

To consider for your Common Reading Program, please contact Barbara_Tonetti@press.princeton.edu

**Suggestions for using WILL THIS BE ON THE TEST
for a Seminar for First-year Students
Prepared by Dana T. Johnson November 2019**

Objective: Students will experience various aspects of college academic life by reading, discussing, and engaging in follow-up activities that require them to explore resources on campus.

The following are examples of the kinds of activities that can be used to support this objective.

Text: *Will This Be on the Test? What Professors Really Want You to Know About Succeeding in College*, by Dana T. Johnson and Jennifer E. Price. Princeton University Press, 2019.

Reading: Introduction: Why Are You Going to College?

- Have students write a paragraph to answer this question. How will they decide if their time in college has been successful? Discuss.
- Share data on college completion. Discuss using questions such as
 - Why do you think some students do not finish?
 - What do you think it will take for you to be successful?

Reading: Chapter 1: It's Not All About You

- Provide students with an article about a professor at your college who has done some interesting research. Discuss.
- Discuss the differences between a college and a university. If your school is a university, have students list all the colleges or schools that make up the university. If your school is a 4-year college, list all the departments.
- If you are a research university, have students find out about:
 - a) the extent of research awards at your university. How much money from external sources is used for research? Where does the money come from? What are some of the the centers, institutes, or projects that have been funded?
 - b) Are there opportunities for students to be involved in research at your university?

Reading: Chapter 2: Just Kidding -- It IS all About You: Personal Responsibility

- Ask students to meet another student in each of their classes and write a paragraph about each. This should be someone they can check in with about any missed classes.

Reading: Chapter 3: Who Are the Professors?

- Ask students to learn about the background of one of their professors. Find their CV online or make an appointment to interview them. What degrees do they have? How long have they studied to earn them? How many publications do they have? What are their research interests?

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- If you are at a university, ask students to interview a grad student at your university and write a summary of what was learned.

Reading: Chapter 4: College as a Springboard to the Workplace, the Military, or Graduate School

- Have students visit the career center. Write a summary of what they offer for students.
- Assign the reading of an article about recent college grads in the workplace or about what employers want. Discuss in class. Example: <https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/8-characteristics-great-managers-look-for-in-college-grads/> or <https://www.americasjobexchange.com/career-advice/what-employers-want>
- Have students interview a grad student or a professor about what kind of record and skills a student needs to be competitive for graduate school. Or have them choose an employer in the field they are interested in and find out what the employer wants to see in a college grad who applies there.

Reading: Chapter 5: The Written Rules of the Classroom – The Syllabus

- Have students map out the information from their syllabi on some kind of graphic and add key dates to their calendars. Here is one example from Stetson University: <https://www.stetson.edu/administration/academic-success/media/Course%20Chart.pdf>

Reading: Chapter 6: The Unwritten Rules of the Classroom – Acceptable Classroom Behaviors

- Assign reading of an article about classroom behavior and follow up with discussion. For example, “For Better Learning In College Lectures, Lay Down the Laptop and Pick Up a Pen.” <https://www.brookings.edu/research/for-better-learning-in-college-lectures-lay-down-the-laptop-and-pick-up-a-pen/>
- Have students sit in the back of one of their classes and make note of the behaviors of other students that are distracting or non-productive. Bring notes to class for discussion.

Reading: Chapter 7 The Virtual Classroom – Special Considerations for Online Courses

- Have students read a short article (example: “Media multitaskers pay mental price.” <https://news.stanford.edu/2009/08/24/multitask-research-study-082409/>) Then do a dry run of an online discussion group. Give students a rubric to guide performance. Then critique the discussion.

Reading: Chapter 8: Office Hours

- Assignment: Visit the office hours of at least one professor and write a summary to share. Include a description about what you talked about and how you felt before and after the visit.
- Read an article about the importance of forging good mentoring relationships with professors. Discuss. (An example: “How to Network with Professors.” <https://www.livecareer.com/resources/careers/recent-grads/how-to-network-with-professors>)

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Reading: Chapter 9: Email Etiquette in Correspondence with a Professor

- Given several scenarios that might require an email to a professor, have students write an acceptable email.
- Give students some sample emails that need improvement. Have them critique and re-write them.

Reading: Chapter 10: Letters of Recommendation

- Give this assignment: Write a letter of recommendation you would like someone to write about you when you graduate. (This will serve as a roadmap for the skills and accomplishments the student will need by graduation.) Comment on performance, skills, habits that you hope to have made clear by the time you graduate. (Give some categories to prompt them such as ability to work in a group, oral communication skills, ability to meet deadlines, command of written language, initiative, responsibility, etc.)
- Provide students with a sample questionnaire for an online recommendation for graduate school. Have them rate themselves.

Reading: Chapter 11: Getting the Best Grades You Can

- Have students grade an assignment, given a student essay response to a question and a rubric.
- Have students find the place online where their grades will be posted and their transcript will be found.
- To make sure they understand GPA, have students calculate a GPA given a sample set of grades for one semester.
- Give them a set of scores (up to but not including the final exam) for a course in which not all grades are weighted equally. Suppose that a student needs 83% to get a B for the course. Have students figure out what score they need on the final exam to get a minimum of a grade of B for the course.

Reading: Chapter 12: Polishing Your Written Work

- Have students make an appointment at the campus Writing Center to find out what they offer.
- Give a sample student paper to critique for elements of style, clarity, and mechanics.
- Have students read this online article from BusinessInsider.com, "A new study shows that students learn way more effectively from print textbooks than screens."

https://www.businessinsider.com/students-learning-education-print-textbooks-screens-study-2017-10?utm_source=facebook&utm_content=top-bar&utm_term=desktop

Discuss the article asking what the implications are for student studying. Ask if this article can be used as a reference in a paper that requires articles from refereed journals. (The research that is referenced is provided in a link within the article —

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00220973.2016.1143794?src=recsys&>)

How will you verify that this Open Access journal is peer-reviewed?

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Reading: Chapter 13: Managing Your Course Work and Your Time

- Write out a schedule for a week with all classes, work, activities, sleep, and study times.
- Have students go to the reference desk in one of the college libraries. Ask a question. Write a paragraph about the experience. What did you learn from that?

Examples:

- I need to find current copies of the New York Times. Can you help me?
- Do you have a map of the library that I can have?
- I am writing a paper about overpopulation of deer in Virginia. I am having trouble finding data about deaths due to deer collisions with cars.
- What are the most respected journals in the field of psychology?
- Do you have any classes in the library to learn about using the online databases?

Reading: Chapter 14: Ethical Considerations

- Set up a sample for students writing sample. Submit it to your online learning management system to show students how plagiarism is identified using software such as Turnitin.
- Have students read the article from Turnitin called “The Plagiarism Spectrum” about types of plagiarism. https://www.turnitin.com/static/plagiarism-spectrum/?fbclid=IwAR3WML3vTKFajOC1GYeqEV_3Fb81PsbchWDejwRA9tBJ2dKQ21ZibnpXRbo
- Have a discussion about self-plagiarism and recycling one’s own work. What is allowed?

Reading: Chapter 15: Preparing, Supporting, and Understanding Your Student (for Parents)

- Have students calculate the cost of each hour of class time for the current semester. Calculate it using only tuition and fees. If you live on campus, do it again including tuition, room, board
- Have students write a thank-you note to any relatives or scholarship groups that helped fund their education. (If parents are paying, suggest that students call their parents and update them on how classes are going!)

Reading: Glossary of Academic Terms

- Have students read the glossary and mark any terms that are new to them. Discuss them in class.
- Choose some for discussion that you suspect will be unknown to them such as sabbatical and seminar.