

College Comparisons, Part 2

SUBMITTED BY: Kathryn McGinn

SUBJECT(S): Career Development

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

Students will read an article about factors to consider when choosing a college. Students will share their research on public and private universities and colleges and make comparisons.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Career Development, VI. Lifelong Learning

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- [“Zina Kumok’s Guide to Smart Student-loan Liftoff”](#)
- [“Who Knew the Job of a Prosecutor Looks Nothing Like “Law & Order?””](#)
- [“Three Critical Steps to Help You Choose a College”](#)
- [“The Search Is On: How to Pick the Right College”](#)
- [“The Rising Costs of a U.S. College Education”](#)
- [“The College Investment: Will It Pay Off?”](#)
- [“One House, Three Seniors and Lots of College Essays”](#)
- [“Is It Time to Take a Second Look at Community College?”](#)
- [“International Student Athletes Learn How to Compete at U.S. Colleges”](#)
- [“Graduates Define Success”](#)
- [“College Students Going Hungry? Sara Goldrick-Rab Shares This and Other Campus Realities”](#)
- [“College Decisions Sometimes Require Sacrifice”](#)

- “College Admission: Will the Summer Program Help You?”
- “Career Spotlight: Studying to Be a Veterinary Technician”
- “Career Spotlight: Motion Capture Is an Industry on the Move”
- “Anthony David Williams Was President of His College Freshman Class — Why Did He Transfer?”
- “Admission Experts Share 7 Tips for College Applicants”
- “A Recent High School Grad Reflects on the Clamor Over College Admissions”
- “A Massive College Admissions Cheating Scandal Gets People Talking”
- “A Gap Year Could Be Your Path to Making Smarter Decisions”
- “‘Creating a Fair Playing Field’: What’s Behind the SAT Redesign”

Common Core Standard(s):

- ELA CCR 7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- ELA CCR 8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- ELA CCR Reading 7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- ELA CCR Reading 10: Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.
- EL CCR Speaking and Listening 1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- ELA CCR Speaking and Listening 4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Objectives/Purposes:

- Students will read and analyze an article.
- Students will understand the differences between public and private universities and colleges and two- and four-year colleges.
- Students will think about their future plans.

Other Resources/Materials:

- College Comparison Chart ([Handout A](#))
- College guidebooks and/or access to the Internet (I was able to check out a big stack of college guidebooks from the library: they were a couple years outdated, but still recent enough to serve as useful resources. If your library doesn't have these guidebooks, perhaps borrow them from your school guidance/college counselors.)

Activities:

1. Hand out “The Search Is On...” and read aloud. Discuss the following questions:

a. What factors does Dr. Harper suggest students consider when deciding to which college to apply?

- Overall, think about how you envision your college experience
- Campus location
- Commute vs. live on campus
- Cost
- Racial Demographics

b. How do different types of colleges compare to each other in terms of cost?

- Overall, community colleges are less expensive than four-year institutions, and public institutions are less than private institutions. However, private universities give a lot of scholarship money and, depending on your parents' income, can sometimes actually cost less than public universities (after scholarships, grants, etc.)

c. What factors are most important to *you* when looking at colleges? Why?

- Answers will vary

(10 mins)

2. Have students take out their college comparison sheets from the previous lesson. Each group (Two-Year Institution, Public University, Private University, Private College) should review their information to prepare to share with the rest of the class.

(5 mins)

3. Hand out College Comparison Chart (Handout A), and have each group share what they found about their type of institution, including:

- Admissions Competitiveness
- Cost
- Size
- Housing
- Faculty
- Academic Programs
- Facilities
- Miscellaneous

As students share, the rest of the class should take notes on the chart.

(15 mins)

4. Ask students to think about some of the pros/cons of the different types of institutions based on the information they compiled. Discuss as a class.

(5 mins)

Tying It All Together:

In the remaining time, explore College MatchMaker on the College Board's website: <http://collegesearch.collegeboard.com/search/index.jsp>. Ask for student volunteers and use their preferences to fill in the various fields in order for the site to compile a list of suitable colleges. (If you don't have a computer with a projector, you can still do this activity, simply reading the questions to the students and sharing the results with them at the end.)

(10 mins)

Practice Outside of the Classroom:

- Use the Internet to research different colleges and start thinking about what does or does not appeal to you.
- Talk to college students or graduates whom you know and ask about their experiences in college. What do they see as pros/cons of college in their own lives?

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently:

Students found filling out the chart a bit tedious, especially since they had just completed a different chart the day before. If I were to teach this lesson again, I would probably just ask groups to share out and not require the other students to take notes on the presentations.

There was enough time at the end of the lesson to explore College MatchMaker, and students loved it. If you have access to a lab where the students can all use their own computers, that would be great. However, students enjoyed watching each other take turns using the website.

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