**Career Activity Curriculum Topic: FAFSA**

**Career Activity: FAFSA: WHAT, WHY, WHEN, AND HOW?**

**Activity Summary:** This lesson will help students become more familiar with the basics of the FAFSA and how to complete the FAFSA.

**Learning Plan Activity:** 11th Grade: What is FAFSA?; 12th grade: Completing the FAFSA

**Estimated Time: 25-45 minutes (2 Parts- 11th grade and 12th grade)**

**Learning Outcomes**:  Students will become knowledgeable of when, how, and why the FAFSA should be filled out and what may be available to them for aid for college or trade school.

**Materials Needed**:  PowerPoint, Handout, Pen, (Computer for 12th grade if starting FAFSA)

Use first 2 pages of lesson plan for 11th grade and all pages with handout for 12th grade.

**Academic Vocabulary**

* **FAFSA:** (Free Application For Student Aid): A federal government form that a student may fill out starting every October to apply for financial aid (for the following year). A student could be offered grants, loans, or work study based off of the student’s parent/guardian and student income.
* **Grant Aid (free aid):** Money offered to a student from the Government based on your FAFSA that will not have to be paid back.
* **Student Loan (aid you pay back):** Money granted by the Government that accrues interest that has to be paid back
* **Work Study (aid you earn):** Money available for specific jobs on a college campus that could be offered to a student pending the process of the student’s FAFSA.
* **SAR (Student Aid Report):** A report a student has available online after the student’s FAFSA has been processed.
* **EFC (Estimated Family Contribution):** A monetary figure schools use to determine how much aid a student is eligible for.

***Introduction****:* [*Use PowerPoint] Have students complete the handout\_What is FAFSA? while you are presenting (OR use as pre/post assessment). Play Video:* [*FAFSA Overview*](https://youtu.be/gUis5lityCQ) *(~2.5 minutes)*

You’ve probably heard your counselor or other adults talk about THE FAFSA®. FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which is the form students complete to apply for federal grants, work-study, and loans to help pay for college and training. It’s also used by states and schools to determine your eligibility for scholarships. This important document will help you determine what your out-of-pocket expenses will be for completing your certificate or degree program.

***Types of Financial Aid:***

* Loans
  + Before you take out a loan, it’s important to understand that a loan is a legal obligation that makes you responsible for repaying the amount you borrow with interest. Even though you don’t have to begin repaying your federal student loans right away, you shouldn’t wait to understand your responsibilities as a borrower.
  + **Direct Subsidized Loans** are loans made to eligible undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need to help cover the costs of higher education at a college or career school. Interest does not start building until after the grace period.
  + **Direct Unsubsidized Loan**s are loans made to eligible undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, but eligibility is not based on financial need. Interest starts building when you borrow the loan.
  + **Federal student loans** and federal parent loans: These loans are funded by the federal government.
  + **Private student loans**: These loans are non-federal loans, made by a lender such as a bank, credit union, state agency, or a school. Private student loans are generally more expensive than federal student loans.
* Grants and Scholarships: Gift aid (Don’t repay)
  + - Grants are provided through FAFSA and are income based
    - Scholarships are not provided through FAFSA, but some may require the FAFSA be completed in order to be eligible
* Federal Work Study: Aid you earn
  + - Part-time job allowing students to earn money to help pay education expenses.
    - On or off campus jobs that work around your class schedule

***Who & When should I fill out the FAFSA:***

Who should fill out the FAFSA?

* No matter how much money you or your parent’s make, every senior should complete the FAFSA because you never know what aid you may qualify for and just because you are awarded it, does not mean you have to accept the aid. A lot of scholarships require you to fill it out in order to be eligible.
* You can complete the FAFSA, but you will need your parent/guardian’s assistance as they will have parts that they need to fill out. (You will each need to sign up for an FSA ID to be able to sign the FAFSA before you submit)
* If you need extra help utilize family FAFSA nights, school counselors, and the financial aid resources at studentaid.gov

When should I fill out the FAFSA?

* FAFSA becomes available every October 1
* As a Senior best to fill out in October (First come, First serve on money)
* Need to fill it out starting every October as a college or trade school student

***How to fill out the FAFSA:*** *(11th grade- end at this slide; 12th grade continue on)*

* *Play Video:* [*How to Fill out the FAFSA*](https://youtu.be/LK0bbu0y5AM) *(~3 minutes)*

WHAT DO I NEED?

* Parent & Students will BOTH need to create a FSA ID and have financial information (Previous year’s tax information and W-2s) ready when completing the FAFSA from their senior year.
  + - If you have a special circumstance, contact your counselor/career staff to get more help! (E.g. Not living with parents, financial difficulties not reflected on taxes such as divorce, loss of job, medical issues, OR if you are not a legalized citizen)

**Learning Activities/Procedures:**

***Completing the FAFSA FORM:*** (Do with 12th grade)

* *Students could start the FAFSA form if they have time following the details steps located here:* [*https://studentaid.gov/articles/steps-to-fafsa-form/*](https://studentaid.gov/articles/steps-to-fafsa-form/) *Or just walk through the steps so they can do it later*

***It’s Submitted, What now?***

*Discuss with students what information the SAR (Student Aid Report) will provide and how the aid they will be award is based on the EFC (estimated family contribution) and the formula “Cost of Attendance (COA) - Expected Family Contribution (EFC) = Financial need” is used to determine the amount of grants, loans, or work study.*

**Questions:**

* What is the FAFSA?
* Should all seniors fill out the FAFSA? Why or Why not?
* What is the difference between loans, grants, scholarships, and work study?
* When do I need to complete the FAFSA?
* What will I need to complete the FAFSA?
* How do I complete the FAFSA?
* What does the FAFSA tell me after it is submitted?

**Adaptations:**

* Could add in the difference between unsubsidized and subsidized loan *(But be careful not to overwhelm students with too much at one time or they may tune out)*.
* Could talk about interest rates, but again may be too much information at one time and better saved for the senior year.
* Could take out what is required to fill out the FAFSA and talk about it in the fall of the senior year.
* The goal is to have juniors become more aware of what the FAFSA is and what it can provide (not to stress them out). Keep this in mind with the student population you are working with at the time. AP students may be able to handle more information at once.

**Evaluation:** Students will have become familiarized with the FAFSA knowing when, where, who, and why they should fill it out. They will have filled out the worksheet answering questions they have gleaned information about while listening and engaging with the presentation. (11th grade Pages 1 & 2; 12th grades Pages 1-3)

**Closing**: Today you have learned about the Free Application for Student Aid and what it can offer you if you take advantage of it in the near future. Just remember every senior should fill out the FAFSA so he/she is aware of options available financially upon leaving high school.

Answers for worksheet:

1. B
2. D
3. A
4. D
5. A, B, C
6. B
7. A
8. A
9. A, C, D
10. A, B, C
11. C, D
12. A
13. A
14. C
15. D