



GRADE: 12 LESSON: 3

THEME: IMPROVING ACADEMICALLY

LESSON GOALS:

- Help students take stock of what they've accomplished and create their **Academic Goal**.
- Introduce postsecondary milestones for this year and next.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- How am I doing?
- How can I do better?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- **Academic Goal Worksheet** (*next page of this lesson plan – one copy for each student*)
- **Postsecondary Milestones** (*next two pages – share with parents*)
- **Postsecondary Assessments** (*final three pages – share with parents*)
- **Information about online student grades or records programs** (*from your lead advisor*)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

- 1. Discuss how classes are going.** Your students are now upperclassmen and will soon be preparing for life after high school in earnest. How are they doing? Are they keeping up with their classes and with homework? How many are taking advanced or “gatekeeper” classes? Make sure students remember how to check their grades. Make a note of students who seem to be struggling, as you may wish to refer them for more help. (*5-10 minutes*)
- 2. Review postsecondary milestones.** You have discussed the postsecondary process many times and reviewed the assessment exams students will need to take. Distribute the **Postsecondary Milestones** and **Postsecondary Assessments** handouts and review the major milestones that will occur this year and next. Are students prepared? Are they making progress? (*5-10 minutes*)
- 3. Have students update Academic Goals.** Distribute the **Academic Goal Worksheet**. Ask each student to complete the goal statement. *Please collect these.* (*5-10 minutes*)

STUDENT PRODUCTS:

- **Academic Goal.** Each student should develop at least one goal. Please save for Lesson 5.

ACADEMIC GOAL WORKSHEET – Gr 12



Name: _____ Grade: _____ Advisor: _____

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE THIS YEAR?

You're now an upperclassman. What do you want to achieve this year?

This will be an important year for you: you'll decide what to do after high school and apply to get there. Whether you're going to a four-year college, a community college, an apprenticeship, the military, or into the workforce, you'll likely have to prove your skills.

As you prepare for the future, think of your academic goals for this year. Do you want to:

- . • Get a certain GPA (say, 3.0)?
- . • Pass all your classes?
- . • Do all your homework?
- . • Take postsecondary assessment exams (such as the SAT or the ASSET)?
- . • Get into advanced or AP classes next year?
- . • Learn another language?

What do you want to do? Please write at least one goal below for your academic achievements this year.

Remember that your goal should be “*SMART*,” that is:

- . • **Specific** rather than general (*Such as: “I want to get a 3.0 GPA this year”*).
- . • **Measurable** by what you will do during the year (*by grades or test scores, for instance*).
- . • **Achievable** or realistic for high school.
- . • **Rewarding** so that you will feel you've accomplished something.
- . • **Time-oriented** and able to be finished by the end of the school year.

ACADEMIC GOAL:

The postsecondary admissions process has already started. Whether you hope to attend a four-year university or a community or technical college, join the military, begin an apprenticeship, or go into the workforce, you will follow many of the same steps.

11th GRADE: RESEARCH YOUR OPTIONS

Begin taking required assessment exams

- If you are planning on attending a four-year college, take the **PSAT** in fall of junior year.
- If you are planning on attending a four-year college, Begin studying for the ACT you will take in April.
- If you are planning on joining the military after graduation, take the **ASVAB** in spring of junior year for practice.

Research colleges and programs

Use your junior year to research postsecondary programs. Try to visit several colleges or training sites if you can. Where would you like to attend? Here are some issues to consider:

- **Type of program.** Do you need a two-year or four-year degree for your career goals? Do you want to pursue an apprenticeship? You might want to research community colleges, apprenticeships, and four-year universities to learn what different types of programs can offer.
- **Area of study.** What do you want to study? Does the program offer a “major” in that subject area? How good is its reputation? What other credentials – such as an apprenticeship or research opportunities – will you need?
- **Location.** Do you want to be close to home or far away? Do you want to live in a big city, small town, or rural area?
- **Job opportunities.** What can you learn about your chances to work part-time – or find an internship or apprenticeship – while you’re in school? How will you find a job after you graduate?
- **Your chances.** Based on your grades and test scores, what are your chances of being admitted?
- **Cost.** Don’t let cost discourage you. But do consider what tuition, books, room and board, and other expenses will total each year. Research financial aid and scholarship opportunities. Use the **FAFSA 4caster** to predict the financial aid you could receive: www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov.

POSTSECONDARY MILESTONES, CONTINUED

12th GRADE: TAKE ACTION

FALL: Take required assessment exams

You will want to take the **ACT** or the **SAT**. Take **AP** tests next spring.

FALL: Apply to postsecondary programs

Guidance counselors recommend applying to six to eight postsecondary programs. You might want to consider a mix of community and four-year colleges, depending on your educational needs and goals. For four-year colleges, you’ll need to decide whether to apply for “Early Admission” (you’ll be notified by mid-December but may be locked in to a choice) or “Regular Admission” (you’ll be notified by next April). For each application, you’ll need:

- **Application Fee.** These fees vary. They may be waived if you need help.
- **Recommendations.** You’ll probably need several recommendations (usually three) from teachers or other adults who know you.
- **Essays.** You’ll have to write one or two essays on subjects chosen by the college to introduce yourself.

- **Information about extracurricular activities.** Colleges will want to know what you've done outside of school.
- **Transcripts and test scores.** Your transcripts will be sent by your high school. Assessment exam scores will be sent by the administrator of the exam (generally, College Board or ACT organization, depending on the exam). You'll have to request that these be sent to each college.
- **FAFSA.** If you want financial aid, your family will need to complete a FAFSA form and request that it be sent to each college.

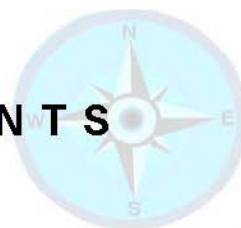
SPRING: Make your decision!

If you go through the normal application process, you should know by April whether you've been admitted or not. You can then decide which college to attend. Please note that community and technical colleges often have shorter application processes.

SPRING: Finish the school year in style!

Some students think that once they've been admitted to college they can stop working. But that's not true. If your grades drop suddenly or you don't complete all the work needed to graduate (particularly your culminating project) you could jeopardize your status at college. Make sure you finish the year with strong grades and a good attitude.

P O S T S E C O N D A R Y A S S E S S M E N T S



No matter what you want to do with your future, you're going to have to take at least one assessment test (and likely many more than one!) during the next several years. Here's a list of the major assessment exams you'll be taking between now and graduation.

POSTSECONDARY ASSESSMENTS

SAT Reasoning Test

- The SAT is the most widely used admissions test for colleges and universities. It is a 3-hour, 45minute exam that measures the critical thinking, mathematical reasoning, and writing skills students need for college.
- Many students take the SAT twice: in junior year to practice, and then in the fall of senior year.
- The SAT is offered several times each year; check with your school counselor for times.
- For more information: www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/about.html.

SAT Subject Tests

- SAT Subject Tests are offered in many different subjects, including English, History, Mathematics, Science (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics), and Languages (Chinese, French, German, Spanish, Hebrew, Italian, Latin, Korean, Japanese).
- Colleges use the Subject Tests for admission or for placement after you're admitted.
- Most students take the Subject Tests late in junior year or early in senior year.
- For more information: www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/about/SATII.html.

ACT

- The ACT assesses students' knowledge in English, mathematics, reading, and science. The ACT also offers an optional Writing Test.
- Students may take the ACT as an alternative to the SAT – or may take both tests.

- Students usually take the ACT late in junior year or early in senior year.
- For more information: www.actstudent.org/index.html.

Advanced Placement Exams (AP)

- Students who have taken Advanced Placement (AP) classes in high school can take the AP class in that subject. Scoring well can result in college placement and credit.
- The College Board offers 37 different AP tests in 22 subject areas.
- Students usually take the AP test at the end of the year in which they've taken an AP course; interested students should tell their AP teacher by March of that year.
- For more information: www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html.

TO BEGIN AN APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeship Program Standards

- Many apprenticeships will require that you meet certain basic academic standards.
- Some apprenticeships have additional standards that you must meet to secure an apprenticeship.

TO JOIN THE MILITARY

Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)

- The ASVAB was developed by the Department of Defense to assess new recruits' abilities and help place them in positions. It is the most widely used assessment test in the world.
- The ASVAB includes eight test areas: General Science, Arithmetic Reasoning, Word Knowledge, Paragraph Comprehension, Mathematics Knowledge, Electronics Information, Auto and Shop Information, and Mechanical Comprehension.
- Students typically take the ASVAB in their junior or senior year.
- For more information: www.asvabprogram.com.