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SESSION 4: GOING TO COLLEGE STARTS NOW: EXTRACURRICULAR INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

Students often believe their grades and test scores are all that colleges look for in determining admission, but they need to understand that in many cases, their extracurricular interests and talents are also important (and sometimes key) factors in the final admission decision... and may also lead to scholarships. In this session, students learn about the ways that extracurricular activities and other factors might impact their decisions about colleges. The session ends with the “Great Sorting Game,” which helps students understand that their GPAs are not the only factor that colleges consider.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, students:

- understand how extracurricular activities can improve opportunities for college admission, enhance the college experience and lead to future jobs
- begin a résumé
- examine a college bound calendar for high school
- understand how these pieces fit together through playing “The Great Sorting Game”

Activities and Handouts:

Recap Activity: Have students pair up and share the schedules that they created for next school year. Ask students to compare their plan (or their previous courses) to their partner’s.

Activity #1: Translating Interests into Activities

Handouts: Personal College Counseling Questionnaire 2;
Interests and Related Activities

Activity #2: Building Your Résumé and Getting Involved

Handout: Activities Résumé

Activity #3: Understanding the Big Picture

Handout: College Planning Checklist

Activity #4: Putting It All Together

Handout: The Great Sorting Game



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ACTIVITY # 1: TRANSLATING INTERESTS INTO ACTIVITIES

Students' extracurricular interests (in or out of school) can often be translated into more formal activities. This exercise helps students brainstorm clubs, organizations, teams, etc. they might want to join. In the following activity, they are encouraged to begin a résumé (or list) of the activities in which they are currently involved and to add to that list each time they begin a new activity.

Opening Discussion:

Remind students that colleges want active and engaged students involved in their communities and that scholarship organizations also look for students involved in activities.

Did you know that your extracurricular interests:

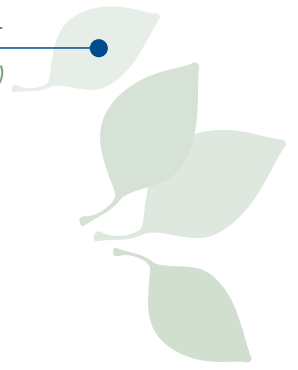
- enable you to discover your talents and develop your skills?
- help build confidence and encourage you to see relationships and connections?
- lead to college majors and future employment as well as internships and volunteer opportunities?
- enhance your application to college and your chances for admission, as well as scholarships?

Activity/Handout:

Personal College Counseling Questionnaire 2 Interests and Related Activities

Instructions:

1. Begin by asking the students to complete the "Personal College Counseling Questionnaire 2" as fully as possible.
2. Once they have completed it, ask the students to find a partner and together decide how they would each fill out the "Interests and Related Activities" chart that will help them to see how their interests might relate to school or community activities and to future majors and/or careers. They may need to do some "brainstorming" to think of majors and careers. Remind them that there are no "wrong" answers here and that they may have to think creatively in order to figure out how their interests would translate into something more.
3. Once students have had a chance to complete their charts, ask them to "introduce" their partner to the group, so that all can benefit from the observations and questions that may arise with this exercise.



PERSONAL COLLEGE COUNSELING QUESTIONNAIRE 2

Student Name _____

1. What activities do you enjoy outside of the daily routine of school? Why?
2. In what sport, games or activities do you participate? With whom?
3. Have you had any leadership roles on sports team, in local organizations, religious institutions, youth groups, or school sponsored activities?
4. In what school sponsored extracurricular activities have you participated? Why?
5. What summer experiences have been particularly important to you? Camps, academic programs, jobs, etc.?
6. What kind of music do you like? Do you play an instrument? Sing? Would you like to? Do you have friends or family members involved in music?
7. Are there activities or opportunities of which you wish you had taken advantage earlier? Do you have any regrets? Is it too late now?
8. Have you been involved with any volunteer or service work? What did you learn from it? Will you continue in the future? Why did/do you do it?
9. What are your interests outside of school?
10. What is something that you're really good at that no one else knows about?



INTERESTS AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

This table should help you to organize your interests and talents and decide how they might relate to activities you could pursue in or out of school and how they might lead to a major in college or a possible career.

List your talents and/or interests in the first column and discuss with your partner what activities you might be able to join that would fit those interests and put them in the second column.

Finally, discuss possible college majors or careers that you might be able to pursue that would fit those interests and talents.

| Interests and Talents (i.e., writing) | Related Activities (in and out of school) (i.e., yearbook) | Possible Major and/or Career (i.e., journalism/newspaper reporter) |
|--|--|---|
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ACTIVITY # 2: BUILDING YOUR RÉSUMÉ AND GETTING INVOLVED

Opening Discussion:

A résumé is a list of your experience, skills and educational background, and is an important piece of the college application. It allows colleges to learn more about you outside of your classroom work and academic performance. Your résumé should be a “living document” that you add to throughout high school until it’s time to apply to colleges in your senior year.

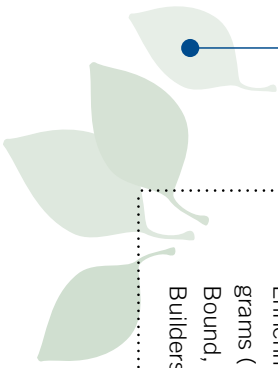
Activity/Handout:

Activities Résumé

Resources List (optional)—the facilitator may want to create a list of extracurricular activities and volunteer opportunities in the school and community, as well as a list of local scholarship opportunities and resources, to share with the students.

Instructions:

1. Ask students to fill out the “Activities Résumé.”
2. They may add to the list the activities add as they go through high school.
3. The students should be encouraged to keep a copy of the résumé in a safe place since it can be used not only for completing applications, but also as an informative piece to share with their school counselor and teachers who may write recommendations for them.
4. In addition to their “Activities Résumé,” the facilitator should remind students to keep a record of awards or honors (and the dates received) in a file folder or electronic portfolio.



ACTIVITIES RÉSUMÉ

| | Dates From/To | Time Spent | | Responsibility / Accomplishments |
|--|------------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| | | Hours per week/month | Total Hours | |
| A. School and Athletic Activities | | | | |
| B. Volunteer Service/ Community or Family Activities | | | | |
| C. Paid Work (after school or summer job) | | | | |
| D. Summer/ Enrichment Pro- grams (Upward Bound, Bridge Builders, etc.) | | | | |

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ACTIVITY # 3: UNDERSTANDING THE BIG PICTURE

Opening Discussion:

It is important for students to understand that each year in high school will count towards preparing for college. They should be aware of important events to be sure that they are taking advantage of every opportunity to be ready for applying to college by the fall of their senior year.

Activity/Handout:

College Planning Checklists—Grades 9–11

Instructions:

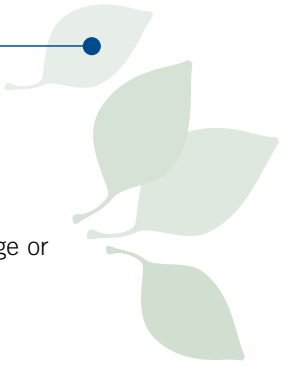
1. Give each of the students a copy of the “College Planning Checklist” and ask them to read it carefully, putting check marks where appropriate.
2. After giving them time to thoroughly read the Checklist, allow time for questions.



COLLEGE PLANNING CHECKLIST

FRESHMAN

- Plan a challenging program of classes to take.
 - The courses you take in high school show colleges what kind of goals you set for yourself. Are you signing up for advanced classes, honors sections, or accelerated sequences? Are you choosing electives that really stretch your mind and help you develop new abilities? Or are you doing just enough to get by? Colleges will be more impressed by respectable grades in challenging courses than by outstanding grades in easy ones.
 - Keep in mind the courses that colleges expect you to have completed for admission; your schedule should consist of at least four college preparatory classes per year, including:
 - Four years of English
 - Four years of math (through algebra II, trigonometry or higher)
 - Two–four years of world language
 - Three–four years of laboratory science
 - Two–four years of history/social studies
 - One year of fine arts
 - One year of electives from the above list
- Create a file of important documents and notes.
 - Copies of report cards, lists of awards and honors, and lists of school and community activities in which you are involved, including both paid and volunteer work, and descriptions of what you do.
- Get involved with academic enrichment programs, summer workshops, and camps with specialty focuses such as music, arts, and science.
 - Keep in mind that learning doesn't happen only in the classroom.
- Stay active in clubs, activities and sports that you enjoy.
 - Colleges look at more than just your academic record for admission. It's important that you demonstrate your abilities outside of the classroom too.



SOPHOMORES

- Learn what resources are available to help you plan for college by meeting with your school's college or school counselor. Ask about catalogs, guidebooks, college search programs, and college websites.
- Begin your college search and visits.
 - Create a list of colleges and universities in which you are interested and discuss it with your parents and school counselor.
 - Find out about the different types of schools. Decide which characteristics are most important to you, such as the size of the school, distance from home, cost, and extracurricular activities.
- Continue extracurricular activities, as admission officers look at students' extracurricular activities when considering them for admission.
- Continue participation in academic enrichment programs, summer workshops and camps with specialty focuses, such as music, arts and science.
- Update your file of important documents and notes.
- Prepare for standardized testing.
 - Ask your counselor about taking the PLAN or PSAT test in the fall. These are valuable tests to help you prepare for the actual ACT and SAT, two college entrance exams, which you can take during your junior year.
 - Review PLAN or PSAT test results with your parents and school counselor.
 - Many students take SAT Subject Tests for college admission as early as sophomore year. These tests help you show colleges your proficiency in different subject areas.
- Sign up for junior year courses keeping in mind that you will want to challenge yourself with tougher courses. It will pay off in the long run not only by making you smarter, but by impressing colleges and helping you win scholarships.
- Talk to your counselor about registering for AP courses next year. AP, or Advanced Placement, courses grant college credit for achievement in exams during high school covering different college-level subjects.



JUNIORS

August

- Start your year off right by talking with your school counselor about the year ahead. Be sure to ask about test dates for the PLAN, PSAT, ACT, and SAT. You'll need to register up to six weeks ahead of time.
- Start investigating sources for financial aid. Take note of scholarship deadlines and plan accordingly.
- Develop a résumé—a record of your accomplishments, activities, and work experiences. This will be an important part of your college application.
- If you don't participate in many activities outside of class, now is the time to sign up. Consider clubs at schools, team sports, or even an after school job.

September/October

- Take the PSAT. Even if you took the test during your sophomore year, taking the test this year will count towards National Merit Scholar consideration and will give you a better predictor for the SAT you take later this year or next.
- Sign up for ACT or SAT prep courses or use free test preparation resources on the Internet. If you can't find the best websites, ask your counselor. You will want to take the test at least once in the spring and again next fall during your senior year.

November

- Sign up for the ACT and SAT, if you haven't already.

December

- PSAT test results should be coming in. Review the results to learn more about your strengths and weaknesses and discuss them with your parents and counselor.
- Use My College Quick Start to access free personalized feedback, practice and college planning based on your PSAT/NMSQT results.

January/February

- Meet with your school counselor again to develop your senior schedule. Ask how you can improve your college preparation.
- Talk to a counselor or teacher about registering for AP courses during your senior year.
- Register for a spring offering of the SAT and/or ACT
- Think about registering for SAT Subject Tests this spring. The final registration deadline for taking the test this academic year will be in April.



March/April

- Begin taking a more serious look at colleges and universities you are interested in attending. Make a file and gather information about academics, financial aid, and campus life to put in it. Go to college fairs and open houses and learn as much as you can from the Internet about schools so you can make the best decision possible.
- Begin planning college visits. Spring break is a good time because you can observe a campus when classes are going on. Even if they are not campuses that you think you would attend, it is important to get exposure to college campuses and the college experience.
- Think about lining up a summer job, internship, or co-op.
- If you are in AP courses, get ready for the AP exams next month.
- Develop a preliminary list of colleges that interest you. Contact them to request a viewbook and additional information.
- Take a look at some college applications and consider all of the different pieces of information you will need to compile.

May

- AP Examinations are given in high schools nationally this month. Make sure you are signed up and know the dates and times for your exams.
- Make a list of teachers, counselors, employers, and other adults who you might ask to write letters of recommendation for your college applications.

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ACTIVITY # 4: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER— THE GREAT SORTING GAME

Opening Discussion:

The Great Sorting Game engages students in an enjoyable mock-admission simulation. The purpose is to help students understand the many factors weighted in admission decisions. The game should generate discussion that summarizes many of the issues presented so far.

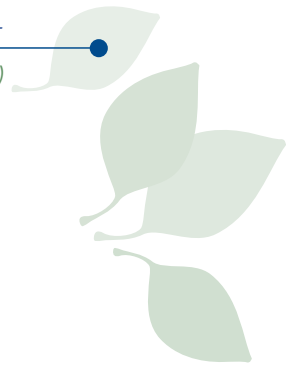
Activity/Handout:

The Great Sorting Game

Instructions:

1. Instructions and game materials are in the pages that follow.





THE GREAT SORTING GAME

(Copyright 2003, Mary Lee Hoganson)

A PARTICIPATORY DEMONSTRATION OF HOW SELECTIVE COLLEGE ADMISSION WORKS (SORT OF)

Getting started with play:

Find nine volunteers to be admission candidates. Secure an additional volunteer to play the “Director of Admission.” That person reads the qualities and tells students whether to move up or down in the competition. Hand out the GPAs in RANDOM order and then instruct volunteers to organize themselves in GPA 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 group of non-volunteers is told that they are the Admission Committee from “College University” (or you pick a better and funnier name). The committee is at the very end of the admission cycle and still has nine great applicants but can only admit three students. All have very appealing qualities, but there is simply not enough room in the class for all nine. Before them they see the candidates. Point out that they are in standing in GPA order from highest to lowest. Also emphasize that all are great candidates and so the committee will have to decide based upon personal qualities and qualifications. Point out that, if the committee were to decide *only* on academics, the three with the highest GPAs would get in.

The Great Sorting Game is intended to be a lighthearted and instructional demonstration that gives participants insight into some of the factors considered in a holistic, selective admission process. For students to understand why these factors matter to institutions, there should be some discussion of each factor after each move led by the facilitator.

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. (One very important note to make this work: if more than one student is moving down at the same time, the lowest student must move first and visa versa—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 read to discuss why this helped or hindered the candidate. As an example: you may ask, “why do you think it might not be helpful to declare your major as pre-med or psychology?” After reading the “Greek Major” quality, point out that many selective colleges have Classics Professors covered with cobwebs and are really hoping to get a few kids in their classes. Stop after the Early Decision qualification to discuss how this may play into a decision by a college. In this way, it is more than reading the qualities. It is a way to generate discussion.

The ending:

After all qualities have been read and candidates have been “sorted,” have the candidates turn their GPA sheets around to reveal the GPA to reveal to the audience. Read through the GPAs, pointing out the new order and note that the top three sorted candidates are going to be admitted.

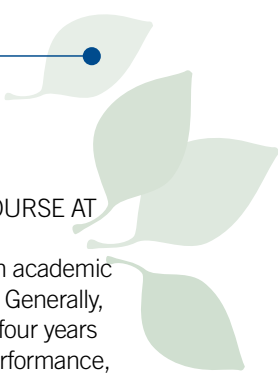
You might choose to have a small prize to thank the volunteers.

THE GREAT SORTING GAME

(Copyright 2003 Mary Lee Hoganson)

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

1. IF YOU HAVE TAKEN AN EXCEPTIONALLY STRONG ACADEMIC PROGRAM +2
Review some of the academic choices that would be considered “exceptionally strong,” for example, 4-5 years of the same foreign language, multiple advanced or AP classes. It may be important to note that colleges will first consider what is available at any given high school, in order to determine the context of what is rigorous in that setting.
2. IF YOU PLAY THE OBOE OR VIOLA +1
Highlight the fact that colleges and universities will have many special slots to fill in order to have a well-rounded student body. The most obvious example is on athletic teams, less obvious are hard to find musicians for the band and orchestra.
3. IF YOU CLEARLY STATED THAT THIS COLLEGE WAS YOUR FIRST CHOICE BY MAKING AN EARLY DECISION APPLICATION AND COMMITMENT +2
Here it is important to explain the early decision and early admission options that are available at some institutions. Explain the commitment required of an early decision applicant and how this may help colleges, for example, in predicting their enrollment or attracting top students.
4. IF YOUR INTENDED MAJOR IS PSYCHOLOGY OR PREMED -1
Both of these are very “popular” majors for freshman applicants, and while not necessarily a detriment to admission, do not distinguish a student from others applying.
5. IF YOUR INTENDED MAJOR IS GREEK +2
In contrast to #4, many selective colleges have “dusty” classics or geology or actuarial science professors who are anxious to find enough students to fill their seats. (At this point you might want to remind students that all of these statements are generalities).
6. IF YOU DO NOT KNOW ANY OF YOUR TEACHERS WELL AND HAD TROUBLE FINDING SOMEONE TO WRITE YOUR COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION -2
Point out that throughout high school it is important to form positive relationships with teachers. When asking for a recommendation, provide information or reminders about your work in that teacher’s class and do not be afraid to mention something you would like to have highlighted.
7. IF, WHEN YOU TYPED YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY, YOU FORGOT TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE COLLEGE YOU WERE APPLYING TO, -4
How you choose to make first impressions counts with colleges. In addition, more and more colleges are exploring how students choose to present themselves in social media.
8. IF YOU ARE A LEGACY +2
Point out that many institutions give special consideration to legacy status, for a variety of reasons, including the fact that loyal families often lead to financial support. Note that at some colleges only immediate family will count for legacy status. This is an example of why highly selective admission involves factors that are beyond many students’ control, and demonstrates why it is important to apply to a range of colleges in terms of selectivity.
9. IF YOU DID NOT WRITE THE OPTIONAL ESSAY FOR YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATION -1
Many colleges consider “demonstrated interest” in choosing students because, not only do they want enthusiastic students, but this leads to a better enrollment yield from accepted students. Visiting campus, attending local information sessions and corresponding directly with admission offices are other ways to show interest.
10. IF THE TOPIC OF YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY WAS “WHAT I LEARNED FROM PLAYING SPORTS” -1
Some college essay topics are so common that it is very difficult, although not impossible, to write a unique and interesting essay. The most obvious topic may not be the best and it is worth exploring what truly makes you unique in choosing your essay topic.
11. IF YOU WROTE THE ESSAY OF THE YEAR—THE ONE THAT WAS PASSED AROUND THE ENTIRE ADMISSION OFFICE IT WAS SO REMARKABLE + 3
This one is self-explanatory.
12. IF YOU PLAGERIZED AN AP AMERICAN HISTORY PAPER AND GOT CAUGHT—SIT DOWN, YOU’RE OUT OF THE COMPETITION ENTIRELY
Use this to explain what is and what isn’t a serious disciplinary issue for colleges. Nearly every institution will understand minor infractions, especially in the less mature early years of high school. But academic dishonesty is a different issue and one that colleges know may be repeated.

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13. **IF YOU WILL BE FIRST IN YOUR FAMILY TO ATTEND COLLEGE +2**
Almost all colleges and universities reward students who have overcome factors that make them less likely to pursue a college education. Another example is the English as a second language applicant.
 14. **IF YOU PARTICIPATED IN AN ENRICHING SUMMER PROGRAM BETWEEN YOUR JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEARS +2**
Give here some examples of summer programs that are available to high school students – on college campuses, internships, special academic focus programs, or in-depth volunteering. All of these endeavors help students stand out from less ambitious applicants.
 15. **IF YOU HAVE PARTICIPATED IN NO EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES -3**
Remind students that most selective colleges are looking to build a well-balanced and interesting freshman class. If only academic performance was considered, you might say with a smile, no one would ever leave the library. (This may be a good place to contrast some large state universities where GPA and test scores, alone, may be clear indicators of who will be admitted.) Suggest some new ways to get involved, for students who may feel they need to broaden their profile.
 16. **IF YOU HAVE PARTICIPATED IN A SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT +1**
Colleges seek students who are not self-absorbed and are willing to give time and energy to others. An emphasis on service is an important factor on many college campuses. Distinguish voluntary community service from “required for graduation” service.
 17. **IF YOU ARE AN EAGLE SCOUT +2**
Explain that attaining the rank of Eagle Scout requires a long and consistent commitment to a goal, as well as strong demonstration of leadership skills. Help students identify some similar activities in which they might be involved.
 18. **IF YOU ARE A VARSITY ATHLETE +2, AND IF YOU ARE A VARSITY ATHLETE AND TOOK SECOND-PLACE AT REGIONALS IN YOUR SPORT MOVE UP ONE MORE (A TOTAL OF 3)**
Fielding strong teams is important to visibility, recruitment, and alumni support – among other factors. Many colleges and universities recruit athletes – not just Division I schools, but also Division III institutions. Even at a college that does not offer athletic scholarships, athletic participation may provide that “value added” that will make for an appealing candidate. Remind students too, that the ongoing commitment that leads to athletic excellence, may be demonstrated in many other activities – music, drama, service, science or math competitions – to name a few.
 19. **IF YOU GOT A “D” IN AN ACADEMIC COURSE AT THE END OF YOUR JUNIOR YEAR -3**
Though no one grade makes or breaks an academic record, colleges will look at grade trends. Generally, colleges will look for increasing rigor over four years and either consistent strong academic performance, or an upward trend.
 20. **IF YOU CAME TO THE COLLEGE INFORMATION SESSION AND INTRODUCED YOURSELF TO THE COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVE (AND IN THE CASE OF THE STUDENT WHO JUST GOT THE “D”, EXPLAINED THE EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES) +1**
This is another example of a way in which to “demonstrate interest.” In addition, giving “context” to any special circumstances – whether in writing or in person – can make a big difference in how a record is viewed.
 21. **IF YOU ARE A RESIDENT OF IDAHO +3**
Another light-hearted way to demonstrate the capriciousness of some decision factors. Almost every college is seeking all sorts of diversity, and given a small number of students applying from any given geographic location, being in that demographic may be an advantage. Use this moment as a time to discuss ethnic, gender, religious, and other diversity issues. (For example a woman applicant may be advantaged in engineering and a male applicant in nursing.)
 22. **IF YOU NEVER GAVE YOUR COUNSELOR ANY PERSONAL INFORMATION FOR USE IN WRITING YOUR COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION -1**
Explain that most counselors have many students in their caseload and many recommendations to write each year. Offering information, either face-to-face or in writing, about activities, accomplishments, interests and family situation will help a counselor write an accurate and distinguishing letter.
 23. **IF YOUR LAST NAME IS ON THE COLLEGE LIBRARY—AND IT’S NOT A COINCIDENCE, MOVE ALL THE WAY TO THE FRONT AND STAY THERE**
The purpose of this foil is to demonstrate in a humorous way to students that there are simply factors over which they have no control in the highly selective admission process and which are, likely not “fair.” Point out that for this reason, if no other, it is important not to become overly emotionally invested in the outcome. Self-worth is not measured by college admissions decisions. And the good news is that there are literally hundreds of wonderful colleges and universities at which any one student can achieve, grow and thrive. –This is likely the MOST important message of this whole game!

4.0

- YOU DID NOT WRITE THE OPTIONAL ESSAY FOR YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATION
- YOU HAVE PARTICIPATED IN NO EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
- YOU ARE A RESIDENT OF IDAHO

3.9

- YOUR INTENDED MAJOR IS PRE-MED
- YOU WROTE YOUR ESSAY ON “WHAT I LEARNED FROM PLAYING SPORTS”
- YOU PARTICIPATED IN AN ENRICHING SUMMER PROGRAM BETWEEN YOUR JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEARS

3.8

- YOU HAVE TAKEN AN EXCEPTIONALLY STRONG ACADEMIC PROGRAM
- YOUR INTENDED MAJOR IS PSYCHOLOGY
- WHEN YOU TYPED YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY, YOU FORGOT TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE COLLEGE TO WHICH YOU WERE APPLYING
- YOU PLAGIARIZED AN AP AMERICAN HISTORY PAPER AND GOT CAUGHT

3.7

- YOU PLAY THE VIOLA
- YOU DO NOT KNOW ANY OF YOUR TEACHERS WELL AND HAD TROUBLE FINDING SOMEONE TO WRITE YOUR COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION
- YOU DID NOT WRITE THE OPTIONAL ESSAY FOR YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATION
- YOU NEVER GAVE YOUR COUNSELOR ANY PERSONAL INFORMATION FOR USE IN WRITING YOUR COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION

3.6

- YOU CLEARLY STATED THAT THIS COLLEGE WAS YOUR FIRST CHOICE BY MAKING AN EARLY DECISION APPLICATION AND COMMITMENT
- THE TOPIC OF YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY WAS “WHAT I LEARNED FROM PLAYING SPORTS”
 - YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN A SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT OR TRIP
 - YOU ATTENDED THE COLLEGE INFORMATION SESSION AT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL AND INTRODUCED YOURSELF TO THE COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVE

3.5

- YOU PLAY THE OBOE
- YOU PLAN TO MAJOR IN GREEK
- YOU ARE A LEGACY
- YOU PARTICIPATED IN AN ENRICHING SUMMER PROGRAM BETWEEN YOUR JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEARS

3.4

- YOU ARE A VARSITY ATHLETE
- YOU HAVE TAKEN AN EXCEPTIONALLY STRONG ACADEMIC PROGRAM
- YOU WILL BE THE FIRST IN YOUR FAMILY TO ATTEND COLLEGE
- YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN A SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

3.3

- YOU WROTE THE ESSAY OF THE YEAR—THE ONE THAT WAS PASSED AROUND THE ENTIRE ADMISSION OFFICE IT WAS SO REMARKABLE
- YOU ARE A VARSITY ATHLETE AND TOOK SECOND-PLACE AT REGIONAL COMPETITION IN YOUR SPORT
- YOU GOT A “D” IN AN ACADEMIC COURSE AT THE END OF YOUR JUNIOR YEAR
- YOU ATTENDED THE COLLEGE INFORMATION SESSION AT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL AND INTRODUCED YOURSELF TO THE COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVE (AND OFFERED AN EXPLANATION OF YOUR “D” GRADE)

3.2

- YOU ARE A LEGACY
- YOU ARE AN EAGLE SCOUT
- YOUR LAST NAME IS ON THE LIBRARY—AND IT'S NOT A COINCIDENCE

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SESSION 4: GOING TO COLLEGE STARTS NOW: EXTRACURRICULAR INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

WRAP-UP

Keep in Mind:

Colleges are not looking for any one type of student. However, all schools look for an accomplished student who brings a lot to the table. While colleges search for truly well-rounded students, they do take into account that grades might not be as high for a student who is committed to many activities outside of the classroom, and vice versa. Students should continue to keep a record of all of the activities that they do outside of school and should also keep in mind how those activities have shaped who they are and will make them better candidates at their chosen colleges.

Homework:

1. Students should write a two-paragraph essay on “The Ideal Student.”
2. In the first paragraph, the students are to pretend that they are a college admission counselor reviewing student applications. They should write what they are looking for in the ideal student. Remind students that admission counselors don’t just look for good grades but take many things into account.
3. In the second paragraph, students should write how they ARE or CAN BECOME that ideal student. Here, students should focus on actions that they have or will take in the future.
4. Remind students that each paragraph should be five or more sentences.

