



# College Month Lesson 2: Admissions Criteria

## Lesson Description

The purpose of this lesson is to give your student an idea of what it takes to be admitted to college.

## Introduction Questions

- ☺ Have you thought about how likely it is you would be admitted to college?
- ☺ What scares you the most about applying to colleges?



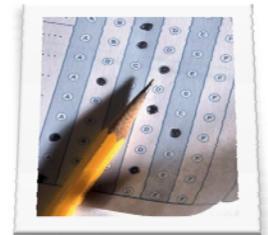
## Activities



1. Read together *"What Do Colleges Look for in an Applicant?"*
2. After reading the article, talk about the questions below with your student.
3. If you went to college, talk about your own experiences of the admissions process.

## Questions

- ☺ Which of the factors listed are based on grades/performance on tests?
- ☺ Answer: Grades and Standardized Test Scores
- ☺ Which are not based on grades/performance on tests?
- ☺ Answer: Extracurricular Activities, Application Essay, Letters of Recommendation
- ☺ Why is this important? (mention that even though they are bad test takers, there are other components to college admissions)



# What Do Colleges Look for in an Applicant?



When deciding which applicants to admit to their college, admissions officers look at many different factors. Read on to see if you are the kind of applicant they want.

## **Grades**

Grades are very important to colleges. Many colleges have a minimum GPA requirement to apply. Therefore, it is crucial that you keep your grades up throughout your entire high school career.

What are 3 things I can do to earn high grades?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## **Standardized Test Scores**

Colleges do take your admissions test scores into consideration. If you are aiming for a scholarship, your test scores need to be at or above the high end range for the college in which you are applying. If your test scores are near the median range, then your class schedule and grades will be the main deciding factors for admission. If your test scores are low, an admissions counselor may go to bat for you if your grades and schedule are outstanding.

Where might I find more information about what is on the SAT/ACT?

## **Extracurricular Activities**

Being involved in extracurricular activities shows admissions officers that you are a well-rounded student and that you are good with time management skills. Colleges want students who are going to be involved with activities on their campus. Keep in mind, however, that you should not join a bunch of activities just to fill up your high school resume. Admissions officers are looking for quality over quantity. Pick a few activities that really interest you and become fully involved in them. It looks better on your high school resume when you can say you organized a fundraiser for the science club, rather than just being a member of the club.

What kind of opportunities do I have for leadership at my school? Think of 3 things you do or would like to do.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Application Essay**

The college application essay allows you to show your uniqueness to admissions officers. Counselors look for application essays that are honest and provide supplemental information. Do not restate the information found on your transcript and application. Instead, write about your desires, your goals, your struggles, etc.

What is a topic I could write about for my application essay? (an important event, where I grew as a person, or learned something new). Briefly describe topic here:

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**Letters of Recommendation**

Admissions officers rely on letters of recommendation to let them know how others view you. Be sure to pick your recommenders wisely. If your recommender doesn't know you that well, it will show through his letter.

Keep in mind that colleges really want well-rounded students, so having a good mixture of the above-mentioned factors will help you in the admissions process. Good luck!

Who should I ask for recommendations? (include people I know currently, or people I might get to know)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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Which of the factors above are based on grades/performance on tests?

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Which are not based on grades/performance on tests?

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