

Are You Ready?

The **BIG** Idea

- What do I need to do to prepare for further education and life on my own?

AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up: Our Destination (5 minutes)
- II. The Moment of Truth (Transcripts) (10 minutes)
- III. Am I Ready? (10 minutes)
- IV. Roads to Success Syllabus (10 minutes)
- V. Application Tracker (10 minutes)

MATERIALS

PORTFOLIO PAGES:

- Portfolio pages 3-4, College Application Tracker (make extra copies for students applying to more than six schools)
- Portfolio pages 19-22, Grade 12 Skills Checklist

STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:

- Student Handbook page 4, Our Destination
- Student Handbook page 5, Credit Check
- Student Handbook page 6, How is College Different from High School?
- Student Handbook page 7, Are You Ready for College?

FACILITATOR PAGES:

- Facilitator Resource 1, College Expectations
- Facilitator Resource 2, How is College Different from High School? Answers
- Facilitator Resource 3, Roads to Success Sample Syllabus

Student transcripts

Course syllabus (one per student)

District graduation requirements (one per student)

Overhead projector or laptop and LCD projector

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Compare accumulated credits with graduation requirements.
- Consider readiness for college.
- Review documents for tracking college applications and financial aid deadlines.

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students compare their transcripts to graduation requirements, consider their readiness for college, and identify first steps in the college application process.

PREPARATION

- List the day's **BIG IDEA** and activities on the board.
- The following handouts need to be made into overhead transparencies or copied onto chart paper:
 - **Facilitator Resource 2, How is College Different from High School? Answers**
 - **Student Handbook page 5, Credit Check**
 - **Portfolio pages 3-4, College Application Tracker**
 - Sample transcript provided by school counselor
 - District graduation requirements
- For **Activity II**, ask your school counselor to provide a copy of each student's transcript so students can determine the number of credits they've accumulated. (Ask the counselor to clarify any unfamiliar transcript terms.) You'll also need a copy of your school district's most recent graduation requirements (one per student). Invite the counselor to present this portion of the lesson if s/he's able.
- Create a class syllabus similar to **Facilitator Resource 3, Roads to Success Sample Syllabus**, and make a copy for each student. Include school holidays and local deadlines for the following:
 - Dates for registering and taking the ACT (www.actstudent.org)
 - Dates for registering and taking the SAT (www.collegeboard.com)
 - State FAFSA deadline (www.fafsa.ed.gov)
 - Other state financial aid deadline
 - CSS Profile deadline
 - Local college application deadlinesCheck with your school counselor, as s/he may already have a list of college deadlines to share. (Additional information may be found at <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-started/for-parents>.)

- ❑ Make copies of **Facilitator Resource 1, College Expectations**. Cut each copy lengthwise into two strips. Cut these strips again, creating one set of answers per student (or pair of students) in your largest class. Place each set into an envelope or plastic bag. (See **IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS**.)
- ❑ Make extra copies of **Portfolio pages 3-4, College Application Tracker**, for students applying to more than six schools.

VOCABULARY

Syllabus: A course outline showing lecture topics, assignments, and exam schedules for an entire semester or year.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

Activity III, Step 2: How is College Different From High School?: You may wish to skip the matching activity if you think your students will find it too juvenile. Instead, have them work in small groups to complete **Student Handbook page 6**; then discuss as a class.

Activity II: If your students already complete a graduation check-in as part of the school guidance program, you may wish to skip the completion of **Student Handbook page 5, Credit Check**.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. Warm Up: Our Destination (5 minutes)

1. [As students enter the classroom, have them turn to **Student Handbook page 4, Our Destination**, and take a few minutes to complete it.]
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** How many of you ranked yourself as doing “very well” on the goal of graduating from high school? It’s true your chances of finishing are now excellent. Today, we’ll review your transcripts and compare them with school district requirements to make sure you’re on track to graduate. This is also a time for looking toward the future and gauging your readiness for college. We’ll finish the class by reviewing documents to help you keep track of important college deadlines.

First, let’s take a look at the district’s graduation requirements.

II. The Moment of Truth (Transcripts) (10 minutes)

1. [Display a copy of the school district’s graduation requirements using the overhead projector or laptop/LCD projector, and distribute a copy to each student.]
2. [Instruct students to turn to **Student Handbook page 5, Credit Check**, and assist them in filling out graduation requirements in column 1.]
3. [Provide each student with a copy of his or her transcript, and display a sample, with name removed, using the overhead projector or laptop/LCD projector.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: As you know, your transcript provides a written record of your work in high school. Colleges will want an official copy, sent from the guidance office, in order to verify your academic performance and certify your graduation. You can also use your transcript to make sure you’ve received credit for all your courses and that you meet all the school district’s requirements for graduation.

4. [Instruct students to enter their “Credits to Date” in column 2. Be prepared to show students where to find this information on their transcript, and answer any specific information about how credits are calculated at your school (for example, one credit per semester for core classes, ½ credit per semester for physical education).]
5. [Have students enter credit for courses they’re taking this semester and next in column 3, “Credits This Year.”]

6. [Have students add columns 2 and 3 together to arrive at “My Total High School Credits,” column 4. Have them compare their totals to graduation requirements and note courses they’re missing, if any. Students who appear to be in danger of not graduating should seek clarification and advice from the school counselor.]

III. Am I Ready? (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Congratulations on making it this far! Before you pat yourselves on the back and succumb to senior slump, there’s next year to think about, applications to be completed and financial aid to be found.

There’s also preparation for the academic life of a college student. Consider these statistics:

- 40% of college students take at least one remedial course. These cost money and do not count for college credit.*
- Just over half of students who start full-time four-year bachelor’s degree programs finish (in six years or less). Fewer than three out of 10 students who start full time at community colleges graduate with an associate’s degree (in three years or less).** (You can check out the graduation rates for schools you’re considering at www.collegeresults.org.)

*National center for Educational Statistics, 2004, as quoted in “Toward a More Comprehensive Conception of College Readiness,” by David T. Conley, prepared for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, March, 2007.

**Complete College America; http://www.completecollege.org/completion_shortfall/

To make sure you’re on the successful side of these statistics, it’s wise to consider yourself as a college-student-in-training. Knowing what to expect can help you prepare.

2. [Have students turn to **Student Handbook page 6, How is College Different from High School?**]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: On this page, you’ll find a list describing expectations in a typical high school. Your experience may be different, so if you’ve taken classes requiring a 10-page paper each semester, for example, feel free to make that change on your list.

3. [Distribute materials created from **Facilitator Resource 1, College Expectations**, one per student (or per pair, if you prefer that your students work together).]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: In this envelope, you'll find a list of college expectations. Your mission is to match each college expectation to the corresponding high school expectation on **Student Handbook page 6, How is College Different from High School?**]

4. [Give students a few minutes to complete the assignment. Then display **Facilitator Resource 2, How is College Different from High School? Answers**, on the overhead projector.]
5. [Discuss the following:
 - What college expectations surprised you?
 - What can you do this year to prepare for next year?]
6. [Direct students' attention to **Student Handbook page 7, Are You Ready for College?**, where they'll find good questions to ask themselves in preparation for college and living on their own.]

IV. Roads to Success Syllabus (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** One difference between high school and college is the way course requirements are presented. Many of you may already be familiar with a **syllabus**, a course outline showing lecture topics, assignments, and exam schedules for an entire semester or year.

[Distribute the Roads to Success syllabus you've created, and designate a place for students to store them for easy reference.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Your syllabus, along with **Portfolio pages 1-2, Senior Year Road Map**, will help you keep track of your college deadlines and Roads to Success assignments. I would highly recommend that you copy these deadlines onto a calendar or day planner, so you can see what's coming up.

V. College Application Tracker (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Finally, there's one more important piece of paperwork for anybody who's thinking about education after high school. Please turn to **Portfolio pages 3-4, College Application Tracker**.

Applying to a four-year college, community college, or tech school is a multi-step process, and it's likely you're applying to more than one school. These pages will help you stay on top of the process and make sure you don't miss a step.

2. [Review items on the **College Application Tracker** as needed.]
3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Right now, list the colleges where you're planning to apply across the top of both pages (same order for each). In the second row, list the status of each school — that is, whether you consider it a reach, match, or safety.

If you're not sure where you'd like to apply, you have some research to do. Remember, we've set a deadline of three weeks from today to have a list of schools you're considering. If you need help on this, please see me after class.

4. [Have students turn to **Portfolio pages 19-22, Grade 12 Skills Checklist**, and complete the Introduction section.]

INTRODUCTION

I can ...

List three ways Roads to Success will assist me in making plans for the year following high school graduation.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Determine whether or not I'm on track to graduate from high school.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
List three ways college is academically different from high school.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Track important college application and financial aid deadlines.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well

5. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Next week, we'll begin our first unit of study for the year. Who can tell me what the topic will be? Hint: you'll find it on your Roads to Success syllabus.

Have a great week!

College Expectations

College	College
Students are expected to write three to five page papers, including information from other sources. Papers should be free of grammatical and spelling errors. Rewriting may be required.	Students are expected to write three to five page papers, including information from other sources. Papers should be free of grammatical and spelling errors. Rewriting may be required.
Student decides how much to do, and when to do it.	Student decides how much to do, and when to do it.
Students select from a variety of courses to meet graduation requirements.	Students select from a variety of courses to meet graduation requirements.
May be as few as two or three tests per semester. Each test covers a large amount of material.	May be as few as two or three tests per semester. Each test covers a large amount of material.
Professor may or may not take attendance. (If you miss too many classes, your performance is likely to be poor.)	Professor may or may not take attendance. (If you miss too many classes, your performance is likely to be poor.)
Professor assumes students will keep up with the work and ask questions when they need help.	Professor assumes students will keep up with the work and ask questions when they need help.
Education is voluntary and often costly.	Education is voluntary and often costly.
Student is expected to draw conclusions about the ideas of others.	Student is expected to draw conclusions about the ideas of others.
Students need to spend at least two to three hours studying outside of class for each hour in class. (College is a full-time job.)	Students need to spend at least two to three hours studying outside of class for each hour in class. (College is a full-time job.)
Students are expected to read one or more books on their own.	Students are expected to read one or more books on their own.
Some classes may be small; others may have 100 or more students.	Some classes may be small; others may have 100 or more students.
Syllabus at the beginning of the semester gives expectations for the entire course.	Syllabus at the beginning of the semester gives expectations for the entire course.
Students are expected to seek help from professors during office hours.	Students are expected to seek help from professors during office hours.
Students are expected to meet professors' expectations without extra credit.	Students are expected to meet professors' expectations without extra credit.
Classes may not meet every day, classes may be one to four hours in length, students may spend 12 to 16 hours a week in class. Full-time students are expected to pass a particular number of credit-hours each semester.	Classes may not meet every day, classes may be one to four hours in length, students may spend 12 to 16 hours a week in class. Full-time students are expected to pass a particular number of credit-hours each semester.

How is College Different from High School? Answers

High School	College
Education is required and free.	Education is voluntary and often costly.
Students attend classes for a fixed period of time each day, about 30 hours per week.	Classes may not meet every day, classes may be one to four hours in length, students may spend 12 to 16 hours a week in class. Full-time students are expected to pass a particular number of credit-hours each semester.
May be little or no homework.	Students need to spend at least two to three hours studying outside of class for each hour in class. (College is a full-time job.)
Few course selection options.	Students select from a variety of courses to meet graduation requirements.
Teachers or counselors may offer help to students who are falling behind.	Students are expected to seek help from professors during office hours.
Extra credit may be offered for students who need to raise their grades.	Students are expected to meet professors' expectations without extra credit.
Some schools may require few out-of-class writing assignments.	Students are expected to write three to five page papers, including information from other sources. Papers should be free of grammatical and spelling errors. Rewriting may be required.
Frequent quizzes and tests, which usually cover small amounts of material.	May be as few as two or three tests per semester. Each test covers a large amount of material.
Homework is checked by the teacher.	Professor assumes students will keep up with the work and ask questions when they need help.
Reading assignments may be short, with material re-taught in class.	Students are expected to read one or more books on their own.
Parents and teachers may assist with time management.	Student decides how much to do, and when to do it.
Most assignments are short-term, for example, homework for the next day, or a test next week.	Syllabus at the beginning of the semester gives expectations for the entire course.
Student is responsible for recalling information presented in class.	Student is expected to draw conclusions about the ideas of others.
Attendance is required.	Professor may or may not take attendance. (If you miss too many classes, your performance is likely to be poor.)
Classes usually have no more than 35 students.	Some classes may be small; others may have 100 or more students.

Roads to Success Sample Syllabus

Date (week of)	Roads Lesson	College Deadline (All dates are for this school year)
Sept 8	First day of school	Sept 9, last day to register for 10/10 SAT
Sept 14	INTRO 1: Introduction	
Sept 21	INTRO 2: Are You Ready?	Sept 22, last day to register for 10/25 ACT
Sept 28	COLLEGE APPS 1: College Application	Oct 1, last day to register for 11/7 SAT
Oct 5	COLLEGE APPS 2: Essay I	
Oct 12	COLLEGE APPS 3: Essay II	Oct 10, SAT
Oct 19	COLLEGE APPS 4: Essay III	Oct 25, ACT
Oct 26	COLLEGE APPS 5: Essay IV	Oct 30, last day to register for 12/5 SAT
Nov 2	COLLEGE APPS 6: Essay V	Nov 1, SUNY Early Decision deadline
Nov 9	FIN AID 1: Overview	Nov 7, SAT, last day to register for 12/13 ACT
Nov 16	FIN AID 2: Scholarships I	Nov 15, SUNY Early Action deadline
Nov 26/27	Thanksgiving Break	
Nov 30	FIN AID 3: Scholarships II	Dec 1, recommended SUNY app. deadline Dec 5, SAT
Dec 7	JOBS 1: Who Gets Jobs?	
Dec 14	JOBS 2: Your Network	
Dec 21	JOBS 3: Company Research I	
Dec 24-Jan 1	Winter Break	Jan 1, first day to begin FAFSA
Jan 4	FIN AID 4: FAFSA I	
Jan 11	FIN AID 5: FAFSA II	
Jan 18	JOBS 4: Company Research II	Jan 19 or earlier, CSS Profile deadline
Jan 25	JOBS 5: Your Resume	
Feb 1	JOBS 6: Cover Letters I	
Feb 8	JOBS 7: Cover Letters II	
Feb 15 -19	Mid-Winter Break	
Feb 22	JOBS 8: The Interview	
Mar 1	JOBS 9: Follow-Up	
Mar 8	MONEY MATTERS 1: Freshman Budget	
Mar 15	MONEY MATTERS 2: Big Ticket Expenses	
Mar 22	MONEY MATTERS 3: Health Insurance	
Mar 29-Apr 6	Spring Break	
Apr 12	FIN AID 6: Comparing Aid Offers	
Apr 19	MONEY MATTERS 4: Budgeting Details	
Apr 26	NEXT STEPS 1: Freshman Survival Guide	
May 3	NEXT STEPS 2: Advice From Experts	
May 10	NEXT STEPS 3: Getting Ahead at Work	
May 17		
May 24		
June 1		
June 7		
Jun 15 - 24	Regents Exams	
Jun 25	Last day of school	

Our Destination

Years ago, when you entered your first Roads to Success class, you were presented with a list of goals. That list is below.

Take a moment now to evaluate how well you've done on each item on the list. Circle the goal that's of greatest importance to you now, and answer the questions below.

We will figure out what we like and are good at. We will use this information to give us ideas about future jobs.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
We will explore careers and find potential matches for every person in the class.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
We will practice the kind of behavior that's desirable in the workplace.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
We will set goals and make clear plans for reaching them.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
We will make a step-by-step, year-by-year plan starting in middle school and ending two years after high school.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
We will learn how to find and keep a job.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
We will learn strategies for managing our own money.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
We will all graduate from high school.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well

1. Why is this goal important to you?

2. What are three steps you can take during your senior year to help you reach this goal?

Credit Check

How's your credit? (Not the purchases-with-plastic kind, the courses-completed kind.) Every school district has requirements to graduate from high school. Take a moment now to make sure you'll meet your school's requirements.

DIRECTIONS:

1. In column 1, enter the credits required for graduation.
2. In column 2, enter the credits you've earned in each subject according to your transcript.
3. In column 3, enter the credits you'll earn this year if you pass all your subjects.
4. In column 4, find your total credits (Credits To-Date + Credits This Year).

Subject	1. Credits Required for Graduation	2. Credits To-Date	3. Credits This Year	4. My Total High School Credits
English				
Social Studies				
Math				
Science				
Health				
Arts				
Physical Education				
Second Language				
Other				

REFLECTION:

1. Are you on track to graduate? You're in good shape if your total for each subject in column 4 is equal to or greater than the credits required for graduation in column 1.
2. If you're not on track, what courses are you missing?
3. When will you take those courses? See your school counselor for help.

How is College Different from High School?

For each high school expectation, find the corresponding college expectation.

High School	College
Education is required and free.	
Students attend classes for a fixed period of time each day, about 30 hours per week.	
May be little or no homework.	
Few course selection options.	
Teachers or counselors may offer help to students who are falling behind.	
Extra credit may be offered for students who need to raise their grades.	
Some schools may require few out-of-class writing assignments.	
Frequent quizzes and tests, which usually cover small amounts of material.	
Homework is checked by the teacher.	
Reading assignments may be short, with material re-taught in class.	
Parents and teachers may assist with time management.	
Most assignments are short-term, for example, homework for the next day, or a test next week.	
Student is responsible for recalling information presented in class.	
Attendance is required.	
Classes usually have no more than 35 students.	

Are You Ready for College?

You've completed 90% of your required education. Graduation is only nine months away! Are you ready for the next step? If not, there's still time to regroup. Here are a few questions to ask to see if you're ready for college and life on your own.

Why and How

Do you have a purpose for going to college?

Do you have a plan for financing your education?

Study Habits

Do you use a calendar or day planner to keep track of assignments and other important obligations?

Do you complete big school projects on time without prodding from an adult?

Is your writing free of errors and easy to understand?

Can you write a research paper?

Do you take notes in class and review them?

Do you keep up with class reading assignments?

Independent living

Do you ask questions of adults in authority to get clarification and help when you need it?

Can you keep track of your finances?

Can you do your own laundry?

College Application Tracker

Name of School	1	2	3	4	5	6
Status: Safety? Match? Reach?						
Applications						
Early application deadline						
Regular application deadline						
Request info/application						
Complete application						
Get fee waiver or include application fee						
Sign application						
Make copies of all materials						
Send application						
Send extra material, if needed						
Confirm receipt of materials						
Academic Documentation						
Request high school transcripts						
Request mid-year grade reports						
Send ACT or SAT scores						
Send SAT Subject Test scores						
Letters of Recommendation						
Request recommendations						
Remind recommenders of due date						
Send thank-you notes						

Adapted from College Board's College Application Checklist: www.collegeboard.com/student/apply/the-application/8435.html

**Grade 12, Introduction 2: Are You Ready?
Portfolio, College Application Tracker**

Name of School →	1	2	3	4	5	6
Essay						
Choose topic						
Write essay						
Proof-read for spelling and grammar						
Have two people read your essay						
Interviews						
Interview at college						
Alumni interview						
Send thank-you notes						
Financial						
FAFSA deadline						
State financial aid deadline						
College financial aid deadline						
Apply for FAFSA Pin #						
Gather financial records						
Complete FAFSA						
Complete PROFILE, if needed						
Submit school financial aid form, if needed						
Submit state aid form, if needed						
Getting Accepted						
Receive acceptance letter						
Receive financial aid award						
Send deposit						
Confirm acceptance of financial aid package						
Receive orientation info						

Adapted from College Board's College Application Checklist: www.collegeboard.com/student/apply/the-application/8435.html