



College Activity: My College Mascot

Grade Range: 4th-8th

Time: 60-90 min

Synopsis: Students will learn about what they can do now to prepare for college and they will gain an understanding of the vast number of colleges and programs available to them.

**Mentors are encouraged to wear something with a college on it that has significance to them.*

Prep Work:

1. Create a list of colleges, their locations, and the program(s) for which they are most noted. See attached list as an example. It is encouraged to include both local and out of states colleges, as well as a wide variety of degrees/programs. *Instructor note: possible source for developing list is U.S. News & World Report rankings.*
 - a. *Optional – ask students ahead of time what careers are they interested in and pick colleges that specialize that field of study.*
2. Develop college preparatory checklist. See attached checklist as an example.
3. Copy bookmark template (see attached) onto white card stock (for rigidity) and cut out bookmarks. *Instructor note: it is recommended to bring extra bookmarks.*
4. Print small (no larger than 2" x 3" to fit on bookmark) colored mascot pictures of colleges on list.
5. Print large (recommend no larger than 8" x 8") colored mascot pictures of colleges on list.
6. Decorate poster board or easel paper and write "My College Mascot" at the top. Leave room to paste large mascot pictures onto poster.

Materials:

1. White card stock
2. Poster board or easel paper
3. Small mascot pictures (recommend 10-15 of each college based on a class size of 30)
4. Large mascot pictures (1 per college)
5. Markers, colored pencils, and/or crayons
6. Glue sticks
7. Scissors
8. Laminating machine
9. Large map of the United states. Can project the map onto the wall if the classroom is equipped with a projector.
10. Easel or magnets to display poster board.

Instructions:

1. **Begin with icebreaker question.**
 - a. Ask the students to guess how many colleges there are in the United States.
 - b. Answer – 4,627* (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). *during the 2014-2015 academic year, 4,627 accredited institutions offered degrees at the associate's degree level or above. These included 1,621 public institutions, 1,672 private nonprofit institutions, and 1,334 private for-profit institutions. Of the 4,627 institutions, 3,011 were 4-year institutions that awarded degrees at the bachelor's or higher level, and 1,616 were 2-year institutions that offered associate's degrees as their highest award.
Instructor note: discuss statistics in more detail at your discretion based on the age of your class.
2. **Discuss college preparatory checklist.** *Instructor note: It is recommended the discussion be led by one team member, with input from other members*
 - a. discuss what it will take now to be prepared for college when graduating high school (hard work, good grades, get involved in extracurricular activities, practice study habits, read, get a job, etc.)
3. **Create collage.** *Instructor note: it is recommended various team members participate in discussion*
 - a. Show students a picture of a mascot and ask them if they know what college it represents. *Instructor note: allow a couple of students to guess. If they do not guess correctly, tell them which college it is.*
 - b. Next, ask the students if they know in which state the college is located. Once guessed, ask them to show you the correct state on the map. *Instructor note: allow a couple of students to guess. If they do not guess correctly, tell them where/show them the state on the map.*
 - c. Then (most importantly), discuss what areas of study they are most known for. *Instructor note: write the location and programs offered on the back of the mascot so the mentor holding the mascot picture will have the answers available.*
 - d. Finally, glue the mascot onto the poster board to create a collage. *Instructor note: it is recommended to have a second team member glue the mascots on the board as not to slow down the conversation.*
 - e. Once the collage is completed, they can display it in their classroom/on their classroom door.
4. **Craft college themed bookmarks.** *Instructor note: during the steps below, please talk to the students about college. Recommended discussion topics include: why they chose that school, what they want to be when they grow up, and thus what they will need to study in college to achieve such a career, if they have any family members or friends who went, go to, or work at a college, what they will need to take with them to college.*
 - a. Have the teacher separate the students into small groups. *Instructor note: have at least one mentor work with each group.*
 - b. Allow the students to design (color, etc.) the front and back of their bookmarks.

- c. The students will then select one of the school mascots (small version) and paste it at the top of the bookmark.
- d. Next, help them write the name and location (state only) of the school on the bookmark in the designated areas.
- e. Then, have the students take their completed bookmark up to the designated lamination area. *Instructor note: prior to beginning this activity, please instruct the students that they are not to touch the lamination machine or attempt to laminate the bookmark themselves because the lamination machine is hot and can burn them. Designate one team member to operate the lamination machine.*
- f. After lamination, have the students trim the excess plastic off the bookmark. *Instructor note: the bookmarks will have to be laminated in groups of 3 due to the way the machine laminates. Have the team member operating the machine cut separate the bookmarks with scissors.*

References

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2015* (NCES 2016-014), Chapter 3.