TRANSITION SKILLS

LESSON 12-6 ▲ COMPLETING A COLLEGE APPLICATION

**LEARNING GOALS/OUTCOMES**

* Students will describe the key components of a college application.
* Students will complete a sample paper application form as practice.

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

* **Student Handouts:**
* Application Tips Handout
* **Projector** for displaying online application
* **Computers with internet access** to allow students to locate online college applications
* **Two Sample College Applications** (see “Additional Resources and Information” section for specific suggestions)

**CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

1. **Review the application process.** Review the **Junior-Senior Calendar** (from Lesson 11-3) with your students. Discuss how far along they are in the process. Ask for volunteers to share their ideas about what information they will need for an application. Using your projector, show students one or two online applications so they can see how they will navigate and find an application. You may wish to use one of the following:

* Western Washington University(<http://admissions.wwu.edu/freshman/f_apply.html>)
* Community College Application **(**<https://www.public.ctc.edu/ApplicantWebClient/Applicant/ApplWelcome.aspx>)
* Common App **(**[www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)**)**

1. **Preview a sample application on paper.** Distribute paper copies of sample college applications (such as either the ***Western Washington University application,*** a link to which can be found below)**.** Point out the types of information students will be required to provide. Ask students to work individually or in small groups to begin filling out the application.
2. **Find an online application.** With students at computers, ask them to go to the web site of a college that interests them. Ask them to navigate through the college’s web site to find the application form, which may be an application unique to that college or may be a link to the Common App or a statewide application form. After each student (or group) has found an application, ask for volunteers to share: (1) the application due date (or dates); (2) the format for the application (individual college application, Common App, etc.); (3) the materials that must be submitted along with the application (test scores, letters of recommendation, transcripts, etc.).

**STUDENT PRODUCTS**

* **Sample College Application.** Each student should begin a sample paper application from a college of their choosing.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND OTHER INFORMATION**

* **FACILITATOR NOTES**

Nearly every college today either requires or strongly encourages students to complete an application online. This lesson utilizes paper applications just to give students a sense of the type of information that will be required when they complete a real (online) application. Suggested applications you may provide in print form include:

* Western Washington University ([admissions.wwu.edu/sites/admissions.wwu.edu/files/print/FreshmanApplication.pdf](https://admissions.wwu.edu/sites/admissions.wwu.edu/files/print/FreshmanApplication.pdf))
* Uniform Application for Washington Community and Technical Colleges (sample copy attached)

If possible, please show students examples of online applications so that they can get a sense of how to find an application form on a college’s web site. Because colleges do not keep their application forms live all year, it is recommended that you schedule this lesson during October, November, or December. Some suggestions for paper applications to provide to students

**College Admission Requirements**

Encourage students and their families to research college opportunities and to learn about admission requirements. The links below will help them get started.

* **Washington Student Achievement Council**

<http://www.wsac.wa.gov/college-admissions>

Overview of college admissions information for WA State

<http://www.wsac.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2015.CADRs.Appendix.pdf>

College Academic Distribution Requirements (CADR) for four-year colleges

* **Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges**

<http://www.sbctc.edu/>

Home page

<http://www.sbctc.edu/becoming-a-student/counselor/default.aspx>

Counselor’s Guide to Community College Resources

**ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS**

* **Essential Academic Learning Requirements Grades 9/10 Grade Level Expectations:** This lesson is aligned with Writing 4.1.2 and Educational Technology 1.3.2 and 1.3.3. Students will complete an application form using established criteria. They will locate, analyze, and use information from college web sites or application sites.
* **Common Core State Standards Grades 11-12:** This lesson is aligned with English Language Arts Language 1a and 1b and Writing 5. Students will complete an application form using appropriate usage, grammar, and conventions. They will develop and strengthen their application as needed, by planning, revising, editing, and rewriting.
* **American School Counselor Association National Standards:** This lesson is aligned with ASCA Academic B2.7 and C1.5 and with Personal & Social B1.12. Students will identify postsecondary options. They will complete an application to achieve their goals.

TRANSITION SKILLS

LESSON 12-6 STUDENT HANDOUT

APPLICATION TIPS

Are you preparing a college application? Here are six important tips.

**TIP 1. Follow all instructions.** Carefully review each application to make sure you complete all sections and all college-specific supplements. Follow all instructions carefully. If you are asked to handle recommendation letters in a certain way, for instance, follow the instructions exactly. Provide all the information that is requested. Colleges want to see that you are careful, thorough, and thoughtful. This is your best chance to make a good impression.

**TIP 2. Proofread carefully.** Be careful about spelling and punctuation. Answer in complete sentences where that is possible. Before submitting your application, ask someone to proofread your work. Then proofread it again on your own. If you are applying to more than one college, make sure each application refers to the correct college.

**TIP 3. Be honest.** It can be tempting to add a few extra activities or nudge your grades up a bit, but don’t do it! Remember that colleges will check all the information you provide with your high school. If your application isn’t honest, you won’t be admitted. If there is something in your high school career that you are not proud of, explain what you have done to recover or change your ways. Colleges don’t expect you to be perfect, but they do expect you to be honest.

**TIP 4. Make your essay stand out.** Focus your essay on a few key points. Don’t try to make your essay a laundry list of all your accomplishments. Instead, choose a quality that describes you and then tell the story of who you are or who you want to become. Don’t exaggerate. But do pay attention to carefully telling the college who you are and why they should want to admit you.

**TIP 5. Submit on time.** Keep a calendar of all your college deadlines and check off each task. When you submit your application, be certain it has been accepted. If you are concerned, or don’t hear back from the college within a week, call the Admissions office and check on the status of your application.

**TIP 6. Keep backup copies.** Save a copy of everything you submit. Print a copy of each online application or supplement for your records before clicking the “submit” button. Having an extra copy will save you a lot of work if your application is lost. And you might be able to use information from one application to help you start another (though be absolutely sure you don’t confuse one college with another).



