



F2.

PREPARING FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND BEYOND

WORD WALL

Transition: Passage from one state, stage, subject or place to another

Challenge: A stimulating task or problem

INTRODUCTION

Students are more likely to transition successfully to the next level of their education if they have a strong belief in themselves and have as much information as possible about what to expect.

Transitions are always challenging and sometimes intimidating for students because they grow accustomed to a group of friends, teachers, school rules and school culture. Going from one academic institution to another changes all of the norms they are accustomed to and may raise new challenges.



TARGET AUDIENCE

Students grades 4 through 8



40-70 MINUTES

Lesson may be extended over several days.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Preview Activity Handout: *Transitions Are a Part of Life*
- Lesson Handouts: *Transitioning into Middle School* (Grades 4-5), *Transitioning into High School* (Grades 6-8), *I Can Overcome Any Challenge* (Grades 4-5; 6-8), and *Making Successful Transitions* (Grades 4-5; 6-8)
- Reflection Activity Handout: *Navigating My Transitions with a Copilot*

LEARNING GOALS

- ➔ Students will learn about the experiences a copilot had that required them to transition (to a new school, country, job, etc.).
- ➔ Students will explore the personal, academic and social differences between elementary school and middle school, middle school and high school, and high school and college.
- ➔ Students will explore their positive and negative feelings about making these transitions.
- ➔ Students will discuss whom to turn to for support and advice.

PREVIEW ACTIVITY

This activity should be given 1-2 days prior to the in-class lesson. Explain to students that they will start a new lesson that requires them to gather information from their home or community and bring it to the classroom. *(See handout)*

- ➔ Distribute *Transitions Are a Part of Life* and explain instructions to students.
- ➔ As you begin the in-class lesson, have students share (as individuals or within small groups) what they discussed and learned in the Preview Activity.

- ➔ You may wish to add value by collecting ideas generated from the Preview Activity and distributing them to students as a resource.

ACTIVITIES

Part 1: Preparing for High School and Beyond

 10 minutes

- ➔ Discuss and review the Preview Activity.

Part 2: Transitioning

 30 minutes

- ➔ Break students into small groups and have them fill out the *Transitioning into High School* handout by brainstorming ways their lives may change. (Use the *Transitioning into Middle School* handout for elementary school students.)
- ➔ Have students share some of the changes they feel they will experience. Make sure to share your own experiences to help them with this exercise.

Part 3: I Can Overcome Any Challenge

 30 minutes

- ➔ Break students into small groups and have them fill out the appropriate grade-level version of the *I Can Overcome Any Challenge* handout. Students will write down some of the new experiences and challenges they may face and how they might deal with them. Give them the appropriate version of *Making Successful Transitions* to use as a reference for ways to deal with these challenges.
- ➔ Have students report back and discuss coping skills and solutions to these challenges.

RESOURCES

- ➔ *A Hope in the Unseen*
 - Suskind, Ron. *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League*. New York: Broadway Books, 1998.
- ➔ *Jesse*
 - Soto, Gary. *Jesse*. Orlando: Harcourt Children's Books, 1994.

REFLECTION ACTIVITY

- ➔ Thank students for their participation in the lesson and talk about how important it is for them to share their discoveries with significant people in their lives.
- ➔ Explain to students that this activity will allow them to share the information they explored at school with their copilot. In addition, the assignment will allow them to reflect on the topic a bit further.
- ➔ Distribute *Navigating My Transitions* with a Copilot and explain instructions to students. (See *handout*)

CURRICULUM AND SKILLS STANDARDS

- ➔ Standards for the English/Language Arts: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12
- ➔ National Standards for Social Studies Teachers:
 - Culture
 - Time, Continuity and Change
 - People, Places and Environments
 - Individual Development and Identity
 - Individuals, Groups and Institutions

See *Appendix A* for complete curriculum standards descriptions.



HANDOUT: TRANSITIONS ARE A PART OF LIFE



NAME

Take a moment to talk to one of your copilots or someone else you trust about a transition they experienced (for example, a time when they changed schools or moved). Whoever you choose will be your copilot for this activity. Be sure to thank your copilot for supporting you.

QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO ASK YOUR COPILOT:

1. Tell me about a particular transition in your life. What was easy or difficult about it?

2. How did you feel during this transition?

3. How did you overcome obstacles during this transition?

4. What did you learn from this experience?

HANDOUT: TRANSITIONING INTO MIDDLE SCHOOL



NAME

Brainstorm with your group and think of ways your life might be different in middle school in the following areas:

| School | Friends | Feelings |
|--------|---------|----------|
| | | |

HANDOUT: TRANSITIONING INTO HIGH SCHOOL



NAME

Brainstorm with your group and think of ways your life might be different in high school in the following areas:

| School | Friends | Feelings |
|--------|---------|----------|
| | | |

HANDOUT: I CAN OVERCOME ANY CHALLENGE



NAME

Brainstorm with your group and write down some of the challenges you might face in high school and possible solutions to these challenges.

CHALLENGES

SOLUTIONS

MAKING SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS

Here are some suggestions to help you make a successful transition from elementary school to middle school.

✓ READ, READ, READ!

- On average, you will need to learn 3,000 words each academic year to be successful as you move on to the next grade. Reading is the best way to acquire vocabulary and language, and reading often and in progressively larger quantities will prepare you for how challenging school will be in the future.

✓ STRENGTHEN YOUR STUDY SKILLS

- You will need to know how to organize information effectively, including how to make outlines, take notes and structure information.

✓ STAY ORGANIZED

- You will have a different teacher for each subject.
- You will need to fulfill the expectations of six or more different teachers.

✓ TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

- You will need to be more self-motivated to make personal choices and good decisions.



MAKING SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS

Here are some suggestions to help you make a successful transition from middle school to high school.

✓ READ, READ, READ!

- On average, you will need to learn 3,000 words each academic year to be successful as you move on to the next grade. Reading is the best way to acquire vocabulary and language, and reading often and in progressively larger quantities will prepare you for how difficult school will be in the future.

✓ STRENGTHEN YOUR STUDY SKILLS

- You will need to know how to organize information effectively, including how to make outlines, take notes and structure information.

✓ STAY ORGANIZED

- You will continue to have a different teacher for each subject.
- You will need to fulfill the expectations of six or more different teachers.

✓ TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

- You will need to be more self-motivated to make personal choices and good decisions.

✓ PREPARE FOR CHANGES

- You will need to consume large amounts of information in an efficient manner.
- You will need to learn to acquire information through listening to lectures and adapt to the lack of interaction during the class period.
- You will need to complete homework assignments and attend classes with minimal prodding from school staff.
- You may need to adjust to a more depersonalized setting if you are going to attend a large, comprehensive high school. In such an environment, very few adults in the school may know your name.
- You will need to seek out academic counseling services and understand how to make use of support services like tutoring and mentoring.



HANDOUT: NAVIGATING MY TRANSITIONS WITH A COPILOT



NAME

Take a moment to share the work you completed in this lesson with one of your copilots or someone else you trust. Whoever you choose will be your copilot for this activity. Talk about how you can support each other through transitions in life and create a pledge to be there for each other. Be sure to thank your copilot for supporting you. For pledge samples, visit <https://schools.dickinsonisd.org/upload/page/0326/docs/CRES%20Parent%20Contract.pdf>.

MY PLEDGE

MY COPILOT'S PLEDGE

EXTENSIONS: WATCH OUT COLLEGE, HERE I COME!

INTRODUCTION

This is an opportunity for 8th grade students to think about transitioning to college.



TARGET AUDIENCE

Students grades 4 through 8, may also be used for students grades 9 through 12



40 MINUTES



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Handouts: *Transitioning into College, I Can Overcome Any Challenge* and *Making Successful Transitions*

LEARNING GOALS

- ➔ Students will explore the personal, academic and social differences between their K-12 educational experiences and college.
- ➔ Students will explore positive and negative feelings about making these transitions.
- ➔ Students will discuss whom they can turn to for support and advice.

ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Break students into small groups and have them fill out the *Transitioning Into College* handout by brainstorming ways their lives may change.
- ➔ Have students share some of the changes they feel they will experience. Make sure to share your own experiences to help them with this exercise.
- ➔ Have students break out into small groups and fill out the *I Can Overcome Any Challenge* handout. Students will write down some of the new experiences and challenges they may face and how they might deal with them.
- ➔ Give them the appropriate version of the *Making Successful Transitions* handout to use as a reference for ways they might deal with the challenges they may face.
- ➔ Have students report back and have them concentrate on coping skills and solutions to the challenges they feel they might face.

HANDOUT: TRANSITIONING INTO COLLEGE



NAME

Brainstorm with your group and think of ways your life might be different in college in the following areas:

| Academic | Social | Feelings |
|----------|--------|----------|
| | | |

HANDOUT: I CAN OVERCOME ANY CHALLENGE



NAME

Brainstorm with your group and write down some of the challenges you might face in college and possible solutions to these challenges.

CHALLENGES

SOLUTIONS

Horizontal lines for writing challenges

Horizontal lines for writing solutions

HANDOUT: MAKING SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS

Here are some suggestions to help you make a successful transition to college.

✓ ACADEMICS

- You should research the requirements needed for graduation for both your major and general education.
- Take courses you are interested in, but make sure you are taking courses to complete your degree. Remember, some courses may not seem interesting, but after taking the course, you'll find it is of interest to you. Take the opportunity to explore your interests while staying on track to completing your degree.
- Research how many units you need to be considered a full-time student.
- Take an appropriate course load during your first year. This will help give you time to adjust to all the changes of college life while not being overwhelmed by your studies.
- Attend professors' and teacher's assistants' office hours.
- Do not fall behind in your coursework, which can lead to low grades, course incompletes, academic probation, loss of financial aid and/or scholarships and eventual expulsion.

✓ ACADEMIC SUPPORT

- Make sure you make a thorough assessment of all the academic support resources available on the campus.
- Be proactive and know what is available so that you will know exactly what to do when you need help and support.

✓ CREDIT

- College students are bombarded with credit card offers the moment they set foot on campus, so it is important to learn about managing your credit and finances.
- Make sure to learn of the importance of having good credit because how you manage these issues in college will have a long-lasting effect on your ability to do things you might want to do as you get older, such as buy a car or house.

✓ FINANCIAL AID

- Make sure to keep copies of all correspondence that is sent to you by the financial aid office.
- Remember, the financial aid office is there to serve you so no matter how frustrating it may become at times, be persistent and make sure to get all the aid you need to continue your education.
- Get to know at least one financial aid officer on a first-name basis so you have a specific person to go to when you have a problem with your financial aid.
- Undocumented students may not have access to financial aid and laws vary greatly from state to state.

For example, in California, undocumented students cannot apply for federal financial aid; but under AB 540, they can be considered California residents for tuition purposes and, if they qualify, are exempt from paying out-of-state tuition. In addition, undocumented students in California may receive certain types of financial aid such as: private scholarships funded through public universities, state administered financial aid, university grants, community college fee waivers, and Cal Grants. In addition, the California Dream Act, allows eligible students to pay in-state tuition at any public college in California.

In Oregon, the Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA) is an alternative to the FAFSA for undocumented Oregon students, including students who have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status or Temporary Protected Status (TPS). By filing the ORSAA, eligible undocumented and DACA students in Oregon can get help paying for college through grants, scholarships, and tuition reduction. The ORSAA opens on October 1 each year, and eligible students should complete the application as soon as possible after that date.

In Virginia, the Virginia Alternative State Aid (VASA) is an alternative option to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The VASA application provides access only to state and to some institutional financial aid programs and can be used by Virginians who are nonimmigrants, undocumented, have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status or are otherwise ineligible to file the FAFSA and would like to be considered for state financial aid.

Please check the laws and requirements in your own state.

✓ SCHOLARSHIPS

- Beware of companies that guarantee scholarships in return for a fee.
- You can get scholarship information from many websites, including <https://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-scholarships.aspx>.
- There are many scholarships that do not require U.S. permanent residency or citizenship. For more information on scholarships for undocumented students, go to <https://immigrantsrising.org/2021scholarships>.

✓ HOUSING

- Make sure that you are honest with yourself about what kind of living situation you want.
- If you are going to live in the dorms, you will probably be given a questionnaire regarding roommate preferences. You should think not just about what you want, but also about the person you will be living with. (Students who mark that they want to stay up late may find that they don't really want a roommate who regularly is up until 3 a.m.)
- If you look for an apartment, make sure to look early because off-campus housing can be difficult to find, especially in large, urban areas.

✓ SAFETY

- Safety is extremely important on all college campuses, not just the ones located in urban areas.
- Make sure you know where the police department is located on campus and utilize any services that may be available, such as an escort service, which walks you to your dorm or apartment late at night from campus, and self-defense classes.
- Never walk alone at night. It doesn't matter whether you are male or female. It is wise to always use the buddy system, even in college.

✓ SOCIAL LIFE

- College is a wonderful opportunity to grow and experience life as a young adult; however, you need to be careful when engaging in social activities.
- Every campus offers a variety of social events, but using your good judgment is crucial regardless of where you go to school or whether you stay home or go away to college.
- There may be opportunities to continue to participate in activities you did when you were in high school, or you might decide to try something entirely new.
- No matter what you are interested in, participate in activities you feel passionate about and that contribute to continued success on your journey.