

Creating My Story: Lesson Four - Researching Colleges

Guiding Question:

How will college help me write my story? What support do I need from others?

Summary of lesson

In this lesson, students will be introduced to information on college websites. They will work in small groups to do internet research on local colleges and present their findings to the class.

Skills Emphasized

- Internet research
- Oral presentation skills
- Writing business letters

Lesson goals

Students will understand that college is a support people use to be successful in life.

Materials needed

- Computers with Internet access
- Markers or colored pencils
- Poster or construction paper

Lesson Design

Begin by asking the class to think ahead to their future. Just like the panel members who shared their stories, they have decided to go to college and are now arriving as freshmen for their first day. What will they find on their college campus?

Now ask pairs of students to explore the website, www.knowhow2go.org. Have them take the virtual tour of a college campus to see if their vision of what's included on a typical college campus matches the website. Students can also explore the middle school section of the website for tips on how to prepare for college.

Next, give student pairs a college resource to research at a local college website. Select 2-3 colleges, tribal and non-tribal, from which students will choose. You could assign topics or let students draw one at random. Give them 10-15 minutes to explore the website for information on their assigned resource. Afterwards, direct students to tables with paper, pens, colored pencils, etc. to make mini-posters about their resource that will advertise:

- What support the resource provides
- Where the resource is located
- How they might use the resource as a student
- Two more important pieces of information that they learned during their research

Ask each pair to present their poster and share what they have found with the rest of the class.

Possible resources:

- Academic advisors
- Counseling services
- Writing center
- Tutoring center
- Math lab
- Computer lab
- Financial Aid Services
- Career Services
- Disabled Student Services
- Clubs
- Student Health Services
- Recreation programs
- Multicultural Centers
- Native American Student Union or club

Finally, have students write a reflection to add to their portfolio by answering the guiding questions, “How will college help me write my story? What support do I need from others?” and add a symbol to their graphic to represent what they learned.

Follow-up

This lesson serves as an introduction to a college field trip described in the next lesson, *A Day in the Life of a College Student*. Share plans for the field trip with the class and make the connection between this lesson and the trip.

To personalize the resources students researched, invite college faculty from a local college to meet the class and describe how they support college students in their work.

Have students write letters to colleges of their choice asking for information on becoming a student. A sample letter is included below.