

OREGON GEAR UP TOOLKIT



Games & Activities

topics, strategies and examples to build a college-going culture

REACHING HIGHER

RIGOR

RELEVANCE

RELATIONSHIPS

RAISING AWARENESS

7 8 9 10 11 12 13+

Parents Community Teachers



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RAISING AWARENESS

Promote early awareness of college preparation, selection, admissions, financial aid and other critical steps for college entry.

Strategies

- Promote college awareness to students and families.
- Demystify paying for college.



DOWNLOAD PRINT-AND-USE RESOURCES: bit.ly/2GGEXNw

Look for the printer icon and green text throughout the toolkit!

· 101 College Trivia Questions

· 101 College Terms

· Money Template

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Sources & More Information

Bell, Rowan-Kenyon & Perna, 2009. [College Knowledge of 9th and 11th Grade Students: Variation by School and State Context](#)

Boller, 2012. [Game Based Learning—Why Does It Work?](#)

Garris, Ahlers & Driskell, 2002. [Games, Motivation and Learning: A Research and Practice Model](#)

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Research has shown that students with lower levels of information about college, especially information focused on cost and aid are less likely to expect to attend, apply for admission or actually enroll in college. Students of color, low-income parents and parents who have no direct personal experience with college are more likely to lack this “college knowledge”.



Research also says that games can be effective learning tools, by engaging students to explore, build, collaborate and win. Games can be effective in increasing student motivation and interest; however, experiential learning must be paired with learner support including an opportunity to reflect.

Learning can be fun. Students as well as parents and educators can benefit from engaging activities that challenge knowledge, spur reflection, require teamwork and build connections.

Games and activities work well to introduce or reinforce topics and can be used in classrooms, workshops, staff meetings and in many other situations.

Be sure to consider the audience as well as the goal before choosing a game or activity and always include time to [debrief](#) and discuss the point of the activity. This gives participants an opportunity to reflect on what they have learned, listen respectfully to others, and become more bonded to a group.

Engaging games and activities can reinforce college knowledge for students, parents and educators.

The toolkit and planning guide will teach you how to use games and activities strategically in your work with specific examples. However, almost **any of the strategies can be adapted to a different topic or audience—be creative and feel free to mix and match.** Encourage students to develop their own activities and lead them for a younger group.



GETTING STARTED

IDENTIFY AUDIENCE & SIZE

The first step is to identify the audience. Is it students, parents or educators? What grade level?

Also consider the size that your game or activity can accommodate. Is there a minimum or maximum number of participants?

CHOOSE A TOPIC & GOAL

Next, decide on the key concept or topic for the activity. What do you want participants to learn? Consider some of the ideas at right or brainstorm your own.

Also, be intentional about your goal for the game. Is it to introduce or reinforce a topic? Do you want participants to work with others and build relationships or work individually and self-reflect?

CONSIDER TIME & MATERIALS

Consider the amount of time it will take to introduce, play and debrief the game. If an activity will take more than 30 minutes, consider breaking it up into two sessions. Make a list of materials needed as well.

OUTLINE THE ACTIVITY

Write a brief introduction to the game, including the goal you've identified (*"We are going to start with an activity to get to know ourselves and each other."*) Outline the basic rules (*"Here's how it will work..."*)

Finally, identify a few [open-ended questions for reflection to be used in the debrief](#) that reiterates the purpose. (*"What did you learn? Why is this important?"*)

IDEAS FOR TOPICS

[101 College Trivia Questions](#) 📖 and [101 College Terms](#) 📖 cover key information related to:

- College Types & Degrees
- Preparing for & Applying to College
- Paying for College
- College Vocab & Support Services
- Specific Colleges.

Also consider:

- College Entrance Test Prep
collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sample-questions
act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-preparation.html
- College & Career Self-Reflection
schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors/publications-position-statements/



TYPES OF GAMES & ACTIVITIES

GET TO KNOW THE GROUP

Commonly known as icebreakers, these types of activities encourage participants to interact with each other and build relationships.

Catch & Throw Intros: Participants introduce themselves and respond to a prompt (*e.g. a career they are interested in, a college they want to learn more about*) when they have a ball or other soft object before throwing it to another participant.

Alliteration Intros: Participants go around the room and introduce themselves with their first name plus a noun or adjective that starts with the same letter (*e.g. a college plus first name like "Pacific Patrick"*).

Challenge the group to repeat back each name combination before they share.

M&M Intros: Participants select a small handful of M&Ms and share one fact about themselves based on the colors in their hand (*e.g. red = a career you're interested in, orange = favorite subject in school, yellow = student club you're in, green = college you want to learn more about, blue = random fun fact, brown = something you are nervous or excited about for college*).

Categories: Participants get up and moving and see what they have in common with others in the room. Add categories related to college and careers (*e.g. favorite Oregon college or how many campuses visited*).

- Instructions: playmeo.com/activities/ice-breakers-get-to-know-you-games/categories

Human BINGO: Participants get up and moving to find others who fit the criteria on their BINGO cards.

- Oregon College Application Week College Experiences: oregonquestocollege.org/sites/default/files/caw/HumanBingoExperiences.pdf

Agree/Disagree: Participants silently share their opinions on statements (*e.g. I want to go to college or I am nervous about going to college*) by physically moving across the room. Great as an introductory activity before group conversations.

Group Rock-Paper-Scissors: Participants introduce themselves to another person before challenging them to a game of rock-paper-scissors. The loser then joins the winner's team who finds another team to play until there is a final winner.



TYPES OF GAMES & ACTIVITIES

GROUP COMPETITION

Competition is an easy way to engage participants and builds teamwork and collaboration. Consider giving a small prize to the winning team to incentivize participation.

GAME SHOWS

Jeopardy: The classic answer-and-question show is easy to adapt to just about any topic.

- Jeopardy Power Point Template: youthdownloads.com/games/jeopardy-powerpoint-template
- Online Jeopardy: jeopardylabs.com

Wheel of Fortune: Great to reinforce key college vocabulary. Give bonus points if the team can define the term after correctly guessing it. Don't have access to a computer or technology? Use a whiteboard or piece of paper to play Hangman instead.

- Wheel of Fortune Power Point Template: youthdownloads.com/games/wheel-fortune-powerpoint-game
- Online Wheel: wheeldecide.com/wheels/games/wheel-fortune-spinner

Trivia/Knowledge Bowl: Teach and test knowledge with a trivia competition.

- Kahoot: Free online learning game maker getkahoot.com
- Oregon Financial Aid Kahoot: play.kahoot.it/#/?quizId=f0a6577e-6fb5-4c0e-886f-eab805ddebb5

Family Feud: Participants work together and individually.

- College Visits Toolkit - On The Bus Games: bit.ly/1O28Jye
- Family Feud Power Point Template: youthdownloads.com/games/family-feud-powerpoint

IDEAS FOR PRIZES

- **Food:** Candy or snack item
- **Special privileges:** Choose music to play during breaks, extra recess or lunch privileges
- **School supplies and swag:** Pencils, pens, stickers
- **Money Template** 📄: Use at a school or classroom store



TYPES OF GAMES & ACTIVITIES

GROUP COMPETITION

BOARD & CARD GAMES

Taboo: Reinforce college vocabulary.

- College Visits Toolkit - On The Bus Games: bit.ly/1O28Jye

Poker: A fun way to use trivia questions.

- College Visits Toolkit - On The Bus Games: bit.ly/1O28Jye

Pictionary: Reinforce college vocabulary with a creative twist; one participant draws a term while the others guess.

PARTY & CARNIVAL GAMES

Charades: An interactive game for large or small groups. Consider having two people work together to act out a career.

BINGO: Use to reinforce college terms or get to know Oregon colleges.

- Career and College Day Toolkit - Carnival: bit.ly/22vNs2d

Swat!: A fast-paced game to introduce or reinforce college vocabulary.

- Financial Aid Swat!: bit.ly/2AhACh4

Hot Potato: Useful as a getting to know you game or to reinforce college knowledge.

- College Visits Toolkit - On The Bus Games: bit.ly/1O28Jye

20 Questions: Low-tech and easy to adapt to just about any topic.

- College Visits Toolkit - On The Bus Games: bit.ly/1O28Jye

Where Am I? Good for getting to know colleges.

- College Visits Toolkit - On The Bus Games: bit.ly/1O28Jye

► MORE GAME IDEAS & INSTRUCTIONS

Career & College Day Toolkit: Host a college & career carnival with specific game instructions.

- oregongearup.org/resource/career-and-college-day-toolkit

College Knowledge Games & Activities: Ideas and instructions from GEAR UP Washington.

- gearup.wa.gov/sites/default/files/resources/gear_up_games_and_activities.pdf

TALENT SHOW

Commercial/PSA: Participants work in small groups to perform a commercial or public service announcement (e.g. info about a college or behavior, such as filling out the FAFSA). Invite guest judges to award prizes.



TYPES OF GAMES & ACTIVITIES

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES

Games and activities that can be done individually to learn or reinforce topics as well as provide time for self-reflection.

WORD GAMES

Crossword: Reinforce college vocabulary.

- Crossword Maker: crosswordlabs.com

Word Search: Introduce and reinforce college vocabulary.

- Word Search Maker: busyteacher.org/wordpuzzle

Word Scramble: Introduce and reinforce college vocabulary. Simply mix up the letters of common terms and have participants unscramble them.

CREATIVE SELF-REFLECTION

Display the results in classrooms or in hallways to build a college-going culture throughout your school.

Ideal College: Participants learn about the importance of college fit and consider their ideal college, drawing the results.

- College-Going Culture Toolkit — DIY Pennant: bit.ly/1TORfYm

Why College?: Participants reflect on the benefits and challenges of attending college.

- College Fit Toolkit — Why College? Box Activity: bit.ly/25xbQT1

Fold Your Future: Participants fold origami graduation caps, then write their future goals for after high school on the top.

- Paper Graduation Cap Instructions: crafts-for-all-seasons.com/paper-graduation-cap.html

► COLLEGE PREP COMPUTER GAMES

Mission: Admission: An online game designed to give students information about preparing and paying for college.

- getschooled.com/dashboard/game/2476-play-mission-admission

Zombie College: An online game designed to help teens understand the key steps on the path to college.

- getschooled.com/dashboard/game/2-zombie-college

Game Innovation Lab: Download *FutureBound* (for middle school students) and *Graduate Strike Force* (for high school students).

- gameinnovationlab.com

ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE

1. Game/Activity Name & Type

2. Audience & Size

Students, parents or educators? What grade level? Is there a minimum or maximum number of participants?

3. Key Concept or Topic

What do you want participants to learn?

4. Goal (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Build relationships | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-reflection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work as a team | <input type="checkbox"/> Work individually |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introduce topic | <input type="checkbox"/> Reinforce topic |

5. Duration

How long will it take including instructions and reflection?

6. Materials Needed

7. Introduction & Instructions

Include the topic, goal and outline the rules or instructions.

8. Debrief & Reflection

Reiterate the purpose of the activity and write a few questions to ask participants to reflect on in conversation or another way.



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