

SASO: MIDDLE SCHOOL CHARACTER EDUCATION TEACHING GUIDE

TOPIC: ACADEMICS (Ashley Banks SASO DVD)

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Note to Teacher: This lesson encompasses one of the Six Pillars of Character (josephsoninstitute.org): Responsibility. Specifically, it focuses on taking responsibility to pursue excellence—i.e., do your best, be prepared, be diligent, work hard. It offers the teacher guidelines to follow after students have viewed the DVD of Ashley Banks: Academics.

Discussion questions, scenarios, and suggestions for writing and speaking assignments have been designed to develop student critical thinking, reflection, interaction, and creativity. Discussion questions and suggestions for writing and speaking assignments are interchangeable and should be determined by the teacher.

With regard to discussion questions and scenarios, teachers may pose questions to students individually or in small groups. With regard to the latter, a spokesperson for each group should be selected to summarize his or her group's discussion to the rest of the class.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it important for the middle school student to begin preparing for college?
2. What is the difference between taking a high school college preparatory course and a high school general elective course?
3. What are examples of college preparatory classes?
4. What is a cumulative GPA?
5. What is the ACT? What is the SAT? Why are they important?
6. If you already know what you want to study in college, how can you begin preparing for that major now?
7. Why are community service and extracurricular activities important when applying to college? What are other reasons that community service and extracurricular activities are important?
8. What is a junior college? How does it differ from a university?

9. What is a public university? What is a private university? What are examples of each?
10. How can you learn about different colleges and universities?
11. What is a college major? What is a college minor? Can you have both a major and a minor? Should you have both a major and a minor?
12. How should you select a major? What criteria do you use?
13. How can you learn about different college majors?
14. What is an associate's degree? A bachelor's degree? A master's degree? A doctorate degree? A professional degree?
15. How long does it take to get an associate's degree? A bachelor's degree? A master's degree? A doctorate degree? A professional degree?
16. What are the characteristics of a "good" university?
17. What is the responsibility of a college academic advisor?
18. What are the benefits of attending college?
19. Does college help you grow as a person?
20. What is diversity and how it is related to college?
21. How do college classes differ from middle school and high school classes?
22. What is a life-long learner?

Scenarios: What would you do?

1. You would like to attend college; however, you know that your family cannot afford the cost. What would you do?
2. You would like to attend college; however, you have no idea what you would like to study. What would you do?
3. Your family has the money to send you to college; however, you have no idea which university you would like to attend. What would you do?
4. A year after you attend college, you decide to change your major. What are the consequences of making that change?

Writing/Speaking Assignments: Students either may write a paper or give an oral presentation about the topic (length and guidelines to be determined by the teacher).

1. Do you plan to attend college after graduating from high school? Why or why not?
2. If you are not interested in attending college, what are your goals after high school graduation? What type of job do you want?
3. Should everyone attend college? Why or why not?
4. What does a college education mean to you?
5. After graduating from high school, what are the advantages of going to work instead of attending college? What are the advantages of attending college instead of going to work?
6. Discuss the differences between a college and a university.
7. Interview your family members and/or friends and ask them to tell you how they feel about college educations.
8. If you have a family member or members who are college graduates, interview them and ask them to tell you about the college experience.
9. Discuss a field of study in which you would like to major. Explain why.
10. Discuss the type of job you would like to have after college.
11. What is time management and why is it important in college? Why is it important in life?
12. What are examples of good study skills? Do you have them? Why or why not?
13. Describe someone you know who has graduated from college and is a role model to you.
14. Describe what excites you when you think about attending college.
15. What is the most attractive thing about attending college? What is the least attractive thing?
16. What is the most attractive thing about completing college?
17. One type of college class follows the traditional lecture format in which the professor lectures and the students take notes. What are other formats for college classes? Which type of format appeals to you? Why?
18. In what types of college extracurricular activities do you want to be involved?

19. Does education affect self-confidence? Please explain.
20. How has technology influenced education? What is distance learning? What is an online class?
21. Define the following terms and whether or not they are important: cum laude, magna cum laude, summa cum laude.
22. What is a traditional college student? What is a non-traditional student?
23. Is a college education important in today's society? Why or why not?
24. Write a nonfiction or fiction story about education.
25. Write a poem or song about education.
26. Select one of the quotes related to academics and learn what it means. Or, find a quotation about education and learning what it means. Identify the author of the quote and describe who that individual is (e.g., Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States).

Quotations about Academics:

1. Too often we give our children answers to remember rather than problems to solve. (Roger Lewin)
2. Learning is not a spectator sport. (Anonymous)
3. Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe. (Abraham Lincoln)
4. The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet. (Aristotle)
5. It takes a village to raise a child. (African proverb)
6. He was so learned that he could name a horse in nine languages; so ignorant that he bought a cow to ride on. (Benjamin Franklin)
7. The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn. (Alvin Toffler)
8. If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail. (Abraham Maslow)
9. Parents can only give good advice or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands. (Anne Frank)

10. Education is the transmission of civilization. (Ariel and Will Durant)
11. Poor is the pupil who does not surpass his master. (Leonardo daVinci)
12. Prejudices, it is well known, are most difficult to eradicate from the heart whose soil has never been loosened or fertilized by education; they grow there, firm as weeds among rocks. (Charlotte Bronte)
13. Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence. (Robert Frost)
14. It is impossible for a man to learn what he thinks he already knows. (Epicetus)
15. Education: a debt due from present to future generations. (George Peabody)
16. Education is one of the few things a person is willing to pay for and not get.
(William Lowe Bryan)
15. Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it. (George Santayana)
16. What I hear, I forget. What I see, I remember. What I do, I understand.
(Confucius)
17. The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn, but to unlearn.
(Gloria Steinem)
18. Education is not filling a bucket but lighting a fire. (William B. Yeats)
19. There is no greater crime than to stand between a man and his development; to take any law or institution and put it around him like a collar, and fasten it there, so that as he grows and enlarges, he presses against it till he suffocates and dies.
(Henry Ward Beecher)
20. Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them. (James Baldwin)
21. Education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living.
(John Dewey)
22. Education makes a people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave. (Lord Brougham)
23. The great aim of education is not knowledge, but action. (Herbert Spencer)
24. Study as if you were going to live forever; live as if you were going to die tomorrow. (Maria Mitchell)

25. The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you.
(B.B. King)
26. The purpose of learning is growth, and our minds, unlike our bodies, can continue growing as we continue to live. (Mortimer Adler)
27. It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it. (Aristotle)
28. As the twig is bent the tree inclines. (Virgil)
29. The things taught in colleges and schools are not an education, but the means of education. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)
30. Education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance. (Will Durant)
31. The highest result of education is tolerance. (Helen Keller)
32. Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous.
(Confucius)