

# College Choice Guidance

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## January Weeks Three and Four

### **\*Freshmen (9<sup>th</sup> Grade)—How to Get Around the College Websites-Academic Information**

In my last lesson, we took a deep dive into making sure your high school courses are planned with a goal of getting into the colleges you are interested in. We looked at where to find admissions requirements and how the colleges evaluate applicants. Fortunately you have an opportunity to evaluate the colleges also.

We also discussed aspects of your summer plan and how to strengthen your personal story.

We'll take it a bit easier today and continue getting you setup for your summer plans and strengthening the story you'll tell in your activities resume and your college application essays. Sorry, I didn't mean to mention essays, but you'll be grateful for the work you do now when it's time to fill out your college application. You'll be head-and-shoulders above the rest of the crowd, ready to take on the challenge with great content and a strong story to tell.

### **Finding Academic Info on College Websites**

Hey, you're a freshman. Maybe you have an idea of what you want to study in college. Maybe you don't. If you don't, don't worry too much about that. Just stay on a course of taking the hardest classes you can in high school, and focus on core classes of English, History, Science, Math, and probably a foreign language.

Still, you're going to need to know how to get around college websites to find information as you do your college research. Today I'll walk you through how to find information about the academic programs that colleges offer. This is the kinds of classes, information about the people teaching the classes, and what kinds of classes you would take to get a degree.

I find it's easier sometimes to see someone do something than to follow lots of words. So take a look at this video that shows how to get around the college websites to find information on their academic programs. This will help you

decide if you like what you see in the area of study you are interested in.

<http://youtu.be/UHanVOFdHg0>

*\*SchoolhouseTeachers.com note: Parents should closely monitor children's use of YouTube and Wikipedia if you navigate away from the videos and articles cited in these lessons. We also recommend viewing the videos on a full screen setting in order to minimize your students' exposure to potentially offensive ads.*

## **Building Your Activities Resume**

The rest of your school year will fly by and you'll be faced with an opportunity to build your activities resume over the summer. In the last guidance lesson, I talked generally about what to do and how to make those plans. Now is the time for you to make some of these things happen.

Sit down with your parents and discuss how you want to approach building your activities resume. Ask yourself some of these questions:

1. *What are the two or three most valuable ways I spend my time?*
2. *Why do I think these are valuable ways of spending my time?*
3. *If I were to continue to spend my time this way, what experiences do I think I'm missing?*
4. *Why do I think I'm missing these experiences?*
5. *Who do I or my parents know that can help me add these experiences?*

Seriously. Ask your parents if they have 10 minutes to discuss this with you. You don't have to spend a lot of time on this. I assure you that the time you do spend will be quality time because it's something you care about. Then follow up with the people you identify and ask them how you can help them and how they can help you fulfill some of the experiences you're looking for.

I know that talking through topics like this with your parents can sometimes be awkward. I get that. Getting their help will give you more opportunities to get the experiences you really want. They know more people than you, and they've had to think about these questions in their own lives.

If you have access to a guidance counselor, they may be a good sounding board. But guidance counselors are not experts in your passions and interests. They can point you in some directions, but don't make them your only stop.