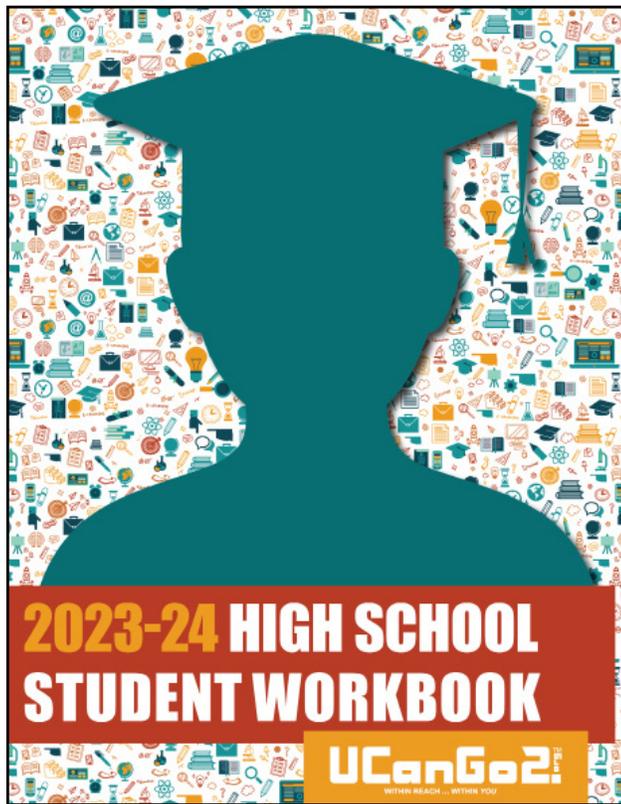


HIGH SCHOOL INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

Lesson Plans for Counselors and Teachers



Use this guide as a lesson plan companion to the High School Student Workbook.



Lesson Plan Instructions

No matter the circumstances — straight As or all Cs, first generation or third generation college student, rural or urban — driven and dedicated students can attend a university, college or technical school and be well on their way to great careers.

The following lesson plans are intended to assist you in helping your students get to college. Each lesson is designed to accompany the *High School Student Workbook*, which includes information about the right classes to take, ACT/SAT resources, career exploration, educational programs and paying for school.

Here are some lesson plan guidelines to help you get started.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN EACH LESSON:

1. Read the lesson goal and objectives.
2. Gather materials: Student Workbooks, PowerPoint Presentation, lesson plan and any relevant handouts.
3. Read and review the corresponding section in the *High School Student Workbook*.

Each section offers guidance on how you can best relay this information to students in every grade level of high school. Try some of the suggested techniques or develop your own!

WELCOME EVERYONE:

Welcome your students and thank them for taking an interest in their future.

INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND ANY OTHER PARTNERS:

Introduce yourself and tell them how a college education has made a difference in your life or in the life of someone you know.

GO OVER THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE DAY:

The following rules should be observed by everyone attending the session.

- ▶ Every question is a good question.
- ▶ Always show respect to the person speaking, whether it's you, another presenter or a student.
- ▶ Stay on topic with questions and answers.
- ▶ Sensitive and personal questions should wait until after the session.
- ▶ Participation and questions are encouraged.
- ▶ Have fun and learn!

START WITH AN ICEBREAKER:

Choose an ice breaker that will motivate your students to think about college. Here's an example:

Have the students pick one item from their pocket, purse, wallet or body (jewelry, belt, etc.) and explain to the class how that item will help them plan and prepare for college. For instance, an ink pen helps them practice their admission essay; glasses help them see the board so they can take good notes during class.

WORKBOOK CONTENT:

How to use the Student Workbook is up to you. You can encourage students to read the content and fill in the worksheets prior to the class period or during the session. The workbook can be read silently or aloud during class.

ENCOURAGING PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

Each section of the Student Workbook includes a "Parent Part." As you complete each lesson with your students, encourage them to share what they've learned, ask questions and discuss concerns with their parent(s).

ESTIMATED TIME NEEDED TO COMPLETE EACH LESSON:

50–55 minutes

Lesson Plan 1: Why Go To College?

Understanding the Value of Higher Education

GOAL:

Some of your students have no doubt about going to college. They've been raised in a college-going environment from the day they were born. Their major may be undecided, but it's a given they'll earn an education beyond high school. However, you may also have students who doubt they can go to college for various reasons; some may be uncertain about attending and others may question whether higher education is worth the investment. Understanding your students' concerns can help you support them as they develop plans for the future.

This section will help students see the value in higher education and address concerns they may have about going to college.

PART 1: TO GO OR NOT TO GO: THERE (REALLY!) IS NO QUESTION

Many students are apprehensive about attending college. We've identified six common concerns, but you may think of more. On Page 5 of their Student Workbooks, they've been given a space to jot down concerns they have about attending school. Ask a few students to share what they've written. Go over each concern with the realities provided in the Student Workbook.

Talk with your students about the role education plays in their future lifestyle. Ask them to take a few moments to complete the [What Do You Want to Be? worksheet](#) on Page 7 in the Student Workbook. Once completed, ask a few students to share their answers. Poll the class by asking them if they think the student's listed income will provide that student with the lifestyle he or she wants. An example of a completed worksheet can be found in the Educators section at UCanGo2.org.

Help them make sure their education, career and lifestyle goals are realistic. If they want to live in a new house and drive a new car but want a career in nonprofit work or acting, it's important they realize their salary may not afford them their desired lifestyle. Talk about the steps needed to reach their goals and whether or not those goals are realistic. Help them see how higher education can assist them in reaching their full potential.

PART 2: WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

No matter where they want to go or what they want to do with their lives, some type of higher education will help your students. Go over a few of the perks they'll receive if they continue their education, including higher income, better benefits and more job security.

WRAP-UP: REVIEW AND REFLECT

Whether your students want to be plumbers, beauticians, teachers or lawyers, there's an academic program designed to help them gain the knowledge and skills to be the best they can be. Higher education is an important tool that enables students to live the life they want to lead.

GRADE LEVEL ACTIVITIES

Share some of these recommended activities with your students.

Freshmen

- ▶ Allow students to set up a free account at OKcollegestart.org and then complete a couple of the career surveys.*
- ▶ Have students make vision boards or take turns decorating bulletin boards highlighting their future goals.
- ▶ Show students how they can keep a record of their classes taken and grades earned in high school by using the Your Plan of Study template at OKcollegestart.org.*
- ▶ Wear a t-shirt from a college you attended and share your experiences with the class. Tell students why you decided college was the best choice for you and why you chose the college from which you earned your degree.

Sophomores

- ▶ Have students complete the Career Finder activity on OKcollegestart.org.*
- ▶ Ask students to research various institutions and write a paper listing three schools of interest, giving the reasons why they chose those schools.
- ▶ Wear a t-shirt from a college you attended and share your experiences with the class. Tell students why you decided college was the best choice for you and why you chose the college from which you earned your degree.
- ▶ Decorate a bulletin board with information on various colleges to get students interested in pursuing higher education.

Juniors

- ▶ Invite one or more recent graduates to come and talk to your class about their college experience so far.
- ▶ Review copies of the [Degree vs. On-the-Job Training](#) chart at [UCanGo2.org](#) and discuss it with your class.
- ▶ Using the information from UCanGo2's [Your Transition to College](#) brochure, discuss some of the major differences between high school and college.
- ▶ Wear a t-shirt from a college you attended and share your experiences with the class. Be prepared to talk about a challenge in college that you or someone you know had to face.

Seniors

- ▶ Assign the Career Cluster Survey at [OKcollegestart.org](#) to encourage your students to think about careers they might wish to pursue.*
- ▶ Allow time for students to research the benefits of higher education and some of the challenges college students face. Instruct them to write a paper outlining their findings and reactions.
- ▶ Tell students why you decided college was the best choice for you and why you chose the college from which you earned your degree.
- ▶ If your seniors haven't completed the [What Do You Want to Be? worksheet](#) on page 7 of their High School Student Workbook, encourage them to do so now. Recommend they keep their worksheet in a file where they can refer to it. This will help them stay motivated to continue their pursuit of higher education.

**Items marked with an asterisk support statewide ICAP efforts and are found on [OKcollegestart.org](#). If your students use another platform for their ICAPs, the activities listed here may have a different name.*

REVIEW:

1. True or false. You could probably live in a three-bedroom home and drive a new car on a \$20,000 annual salary. *False*
2. Besides more money, name three additional perks higher education can give you. *More job security, sick/annual leave, more meaningful work, health benefits*
3. True or false. If you dislike high school, college isn't for you. *False*

REFLECT:

1. Do you want to get an education after high school? Why or why not?
2. What most excites you about going to college?
3. What's your biggest fear about going to college?

Lesson Plan 2: What Do I Want to Be?

Exploring Careers and College Majors

GOAL:

Some students know the career path they'll choose. They may want to follow in the footsteps of a close family member or they may excel in a particular area. For others, the process of choosing a profession or major will take more exploration. Choosing a major is a big decision.

This section of the workbook will help students explore their interests, skills and talents, directing them to find potential majors or career matches that make use of their natural abilities. Students will learn about the difference between a career and a job; investigate their interests and skills; understand how those interests and skills can be the beginning of a plan for continuing education; and learn about the most popular careers in Oklahoma.

PART 1: CAREER VERSUS JOB

Begin by asking the students if they know what they want to do after high school. Have a few students tell the class their career goals. Some of their answers may include veterinarian, social worker, accountant, teacher, etc.

Once they've shared, explain the difference between a career and a job. A career is a long-term profession that typically requires educational training. A job is a short-term paid position. They may currently have a job to help them pay for a few expenses. A career, however, allows them to use their unique skills and strengths in a long-term profession.

PARTS 2–3: INVESTIGATE YOUR INTERESTS AND CONSIDER YOUR SKILLS

Your students have a section in their workbooks that asks questions about their interests and skills. Ask a few students to share their lists and have students complete a career assessment at [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org). Once students have completed an assessment, they'll discover career categories that may interest them in the *Career Assessments* section on Page 12 of the Student Workbook. Tell students to save all self-assessment quizzes they take and encourage them to start a file and stash the results, along with other information and college-planning resources, in this file.

PART 4: DEVELOP A CAREER PLAN

By now, your students may have some specific or general career or major options in mind. Now is the time to encourage them to create a career plan and develop a strategy to accomplish their goals. A career plan worksheet and an example of a completed career plan are provided on Pages 19–20 of the Student Workbook. If your students are still having a hard time deciding on a potential profession, have them review the list of fastest growing occupations in our state (Page 17). Poll your class and ask if anyone is interested in the occupations listed. Also, point out the difference in salaries between the jobs requiring an associate degree and those requiring a bachelor's degree. This is another opportunity to show your students the difference education makes in their future income.

GRADE LEVEL ACTIVITIES

Share some of these recommended activities with your students.

Freshmen

- ▶ Encourage students to view videos describing their careers of interest at [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org).
- ▶ Have your students assess their current activities at your school or in the community, and ask them to list the skills they are developing from those particular pursuits.
- ▶ Conduct a school-wide career day by inviting professionals from your community to visit your school to describe the tasks they perform and level of education required for their chosen careers.
- ▶ Require students to complete the [Developing My Career Plan](#) activity on page 20 of the High School Student Workbook. Ask students to share their information with the class.*

Sophomores

- ▶ Advise students to continue tracking their high school courses and grades by using the Your Plan of Study template at [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org).*
- ▶ Have students review the Sample Career Plan on page 19, pointing out the various categories required for determining the type of education and skills necessary. Ask them to set up a Career Plan of their own based on their interests and abilities. Use the [Developing My Career Plan](#) worksheet on page 20 of the High School Student Workbook as a guideline.
- ▶ Ask students to talk to someone they know about their career and what kind of postsecondary education it required. Invite those who provided this information into your classroom to talk with students about their college and career paths.
- ▶ Conduct a school-wide career day by inviting professionals from your community to visit your school to describe the tasks they perform and level of education required for their chosen careers.

Juniors

- ▶ Encourage students to find professionals who are willing to let students “shadow” them one day at work.
- ▶ Advise students to update their Your Plan of Study template regularly at [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org).*
- ▶ Ask students to review the Ten Fastest Growing Occupations in Oklahoma charts on page 17 of the High School Student Workbook. Ask them to research a career that seems interesting and share their findings with the class.
- ▶ Ask students to complete the Career Cluster Survey at [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org) again to see if their interests have changed. Review the top clusters for your students and then hold a career day by inviting professionals from the specific areas chosen by your students.*

Seniors

- ▶ Ask students to suggest challenges that may arise as they apply for college. They can complete a sample college application at the College Planning tab of [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org).
- ▶ Assign completion of their Career Plan and Your Plan of Study found at [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org).*
- ▶ Remind Oklahoma's Promise students of the requirements for receiving this scholarship, found on page 26 of their High School Student Workbook. Advise them to check their GPA each quarter of their senior year.
- ▶ Ask students to talk to someone they know about why they decided to go, or not to go, to college. Invite those who provided this information into your classroom to talk with students about their college and career paths.

*Items marked with an asterisk support statewide ICAP efforts and are found on [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org). If your students use another platform for their ICAPs, the activities listed here may have a different name.

WRAP-UP: REVIEW AND REFLECT

Encourage students to spend time thinking about their interests and skills to determine potential majors and careers. Ask them to complete free self-assessment quizzes.

Review:

1. True or false? Career assessments are always accurate. *False*
2. True or false? A career is a short-term paid position with no training or education requirement. *False*
3. Name some extracurricular activities or skills that would be helpful for the following occupations:
 - a. Teacher (*Speech Club, organizational skills, etc.*)
 - b. Artist (*marketing, entrepreneurship, Art Club, etc.*)

Reflect:

Based on your interests and skills, what three careers are you interested in pursuing?

Lesson Plan 3: How Do I Get There?

Preparing and Planning for My Next Step

GOAL:

Enrolling in the right classes, taking the ACT or SAT, and developing good study habits are important steps in planning and preparing for college. In addition, a variety of programs offer high school students the ability to earn college credit. Continue encouraging your students to do all they can while in high school to ensure a successful transition to college.

This section will help students understand the importance of taking college prep classes; provide resources to help them track their classes; encourage them to strive for excellence in their coursework; offer tips to strengthen their study habits; explain ACT/SAT testing; provide information about programs allowing them to earn college credit in high school; and explain the benefits of extracurricular activities, including non-school activities like family, church, volunteer work, etc.

PART 1: TAKE THE RIGHT CLASSES

Trying to attend college without the proper preparation and planning is similar to traveling somewhere without GPS. Consider sharing a story of a time you were lost or ask a few students to share. Tell them this section of their workbook will help them develop a road map for their future.

If your students plan to attend a public college or university in Oklahoma they must take certain courses in high school. These courses will prepare them for college, and they'll learn valuable skills in case they decide to enter the workforce after graduation. Have your students use the charts on Pages 22 and 28–29 of the Student Workbook to keep track of their classes and activities. Students can also track their Plan of Study at OKcollegestart.org.

PART 2: GRADES

Explain to your students the importance of earning and keeping good grades. Good grades can result in admission to a better college or being awarded a scholarship. But, getting good grades doesn't happen overnight. It takes planning, attention to detail and lots of study time. Encourage your students to identify three subject areas in which they need improvement. Ask a few students to share. Finding study partners, tutors or just taking extra time to prepare for assignments and exams are great ways to boost grades.

PART 3: STRENGTHEN STUDY HABITS

Good study habits in high school will lead to good study habits in college. Have your students read the tips listed on Page 23 in their workbooks. Some experts say it takes 66 days to build a habit of repeated behavior. Your students shouldn't be discouraged if it takes a while to build consistent, successful study skills.

PART 4: ACT/SAT TESTS

All that study time will come in handy when your students take the ACT and/or SAT exam. When it comes to college admission, these tests play a big role. Explain the ACT and SAT to your students and remind them to take the exams as many times as possible to increase their score. Provide upcoming testing dates and have them record them in a prominent location. Give them a few minutes to solve the practice questions, too. The basic exam costs are typically \$55 to \$88; however, fee waivers are available. Visit ACT.org and SAT.org to learn more.

While the ACT is more common in Oklahoma, encourage students to check with the schools they're interested in attending to find out which test is preferred. Of course, schools don't base admission exclusively on these test scores, but it's best if students can meet the school's minimum test score requirement. Encourage students to contact schools' admission offices for more information and current requirements. Students can also take free practice tests for the ACT and SAT at OKcollegestart.org. Recently, many colleges have waived the entrance test requirement. Ask the admission office at your school of choice if an entrance test is required at this time.

PART 5: WHY WAIT? EARN COLLEGE CREDIT NOW!

Through a variety of programs, high school students can earn college credit while still in high school. A few of these options are outlined on Page 26 in the Student Workbook. Bring any specific information you have about local programs to class. More information about options like Advanced Placement (AP) courses and Concurrent Enrollment can be found at OKcollegestart.org.

PART 6: THINKING AHEAD

You'll discuss paying for college in more detail later, but it's important to let students know there are options they can take advantage of now to prepare.

Oklahoma's Promise

Students must apply in the 8th, 9th, 10th or 11th grade, be a resident of Oklahoma, complete a specific high school curriculum, achieve at least a 2.50 GPA both in the curriculum and overall, and abide by certain conduct standards. The federal adjusted gross income of the student's family may not exceed \$60,000 for parents with one or two dependent children, \$70,000 for parents with three or four dependent children, or \$80,000 for parents with five or more dependent children at the time of application, and \$100,000 each year the student is enrolled in postsecondary education. Oklahoma's Promise will pay resident tuition at a public college or a portion of tuition at private institutions or public technology centers in Oklahoma. Learn more at okpromise.org.

Oklahoma 529

It's never too late to save for college. Talk to your parent(s) about signing up for a college savings account through Oklahomas 529 or continue to add money to an existing account. It's generally best to keep most savings in the parent(s)' name. Visit oklahoma529.com for more information.

PART 7: GO THE EXTRA MILE WITH EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Tell your students that sports, 4-H, FFA and class government are great hobbies, and their participation in such activities may give them an edge in the college admission process! Many schools look for prospective students who are active in their school and community and exhibit leadership qualities.

Ask students to write down which extracurricular activities they're most proud of. Keeping a list of these accomplishments can be used as a springboard when they write their college admission essays.

GRADE LEVEL ACTIVITIES

Share some of these recommended activities with your students.

Freshmen

- ▶ Make sure your students are familiar with the Individual Career Academic Plan (ICAP). They will continue to work on their ICAPs in each year of high school.
- ▶ Explain that even if some students didn't do well in middle school, now is the time to take ownership of their academic progress. All high school grades will now be recorded on their transcripts and examined by college admission personnel when the time comes.
- ▶ Demonstrate how to calculate a GPA.
- ▶ Remind students that colleges and employers often look at candidates' social media profiles, so they should be careful about what they post.

Sophomores

- ▶ Advise students to take the ACT practice test at [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org) before taking the PreACT in the fall of their sophomore year.
- ▶ After taking the PreACT, instruct students to add their scores to [MyACT](https://www.okcollegestart.org) to learn tips for improvement. Stress the importance of keeping their test booklet and score report to review their strengths and weaknesses in preparation for taking the ACT in their Junior and Senior years.
- ▶ Assign the Volunteering & Community Service activity at [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org) and stress the importance of volunteerism and community involvement. Scholarship and college applications place a lot of emphasis on these actions.*
- ▶ Advise students to review their Your Plan of Study template at [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org) and discuss any problems with their teachers.*

Juniors

- ▶ Encourage students to register for a regional college fair at [GPACAC.net](https://www.gpacac.net). Most college fairs take place in September.
- ▶ Instruct students to complete a practice college admission application at [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org), or print copies of a standard application for students to complete on paper.
- ▶ Remind students they'll take their ACT through the state testing program in the spring of their junior year.
- ▶ Direct students to register for a college entrance exam at [ACT.org](https://www.act.org) or [SAT.org](https://www.sat.org). Remind them to register before the deadline to avoid paying a late fee. Students should also review their areas of strengths and weaknesses using their 10th grade PreACT test booklet and score reports.

Seniors

- ▶ Host a College Application Week event at your school. Encourage seniors to apply to at least one college during the designated week. Visit [OKCollegeAppWeek.org](https://www.okcollegeappweek.org) to register your school and to learn more.
- ▶ As you learn of seniors who've been accepted to a college, attach balloons to the student's desk or locker in celebration, or ask the student if they are willing to share the news and start a dialogue about the acceptance process with the class.
- ▶ Encourage students to watch deadlines imposed by their prospective college(s). While some schools will allow enrollment until just prior to the beginning of the semester, many others will not.
- ▶ Assign students to complete the Vocabulary Builder on [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org). This will be helpful for them when writing college or scholarship essays.

**Items marked with an asterisk support statewide ICAP efforts and are found on [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org). If your students use another platform for their ICAPs, the activities listed here may have a different name.*

WRAP-UP: REVIEW AND REFLECT

The following questions are also included on Page 27 in the Student Workbook. Consider asking volunteers to share their answers.

Reflect:

1. Name three steps you'll take to improve or keep up your grades.
2. Name three steps you'll take to prepare for the ACT or SAT.

Lesson Plan 4: Where Do I Go?

Researching Institutions and Programs

GOAL:

Choosing a path after high school is a stressful, but exciting process for most students. As their instructor, you may be their only link to the information they need to make an informed choice. This section contains a lot of information because helping students find the school that's the best fit for them is extremely important. Strongly encourage your students to visit [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org) for more detailed information.

This section of the Student Workbook will take your students through the process of researching and choosing a college or career path that's right for them. You'll teach students the differences in school types, lead students to consider various school selection factors like location and size, encourage students to think about their wants and needs when picking a school, help students consider affordability and admission requirements when narrowing down their list of possible schools, discuss how to set up a campus tour and identify places to visit while there, provide a list of questions to ask during a campus visit and share tips for completing a college application.

PART 1: YOU'RE JUST NOT MY TYPE (OF SCHOOL)

There are many types of schools in Oklahoma that offer a wide range of programs. The first step in helping your students succeed after

high school is making sure they understand the options available to them. Emphasize the value of every type of school and post-graduation opportunity. If you feel students are being unrealistic about their options, talk to them privately about their challenges and offer positive ways to overcome them. The Student Workbook lists the different types of schools in Oklahoma on Page 31.

PART 2: LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Students should also consider location when choosing a school. Schools of all types can be found in urban, suburban and rural areas. Discuss the differences between the locations of different schools and ask students how different locations will impact them while they're in school. More information about schools and locations can be found on Pages 30–33 in the Student Workbook.

PART 3: SIZE UP YOUR SCHOOL

Don't forget to encourage students to consider the size of a school. Small schools give students the chance for more interaction with professors, smaller classrooms and more personalized assistance with educational needs. Larger schools provide more social opportunities and more classes to build a flexible schedule.

Schools of all sizes and types can be found in all locations. A large, private, four-year school may be located in a rural area near a student's hometown. Or, students might find a career technology center in the heart of the city. Oklahoma offers schools of all types, locations and sizes to meet various educational needs.

PART 4: WHAT DO YOU WANT IN A SCHOOL?

This section is designed to help students compile a list of characteristics that are important to them. They can then use those characteristics to build a list of schools that fit their criteria. You may wish to poll your students and ask what's most important to them in a school. Use the [Picking a College Decision Tree](#) on Page 33 and the list of questions on Page 34 in their Student Workbook to help you start some dialogue.

Provide your students with tools for researching colleges such as books, course catalogs, websites and other resources. Encourage them to take the lead in deciding what they want out of their college experience.

Ask your students to write down five campus characteristics that are important to them or five schools they're considering and turn in the list(s) to you. Discuss schools they have not learned about or may not be familiar with.

Also, use this opportunity to explain the importance of college fairs. Tell your students when the next event will take place and explain what happens and who's involved in these events. To make the most of college fairs, visit GPACAC.net. You can also access a list of Oklahoma college fairs at GoToCollegeFairs.com.

PART 5: NARROWING DOWN YOUR CHOICES

Help your students take their list of potential schools and narrow it down based on affordability and admission requirements. Explain the importance of finding a college that meets their needs and one they can afford. Tell students to take into consideration the cost of tuition, fees, housing, books, travel back home, food and other regular expenses. Make sure they consider all of their options, including commuting, part-time employment, lower-cost colleges and financial aid, to help make ends meet. Ask students to write down their top three strengths and weaknesses from a college admission point of view. Ask them to highlight their strengths by writing a practice college essay.

PART 6: CHECK THEM OUT ... SETTING-UP CAMPUS VISITS

Encourage your students to plan campus visits if possible. If your school has an excused absence policy for these types of visits, you may want to explain that policy to the students. Tell them to contact organizers of campus tours at the school(s) they wish to attend. These planned tours are usually led by a college student. If your students can't make a structured campus tour, encourage them to check out local campuses whenever they are on the grounds for athletic events, TRiO programs, 4-H or National FFA Organization events, etc. Encourage them to use the materials provided on Pages 37–39 of the Student Workbook to help them make the most of campus visits. Many colleges now offer virtual tours. Find a list of participating Oklahoma schools at OKcollegestart.org.

PART 7: MAKE YOUR CHOICES AND APPLY

Tell your students to be aware of application and financial aid deadlines. Encourage them to call the admission office to make sure they received their application. Let students know they need to confirm their high school transcripts and official test scores are being sent to the school(s) to which they're applying. Also, let them know you're a resource for them during the application process. Encourage students to review the tips for completing a college application provided on Page 40 of the Student Workbook. Also, promote [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org) and [UCanGo2.org](https://www.ucango2.org) for numerous college planning tools and materials.

GRADE LEVEL ACTIVITIES

Share some of these recommended activities with your students.

Freshmen

- ▶ Let students know that 60% of today's jobs require some form of education beyond high school, and by 2025 two thirds of all jobs in the U.S. will require a college degree or certification. Explain the differences between degrees and certificates.
- ▶ Encourage students to get involved in extracurricular activities at school and volunteer work in their community. Colleges look favorably on well-rounded students during the admission process.
- ▶ Talk to students about the [Picking a College Decision Tree](#) on page 33. Ask them to complete the exercise and discuss different school types and sizes.
- ▶ Wear your college t-shirt and describe the campus — location, setting, size, social scene. Let them know how these factors played into your decision making.

Sophomores

- ▶ List colleges and career technology centers in your region and discuss the different options available at each. Ask students to share any personal experiences or perspectives about those campuses.
- ▶ Direct students to use the school exploration tools in the College Planning section at [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org).
- ▶ Discuss Advanced Placement and/or concurrent enrollment with students. Be prepared to give them a list of the AP classes your school offers.
- ▶ Prepare a random list of schools in Oklahoma and ask your students to describe them based on the information about school types shown on page 31 of the High School Student Workbook.

Juniors

- ▶ Spring semester of a student's junior year is a great time to schedule one or more campus visits to their college(s) of interest. Share the [Making the Most of Campus Visits worksheets](#) found on pages 37-39 of the Student Workbook, or print copies at [UCanGo2.org](https://www.ucango2.org).
- ▶ Discuss Advanced Placement and/or concurrent enrollment with students. Be prepared to give them a list of the AP classes your school offers.
- ▶ Distribute the [Sample College Application Essay Questions](#) handout, found in the student packet at [OKCollegeAppWeek.org](https://www.okcollegeappweek.org). Ask them to write an essay to answer the question of their choice.
- ▶ Allow students to research different colleges in the College Planning section of [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org). Mention the best way to see the programs and degrees offered at specific schools can be found by selecting the link to the school's official website.
- ▶ Ask students to review the [Places to Visit on Campus](#) information on page 37 of the Student Workbook, then quiz them on which two offices they feel would be the most beneficial to visit on a campus tour.

Seniors

- ▶ Encourage those students who haven't chosen a college yet to arrange a couple of college visits throughout the fall of their senior year.
- ▶ Mention to students that attending events on a college campus will give them a sense of what college life will be like for them. Have students brainstorm events they would enjoy attending, such as sporting events, concerts, or guest speaker nights. Ask students who have already been to campus events to share their experiences.
- ▶ Review with students the steps required after being accepted to college. Distribute the [What's Next?](#) handout found in the student packet at [OKCollegeAppWeek.org](https://www.okcollegeappweek.org).
- ▶ Share the average expense for a college education based on the different types of schools in Oklahoma and ask students how they will pay for it. (This activity will encourage students to think about paying for college before they advance to the next section of the Student Workbook.)

**Items marked with an asterisk support statewide ICAP efforts and are found on [OKcollegestart.org](https://www.okcollegestart.org). If your students use another platform for their ICAPs, the activities listed here may have a different name.*

WRAP-UP: REVIEW AND REFLECT

Researching schools can be an overwhelming task for some students. Provide them with as many resources as you can and let them know you're available to assist them in the process.

Review:

1. How does a four-year school differ from a two-year school? *A four-year school may offer bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees, while a two-year school offers associate degrees and certificate training.*
2. Besides school type, what other factors should you consider when researching a school? *Location, size, affordability and admission requirements.*
3. Name at least three offices you should check out on a campus visit. *Examples: Admissions Office, Financial Aid Office, Housing Office, etc.*

Reflect:

1. What type of school (four-year, community college, proprietary school, etc.) do you think is the best fit for you? Why?
2. After talking with your parent(s) about schools that interest you, what did you gain from their feedback?

Lesson Plan 5: How Do I Pay For It?

Finding and Getting Financial Aid

GOAL:

Paying for college is an important component of college preparation. It's essential for students and families to understand the financial aid process and know what types of aid are available to them.

This section will help students learn about college costs and the resources available to help pay for it. You'll show students the estimated cost of higher education; help them identify various types of federal and state aid, including grants, scholarships, work-study and student loans; educate them about the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); provide scholarship resources; and inform them about student loans and responsible borrowing.

PART 1: COLLEGE COSTS

Begin by asking the students questions:

- ▶ Have you started to think about the cost of college?
- ▶ Are you familiar with the costs at the school(s) you'd like to attend?
- ▶ Talk to them about the cost of attendance. Have them guess the total cost per year for different types of schools. In 2023-24, the cost per year ranges from \$12,856 for community colleges to \$34,000 for a research university. Check out [OKcollegestart.org](https://okcollegestart.org) to find the current academic year's cost at most Oklahoma state schools.

PART 2: GETTING FINANCIAL AID

You'll want to spend some time talking about the FAFSA and why it's important. To be considered for any federal financial aid and most state aid, students must fill out this application annually.

Some FAFSA information is provided in the Student Workbook, but if you'd like to explain the FAFSA to students and parents in more detail, visit [StartWithFAFSA.org](https://startwithfafsa.org). Students starting college in fall 2024 will need to complete the 2024–25 FAFSA.

Your students should complete and submit their FAFSA as soon as it becomes available during their senior year and each year they need financial aid. Encourage your students to:

- ▶ Apply online to save time. Online applications are faster than paper applications and allow students to complete the FAFSA the following year without entering their basic information.
- ▶ Never pay anyone to help them complete the FAFSA. Remind them the first "F" stands for "free." If they need help they can always contact the FAFSA Help Desk at 1.800.4.FED.AID (1-800-433-3243) or any college financial aid office.
- ▶ Visit the official FAFSA website, [FAFSA.gov](https://fafsa.gov).
- ▶ Watch the FAFSA video tutorial with their parent(s) at [StartWithFAFSA.org](https://startwithfafsa.org) (or show it in the classroom, if possible), which is available in both English and Spanish.

Explain to your students that once they complete the FAFSA, they'll receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) electronically or by mail. They should review the SAR to ensure all their information is correct. The data from the SAR will be sent to the school(s) they listed on their FAFSA.

Once all of their application materials are complete, the financial aid office(s) will send them a financial aid offer via regular mail or email to let them know what types of aid they're eligible to receive. Remind them they don't have to accept all funds offered to them.

PART 3: TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID

Explain the three main types of financial aid: free money (grants and scholarships); earned money; and loans. Go over each type of aid and the differences between each one. If possible, show the *Types of Federal Student Aid* video at StudentAid.gov to explain the different sources of federal aid in detail. Be sure to explain the different forms of state aid, too. Encourage students to check out OKcollegestart.org and okpromise.org to learn more.

GRADE LEVEL ACTIVITIES

Share some of these recommended activities with your students.

Freshmen

- ▶ Remind students they can apply for the Oklahoma's Promise Scholarship when they're in the 8th, 9th, 10th or 11th grade.
- ▶ Ask students to discuss a college savings plan with their parents. Explain that any amount of savings will be a benefit to them when they're in college. Share the URL for the Oklahoma 529 college savings plan, oklahoma529.com, and briefly talk about the benefits.
- ▶ Direct students to become familiar with the scholarship websites shown on page 42 of their Student Workbook. Ask them to begin compiling a list of scholarships that look promising for their future education.
- ▶ Share the weird scholarships at Unigo.com. Students 13 years of age and up are eligible to apply. These scholarships range from writing about your favorite ice cream flavor to choosing a superpower you'd like to have to plotting how to escape zombies that have attacked your high school! Have students review the list and write an essay for two or more of their favorite scholarships.

Sophomores

- ▶ Remind students their final deadline for submitting the Oklahoma's Promise (OKP) scholarship application is June 30 of their junior year. Hand out the current OKP flyers to your students who haven't applied and ask them to share the information with their parents. Learn more at OKPromise.org.
- ▶ Inform Oklahoma's Promise students they must graduate with a GPA of 2.50 or higher in order to meet one of the qualifications for receiving the Oklahoma's Promise scholarship. Other requirements are listed on page 26 of the High School Student Workbook.
- ▶ Encourage students to stash away a small amount of their summer earnings in a college savings account.
- ▶ Direct students to the How Much Does College Cost? information found at OKcollegestart.org. Explain that the estimated costs shown in that section may be from the previous academic year and those amounts are likely to increase before they start college. Ask each student to research the costs for their top three favorite colleges and share with the class.
- ▶ Have students read the FAFSA information on page 46 of their Student Workbook and discuss briefly the importance of completing this form when they are seniors to receive financial aid for college. Share the difference between free money, such as grants and scholarships, and student loans that must be repaid with interest. Inform students there are scholarships they can apply for as sophomores. Ask them to do some research and find one they can share with the class.

Juniors

- ▶ Require students to apply for at least one scholarship and share their choice with the class. Students can find numerous scholarships at UCanGo2.org and OKcollegestart.org.
- ▶ Stress the importance of community involvement as it relates to scholarship and college applications.
- ▶ Have students read the FAFSA information on page 46 of their Student Workbook and discuss briefly the importance of completing this form as soon as possible during their senior year to receive financial aid for college.
- ▶ Discuss the documents needed to complete the FAFSA during the spring months. Over the summer, students can encourage their parents to start getting the required paperwork ready to go, i.e. tax returns, Social Security cards, records of investment and untaxed income, driver's licenses, etc.

Seniors

- ▶ Encourage seniors to set up their FSA ID (Federal Student Aid Identification) at [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) prior to Oct. 1. This username and password will be used to access and sign their FAFSA online. The student and one parent will each need a FSA ID.
- ▶ Announce that seniors should complete and submit their FAFSA at [FAFSA.gov](https://fafsa.gov) as soon as it becomes available. Stress the importance of submitting the FAFSA as early as possible. Applicants will need to report their income and assets on this form. Have students read page 46 of their Student Workbook to become familiar with the FAFSA application.
- ▶ Explain the FAFSA, pointing out the results of this form are simply a snapshot of a family's financial situation. Colleges will notify students of their aid eligibility after receiving the FAFSA.
- ▶ We recommend that seniors apply for 2-3 scholarships a week. Ask your students to try this and share their scholarship sources with the class.

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WRAP-UP: REVIEW AND REFLECT

Financial aid can sometimes be a confusing subject for students and parents. It's important they understand each type of aid they may be awarded, as well as how and when to apply. Page 45 of the Student Workbook offers helpful tips for students who must consider student loans to pay for college.

Review:

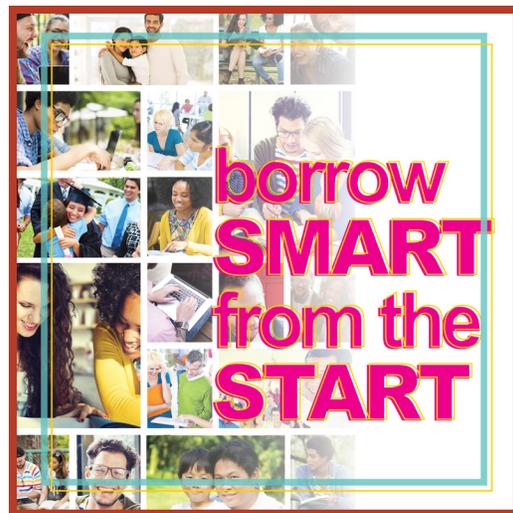
1. True or false? I don't need to complete the FAFSA each year as long as I complete the application my senior year of high school. *False. You must complete the FAFSA as soon as it becomes available to apply for financial aid.*
2. What does FAFSA stand for? *Free Application for Federal Student Aid.*
3. True or false? I must accept all funds a school offers me in my financial aid offer. *False. Only accept what you need to pay your school expenses.*
4. True or false? Scholarships are only offered to students with really good grades. *False. Scholarships are awarded based on a variety of factors, not just grades.*
5. Name the federal program that provides jobs for students with financial need. *Work-study.*
6. True or false? It's cheaper to turn to student loans to cover tuition and school-related expenses than to charge them to a credit card. *True.*

Reflect:

What did you learn about financial aid that surprised you the most? Why?

Borrow Smart from the Start

Borrow Smart from the Start is a step-by-step guide through the student loan process that emphasizes the importance of completing the FAFSA, making smart borrowing choices, monitoring debt load, considering various repayment options and more! Visit ReadySetRepay.org to download a copy in English or Spanish.



Visit UCanGo2.org to:

- ▶ Learn more about planning, preparing and paying for college
- ▶ Find a list of numerous college scholarships listed by deadline and category
- ▶ Access games and tools to help students prepare for higher education
- ▶ Locate financial aid resources, including FAFSA teaching tools
- ▶ Learn about the Oklahoma FAFSA Data Portal (OK-FDP) and how this FREE online tool can help you increase your students' FAFSA completion
- ▶ Download additional resources for:
 - ▷ High school students and their parents
 - ▷ Middle and high school educators
 - ▷ Middle school students and their parents
 - ▷ Elementary school students and parents

**Have questions about State Regents' programs
or preparing for college in general?**

CounselorInfo@osrhe.edu

(405)225-9239 or (800)858-1840

college questions answered promptly

Check out these other helpful resources!

[OCAP.org](https://ocap.org)

The Oklahoma College Assistance Program's website contains helpful information for prospective and current students, including scholarship and federal student loan resources.

[OKcollegestart.org](https://okcollegestart.org)

OKcollegestart.org offers college planning resources for students, parents and educators, including academic offerings, career exploration tools, scholarships and financial aid information.

[OKhighered.org](https://okhighered.org)

The student section of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education's website directs students to various college planning resources, including Oklahoma's Promise and OTAG.

[OklahomaMoneyMatters.org](https://oklahomamoneymatters.org)

OCAP's financial literacy program, Oklahoma Money Matters, provides families information and tools addressing budgeting, consumer credit, student loan management and other personal finance topics.

[ReadySetRepay.org](https://readysetrepay.org)

Ready Set Repay, OCAP's student loan repayment initiative, works with student loan borrowers and Oklahoma higher education institutions to help students make smart borrowing choices and successfully repay their student loans. Whether they're in school, in repayment or in default, Ready Set Repay offers borrowers the information, tools and resources they need to make informed borrowing and loan management decisions.

[StartWithFAFSA.org](https://startwithfafsa.org)

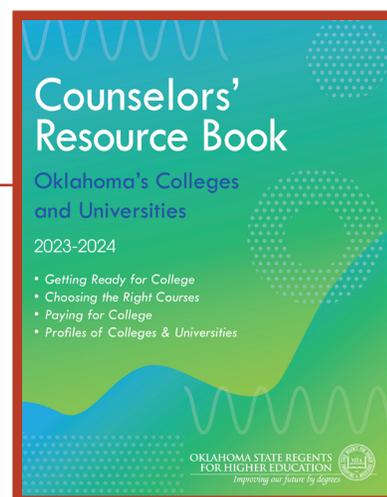
StartWithFAFSA.org offers Oklahoma students and parents information and resources to help them understand financial aid and the FAFSA. Videos are provided in English and Spanish to walk students through the FAFSA completion process.

[StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov)

This website features free information from the U.S. Department of Education about preparing and paying for higher education, including FAFSA resources.

The Counselors' Resource Book

Take a look at [The Counselors' Resource Book: Oklahoma's Colleges and Universities](https://okhighered.org/publications/counselors-resource-book). You'll find a wealth of information about preparing for higher education and profiles of Oklahoma's colleges and universities. Visit okhighered.org and select *Students*, then *Publications*.





startwithfafa.org



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