

Name:	Date:
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INTRO

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Pretend I assign you a project to fold 1000 origami animals, due one week from today, and I don't give you any materials. You get to choose any 5 members of the class to be on your team.



1. What qualities would you look for as you select your group members?



LEARN IT

EDPUZZLE: What Do Colleges Look For?

In the INTRO you determined what characteristics made a classmate best suited to work in your origami group. College admissions counselors do the same thing -- figure out what matters most when it comes to admitting new students and then assessing which applicants are strongest.

1. Which two questions are colleges trying to answer by looking at your transcript?
 - a. Did you take challenging courses?
 - b. Were you involved in clubs and/or sports?
 - c. Did you earn good grades?
 - d. Were you class president or otherwise a leader?

2. What is the difference between a college essay and a recommendation letter?
 - a. The essay is written by the student, and the letter is written by an adult
 - b. The essay is written by an adult, and the letter is written by the student
 - c. The essay describes everything on your transcript, and the letter is about your personality.

3. How will being involved in extracurricular activities also help your college essay and/or recommendation letters?
 - a. If you fill your college application with enough extracurriculars, you won't have to write the essay
 - b. Extracurricular activities are after school clubs where you can write the essays and letters you need
 - c. You'll have interesting experiences and make connections with adults who can write recommendations

ARTICLE: What's a High School Transcript?

Many of the items from the College Admissions video come into play the second you enter high school, so it is important to go in with a plan. The first step is understanding terms such as *transcript* and *GPA*.

What's a High School Transcript?

Your high school transcript is a complete record of your academic achievements in high school. It starts with the first grading period of your first year of high school and is updated each term until you graduate.

The format varies from school to school, but most transcripts include:

- Your name, address, and date of birth
- The name of your school
- The courses you've taken and when you took them
- Your grades for each grading period
- The weight of each grade (grades in higher-level courses like AP are often worth more than the same grade in a standard course)
- The number of credits you earned for each course
- Your GPA calculated with all of the courses you've taken so far
- Your scores on AP Exams, the SAT, or other standardized tests
- Any academic honors you've received

High school transcripts are necessary for almost every college application. Some scholarships, internships, and jobs may also ask for a copy of your high school transcript.

[Source](#)

DEFINITION: GPA

Your **GPA** is the average of all the grades you've gotten in school. If you have a *GPA* of 4.0, it means you've earned all As in your classes.

GPA is an abbreviation for "grade point average," which is typically calculated by adding all the numbered grades you've received and dividing them by the number of credits you've taken. In high school, it's simply a matter of tallying your grades and dividing that total by the number of classes. GPA is usually given on a scale from 0 (an F) to 4.0 (an A), though sometimes it goes higher than that, accounting for a grade of A+.

[Source](#)

1. How is a *transcript* different from a *report card*?

2. Kelvin's in grade 9 and figures he can wait until the start of 11th grade to worry about his GPA. Why is that a bad idea?

3. Why do you think colleges rely so much on student transcripts when deciding who to admit?

VIDEO: What's the Difference Between Honors, AP, and IB Classes?

By taking challenging coursework during high school, you'll prove to admissions officers that you are willing to work hard on your studies.

1. Jasmine struggles in some of her middle school classes, even though she tries really hard. She needs to choose courses for 9th grade. What do you think is her best option:
 - **Option A:** Register for all Honors/AP courses, even if she risks a low GPA
 - **Option B:** Register for mostly regular courses and 1-2 high level courses, and earn a middle-level GPA
 - **Option C:** Register for all regular courses, and earn a high GPA
2. Explain your answer.

3. Do you know which, if any, of these course types your high school offers?



DO IT

Planning for High School Success

High school is a time for learning a lot and having new experiences. Some of the same factors that colleges look for will also be important for getting your first job or creating other opportunities. It's never too early to plan for the future! Complete the 4-Square to get started.

Taking Tough Courses ---

Does your HS offer:

- Honors classes? Y N not sure
 → AP classes? Y N not sure
 → IB classes? Y N not sure

Will you be ready to take advanced classes by the time you're in 9th grade?

- I'm ready now!
- I'll need to study hard, but I can do it!
- In my best subjects, YES, but in others, NO.
- I think advanced classes will be too tough for me.
- Not sure -- need to ask my guidance counselor



--- Getting High Grades

On a scale of 1 to 4, how satisfied are you with your middle school grades?

1 2 3 4
 (disappointed) (so proud!)

What strategies do you use when a class feels too hard? Or you're not doing well?

Extracurriculars ---

List 5 things activities, hobbies, sports, teams, clubs, or community organizations you are passionate about.

Extracurricular	I do this now	I want to do this in high school

--- Letters of Recommendation

In your own opinion, what are your best personality traits or characteristics?



List a few adults (not in your family) who know you well and have seen you at your best:

1. How might the 4-Square you just created help you as you transition to high school?



EXIT TICKET

1. Which document outlines your courses and grades throughout all of high school?

- a. Report card
- b. Transcript
- c. Letter of recommendation

2. Why do colleges want to see that you took challenging courses in high school?

3. What are two reasons it is important to be involved with organizations or hobbies outside of just school work?