

Finding Meaningful Experiences and Activities (7.2)

Goal: Students will track their activities and experiences thus far in order to identify high school activities and college programs/majors that align with their interests.

Lesson Time Options

This lesson requires one 45-60 minute class period.

Student Materials

- Chromebook/Laptop
- Internet Access
- Worksheet

In This Packet

This packet includes everything you need to complete the lesson.

- Educator Guide
- Student Worksheet

Standards

The literacy skills of Common Core can be broken down into sections – reading, writing, and speaking and listening (language skills are outside of the focus of CaliforniaColleges.edu). In the lesson, students will practice the following skills:

Common Core Skill	Practiced in this Lesson
Reading for Information	CCR-Reading 1, 4; Reading Information- 1, 4
Narrative Writing	CCR-Writing 3; Writing 3

21st Century Skills

Students in today's classrooms are learning not only academic skills and content, but how to be productive members of global communities. There are work habits, experiences, and skills that students need to develop to be ready for higher education and careers.

21 st Century Skill	Practiced in this Lesson
Critical Thinking	X
Digital Skills	X
Extrapolating Information	X
Making Connections	X

Finding Meaningful Experiences and Activities: Educator Guide

Goal: Students will track their activities and experiences thus far in order to identify high school activities and college programs/majors that align with their interests.

Recommended Preparation

- Review the **Student Worksheet**. The worksheet provides clear instructions for students to complete the lesson. Determine how you will use the worksheet.

Getting Started

- You may print the **Student Worksheet** for students or embed the link in the materials you share with students.

Guiding Question

- What activities make you who you are? What do you do that sets you apart? What lessons do you learn from these personal experiences?

Bell Work (5 minutes)

- Students will answer the bell work question: “What activities do you participate in outside of school? How did you choose them? What other activities would you be interested in during middle and high school?”
- Allow 2-3 timed minutes past the bell.
- Discuss student responses as a class.

Introduction (10 minutes)

- Students will sign in to **CaliforniaColleges.edu** and add their current activities to **My Experiences**.

Activity (25 minutes)

1. Students read a paragraph on extracurricular activities and college admissions then discuss it with an elbow partner.
2. Students reflect on how activities highlight their best qualities and consider other experiences they wish to take part in – travel, internships, volunteer positions, etc. Encourage them to think about what would be the most impactful to them and their community.
3. Students use the **Major Search Tool** to make the connection between their interests and college.

Reflection (5 minutes)

- Direct students to **My Journal** to respond to the prompt indicated in the student worksheet (*prompt #5: “What can someone learn about you from your activities and experiences? How do your extra-curricular activities prepare you for school and for life?”*). You may also assign an alternative prompt.
- Optional: direct students to upload their completed worksheet to **My Documents**, found under **My Plan**.

Finding Meaningful Experiences and Activities: Student Worksheet

Goal: You will track your activities and experiences thus far in order to identify high school activities and college programs/majors that align with your interests.

Part I: Introduction – Bell Work

What activities do you participate in outside of school? How did you choose them? What other activities would you be interested in during middle and high school?

Now,

- Sign in to **CaliforniaColleges.edu**.
- Hover over **My Plan** at the top of the page and then select **My Experiences**.
- Add the activities that you mentioned above and any others that come to mind. You will enter all the fields you see below.
 - **Type of Experience:** Choose the category that most closely aligns with your experience.
 - **Organization Name:** Name of school (and club, if applicable), organization, company, etc. where you completed your experience. For example, if you write for your school newspaper, the organization name might be Wilson High School Journalism Club.
 - **Position/Title:** Indicate your role (i.e. member, captain, volunteer, etc.).
 - **Leadership Role:** Check if you hold a leadership position.
 - **From & To:** Indicate the time period you participated in each experience.
 - **Hours per Day & Number of Days:** Indicate the approximate number of hours per day you participated in an experience and approximately how many days you committed to the experience.
 - **Description of Activity:** Briefly describe what you did.
 - **Name of Supervisor/Teacher/Advisor/Leader:** Indicate the name of the person who supervised you during your experience.
 - **Supervisor Email:** Indicate the email of the person who supervised you during your experience.

Add Experience



Type of Experience	Organization & Position/Title	Date Range	Total Number of Hours (Number of Hours per Day * Number of Days)	Description of Activity	Supervisor/Teacher/Advisor/Leader Name & Email	Edit/ Delete
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Part II: Activity

1. Read this piece:

Some students feel so much pressure to get into the "right" college that they want to make sure they do everything "right" - even do the "right" extracurricular activities. Fortunately, the only right answer is to do what's right for you - not what you think is right for us.

Choose your activities because they delight, intrigue and challenge you, not because you think they'll look impressive on your application. Go out of your way to find projects, activities and experiences that stimulate your creativity and leadership, that connect you with peers and adults who bring out your best, that please you so much you don't mind the work involved. Some students find room for many activities; others prefer to concentrate on just a few. Either way, the test for any extracurricular should be whether it makes you happy - whether it feels right for you.

By the same token, some applicants struggle to turn themselves into clones of the "ideal" MIT student - you know, the one who gets triple 800s on the SAT. Fortunately, cloning is still for sheep. What we really want to see on your application is you being you - pursuing the things you love, growing, changing, taking risks, learning from your mistakes, all in your own distinctive way. College is not a costume party; you're not supposed to come dressed as someone else. Instead, college is an intense, irreplaceable four-year opportunity to become more yourself than you've ever been. What you need to show us is that you're ready to try.

This excerpt is from the admissions page of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology at <http://mitadmissions.org/apply/prepare/highschool>.

2. With a partner, discuss which activities make you stand out. How do these activities make you stand out? Look back at your bell work. What activities do you hope to start or continue through high school? Add them to the chart below. How will you use those activities to highlight your best qualities?

Activity	How will this activity highlight your best qualities?

3. Can you imagine having a career that feels just like doing one of your favorite activities? Begin exploring this by finding college programs and majors that match your interests (programs and majors are the topics you study in college to prepare you for a career). Hover on **College** at the top of the page and click on **Major Search Tool**.
4. Get to know the **Major Search Tool** by searching for programs and majors that simply sound interesting to you. When you read a description that sounds like it might fit your interests, ♥ (favorite) it, and it will save to **My College Plan**.

Part IV: Reflect

- Go to **My Plan** and then **My Journal**. In the **College Journal** section, find **prompt #5**:
“What can someone learn about you from your activities and experiences? How do your extra-curricular activities prepare you for school and for life?”
- Respond to the above prompt. Follow your teacher’s instructions if they assign a different prompt.