

PARADE classroom®

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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Sept. 25–Oct. 1, 2005

KASTERA/WIDE WORLD (MODELS POSED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY)



In this week's special mini-guide, we focus on the challenges students face when choosing a college.

► This Week's Focus:

Choosing a College

In this week's guide, we look at factors to consider in choosing a college. What matters most to your students? In a related story, we focus on how students can cope with the burgeoning costs of college applications. Elsewhere, we continue our Year of the Heart coverage with a lesson plan on teen heart health. Finally, we'd like to urge you once more to enter our Tell America's Story contest. But hurry! The deadline is Sept. 30.

Enter your classroom in PARADE magazine's Preservation Award contest!

The deadline for entries is Sept. 30.

Visit www.parade.com/history to learn more.

Everyday Newspaper Activity

Activity #5: Healthy Recipes. Look in your newspaper's food section and see what recipes you can find. Do these recipes seem healthy? Are they high or low in fat? What about sugar and salt? Which recipes are best for people who want to keep their hearts healthy?

Coming Up Next Week

- Dress Codes for Teachers
- The Price of Gas
- 6th Annual Teen Poetry Contest

► **In the News: College Application Guide; Pre-College Costs p.2**

► **In PARADE: Teen Heart Health p.3**

► **Skills Sheets: Picking an Essay Topic p.4; College Priorities p.5**

CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH YOUR NEWSPAPER AND THE WORLD

Choosing a College

Curriculum links: College and careers, research skills, family and consumer science, personal development

Briefing: High school seniors are now taking standardized tests and applying for college. They need to think about many factors—from rising costs to their own interests, needs, goals and chances of getting in—as they make the critical decisions about where to apply. This mini-guide, including the related Skills Sheets on pp. 4-5, will help you help them, while also preparing younger students to tackle these challenges in the years ahead.

Newspaper activity: College interviews sometimes involve questions about current events. Divide students into teams of two. Have students interview each other about topics in the newspaper. Then have them write essays taking positions on these issues.

Resources: Books: Jay Mathews' *Harvard Schmarvard: Getting Beyond the Ivy League to the College That Is Best For You* (Three Rivers Press, 2003), Robert Franek's *Best 361 Colleges, 2006* (Princeton Review, 2005), Loren Pope's *Colleges That Change Lives* (Penguin, 2000), *Four-Year Colleges, 2006* (Peterson's, 2005). Web sites: Find online info from *U.S. News and World Report*, the College Board, Peterson's and the American Council on Education.*

Classroom Debates

• **What factors will you consider in choosing a college?** Cost? Academic or special programs? Size? Location? Atmosphere? Others? Explain. How much weight do you give rankings, such as those in *U.S. News and World Report*? What do you think is the best way to find out whether a school is right for you? Visiting it? Talking to a recruiter? Reading books or articles? Surfing its Web site? Speaking to alumni? What colleges are you considering now? Why?

Coping with Pre-College Costs

Curriculum links: College and careers, family and consumer science, personal development

Briefing: College can be expensive, and big costs begin with the application process. First, colleges charge you to apply—about \$60 per application. Then there's the cost of the ACT or the SAT, which recently became more expensive due to the new writing component. And you may take these more than once to improve your scores. There's also the cost, if you choose, of classes to prepare for these tests—often around \$800. Plus there are fees for Advanced Placement tests. And none of this even considers the college-application books you buy or the visits to colleges that interest you. There are even costs to apply for financial aid if your colleges require the College Scholarship Service Financial Aid Profile. The bottom line is that senior year can be expensive. If students work, they should set aside money to allow for expenses beyond those their parents are willing and able to pay. If a family meets low-income standards, students can obtain a waiver for SAT costs and application fees for four colleges. If they think they may qualify, your students should talk to a guidance

Classroom Debates

• **To how many colleges will you apply?** How many times will you take the SAT? Will you take an SAT prep course? Will cost be a factor? Do richer students have an advantage over other students in applying to college? Explain. What can you do to narrow the gap (e.g., apply for waivers, earn extra money, use SAT study books instead of taking expensive courses, etc.)?

Newspaper activity: Should colleges charge to consider students' applications? Why or why not? Is it fair? Divide students into two groups and have them write letters to the editor supporting or opposing this practice.

Resources: Web sites: To learn about SAT fee waivers, visit the College Board. Find out if the colleges you are interested in cooperate with its application fee waiver plan. Learn about ACT fee waivers.*

*Visit www.paradeclassroom.com/links for links to all mentioned Web sites.

Teen Heart Health

Curriculum links: Health, science, physical education, family and consumer science, current events

Briefing: Heart disease can begin early in life, says Dr. Isadore Rosenfeld in this week's issue of PARADE. Hardening of the arteries is a gradual process that begins in childhood. A fatty yellow streak inside the walls of the arteries contains cholesterol. The higher the cholesterol content of the diet and its level in the blood, the greater the plaque that collects in the arteries. Eventually, this plaque can clog the arteries and cause a heart attack. And "eventually" can be as early as your 20s or 30s! So what can you do to avoid this? The key interventions are exercise and a healthy diet. 1) If you're overweight, try to drop some pounds. Try to cut back on fatty foods and concentrate on the healthy stuff (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and low-fat dairy). The bottom line is to use more calories than you take in. To do that, exercise. 2) Find exercise that you like. Do it 30 to 60 minutes a day most days of the week. 3) If you smoke, stop. Smoking in your teens or 20s can shorten the length of your life. Stopping now can change that. 4) Cut back on salt. Try flavoring food with garlic, onions, herbs and spices. 5) Other ways to cut heart risk include lowering high cholesterol, high blood pressure and high blood sugar. For all of these, proper diet and exercise are key. If they're not enough, a doctor may prescribe drugs.

Classroom Debates

• **Do you exercise regularly?** If not, what's stopping you? How can you get over these obstacles? What tricks can help you stay active (e.g., exercising with a friend, setting up a specific time, etc.)? What types of exercise and sports do you enjoy? Do you eat healthy low-fat, low-sugar meals? What can you do to make sure that you have healthy snacks and meals at school (e.g., bring healthy snacks)? How can you cut back on fat in your diet? What else can you do to keep your heart healthy?

Newspaper activity: Look through your paper. Can you find good tasting heart-healthy recipes that are low in fat and sugar? Can you find grocery ads for vegetables and fruits in different color groups, such as green, red, yellow, orange and white?

Resources: Books: The American Heart Association's *To Your Health!: A Guide to Heart-Smart Living* (Clarkson Potter, 2001) and *Fitting in Fitness* (Clarkson Potter, 1997). Also David Heber's *What Color Is Your Diet?* (Regan, 2002). Web sites: Visit the AHA and its related exercise sites. Also get advice from government sites.*

ASK MARILYN

Quick Quiz

What single country supplies the U.S. with the most oil? a) Iraq; b) Saudi Arabia; c) Kuwait; d) Canada.

Answer: d) Canada!

Interact: Do students have questions or comments for Marilyn? Send them to Ask Marilyn, 711 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017, or e-mail marilyn@parade.com.

FRESH VOICES

Reaching a Goal

For class discussion or writing assignment: This week, T.J., 18, tells how he set a goal to lose weight his freshman year of high school. He started at 220 pounds and ended up at 140, through a regimen of regular exercise and a healthy diet. He says, "It's not about some miracle diet. It all comes down to willpower." T.J. became the person he wanted to be. Have you ever set a goal and met it? How did you do it? How did it make you feel about yourself?

Interact: Ask students, "What would you like to see in your school's vending machine?" Send their comments to Fresh Voices, Box 5103, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163-5103. Or e-mail them to freshvoices@parade.com. Students whose letters are published in PARADE will receive Fresh Voices T-shirts.

Answer Key:

Pick That Topic (p. 4): Answers will vary.

Get Your Priorities Straight (p. 5): Answers will vary.

Pick That Topic: College Essays

What should you write your college application essay about? Many colleges have specific topics that they want you to address, but most are general enough to allow you to choose an area of focus. Below, we've listed some essay questions that you're likely to find on an application. For each one, list three possible ideas—and be specific. Then put an X next to the one that most reflects who you are. Here's a hint: If you think someone else might choose the same idea, rewrite it until you believe that no one but you could write that essay. This way, the college-admissions officer will have to see it as a standout! (Another hint: You can find many useful topics in your newspaper—from people you admire to events that have influenced you to issues on which you have strong opinions. Keep a file of newspaper clippings that could help you with your essay!)

1. What person do you admire most? Why?

How have they influenced you?

2. What are your goals?

3. Why do you want to go to this particular college?

4. Why should this college accept you? What do you have to offer?

5. What event has most influenced you or served as a turning point in your life?

6. What obstacle(s) have you overcome?

7. Defend an opinion that you hold strongly.

8. What is your most important personality trait?

9. What incident has most helped you to grow?

10. Given a free choice, what would you like to say about yourself? What form of expression would you use (i.e. poem, song, video)?
