



10th Grade Campus Visit: Milestones That Matter

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0 License](#)

Time Frame 45–50 minutes

Essential Question(s)

- What steps do you need to take, and when should you take them, to reach your postsecondary goals?

Summary

This 10th-grade campus visit activity will complement a student tour of a college campus to learn about postsecondary options. In this learning activity, students will strengthen their postsecondary readiness by sequencing postsecondary-preparation milestones across each year of high school. Students will gain awareness of when and why important tasks should be completed, helping them create a clear roadmap for achieving their postsecondary goals.

Learning Goals

Standards

College and Career Preparation Standards 6–12 (6th -12th)

10.1 (K): Students will investigate and plan for potential postsecondary pathways by identifying key milestones.

10.1.2: Students will create a visual or written timeline showing the major milestones (e.g., admissions deadlines, financial aid applications, enrollment requirements) and time commitments for various postsecondary pathways (e.g., traditional four-year colleges, community colleges, career technical education programs, apprenticeships, military service).

Attachments

- [Activity Slides—Milestones That Matter.pptx](#)
- [Milestone Cards—Milestones That Matter.docx](#)
- [Milestone Markers—Milestones That Matter.docx](#)
- [Postsecondary Prep Checklist—Milestones That Matter.docx](#)
- [Postsecondary Prep Checklist—Milestones That Matter.pdf](#)
- [Timeline Mat—Milestones That Matter.docx](#)

Materials

- Activity Slides (attached)
- Milestone Cards (attached; one set per group; print one-sided)
- Timeline Mat (attached; one per group; print one-sided on 11"x17" paper)
- Milestone Markers signs (attached; one set; print one-sided)
- Postsecondary Prep Checklist handout (attached; one per student; print two-sided)
- Writing utensils

15 minutes

Introduction

Introduce the activity using the attached **Activity Slides**. Display **slide 3**, titled “Housekeeping: Norms,” and review the list of expectations for the visit with students:

- Behave like a guest—represent your school well.
 - Keep cell phones on silent.
 - Leave the campus as clean as it was when you arrived.
- Follow all instructions.
 - Stay with your group.
 - Stay engaged in all activities.
- Ask questions that are on topic.

Share the essential question on **slide 4** and then the learning objectives on **slide 5**.

Have students get into groups of 3–4 or assign groups. Display **slide 6** and introduce the [Card Sort](#) strategy. Give each group a copy of the attached **Timeline Mat** and a set of the attached **Milestone Cards**. Ask students to think about all the things they need to do before graduation to prepare for their postsecondary pathway. Explain to students that during this activity, they are going to map out what they believe to be the most effective plan.

Show **slide 7** and explain to students that printed on each card is an important task that needs to be completed in preparation for postsecondary pathways such as community college, university, career tech, or military. Ask students to sort the cards in the order they think they should complete those tasks by placing the cards in either the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade columns on their Timeline Mat.

As students work, walk around the room to guide discussions and answer clarifying questions.

Facilitator's Note: Guiding the Activity

During this portion of the learning experience, students are using prior knowledge and reasoning to sort their cards. If students ask questions, try to ask more questions than give answers. But if students are unsure of the meaning of any of the tasks on the cards, those are the questions to answer. Do not let students know yet if their work is accurate or not. Consider asking guiding questions like the following:

- In which grade level do you think it would be most helpful to complete that task?
- What evidence or personal experience are you using to decide that this task belongs in [11th grade] instead of [10th grade]?

During this activity, students should recognize that there are some postsecondary preparation tasks that they need to do every year.

20 minutes

Knowledge Building

Display **slide 8** and tell students they are going to create a visual map of postsecondary preparation milestones. Ask for volunteers to each hold a page from the attached **Milestone Markers** handout. These are essentially extra-large versions of the cards from the earlier activity. Tell these volunteers that they need to use what they learned from the earlier Card Sort activity, maybe even asking their group for help, to create a human timeline. After giving each volunteer a Milestone Marker to hold, transition to **slide 9**. Use this slide as guidance as students move around.

Facilitator's Note: Guiding the Activity

Let time determine how much guidance you give students for this activity. As the slide indicates, tasks to be completed in 9th grade are on one end of the timeline and tasks to be completed in 12th grade are on the other end. It may be helpful to encourage students to stand in groups initially, as opposed to a straight line, to group themselves per grade-level.

Once students are at least grouped per grade level, show **slide 10** and direct everyone's attention to those representing the tasks to be completed during 9th grade. Ask those in the audience if there is a task card they have on their Timeline Mat in the 9th grade column that does not match the human timeline. Facilitate this discussion as needed; have those in the human timeline move as needed. Use the attached **Postsecondary Prep Checklist** handout as reference during this activity.

Once the whole group agrees with the tasks in the 9th grade group, display **slide 11**. Then ask if they think the order of the 9th-grade tasks matters. For example, does it matter if one builds good study habits before or after they visit a college campus?

Repeat this for 10th-grade tasks using **slides 12–13**, 11th-grade tasks using **slides 14–15**, and 12th-grade tasks using **slides 16–17**.

Teacher's Note: Guiding the Activity

Slides 11, 13, 15, and 17 have the tasks from the Milestone Markers handout. Keep in mind that if you did not print all 32 pages, then there will be more information on the slide than there are students standing in the human timeline. However, those tasks are also on the Milestone Cards, so students should see all of the tasks on their Timeline Mat.

Then, use the guiding questions below to facilitate discussion:

- Does the order within that grade level matter for completing tasks? Or does it just need to be completed within that grade level?
- What if I didn't complete a task that I should have during 9th grade?
- Which tasks should you start early, even if you don't have to finish them until later?
- Looking at this timeline, what grade level seems the busiest? Why?
- Which milestone feels like the biggest hurdle for you?

Show **slide 18** and thank the volunteers of the human timeline and encourage them to return to their seats. Have groups look at their cards on their Timeline Mat. Ask them to think about what cards they should move, if any. Then facilitate a discussion, as needed, to address students' questions. If it has not already been discussed, use this time to focus on reoccurring tasks, like talking to their high school counselor.

10 minutes

Wrap-Up

Display **slide 19** and give each student a copy of the attached **Postsecondary Prep Checklist** handout. Direct students to take a few minutes to read through the checklist and mark the tasks they have already completed.

Digital Option

Consider sharing the attached **Postsecondary Prep Checklist** PDF file with students digitally using your Learning Management System (LMS). This file gives students the opportunity to click checkboxes next to completed tasks and save their edits on their device to reference each year and update their progress.

Show **slide 20** and introduce the [Mirror, Microscope, Binoculars](#) strategy. Have students use the back of their handout to write their responses to the prompts on the slide:

- **Mirror:** What have I learned about myself today?
- **Microscope:** What deserves my attention right now?
- **Binoculars:** Looking ahead, what do I need to prepare for next?

As time allows, ask for volunteers to share their responses with the whole group.

Show **slide 21** and ask the group, “Is this a school that has a degree plan that aligns with your postsecondary goals?” Ask for students to keep this question in mind as they go on their campus tour.

Research Rationale

Adults typically spend a significant portion of their time, sometimes as much as a third of their lives, at work, so having meaningful work is crucial to their overall well-being at work and at home. Decent work means not only making money but having good hours, job security, safety, a short commute, fair pay, and benefits such as paid time off and healthcare. These things can add up to a sense of well-being about what you do and who you are (Solberg et al., 2021). Research shows a critical connection between experiences in education and the path to decent work (Duffy et al., 2022). In fact, “as the level of education increases, the probability of attaining decent work also increases” (Masdonati et al., 2022).

Postsecondary education can be a life-altering experience for students. College graduates tend to have more job satisfaction, jobs that offer a greater sense of accomplishment, more independence and opportunities for creativity, and more social interactions in their jobs than non-college graduates (Wolniak & Engberg, 2019). College graduation also increases the chances of employment. Over the last 20 years, the unemployment rate for college graduates has been approximately half of that of high school graduates (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022). College helps students develop skills that prepare them for careers in the tech-driven economy, including non-routine, abstract skills that aid in problem-solving, multitasking, and creativity (Oreopoulos & Petronijevic, 2013).

The campus visit activity will help students and administrators set expectations for students to meet Oklahoma’s Academic Standards of being college, career, and citizenship-ready (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2025), as well as The K20 Center's College and Career Preparation Standards for ninth grade (K20 Center, 2025, standard 10.1).

Resources

- Alzam. (2025, March 6). *Diploma*. [Illustration]. Noun Project. <https://thenounproject.com/icon/diploma-7708301/>
- Alzam. (2025, March 6). *Notebook*. [Illustration]. Noun Project. <https://thenounproject.com/icon/notebook-7708314/>
- Alzam. (2025, March 6). *Test*. [Illustration]. Noun Project. <https://thenounproject.com/icon/test-7708310/>
- Alzam. (2025, March 6). *University*. [Illustration]. Noun Project. <https://thenounproject.com/icon/university-7708312/>
- Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. (2022, March 9). High school graduates with no college had unemployment rate of 4.5 percent in February 2022. The Economics Daily. <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2022/high-school-graduates-with-no-college-had-unemployment-rate-of-4-5-percent-in-february-2022.htm>
- Duffy, R. D., Kim, H. J., Perez, G., Prieto, C. G., Torgal, C., & Kenny, M. E. (2022). Decent education as a precursor to decent work: An overview and construct conceptualization. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 138. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2022.103771>
- K20 Center. (n.d.) Card sort. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/147>
- K20 Center. (n.d.) Mirror, microscope, binoculars. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/3020>
- K20 Center. (2025). Student college and career preparation standards 6–12. <https://k20center.ou.edu/collegeandcareerpreparation>
- Masdonati, J., Massoudi, K., Blustein, D. L., & Duffy, R. D. (2022). Moving toward decent work: Application of the psychology of working theory to the school-to-work transition. *Journal of Career Development*, 49(1), 41–59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845321991681>
- Oklahoma State Department of Education. (2025). *Oklahoma Academic Standards*. <https://oklahoma.gov/education/services/standards-learning/oklahoma-academic-standards.html>
- Oreopoulos, P. & Petronijevic, U. (2013). Making college worth it: A review of the returns to higher education. *The Future of Children*, 23(1), 41–65. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w19053>
- Solberg, V. S. H., Park, C. M., & Marsay, G. (2021). Designing quality programs that promote hope, purpose and future readiness among high need, high risk youth: Recommendations for shifting perspective and practice. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 29(2), 183–204. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072720938646>
- Wolniak, G. C. & Engberg, M. E. (2019). Do “high-impact” college experiences affect early career outcomes? *The Review of Higher Education*, 42(3), 825–858. <https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2019.0021>