



Sparking the Future

EDUCATION AFTER HIGH SCHOOL: REASONS FOR COLLEGE

GRADES: 7-9

LESSON: 1

LEARNING GOALS:

- Students will describe their goals for life after high school.
- Students will accurately list basic facts about postsecondary education and describe several reasons why postsecondary education is needed to achieve their goals.

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS:

- **Essential Academic Learning Requirements Grade 8 Grade Level Expectations:** This lesson is aligned with Communication 1.1.1 and 2.2.2. Students will apply a variety of speaking and listening strategies to participate responsibly in a small group discussion.
- **Common Core State Standards Grade 8:** This lesson is aligned with English Language Arts Speaking and Listening 1b, 1d, and 2. Students will participate in collegial discussions with a group, acknowledging new information and qualifying or justifying their own views as needed. They will analyze information that is presented to them and demonstrate that they can reiterate that information accurately.
- **American School Counselor Association National Standards:** This lesson is aligned with ASCA Career A1.3, A1.6, and C1.3. Students will articulate their personal interests and goals and identify how those interests and goals influence their choice of a future career.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- **College Facts Quiz Handout** (*included in this lesson plan – one copy for each student*)
- **College Facts Quiz Answer Key** (*final page of lesson plan – print one for teacher*)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

1. **Discuss post-high school goals.** Working in small groups or as a whole group, ask for student volunteers to share what they would like to do after high school. Some students may have definite ideas; others may not know. Discuss what students know about what it will take them to achieve these goals. How many know what kind of education they will need after high school? Explain that most careers require some type of education or training after high school. Talk a little about your own experience. How did you decide what you wanted to do? How did you learn what education you needed? (10-15 minutes)



- 2. Explore college facts.** Tell students that nearly every career requires some type of education or training after high school. Explain that this is called “**postsecondary education**” because it is after (or “post”) high school (secondary education). Postsecondary education is often called college. Ask students if they think they know a lot or a little about college. Ask student volunteers to share a few things they know. Then distribute the **College Facts Quiz** and have students complete it, working individually or in small groups. (5-10 minutes)
- 3. Review reasons for college.** Correct the quiz with your students. Ask if knowing the reasons to go to college makes students more likely to think about college for themselves. Why or why not? How can they share this information with their families? (10 minutes)

STUDENT PRODUCTS:

- **College Facts.** Each student should complete a quiz.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

The following resources are helpful for middle school and early high school students, as well as for families who are new to the college admissions process.

- **Know How 2 Go:** www.knowhow2go.org
- **GEAR UP** for middle school: www.gearup.wa.gov/middle-school
- **First in the Family:** www.firstinthefamily.org
- **Adventures in Education:** www.adventuresineducation.org/middleschool/index.cfm



College Facts Quiz



WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT COLLEGE?
TAKE THIS TRUE/FALSE QUIZ TO SEE HOW MUCH YOU KNOW!

Name _____ Give yourself 10 points for every correct answer.

Your Score

T or F?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

1. 90% of high school students would like to go to college.
2. You have to attend college for four years to get a degree.
3. Only rich people can afford to go to college.
4. Anything that is taught in college you can learn on the job.
5. Many people don't know what they want to study when they start college.
6. If your grades aren't very good you can't get into college.
7. There are lots of high paying jobs that don't require any training after high school.
8. If you don't know how to apply to college you can't go.
9. If you're tired of school there's no way that you'll like college.
10. Middle school and high school don't really matter.

TOTAL SCORE: _____ *What did you learn? Take notes on the back of the sheet.*



College Facts Quiz



ANSWER KEY

Help your students check their answers. Then discuss what they've learned.

- 1. 90% of high school students would like to go to college.**
TRUE. Most teens say that they want to go to college. But getting to college takes hard work and careful planning, such as taking the right courses during high school. Remind students that if they think they would like to go to college – like most teenagers – they will need to work hard during middle school and high school.
- 2. You have to attend four years of college to get a degree.**
FALSE. There are many types of colleges and degrees. Some careers require one or two years of college. Others require four years. Still others require more than four years. It just depends on what you want to do.
- 3. Only rich people can afford to go to college.**
FALSE. College can be expensive, but that doesn't mean you can't afford to go. There are many ways to pay for a college education. Most students get financial aid to help pay for college, and most aid is based on need. That means that the less money you have, the more aid you can get. Tuition at community colleges is less expensive than four-year colleges, and you may be able to live at home to save money.
- 4. Anything that is taught in college you can learn on the job.**
FALSE. Most jobs require some on-the-job training. However, for most jobs, you will also need technical or problem-solving skills before you are hired, and that almost always requires you to get some level of education after graduating from high school.
- 5. Many people don't know what they want to study when they start college.**
TRUE. Join the crowd! Lots of college students haven't decided on a major or a career. At most colleges, you can spend your first year taking different courses so that you can narrow your choices. Academic advisors and counselors will help you make the decision.
- 6. If your grades aren't very good you can't get into college.**
FALSE. Different colleges have different requirements for admission. Colleges also look at other qualities in addition to your grades, such as activities, involvement in the community, and hardship.
- 7. There are lots of high paying jobs that don't require any training after high school.**
FALSE. There are jobs available to people who only have a high school diploma, but most of these jobs are low-paying and won't support a family. Statistics show that, on average, the more education you have, the more money you will make and the easier it will be for you to find a good job.
- 8. If you don't know how to apply to college you can't go.**
FALSE. If you don't know how to apply to college, you can get help during high school from your school's guidance counselor. There are also many great resources on the Internet to help.
- 9. If you're tired of school there's no way that you'll like college.**
FALSE. College is very different from high school or middle school. You'll choose a major and you'll be able to take specialized courses that interest you.
- 10. Middle school and high school don't really matter.**
FALSE. Working hard in middle school and high school is the most important thing you can do to prepare for college... and an exciting career.

