



KEY CONCEPTS

- Evaluate schools and training programs
- Admissions applications
- Financial aid applications



CLASSROOM MATERIALS

- Handout 12.2
- Handout 12.3 or 12.4
- Handout 14.1 or 14.2
- Handout 14.3
- FAFSA form (optional)

For Additional Activity 4:

- Handout 14.4



CAREER COACH WEBSITE LINKS

- Paying for School
- Comparing Schools
- Choose a School
- Learn More Before You Enroll

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Through the lesson and related assignments, students will:

- Evaluate information and choose schools or training programs
- Practice completing admissions applications
- Preview financial aid applications

LESSON SET-UP

Note: There are alternative options in this lesson for the Introduction, Activity 1, and the Wrap-Up for classrooms in which students have already been accepted into college.

FOR SETTINGS IN WHICH STUDENTS HAVE NOT YET BEEN ACCEPTED INTO A COLLEGE OR TRAINING PROGRAM (INCLUDING ADULT EDUCATION STUDENTS)

This module will be spent completing admissions and financial aid forms.

Note: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form is complicated, so it may be worthwhile to contact your local community college and ask a financial aid representative to come preview the FAFSA form with students and tell them about the typical financial aid package.

FOR SETTINGS IN WHICH STUDENTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN ACCEPTED INTO COLLEGE, BUT ARE EXPLORING MAJORS OR CONCENTRATIONS

Modify this lesson to augment Module 13, by spending the class period on Activity 1, a question-and-answer session with one or two additional department representatives. Follow the directions in Module 13 to prepare guest speakers to answer questions that will help students choose a program.

For this lesson you will need:

ACTIVITY 1 COLLEGE OR TRAINING PROGRAM ADMISSIONS OPTION

- Students to take **Handout 12.2** and three copies of **Handout 12.3** out of their portfolios
- One copy of **Handout 14.1** for each student in your class

LESSON SET-UP (cont.)

ACTIVITY 1 COLLEGE MAJOR EXPLORATION OPTION

- Students to take **Handout 12.2** and three copies of **Handout 12.4** out of their portfolios
- Extra copies of **Handout 12.4**
- One copy of **Handout 14.2** for each student in your class

ACTIVITY 2

- An admissions application from a local community college for each student in your class
 - * The admissions representative who visited your class may have brought enough.
 - * You can download the admissions application from the community college website.

ACTIVITY 3

- One copy of **Handout 14.3** for each student in your class
- A FAFSA form for each student in your class
 - * Contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)
 - * Download the FAFSA worksheet at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>

Note: Students who enter apprenticeship or certificate programs may not be eligible for federal or state financial aid. However all students should be encouraged to fill out a FAFSA form in case their plans change.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY 4

- One copy of **Handout 14.4** for each student in your class

FYI

For more information on:

- Key elements in applying, see <http://www.petersons.com/common/article.asp?id=2862&path=ug.fas.advice&sponsor=1>
- Making your application stand out, see <http://www.petersons.com/common/article.asp?id=515&path=ug.gs.advice&sponsor=1>
- Applying for federal student aid, see <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>

Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Review the last module. Students learned about the admissions and financial aid processes or learned information about a program of study and the related occupations.
2. The assignment had students answer two questions in their notebooks. Ask for two to three volunteers to answer the questions. If more students want to read their answers, allow it.
 - *What are the most important things that I need to know about a school or program?*
 - *What do I need to do to be accepted into this school or program?*

Use *Introduction, Option A* if your students have not yet been accepted into a college or training program.

Use *Introduction, Option B* if your students have already been accepted into a college but are exploring majors or concentrations.

Introduction Option A

3. Introduce the main point of the lesson: Students will:
 - Evaluate and pick schools or training programs
 - Practice filling out admissions applications
 - Preview financial aid applications
4. Ask students to write two questions in their notebooks. They will answer them after the class.
 - *What school or schools will I apply to and what are the deadlines?*
 - *What information do I need to obtain for my school applications?*

Introduction Option B

3. Introduce the main point of the lesson. Students will:
 - Hear from one to three program representatives
 - Evaluate and pick a program of study or concentration
4. Ask students to write two questions in their notebooks. They will answer them after the class.
 - *What program do I want to enter?*
 - *What requirements do I need to meet?*

Use *Activity 1, Option A* if your students have not yet been accepted into a college or training program.

Use *Activity 1, Option B* if your students have already been accepted into a college but are exploring majors or concentrations.

ACTIVITY 1, Option A: Comparing Education and Training Options (15 minutes)

WORKSHEET Explain to students that in this activity they will:

- Compare the schools or training programs they are considering
- Learn how to choose the school or training program best suited to their educational and personal needs



Students take *Handout 12.2* and three copies of *Handout 12.3*



Pass out *Handout 14.1*

1. Have students take *Handout 12.2* and three copies of *Handout 12.3* out of their portfolios.
2. Pass out *Handout 14.1: Compare Schools or Training Programs*. Have students write the names of the three schools that they are researching at the top of each column. Have them consider the information on *Handout 12.3* as they fill in the worksheet.
3. Once everyone in class has completed *Handout 14.1*, ask:
 - Which of these schools or training programs seem to meet your needs?
 - Is there more you want to know about this school or program?
 - Besides the schooling and training, does this school have other programs or activities that will help you get started in your career?
4. If more than one school or training program is appropriate for them, encourage students to apply to more than one.
5. Remind students to put *Handouts 12.2, 12.3, and 14.1* in their portfolios.

ACTIVITY 1, Option B: Comparing Majors or Concentrations (40 minutes)

WORKSHEET Explain to students that in this activity they will learn more about programs of study they may be interested in.



Students take *Handout 12.2* and three copies of *Handout 12.3*



Pass out extra copies of *Handout 12.4*

1. Have students take *Handout 12.2* and three copies of *Handout 12.4* out of their folders. Point out the categories that are most appropriate for questions depending on who is visiting the class.
2. Tell students extra copies of *Handout 12.4* are available. Explain that students should use this form to take notes.
3. After the department or program representative arrives:
 - Introduce the representative by their name and the name of the department or program that they represent. Ask them to provide contact information.
 - Explain that the representative will speak for 10 minutes about their program of study. Then students should ask questions, even if they do not plan to take this particular program.

ACTIVITY 1, Option B: Comparing Majors or Concentrations (cont.)**Pass out Handout 14.2**

The main point of the presentation is for students to learn about the kinds of information they need to know to decide on the appropriate educational program.

4. When the representative is done, thank the person for their time and effort. Be sure that the representative has passed out all of the information that you asked them to bring.
5. Ask students if the speaker(s) today were helpful. Ask if any of them learned something from the speaker(s) that will help them decide which major or concentration they would like to pursue. Ask for one to two volunteers to share that information with the class
6. Pass out **Handout 14.2: Compare Programs of Study**. Tell students that they should fill out as much as they can of the handout. Instruct students who have already decided on a concentration or major, but haven't decided which credential to study for, to use each column for a different credential instead of different majors.
7. For homework, ask students to find the answers to any questions on **Handout 14.2** they can't answer.
8. Skip **Activities 2** and **3** and proceed to the Wrap-Up.

Completing the Admissions Application**Background**

Note: The following activity has been designed for use with students who have not yet been accepted to a college or training program.

FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT YET BEEN ACCEPTED INTO A COLLEGE OR TRAINING PROGRAM

Explain to students that they are going to practice completing an admissions application. This practice is worthwhile for all students, even though students may not be going to the college whose application is being filled in.

ACTIVITY 2: Filling Out an Admissions Application (15 minutes)

APPLICATION FORM Explain to students that they will complete a practice admissions application in class with the understanding that they modify this material to fit whatever applications they choose to complete on their own outside of class.

1. Tell students that many application forms are now filled out online, but that they should be able to print out the application or request a paper version to practice filling out.

ACTIVITY 2: Filling Out an Admissions Application (cont.)**Pass out Application Form**

2. Pass out the application form. Read it out loud and coach the students in answering questions such as:

Name: Students should use formal names, i.e., James rather than Jimmy; Jennifer rather than Jenny; Amanda rather than Mandy

Social Security Number: If students do not have this number memorized, they should look it up and be prepared to fill it out on their real application.

Note: In some college districts, students may not need to have a Social Security number.

Address: In many states, students must attend the community college in their district. If they attend out of district, there may be higher out-of-district tuition fee. However, in some cases, if students enroll in a program not offered in their district, they can get permission to attend a community college out of their district for the in-district rate. Encourage students to contact the local admissions office or look in the college catalog, if this is an issue.

High School: Students need the name and address of high school(s) they attended. Students will fill in if they graduated with a high school diploma or if they have a GED.

Colleges/Vocational Schools: Students should know the names and addresses of any schools they attended and the time (years) that they were there.

Applicant Signature: Students should sign their name and date.

3. Remind students to:

- Print the application in pen in neat handwriting that is easily read
- If necessary, use the printed application to fill out the online application
- Find out if an application fee applies and how they can pay the fee, e.g., by mail, at the cashier's office, check, cash, or credit card
- Mail the application with correct postage or deliver it in person
- Find out when the application needs to be submitted in order to begin school at the next entrance time

4. Have students work with a partner to exchange forms and to give feedback on the application form. They should discuss such issues as:

- *Is the application clear and readable?*
- *Is it complete? If not, where could the information be found?*

5. Students should bring a completed admissions application to the next class.

Previewing a Financial Aid Application

Background

Note: The following activity has been designed for use with students who have not yet been accepted to a college or training program.

ACTIVITY 3: Previewing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (10 minutes)

APPLICATION FORM Students will learn about how to pay for college.



Pass out *Handout 14.3*

Pass out FAFSA form or worksheet

1. Explain to students that many people are eligible for financial aid. Explain to students that there are many different types of financial aid, including grants, loans, and work-study programs. Tell students that some financial aid helps students with low incomes pay for college and other financial aid is available to help those with good grades pay for college.
2. Tell students that if they are interested in a certificate program, they may not be eligible for financial aid, but they may be eligible for a training voucher under the Workforce Investment Act. They can use this voucher to help pay for job-training programs. More information is available at the local CareerOneStop Center.
3. Explain that financial aid may come from the college, individual donors, the state, or the federal government, but that the first step is to fill out the FAFSA.
4. Pass out ***Handout 14.3: Financial Aid Information*** and go over it with the students.
5. Pass out the FAFSA form. Tell students that they will not be filling it out now, but they should in the future. Explain that the purpose of this activity is for them to know what types of information are needed to apply for financial aid.
6. Give students five minutes to go over the form. They should:
 - Circle items that they will need to gather information on
 - Put a question mark next to things that are unclear to them
7. Tell students that they should apply for financial aid in January or February if they think they might want to attend school in the following school year, since any state financial aid may run out later in the year.
8. You or the financial aid representative should answer students' questions about the meaning of specific topics on the form.

Note: If you cannot arrange for a financial aid representative to visit your class, tell students they can also get help completing the FAFSA in the financial aid office of their local community college or other school they are applying to, or from the state's financial aid agency.

ACTIVITY 3: Previewing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (cont.)

9. Explain to students that there are also hundreds of private scholarships that they may be eligible for. Tell students that they can find more information about private scholarships in their local library or by entering the word *scholarships* in a search engine such as <http://www.google.com>. Emphasize that they should never have to pay to search for *scholarships*, and that there are a number of books and free websites that will help them search for scholarships.

Use Activity 1, Option A if your students have not yet been accepted into a college or training program.

Use Activity 1, Option B if your students have already been accepted into a college but are exploring majors or concentrations.

Wrap-Up and Assignments (5 minutes)**Wrap-Up Option A**

1. Tell students the hardest part of applying for school admission and financial aid is getting started. The most important things to remember when completing school and financial aid forms are:
 - Follow directions completely and exactly
 - Ask for help from the admissions and financial aid offices or the state financial aid department
 - Be persistent and follow through
2. For the next session, they need to bring in at least one completed application form for a school that they are applying to. Remind students that many applications can be downloaded from the Internet.
3. Remind students that they wrote two questions in their notebooks. Have them write answers to the questions and bring the answers to the next class.
 - *What school or schools will I apply to and what are the deadlines?*
 - *What information do I need to obtain for my school applications?*
4. Students who have access to the Internet should visit these sections of the *Career Coach* website:
 - Paying for School
 - Comparing Schools
 - Choose a School
 - Learn More Before You Enroll



Wrap-Up and Assignments (cont.)

Wrap-Up Option B

1. Remind students that they will need to bring a completed **Handout 14.2** to the next class.
2. Tell students that it is very important to get answers to their questions from the right people. Explain that friends or family can help them find out more about their major or target career, but they may not have the right information about degree requirements. Tell them that even if they know someone who graduated from a program in the past year, some things may have changed, so they should make sure to get the official answer from a department representative.
3. Suggest that if they have more questions about their concentration, students may want to make an appointment with someone in the relevant department, or ask to visit a class.
4. Remind students that they wrote two questions in their notebooks. Have them write answers to the questions and bring the answers to the next class.
 - *What program do I want to enter?*
 - *What requirements do I need to meet?*

Additional Activities

You may choose to substitute one of these activities for an activity in the lesson or to use any of them as time permits.

Additional ACTIVITY 4: Following Directions

GAME Remind students that in this session one of our activities is to complete an application for admissions. Ask students:

- *What is the most important thing about completing an application of any kind, e.g., admissions, job, insurance etc.?*

Possible answers

Possible answers may be spelling, grammar, filling it out completely, making a copy for their records, etc. Explain that the most important thing is following directions completely and correctly.

1. Tell students that following directions is the most important thing about completing an application. Ask students:
 - *Who thinks that they are good at following directions?*
2. Tell students that they are going to take a short quiz on following directions. Be sure to reassure them that this is not graded, it is just for fun.
3. Pass out **Handout 14.4: Following Directions**. When every student in class has completed the activity, ask students:
 - *Were you good at following directions?*
 - *What will you do in the future to improve your skills in following directions?*



Pass out **Handout 14.4**

Additional ACTIVITY 5: Solving Problems

CLASS DISCUSSION Direct students to talk about difficulties in applying for schools and training programs and have them think of ways to overcome these barriers. Brainstorm problems and solutions on the classroom board.

Examples

Barrier	How to Overcome
No Social Security number	Some states or individual schools allow students to apply without a Social Security number
No W-2 information	Contact current (or former) employer
Have not filed income tax	Can provide income and tax information
No computer to apply for admission online	Use computer at library, school, or community center
No computer to apply for financial aid	Complete paper FAFSA and mail
Don't know how to apply	Ask for help by telephoning school, e-mailing, or visiting school in person
No car	Use public transportation or ask a friend for a ride
Not sure I can do it, seems too complicated, afraid, etc.	Take it one step at a time and ask for help. Be persistent.



Handout 14.1: Compare Schools or Training Programs

College/Training Program Admissions Option

1. Print the names of the three schools you are researching on the chart. Fill out the information for each school or program.

2. Then, based on the information, write the names of the one, two, or three schools that you will apply to.

	School or Program 1	School or Program 2	School or Program 3
Name of School			
Program: Does this school or program offer the training I need?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Reputation: Is this school or program accredited by a higher education association?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Costs: Can I get financial aid?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Costs: Can I afford this school or program, after financial aid?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Location: Can I get to this school or program quickly and easily from my home? If not, is it realistic for me to move or to live on campus?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Schedule: Do the classes I need to take fit into my schedule?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Schedule: Do this school or program's requirements match my time frame?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Support: Does this school or program offer the support services that I need?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Schools or training programs I will apply to:



Handout 14.2: Compare Programs of Study

College Major Exploration Option

1. **Print the names of two to three concentrations or majors you are researching on the chart.** If you have decided on a concentration or major, but haven't decided which certificate or degree to study for, use the columns to compare certificates and degrees.

2. **Then, based on the information, write the name of your top choice and the certificates or degrees you plan on completing.**

	Major or Concentration 1	Major or Concentration 2	Major or Concentration 3
Department Name			
Credential: Certificate or degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Reputation: Is this school or program accredited by a higher education association?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Entry Requirements: Can I reasonably complete the entry requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Waiting List: Is there a waiting list for this program? If so, how long?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Schedule: Do the classes I need to take fit into my schedule?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Financial Aid: Are there special grants or scholarships for this major?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Career Preparation: Will this degree prepare me for my target career?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are good-paying jobs available upon graduation in this field?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What other education or licensing will I need to work in this field?			

My top choice: _____

I plan to get these degrees or certificates:

Handout 14.3: Financial Aid Information

College Admission Option

Applying for financial aid

- There are two ways to apply:
 - * File online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>; fill out FAFSA on the Web Worksheet before filing online
 - * Mail the FAFSA (pages 7-10) in the attached envelope, or send it to Federal Student Aid Programs, P.O. Box 7001, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864-0071
- It takes about three weeks to get a response. The result of a FAFSA application is called a Student Aid Report (SAR).
- If you write the schools you are interested in on the FAFSA, the government will send the SAR to each school. If you apply to a school that you did not list on the FAFSA, you should submit the SAR to the financial aid office to that school too. In addition, you may be asked to complete an institutional student aid application for each school that you apply to.

To apply you need the following items:

- Social Security number (if you are a U.S. citizen)
- Alien registration number (if you are not a U.S. citizen)
- Drivers license number, if you have one
- Federal tax information or tax returns (including IRS W-2 information) for yourself and your spouse if you are married. If you do not have a W-2, you can get this information from your current employer (or former employer if you no longer work for that employer)
- If you have not yet filed your income tax forms, you must still provide income and tax information
- Records on untaxed or unreported income, e.g., Social Security benefits, self-employment income, welfare benefits (TANF), and veterans benefits

If you live at home and are supported by your parents, you also need:

- Your parent's or guardian's Social Security number(s)
- Federal tax information or tax returns (W-2) for your parent(s)
- Untaxed income such as Social Security benefits, welfare benefits (TANF), and veterans benefits for your parent(s)
- Information on savings, investments, business, and farm assets for your parent(s)

Handout 14.4: Following Directions

1. Read all of the following directions before doing anything.
2. Write your name in the upper right-hand corner of this page.
3. Circle the phrase "following directions" in sentence one.
4. Draw five small stars on the upper left-hand corner of this page.
5. Draw five small stars on the lower right-hand corner of this page.
6. Put a circle around each "L" in the title of this activity.
7. Sign your name at the bottom of this page.
8. After your name, write, "yes, yes, yes."
9. Put a circle around number 7.
10. Put an "X" in the lower left-hand corner of this page.
11. On the reverse side of this paper, write "253" and "352."
12. Circle your name that is in the upper right-hand corner of this page.
13. On the lower left-hand side of this page, print your last name using all capital letters.
14. Now that you have finished reading carefully, do only those things called for in the sentences numbered 1 and 2.
15. Remain quiet while the other students "follow directions."