career Exploration

1. I would like to know more about a career in:
2. I think this could be a good career for me because:
3. To learn more about this career, I should talk to:
4. I can also learn more about this career from the following places:
5. This is what my business card would look like if I worked in this career:

Sample



Design your own card

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to design their own business card.

2

Session 2: How Can College Help Me?

The purpose of this session is to help students explore what their ideas of college are, whether they want to go to college, and how college could make a difference in their lives. Now that students have had an opportunity to explore a variety of careers, they can learn more about how college can prepare them for those careers.

Objectives

By the end of this session, students will have:

- Expressed their initial thoughts about college
- Recognized that higher levels of education generally correlate with higher earnings
- Identified some of the characteristics they value in a college
- Demonstrated their understanding of basic college-related terms
- Identified their learning style and selected some aids they will use in the future

Activities/Handouts

Activity #1: College Knowledge (Grade level: Fourth or Fifth Grade)

Handout: College Knowledge and Earning Power

Activity #2: Know, Want, Learn (Grade level: Fourth or Fifth Grade)

Handout: Know, Want, Learn (KWL), and college guidebooks and viewbooks

Activity #3: Starting Your Search for the Right College (Grade level: Fourth or Fifth Grade)

Handout: Your Map to Buried (College) Treasure, and college guidebooks and viewbooks

Activity #4: Understanding College Terminology (Grade level: Fourth or Fifth Grade)

Handout: College Terms and Matching College Terms

Activity #5: Making the Most of Your School Experience (Grade level: Fifth Grade)

Handout: How Do I Learn, Suggested Aids for Different Learning Styles, and TIPS for making your classes count

Activity #6: Step to the Top of Your Class (Grade level: Fifth Grade)

2

Session 2: How Can College Help Me?

Activity #1: College Knowledge

Activity/Handout

College Knowledge Survey and Earning Power sheet

Materials

Pencils or pens

Instructions

1. Opening Discussion: As a rising middle school student, you probably have a lot on your mind: *Will I get this major school project finished on time? Will I be able to hang out with friends this weekend?* But have you seriously thought about college? Here are some reasons why you should start thinking about college now:
 - You Say: It's too early to think about college!
 - We Say: The steps you take now will determine your college options later. Start planning now!
 - You Say: No one in my family ever went to college.
 - We Say: Be the first! Set a good example for others to follow by meeting people and learning cool stuff in college.
 - You Say: I can't afford it!
 - We Say: Colleges, high school counselors, scholarship organizations, and even your state government can help meet the cost! More than half of college students get some type of financial aid. For example, if you take challenging courses and earn good grades, you should apply for scholarships.
2. Give each student the College Knowledge Survey and give them time to answer each question in a few words independently. Inform students that there are no right or wrong answers for this activity.
3. Review the questions and student responses as a large group.
4. After the discussion, hand out the "Earning Power" sheet. As a large group, read the sheet and use the following questions to aid in a discussion:
 - Approximately how much does someone with a professional degree earn each year?
 - What kind of jobs do you think require a professional degree?
 - Approximately how much does someone with a high school diploma earn each year?
 - How much more does someone with an associate degree earn? A bachelor's degree?

College Knowledge Survey

Answer these questions in a few words. These are your own thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. What do you think of when you hear the word college?
2. Who do you know who goes to or has been to college? Where?
3. Why do you think students continue on to college after high school?
4. What jobs do you think require a college education?
5. What colleges do you know about? How do you know about these colleges?
6. What other things do you think that you can do in college besides study and take classes?
7. Why do you want to go to college?

Adapted from Cabral, Joshua. "Addressing the Needs of First-Generation, College-Bound Students: A Comprehensive 5th–12th Grade Approach." South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School.

Earning Power

There is real, independent evidence that shows that higher education leads to higher pay.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, college graduates age 25 and over earn nearly twice as much as workers who have only a high school diploma.

Good paying jobs usually require at least a high school diploma. An employer may even request your high school transcripts.

Living away from home, making new friends, and taking unique courses are all a part of the college experience. But, it gets even better! A college education will offer you more money, more job choices, and more freedom.

Businesses want more than employees with a high school diploma—they want problem solvers, good thinkers, and people who are flexible and want to continue learning. People with college educations generally have more jobs to choose from.

More Money

On average, a person who goes to college earns more money than a person who doesn't.

Learn More, Earn More

People with more education earn more money. Here are annual earnings based on degree:



From: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-started/know-yourself/learn-more-earn-more>

2

Session 2: How Can College Help Me?

Activity #2: Know, Want, Learn

Activity/Handout

Know, Want, Learn (KWL)

Materials

College guidebooks and viewbooks, and pencils or pens

Instructions

1. Brainstorm with students to come up with a preliminary list of colleges and universities. To inspire responses, encourage students to think in terms of familiarity: a college that a relative attended or is attending, a college sports team, a local college, etc.
2. Distribute Know, Want, Learn (KWL).
3. Have students work individually or in pairs to complete the Know, Want, Learn (KWL). Students will record what they already know, what they want to know, and new information they learn for one college or university of their choosing. They can select a school from the brainstorm list or one that wasn't mentioned.
4. Provide students with college guidebooks and viewbooks or websites that will be helpful resources for completing their chart.
5. Time permitting, have each student/pair share or ask for volunteers to share.

Know, Want, Learn (KWL)

- Directions:** List what you already know about the college in the KNOW column
List what you want to know about the college in the WANT column
List new information you learn about the college in the LEARN column

Name of College or University:
Already Know:
Want to Learn:
Learned:

2

Session 2: How Can College Help Me?

Activity #3: Starting Your Search for the Right College

Activity/Handout

Your Map to Buried (College) Treasure

Materials

College guidebooks and viewbooks, pencils or pens

Instructions

1. Distribute the handout—Your Map to Buried (College) Treasure.
2. Explain to students that there are a lot of characteristics to consider when thinking about the “best fit” college. Review each of the squares on the map with students pointing out that these are examples of characteristics they might want to consider.
3. Instruct students to work independently to complete their own treasure maps.
4. As a large group, invite students to share which points on the map were most important to them and why.
5. Instruct small groups to use the college guidebooks and viewbooks to find information that would help them dig up information on their treasure map.
6. Ask each group to share what kind of information they were able to locate—and where it was found.

Your Map to Buried (College) Treasure

I look for my buried college treasure, this map as my guide.



START HERE

PS (Pirate School) #1

DISTANCE FROM HOME: I want to look for my treasure:

- close to home not too close to home not sure

Do you think that you will want to be close to home? Would you enjoy traveling to a new place? Some students find that it helps to have the support of family close by while in college; others need to get away from distractions.



SIZE: As I look for my treasure I plan to travel on this size ship: small (fewer than 2,000 pirates) medium large not sure

The size of your college will determine many possibilities including: the number of majors offered, activities available, number of books in the library, class size, and attention from teachers. (Small colleges may be as small as 500 students, medium sized 3,000–5,000, and large as many as 25,000–50,000 students.)

LOCATION: I'd like to dig for treasure:

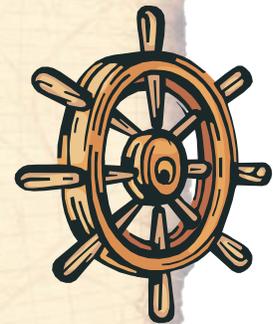
- in or near a big city
 in a quieter location

Are the opportunities of a city important, or do you want a quiet, self-contained campus that will help you focus on your studies?



COLLEGE MAJOR: After you find your treasure—where would you like it to take you? Do you have a college major or career plan? If so, for which strong programs should you look?

(Fill in the blank with college major or career choice)



ACTIVITIES: Even pirates can't spend all of their time looking for treasure! How would you like to use your spare time? Are extracurricular activities (sports, drama, music, fraternities and sororities, etc.) important to you? Campus activities that matter to me include:

(Fill in the blank with one or two activities)

END POINT: Congratulations—you are on your way to finding
COLLEGE TREASURE!



2

Session 2: How Can College Help Me?

Activity #4: Understanding College Terminology

Activities/Handouts

College Terms and Matching College Terms

Materials

Pencils or pens

Instructions

1. Distribute the “College Terms” handout and have students break into groups of four.
2. Instruct students to read the college terms together.
3. After students have reviewed the college terms, instruct them to place their College Terms handouts in a folder and set it aside.
4. Distribute the “Matching College Terms” sheet (one to each group) and tell students to work together in their groups to recall the college terms they reviewed and match them with the appropriate picture.
5. When groups are finished, go through each picture and have groups volunteer their responses. Discuss the pictures with the students.

College Terms

The College Experience



Major/Minor

A major is your main field of study in a college program. A minor is your secondary field of study.



Dorm or Residence Hall

A building that college students live in on the college campus.



Roommate

A student who shares your dorm room with you.



Dining Hall

A large room on campus where students eat meals together.

Applying to College



Personal Statement

An essay that the student writes to show their personality, achievements, and character.



Letter of Recommendation

A letter written on your behalf, explaining why you make a good candidate. Some colleges require these as part of the application process.



College Entrance Exams

The ACT and the SAT are tests designed to measure a student's level of knowledge in basic areas such as math, science, English, and reading. Colleges may require the results of either test before granting admission.

Paying for College



Financial Aid

Money that helps the student pay for college. Financial aid includes grants, scholarships, student loans, and work study.



Scholarship

A type of financial aid that is awarded to students who meet or exceed the criteria identified. A scholarship does not have to be repaid.



Work Study

A program that helps students get jobs on campus to help them pay for college or other expenses.

Matching College Terms

Draw lines to match the definitions to the terms.



Your main field of study in a college program. Your secondary field of study.



A building that college students live in on the college campus.



A student who shares your dorm room with you.



A large room on campus where students eat meals together.



An essay that the student writes to show their personality, achievements, and character.



Written on your behalf, explaining why you make a good candidate. Some colleges require these as part of the application process.



The ACT and the SAT are tests designed to measure a student's level of knowledge in basic areas such as math, science, English, and reading. Colleges may require the results of either test before granting admission.



Money that helps the student pay for college. Financial aid includes grants, scholarships, student loans, and work study.



A type of financial aid that is awarded to students who meet or exceed the criteria identified. A scholarship does not have to be repaid.



A program that helps students get jobs on campus to help them pay for college or other expenses.

College Entrance Exams

Dining Hall

Dorm or Residence Hall

Financial Aid

Work Study

Letter of Recommendation

Major/Minor

Personal Statement

Roommate

Scholarship

3. _____

2

Session 2: How Can College Help Me?

Activity #5: Making the Most of Your School Experience

Activities/Handouts

How Do I Learn?, Suggested Aids for Different Learning Styles, Tips for Making Your Classes Count, highlighters, and pencils or pens

Materials

Highlighters, and pencils or pens

Instructions

1. Distribute the “How Do I Learn?” handout. Walk students through a few examples demonstrating how they should fill out the handout and total up their numbers for each category.
2. Instruct students to spend about five minutes completing the handout independently.
3. Once students have completed the handout, have them find a partner that has the same top learning type as them (visual, hearing, or sensing).
4. In pairs students should review the handouts: “Suggested Aids for Different Learning Styles” and “Tips for Making Your Classes Count.” Each student should highlight the aids and tips that are or would be most helpful to him or her. Encourage students to talk to their partner about how they plan to use those aids and tips.
5. Come back together as a class. Get a sense of your students’ learning styles by asking students to raise their hands or stand up for their preferred style—visual, hearing, or sensing. Use the following questions to encourage a class discussion:
 - Which aids from the “Suggested Aids for Different Learning Style”’s handout do you already use?
 - Which aids can you see yourself trying in the future?
 - Which tips from the “Tips for Making Your Classes Count” handout do you like?
6. Close the activity by emphasizing that it’s important to start practicing strong study skills that will help them be

How Do I Learn?

(From Incentive Publications, Inc. Nashville, TN 1990)

Read each statement below and select the appropriate number as it applies to you:

Often (3), Sometimes (2), Seldom/never (1)

Learning by seeing:

- ___ I remember information better if I write it down.
- ___ Looking at the person who is talking helps keep me focused.
- ___ I need a quiet place to get my work done.
- ___ I find it easiest to learn something new by watching a demonstration of how to do it.
- ___ I enjoy reading most when I can read descriptive passages that allow me to create mental pictures.
- ___ I usually remember people I have met by their faces (I forget names).
- ___ When I take a test, I can see the textbook page in my head.
- ___ I need to write down directions, not just take them verbally.
- ___ Music or background noises distract my attention from the task at hand.
- ___ I don't always get the meaning of a joke.
- ___ I doodle and draw pictures on the margins of my notebook pages.
- ___ I have trouble following lectures.
- ___ I react very strongly to colors.
- ___ **TOTAL**

Learning by hearing:

- ___ My papers and notebooks always seem messy.
- ___ When I read, it helps to use my finger to track my place on the line.
- ___ I find it easiest to learn something new by listening to someone explain how to do it.
- ___ I enjoy reading most when I can read dialogue between characters.
- ___ I usually remember people I have met by their names (I forget faces).
- ___ I don't follow written directions well.
- ___ If I hear something, I will remember it.
- ___ Writing has always been difficult for me.
- ___ I often misread words from the text ("them" for "then").
- ___ I would rather listen and learn than read and learn.
- ___ I'm not very good at interpreting an individual's body language.
- ___ Pages with small print or poor quality copies are difficult for me to read.
- ___ My eyes tire quickly even though my vision check-up is always fine.
- ___ **TOTAL**

Learning by doing: (touching, feeling, smelling, moving)

- ___ I start a project before reading the directions.
- ___ I hate to sit at a desk for long periods of time.
- ___ I enjoy reading most when I can read stories with a lot of action in the beginning.
- ___ I usually remember people I have met by their mannerisms, motions, and actions.
- ___ I prefer first to see something done and then do it myself.
- ___ I use trial and error approach to problem-solving.
- ___ I like to read my textbook while doing something else.
- ___ I take frequent study breaks.
- ___ I have a difficult time giving step-by-step instructions.
- ___ I use my hands when describing things.
- ___ I have to rewrite or type my class notes to reinforce the material.
- ___ **TOTAL**

- Record your totals here: Learning by seeing: _____ Learning by hearing: _____
Learning by doing: _____
- Circle the learning type with the highest score.
- Now look at “Suggested Aids for Learning Styles” and discuss with your partner how you think you might be able to take advantage of some of those aids to improve your study habits. (Circle one or two ideas that may work for you.)

Suggested Aids for Different Learning Styles

VISUAL	AUDITORY (HEARING)	SENSING
Use guided imagery	Use recordings	Pace/walk as you study
Form pictures in your mind	Watch TV	Physically "do it"
Take notes	Listen to music	Practice repeated times
See parts of words	Speak/listen to speakers	Breathe slowly
Use "cue" words	Make up rhymes/poems	Role play
Use notebooks	Read aloud	Exercise
Use colored study cards	Talk to yourself	Dance
Use photographs	Repeat things orally	Write on surfaces with a finger
Use charts, graphs	Have discussions	Write lists repeatedly
Use maps	Listen carefully	Move in chair
Draw, use drawings	Say words in syllables	Watch lips move in front of mirror
Use mnemonics	Use mnemonics	Use mnemonics

Tips for Making Your Classes Count

- **Sit close to the front** of the classroom when possible.
- **Join in** class discussions.
- **Ask questions!** If you don't understand something, chances are others in the class don't understand either.
- **Keep up** with class assignments. Finish them before they're due.
- **Ask for help** in any class in which you find yourself falling behind. Remember, your teachers want to help you succeed!
- Look for ways to **sharpen your basic skills** in each class. For example, you can practice your writing skills and, your algebra skills in science.
- **Learn keyboarding** skills so you can type your own schoolwork and use a computer.
- Learn to **take good class notes**. You'll be taking lots of notes during the rest of your life.
- Learn to **proofread, edit, and rewrite** your written work.
- **Develop test-taking skills**. Your counselor and teachers can show you how to get the most out of your test preparation.

Outside of school (what you do outside of school counts too!):

- Develop **habits** now that will help you succeed in high school, in education after high school, and in the world of work. For example, arrive on time.
- Find a **quiet place to study** where you won't be interrupted. Is it just too noisy at home? Ask your family or a teacher to help you find a place to study.
- Plan a **daily homework schedule** and stick to it. Do more than is required.
- Ask your **family or friends** to read your written work. And ask them for help if you're having trouble at school.
- Use your local **library**. If you don't have a library card now, ask the librarian for one. They're free.
- Read **newspapers and magazines**. Talk with your family and friends about what you read.
- Look up words you don't know in the **dictionary**. Then use your new words in writing and while talking.
- Talk with your family about **career plans** and what you want to do in the future.



2

Session 1: How Can College Help Me?

Activity #6: Step to the Top of Your Class

Materials

Print out the class standing pages for Step to the Top of Your Class

Instructions

Getting started with play:

You will need nine volunteers to play students about to enter high school and one to play the school principal. That student reads the qualities and tells students whether to move up or down. Hand out the class standings in random order and then instruct volunteers to organize themselves in class standing order from highest to lowest. (This is generally a couple of minutes of comedy relief because players have trouble getting organized. This is part of the fun.)

Scenario of Play:

The remainder of the group is told that they are the teachers deciding who from the senior class at All-American High School (or you pick a funny name) will be selected to speak at graduation ceremonies. The teachers, along with the principal, are deciding who has stepped to the top of his or her high school class and will be asked to speak at graduation. Before them they see the candidates. Point out that they are standing in order from highest to lowest, based upon how they placed at the end of middle school. Point out that more than grades will be involved in making this decision.

The personal qualities/qualifications are then read and the volunteers are asked to exchange places (move up and down in the order) based upon what is read. (Important: If more than one student is moving up, the highest student must move first.) You may choose to alter the qualities/qualifications and the weight given to each.

Stop after each quality is read to discuss why this helped or hindered the student. As an example: you may ask, How do you think it might help you to have a volunteer job in the summer? Or, How might studying at the library be helpful in your classes? This is a way to generate discussion.

The Ending:

After all qualities have been read and candidates have been sorted, have the participants turn over their top sheet to reveal their original standing and then turn the sheet around to reveal it to the audience. Read through, pointing out the new order and note that the top candidate, newly sorted, will be invited to speak at graduation. Point out that their personal choices can have an impact on the ways in which they will grow and achieve during their high school years.

Step to the Top of Your Class

Qualities, which are read, and designated places to move up and down in the line:

1. IF YOU PLAN TO TAKE THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES REQUIRED BY COLLEGES FOR ADMISSION +2
2. IF YOU PLAN TO GET INVOLVED IN SOME MUSICAL ACTIVITIES IN HIGH SCHOOL +1
3. IF YOU MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR COUNSELOR DURING YOUR FIRST YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL TO LET HER KNOW YOU PLAN TO GO TO COLLEGE +2
4. IF YOU PLAN TO SPEND YOUR SUMMERS "HANGING OUT" -1
5. IF YOU PLAN TO TAKE AT LEAST THREE YEARS OF THE SAME WORLD LANGUAGE IN HIGH SCHOOL +2
6. IF YOU NEVER SPEAK TO YOUR TEACHERS OUTSIDE OF CLASS -2
7. IF YOU SPEND MORE TIME ON THE PHONE AND WATCHING TV THAN YOU DO ON YOUR HOMEWORK -4
8. IF YOU HAVE TALKED TO YOUR FAMILY ABOUT THE FACT THAT YOU WANT TO GO TO COLLEGE AND ASKED FOR THEIR SUPPORT +2
9. IF YOU DON'T LIKE SCIENCE AND PLAN TO TAKE THE BARE MINIMUM OF LAB SCIENCE CLASSES -1
10. IF YOU SPEND MORE TIME THINKING ABOUT YOUR NEXT PARTY THAN YOU DO YOUR NEXT CLASS -1
11. IF YOU STUDY AT LEAST ½ HOUR EACH NIGHT FOR EACH ACADEMIC CLASS YOU ARE TAKING +3
12. IF, INSTEAD OF STUDYING FOR YOUR TEST, YOU COPIED OFF YOUR NEIGHBOR'S PAPER—SIT DOWN, YOU JUST FAILED AN IMPORTANT CLASS THAT YOU NEEDED FOR COLLEGE ADMISSION
13. IF, EVEN THOUGH NO ONE IN YOUR FAMILY HAS GONE TO COLLEGE, YOU ARE DETERMINED TO DO SO +2
14. IF, IN THE SUMMER, YOU GET A VOLUNTEER JOB RELATED TO YOUR CAREER INTEREST +2
15. IF YOU DON'T PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY ACTIVITIES WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL -3
16. IF YOU PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN A COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT +1
17. IF YOU HAVE A PUBLIC LIBRARY CARD AND VISIT THE LIBRARY FOR A QUIET PLACE TO STUDY +2

18. IF YOU BELONG TO A SPORTS TEAM AND WORK HARD TO DO YOUR BEST +2
19. IF YOU PLAN TO GET A PART-TIME JOB AND SAVE YOUR MONEY FOR A CAR, INSTEAD OF SAVING MONEY FOR COLLEGE -3
20. IF YOU GOT BEHIND IN ONE OF YOUR CLASSES BUT STAYED AFTER SCHOOL TO GET EXTRA HELP FROM THE TEACHER +1
21. IF YOU MAKE SURE YOUR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS KNOW HOW YOUR SCHOOL WORK IS GOING AND REGULARLY SHARE GRADES AND REPORT CARDS WITH THEM +3
22. IF YOU TAKE SICK DAYS FROM SCHOOL, EVEN WHEN YOU AREN'T SICK -1
23. IF YOU PLAN TO BELONG TO STUDENT GOVERNMENT OR WORK ON THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER +1

Personal quality sheets follow.

#1 in middle school class:

- YOU DON'T LIKE SCIENCE AND PLAN TO TAKE THE BARE MINIMUM OF LAB SCIENCE CLASSES
 - YOU DON'T PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY ACTIVITIES WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL
- YOU MAKE SURE YOUR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS KNOW HOW YOUR SCHOOL WORK IS GOING, AND REGULARLY SHARE GRADES AND REPORT CARDS WITH THEM

#2 in middle school class:

- YOU PLAN TO SPEND YOUR SUMMERS HANGING OUT
- YOU SPEND MORE TIME THINKING ABOUT YOUR NEXT PARTY THAN YOU DO YOUR NEXT CLASS
- IN THE SUMMER, YOU GET A VOLUNTEER JOB RELATED TO YOUR CAREER INTEREST

#3 in middle school class:

- YOU PLAN TO TAKE THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES REQUIRED BY COLLEGES FOR ADMISSION
- YOU PLAN TO SPEND YOUR SUMMERS HANGING OUT
- YOU SPEND MORE TIME ON THE PHONE AND WATCHING TV THAN YOU DO ON YOUR HOMEWORK
 - INSTEAD OF STUDYING FOR YOUR TEST YOU COPIED OFF YOUR NEIGHBOR'S PAPER—SIT DOWN, YOU JUST FAILED AN IMPORTANT CLASS THAT YOU NEEDED FOR COLLEGE ADMISSION

#4 in middle school class:

- YOU PLAN TO GET INVOLVED IN SOME MUSICAL ACTIVITIES IN HIGH SCHOOL
 - YOU NEVER SPEAK TO YOUR TEACHERS OUTSIDE OF CLASS
 - YOU DON'T LIKE SCIENCE AND PLAN TO TAKE THE BARE MINIMUM OF LAB SCIENCE CLASSES
 - YOU TAKE SICK DAYS FROM SCHOOL, EVEN WHEN YOU AREN'T SICK

#5 in middle school class:

- YOU MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR COUNSELOR DURING YOUR FIRST YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL TO LET HER KNOW YOU PLAN TO GO TO COLLEGE
- YOU SPEND MORE TIME THINKING ABOUT YOUR NEXT PARTY THAN YOU DO YOUR NEXT CLASS
- YOU PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY SERVICE
- YOU PLAN TO GET A PART-TIME JOB AND SAVE MONEY FOR A CAR INSTEAD OF SAVING FOR COLLEGE

#6 in middle school class:

- YOU PLAN TO GET INVOLVED IN SOME MUSICAL ACTIVITIES IN HIGH SCHOOL
- YOU PLAN TO TAKE AT LEAST THREE YEARS OF THE SAME WORLD LANGUAGE IN HIGH SCHOOL
- YOU HAVE TALKED TO YOUR FAMILY ABOUT THE FACT THAT YOU WANT TO GO TO COLLEGE AND ASKED FOR THEIR SUPPORT

#7 in middle school class:

- YOU BELONG TO A SPORTS TEAM AND WORK HARD TO DO YOUR BEST
- YOU PLAN TO TAKE THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES REQUIRED BY COLLEGES FOR ADMISSION
- EVEN THOUGH NO ONE IN YOUR FAMILY HAS GONE TO COLLEGE, YOU ARE DETERMINED TO DO SO
- YOU PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY SERVICE

#8 in middle school class:

- YOU STUDY AT LEAST $\frac{1}{2}$ HOUR EACH NIGHT FOR EACH ACADEMIC CLASS YOU ARE TAKING
- YOU BELONG TO A SPORTS TEAM AND WORK HARD TO DO YOUR BEST
- YOU GOT BEHIND IN ONE OF YOUR CLASSES BUT STAYED AFTER SCHOOL TO GET EXTRA HELP FROM THE TEACHER

#9 in middle school class:

- YOU HAVE TALKED TO YOUR FAMILY ABOUT THE FACT THAT YOU WANT TO GO TO COLLEGE AND ASKED FOR THEIR SUPPORT
- YOU HAVE A PUBLIC LIBRARY CARD AND VISIT THE LIBRARY FOR A QUIET PLACE TO STUDY
- YOU PLAN TO BELONG TO STUDENT GOVERNMENT OR WORK ON THE SCHOOL PAPER
- IN THE SUMMER YOU GET A VOLUNTEER JOB RELATED TO YOUR CAREER INTEREST

General Activities

This section includes various activities that can be easily adapted to meet the needs of the students.

Activities/Handouts

Activity #1: Peer Connections (Grade levels: Kindergarten – Fifth Grade)

Handout: K – 3rd Grade Bingo cards or 4th – 5th Grade Bingo cards

Activity #2: Design a College Pennant (Grade levels: Kindergarten – Fifth Grade)

Handout: College Pennant

Activity #3: Avatar (Grade levels: Kindergarten – Fifth Grade)

General Activities

Activity #1: Peer Connections

Activity/Handout

K–3rd Grade or 4th–5th Grade Bingo cards

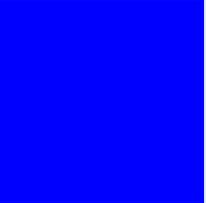
Materials

Pencils or pens

Instructions

1. Distribute a bingo card to each student.
2. Explain to students that they are going to move around the room to find students who match the descriptions in the bingo squares. The owner of the bingo card should ask his/her peers questions (e.g., do you like basketball?) to determine whether there is a match. If there is a match, the owner of the bingo card should write the student's name in the appropriate square.
3. Once a student has a row filled with names they should yell, "BINGO!"
4. Come back together as a class and check the winner's bingo card squares. Identify the individuals matching each square's description.
5. Continue the game for a second round with the new goal of filling the entire card. (Set a five-minute time-limit and then award the student who came closest.)
6. Check all of the squares on the student's card—identify the students matching each description.
7. To close the activity, read each bingo square and direct students to stand for those that apply to them.

K-3rd Grade Bingo

B I N G O				
<p>Likes to play</p> 	<p>Favorite color is</p> 	<p>Wants to be a doctor</p> 	<p>Likes to draw</p> 	<p>Favorite season is</p> 
<p>Speaks 2 languages</p> 	<p>Likes to dance</p> 	<p>Has brown hair</p> 	<p>Can name 1 college</p> 	<p>First name starts with an "A"</p> 
<p>Favorite season is winter</p> 	<p>Has moved to a new house</p> 	<p>FREE</p>	<p>Has 2 sisters</p> 	<p>Likes to play</p> 
<p>Wants to be a scientist</p> 	<p>Last name starts with a "S"</p> 	<p>Can walk to school</p> 	<p>Likes to play outside</p> 	<p>Likes to read</p> 
<p>Likes to play board games</p> 	<p>Is the youngest child</p> 	<p>Likes to sing</p> 	<p>Likes math</p> 	<p>Favorite color is</p> 

4th–5th Grade Bingo

B I N G O				
<p>Plays on a sports team</p> 	<p>Favorite color is</p> 	<p>Wants to be a doctor</p> 	<p>Likes to draw</p> 	<p>Favorite season is</p> 
<p>Speaks 2 languages</p> 	<p>Likes to dance</p> 	<p>Does volunteer work</p> 	<p>Can name 1 college</p> 	<p>Studies or does homework at least 1 hour a night</p> 
<p>Favorite season is winter</p> 	<p>Would like to attend a BIG college</p> 	<p>FREE</p>	<p>Has moved to a new house</p> 	<p>Has 2 sisters</p> 
<p>Wants to be a scientist</p> 	<p>Plays a musical instrument</p> 	<p>Can walk to school</p> 	<p>Likes to play outside</p> 	<p>Likes to read</p> 
<p>Knows someone who graduated from college</p> 	<p>Is the youngest child</p> 	<p>Likes to sing</p> 	<p>Likes math</p> 	<p>Was born in a country other than the US</p> 

General Activities

Activity #2: Design a College Pennant

Activity/Handout

College Pennant

Materials

Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Instructions

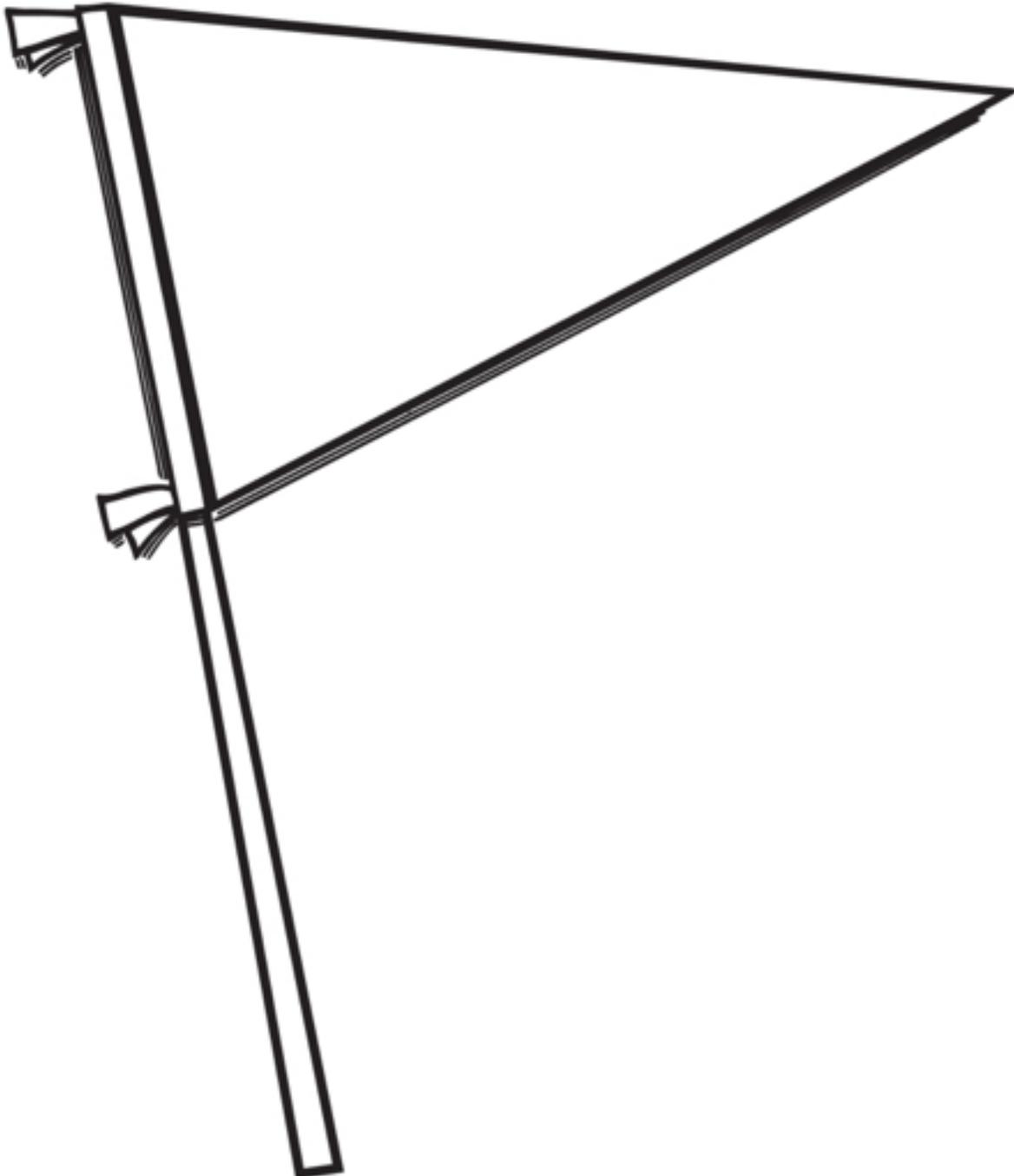
1. Show the students a sample of a college pennant.
2. Have students create their own college pennant. It can be of an actual college or university they might know about or they can be creative and come up with their own.
3. Have the students share their pennants with the class and hang up on the walls.

College Pennant

Directions: Design your own college pennant. You can make one for a specific college or university or for a made-up college or university. Be creative!

Name: _____

Date: _____



General Activities

Activity #3: Avatar

Materials

Blank sheet of paper, crayons, markers, or colored pencils. (If computers or tablets are available, have students use avatar creation tools such as Tellagami or Voki.)

Instructions

1. Explain that students are going to create an adult avatar of themselves and write a script for their avatar. The script will need to include the following information (which can be modified depending on the grade level of the students):
 - Information about your job
 - Knowledge, skills, and/or abilities needed to perform the job
 - Responsibilities
 - What a typical day looks like
 - Level of education
 - How your career relates to your hobbies and interests when you were young