The BIG Idea

- What are some ways to help pay for college?

AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

I. Warm Up: Dollars for College (5 minutes)

II. Scholarships and Awards (15 minutes)

III. Grants and Work Study (15 minutes)

IV. Loans (5 minutes)

V. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

MATERIALS

❑ **STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:**

- Student Handbook page 72, College Scholarships Awarded
- Student Handbook page 73, Expected Family Contributions
- Student Handbook page 74, Financial Aid Menu
- Student Handbook pages 75-77, Scholarships and Awards
- Student Handbook page 78, Scholarship Scavenger Hunt
- Student Handbook page 79 Check-up Questions
- Student Handbook pages 80-81, Scholarship Research
- Student Handbook page 82, My Scholarships

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Learn about the different kinds of financial aid available for college.
- Recognize that family income and assets determine how much financial aid you are eligible for and that even expensive schools may provide enough aid to make them a viable option.

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OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students are introduced to four kinds of financial aid: scholarships/awards, grants, work-study, and student loans. The first three are free sources of money; the fourth must be paid back.

First, students use sample scholarships and awards from FastWeb to complete a quick Scholarship Scavenger Hunt. Next, the students look at several family scenarios to understand the role of expected family contributions in determining grant and work-study awards. Finally, they discuss the advantages and disadvantages of loans.

PREPARATION

- ❑ List the day's **BIG IDEA** and activities on the board.
- ❑ Write the day's vocabulary words and definitions on the board.
- ❑ The following handouts need to be made into overhead transparencies or copied onto chart paper:
  - **Student Handbook page 73, Expected Family Contributions**
  - **Student Handbook page 74, Financial Aid Menu**
  - **Student Handbook page 79, Check-up Questions**
- ❑ Students may have financial aid questions beyond the scope of this lesson. For answers, please consult with your school counselor or refer to www.studentaid.ed.gov/guide.

VOCABULARY

Financial Aid: any type of assistance used to pay college costs.

Grant: also called gift aid, a grant is financial aid that doesn't have to be repaid. Grant aid comes from federal and state governments and from individual colleges, usually on the basis of financial need.

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Scholarship: financial aid distributed according to requirements set by the scholarship provider, like excellence in academics or sports.

Loan: financial aid that must be repaid.

Work-Study Program: work-study is a federal program that provides students with part-time employment, often on campus, to help meet their financial needs.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

In **Activity II, Scholarships and Awards,** you may want to assign teams of students to work on **Student Handbook page 78, Scholarship Scavenger Hunt** together.

You may wish to contact your school counselor to figure out what local scholarships are available. You can then share this information with the students at the end of **Activity II, Scholarships and Awards.**

It's important to spend a few minutes on each type of financial aid, so feel free to abbreviate any of the Activity Steps in order to get to all four.

If you think your students will struggle to figure out the pros and cons of each type of aid on **Student Handbook page 79, Check-up Questions,** you may choose to complete these questions as a class.

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ACTIVITY STEPS

I. Warm Up: Dollars for College (5 Minutes)

1. [As students enter the room, direct them to **Student Handbook page 72, College Scholarships Awarded**, and ask them to circle the best answer.]

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE**: How many of you were worried last week when you saw how expensive college can be? [Show of hands.] This week, we're going to put some of those worries to rest. Most students receive some kind of **financial aid** – money from outside the family – when they go to college. Financial aid comes in different forms, but its purpose is to help you get all the money together that you need for different college costs.

   We'll talk about 4 different ways to help pay for college, and the advantages and disadvantages of each. But first, the answer to how our mystery couple helped pay for their college education. Izzy Bristow and John Dyer, 18-year-olds from Colorado, were the winners of the ninth annual Stuck at Prom® Scholarship Contest. More than 215 couples from 40 states and 4 Canadian provinces entered this competition. All of the contestants created the clothing they wore to their high school prom from duct tape. The sponsor of the scholarship was Duck Tape brand duct tape. See www.stuckatprom.com for details.

II. Scholarships and Awards (15 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE**: Can anyone think of other things a student might get a scholarship for? [Allow students to respond and list their answers on the overhead or board. Make sure to include the following areas: *outstanding grades or test scores; excellence in sports, music, art, science and other subjects.]*

   SAY SOMETHING LIKE: People giving out scholarships aren't always just interested in great students and great athletes. Sometimes scholarships are given to students based on where they're from, their race or ethnicity, or even quirky things like left-handedness or being under 4' 10."

   - **Scholarship Websites**

   In the old days, finding scholarships that matched your particular talents was pretty hit or miss. The Internet has changed that. You can use the **Scholarship Finder** in IHaveA-Planlowa.gov to search for scholarships. You can also sign up on websites like www.fastweb.com and www.collegeboard.com, and find a list of scholarships and awards that might work for you.

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- **Privacy**

These websites will ask you for lots of personal information, which is how they figure out which scholarships match your talents. It's a good idea to check their Privacy Policy to see with whom they share your info. There's usually a box to check to let them know that you don't want to hear from any of their advertisers.

- **What You'll Find**

[Ask students to turn to **Student Handbook pages 75-77, Scholarships and Awards.** Note that these are actual scholarships and awards found on FastWeb in 2006. Call their attention to **Student Handbook page 78, Scholarship Scavenger Hunt,** which follows 3 pages of scholarship info, and read through the directions. Explain that they'll have 7 minutes to come up with as many scholarships as they can, each suitable for a particular student.]

[When 7 minutes have passed, bring the students back as a whole group and have them report on their findings.

- What was the weirdest scholarship they found?
- Which ones seemed like they'd be very competitive?
- Did they find any awards that they'd like to try for in the future?]

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE**: You'll notice that many of the Scholarships and Awards are highly competitive. For example, twelve Siemens Westinghouse prizes are given to the top math and science projects in the country each year. In 2005, nearly 1,700 students submitted work for judging. If you're not at the top of your class in one of these subjects, this is not a realistic place to look for financial help.

   Local scholarships (which may not appear on national websites like FastWeb) are often less competitive. Applying for them may be a better use of your time, and you can get more info from your school counselor.

III. Grants and Work-Study (15 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE**: The best kind of financial aid is free money – you don't have to pay it back. Scholarships are one kind of free money.

   There are two more "free" kinds of financial aid – **grants** and **work-study programs.** You don't have to have a special talent or enter a competition to get a grant or be part of a work-study program. Grants and work-study programs are based on need. How do colleges tell if you need financial aid?

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They ask your parents to fill out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (the FAFSA). This happens in the middle of your senior year. The FAFSA asks for information about your family's income to determine how much help they can afford to give you in paying for college. The amount your family can afford to pay, as calculated on the FAFSA, is called your **Expected Family Contribution (EFC)**.

3. [Direct students' attention to **Student Handbook page 73, Expected Family Contributions,** for a look at how this determines how much grant money they may receive.]

4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE**: Take a look at the family descriptions on the Family Contributions page. These are hypothetical situations; actual Expected Family Contributions will be different based on the information given on the FAFSA. But these will give you a good basis to compare. If your family makes $8,000 a year, how much will they be expected to contribute toward college? *(nothing)* 25,000? *($350)* $50,000? *($5,000)*

   The government will give free college grants to students whose expected family contributions are low. You can use this money for school and don't have to pay it back.

   If you have a low Expected Family Contribution, you're also eligible for a work-study program. Work-study students work part-time at the college to help pay for their expenses.

IV. Loans (5 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE**: The fourth and final category of financial aid is student loans. How is this different from the "free money" available through scholarships and awards, grants, and work-study programs? (*You must pay this money back when you graduate. You will have to make mandatory payments, just like a car loan.*) What happens if you don't graduate or if you accept a job after graduation where you don't earn a lot of money? (*still have to pay it back*) Student loan payments can add up to hundreds of dollars a month – over the course of many years – so you should only use this option after all of your "free money" sources have been exhausted.

V. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE**: In 2004–2005, free grant aid averaged about $1,800 per student at two-year public colleges, over $3,300 at public four-year colleges, and about $9,600 per student at private four-year colleges.

   [Write the above figures on the board.]

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SAY SOMETHING LIKE: So it's important not to let a high price tag discourage you from a school you really want to attend. About two-thirds of all students do not pay anywhere near the full costs of a college. It helps to know all your options before you make a decision.

There will be Roads to Success classes during your senior year to help you complete the paperwork you need to apply for financial aid. In the meantime, it's not too early to check out the IHaveAPlanIowa.gov , FastWeb, College Board, and Scholarships.com websites to see what kinds of scholarships are available.

2. [Instruct students to turn to **Student Handbook page 79, Check-up Questions**. Give students two minutes to brainstorm possible pros and cons for each type of aid. After that time, discuss the pros and cons as a class.]

3. [Assign **Student Handbook pages 80 and 81, Scholarship Research** and **Student Handbook page 82, My Scholarships,** as homework. Be sure and go over the directions with the students, with particular attention to instructions on how to opt out of unwanted advertising.
NOTE: You may wish to provide incentives to those students who bring their completed homework to next week's class.]

EXTENSION ACTIVITY
The FAFSA is available online at **www.fafsa.ed.gov**. If students are interested in finding out what their family's current approximate EFC is, they might consider asking a parent to help them complete forms available on the websites listed at the bottom of **Student Handbook page 72, College Scholarships Awarded**.

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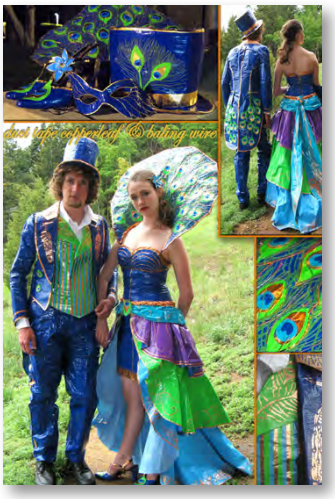
College Scholarships Awarded

DO NOW: Carefully consider the photo and circle the best explanation of why these students won big scholarship money.



In 2009, this couple won $3000 each to help pay for their college educations. What did they do to receive this money?

a. Starred in their high school musical.

b. Started an international project for peace.

c. Designed the outfits they wore to prom out of Duck Tape brand duct tape.

d. Entertained kids at a local children's hospital.

DO LATER: To look for scholarships that match your talents, use the Scholarship Finder in IHaveAPlanIowa.gov or sign up at one of these sites:

- www.fastweb.com
- www.collegeboard.com
- www.scholarships.com

Note: Check the websites' privacy policies to see who will have access to your info. Many websites of this type give you the option of "opting out" of receiving e-mail from advertisers.

For a preview of the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid,** visit www.fafsa.ed.gov.

For a calculator that estimates your family's Expected Family Contribution, go to www.petersons.com/finaid/efcsimplecalc.asp or www.FAFSA4caster.ed.gov.

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Expected Family Contributions

Family #1

Your mom works as a salesperson at a discount store when your little brother is at school. Your family income is $8,000 a year.

Expected Family Contribution (per year): $0

Family #2

Your dad makes $10/hour on a road construction crew. Your mom makes extra money babysitting for the neighbor's kids. Your family income is $25,000 a year.

Expected Family Contribution (per year): $350

Family #3

Your mom works as a freelance writer. Your dad has his own computer-repair business. Your family income is $50,000 a year.

Expected Family Contribution (per year): $5,000

NOTE: *Expected Family Contributions are for comparison only. Actual EFC's depend on family assets, number of family members in college, etc.*

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Financial Aid Menu

Scholarships and Awards

- Based on merit (things you're great at), not need.
- Free money for college that you don't have to pay back.
- Often very competitive.

Grants

- Provided by federal and state governments, as well as individual colleges.
- Free money for college that you don't have to pay back.
- Awarded to students with low Expected Family Contributions.
- Maximum amounts awarded change from year to year.
- Some higher-priced private colleges may offer bigger grants.

Work-Study

- Your college will find you a part-time job on campus.
- The pay you receive can be used to pay your college bills or personal expenses.
- Awarded to students with low Expected Family Contributions.

Loans

- When you've used other forms of Financial Aid and still need more money, a loan can make up the difference.
- **CAUTION**: loans must be paid back after you graduate, and it often takes 5, 10, or even more years to do this. You may want to avoid $20,000 in debt ($80,000 for four years of school) if there's a chance you won't be making a lot of money when you graduate.

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Scholarships and Awards 1

All of the scholarships and awards listed below were found on www.fastweb.com during the spring of 2006. Hundreds of scholarship opportunities suited to your talents and interests can be found by logging on and completing a personal profile.

HBCU Connect Minority Student Scholarship

$1000 Awards for tuition at a Historically Black College or University such as Spelman or Tuskegee. Student must be African-American, Native American, or Hispanic American. An essay is required.

Girls Going Places Scholarship

$1000 – $10,000 15 scholarships for girls ages 12 – 18. An adult must write an essay about you that describes how you're taking steps towards financial independence, are developing a business sense, and making a difference in your community.

"The Worst Day of My Life" Scholarship

$5000 Open to female high school students. You write a story of any length describing the worst day of your life. The winner gets a scholarship, and her story will be turned into a made-for-TV movie.

Anne & Matt Harbison Scholarship

$1000 One award to a high school senior with a language-related learning disability. You have to be nominated by a member of the P. Buckley Moss society. (The society works for charity and to foster an appreciation of the art of P. Buckley Moss.)

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Scholarships and Awards 2

Butterfly Award Grant

$1000 5 awards available for students at New York City Public High Schools who have been active in AIDS/HIV education and demonstrated leadership. You need 2 letters of recommendation and a personal statement.

Brown Aveda Institute Scholarship

$7000 – $12,000 This award is for cosmetology (and esthiology) students interested in attending the Brown Aveda Institute in Mentor, Ohio. You must meet their admissions requirements and complete an application, questionnaire, and essay to be eligible.

Federal Junior Duck Stamp Art Competition

$1000 – $4000 Are you artistic? Pick a species of North American waterfowl and design a stamp. Open to K-12 students. Winners get $, and the Best of Show becomes a real U.S. stamp. The U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife sponsors this competition.

Future Teacher of America Scholarship

$250 2 awards available to students in grades 9 – 11 who are pursuing a career in education. Take an online quiz that tests your knowledge of core subjects important to teaching.

Frank O'Neill Memorial Scholarship

$500 2 awards. Is there somebody in your life who's been a positive influence? If you're attending a university, college, trade school, technical institute, vocational training or other post-secondary education program, write an essay of 1000 words or less describing this person's impact on you.

Holocaust Remembrance Project Essay Contest

$2500 – $10,000 30 awards. Open to students in the U.S. and Mexico, ages 19 and under. Write an essay of 1200 words or less on the topic specified. First-place winners receive a trip to Washington, D.C., and scholarships of up to $10,000.

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Scholarships and Awards 3

Excellence in 3D Animation Award

$100 – $1000 Download free software and create an animated character, prop, set, or movie scene. 2 contests/year.

McDonald's National Employee Scholarship

$1000 – $5000 Are you a high school senior and a McDonald's employee? If you work at least 15 hours/week and have been there for at least 4 months, you're eligible to apply for this college scholarship. One $1000 winner/state, with a grand prizewinner of $5000.

StraightForward Media and Communications Scholarship

$500 It's easy to apply for this scholarship online. Just tell them your GPA, why you're studying media & communications, and how this scholarship will help you. 4 winners a year.

Siemens Westinghouse Competition

$1,000 – $100,000 A national competition for the best & brightest in math, science, and technology. Design a research project in mathematics, engineering, the biological and physical sciences or a combination of these. Compete as an individual or as part of a team.

Drive Your Future Scholarship

$2500 This scholarship is available to high schools seniors who plan to attend college full-time or enter a vocational school program. You must be the first generation in your family to attend college and have a 3.0 GPA or better. Sponsored by Mercedes-Benz.

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Scholarship Scavenger Hunt

Use **Student Handbook pages 75-77, Scholarships and Awards 1-3** to find scholarships or awards in each category.

Each item describes a student. Next to the description, write a scholarship or award the student could apply for. An example has been done for you. Some categories may be eligible for multiple scholarships. You may list all scholarships that fit each category.

Making a Difference	
A girl improving her community	*Girls Going Places Scholarship*
A New York City student educating people about AIDS	

Career	
A future teacher	
A current fast-food employee	

Where You Want to Go to School	
Someone who wants to go to a historically Black college	
Someone who wants to go to the Brown Aveda Institute	

Amazing Abilities	
A math or science whiz	
Somebody who can do animation	
A good writer	

Personal Challenges	
A student with a learning disability	

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Check-up Questions

Directions: List one pro and one con for each kind of financial aid. The first one has been done for you.

Kind of Financial Aid	Pro	Con
Grants	Don't have to be paid back.	Usually based on financial need, so may not help people with high Expected Family Contributions.
Work-Study		
Scholarships and Awards		
Loans		

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SCHOLARSHIP RESEARCH

Log on to IHaveAPlanIowa.gov or on to Fastweb.com and find out what scholarships are available to you. Choose 3 scholarship options, and fill in the chart using the web information for each. If you do not have an e-mail address, you can search for scholarships using www.collegeboard.com. You can also search for scholarships on the website www.scholarships.com.

DIRECTIONS FOR USING IHaveAPlanIowa.gov

1. Type www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov in your browser's address space.

2. Log in to IHaveAPlanIowa.gov by entering your account ID and password in the spaces in the upper right corner of the screen.

3. Click on the **Financial Aid Planning** tab and then on the **Find Scholarships** section.

4. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on **Scholarship Finder.**

5. Read the instructions beneath Your Scholarship Profile.

6. Build Your Scholarship Profile by clicking **Add/Change** next to any of the criteria listed on the left side of the page. Make sure you add at least one enrolment level in the criteria.

7. Once you have finished adding or changing your criteria, click **See Matching Scholarships** at the bottom of the page and review the list of scholarships that you may apply for. Choose three that seem most interesting to you. If you do not have a large enough scholarship list, you can click **Back to Your Scholarship Profile** at the bottom of your scholarship list to add or change your criteria.

8. Fill out the chart on **Student Handbook page 82, My Scholarships** based on the three scholarships you've chosen. (An example has been completed for you.) Finally, answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

DIRECTIONS FOR USING FAST WEB

1. In order to use FastWeb type www.fastweb.com into your browser's address space. You should click on the red button that says **New Users: Start your free search.**

2. Enter your e-mail address and create a password for the website. This website will ask you for personal information which is how they will figure out which scholarships match your talents, so make sure that you answer accurately. At the bottom of each page there is an option to check whether or not you want to receive promotional e-mails from FastWeb's sponsors. If you check **Yes**, you will receive ads on a regular basis. If you click **No**, promotional e-mails will not be sent to your inbox.

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3. Once you have finished answering the questions, you will be provided with a large list of scholarships that you may apply for. Choose three that seem most interesting to you.

4. Fill out the chart on **Student Handbook page 82, My Scholarships** based on the three scholarships you've chosen. (An example has been completed for you.) Finally, answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

DIRECTIONS FOR USING COLLEGE BOARD

1. In order to use College Board, type www.collegeboard.com into your browser's address space. You should click on the button that says **For students.**

2. Click on the green button on the right labeled, **Pay for College** and then click on the button labeled **Scholarship Search.** Half-way down the page you will see an arrow with the word "Start" next to it. Click on it.

3. Once you have finished answering the questions, you will be provided with a large list of scholarships that you may apply for. Choose three that seem most interesting to you.

4. Fill out the chart on **Student Handbook page 82, My Scholarships** based on the three scholarships you've chosen. (An example has been completed for you.) Finally, answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

DIRECTIONS FOR USING SCHOLARSHIPS.COM

1. In order to use Scholarships.com type www.scholarships.com into your browser's address space. You should click on the red button that says **New Users: Start your free search.**

2. Fill in your school year, birthday, and zip code. Then enter your e-mail address and create a password for the website. Once you have entered in this information, click the **Submit** button.

3. This website will ask you for personal information which is how they will figure out which scholarships match your talents, so make sure that you answer accurately. At the bottom of each page there is an option to check whether or not you want to receive promotional e-mails from Scholarships.com's sponsors or schools. If you check **Yes**, you will receive ads on a regular basis. If you click **No**, promotional e-mails will not be sent to your inbox.

3. Once you have finished answering the questions, you will be provided with a large list of scholarships that you may apply for. Choose three that seem most interesting to you.

4. Fill out the chart on **Student Handbook page 82, My Scholarships** based on the three scholarships you've chosen. (An example has been completed for you.) Finally, answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

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MY SCHOLARSHIPS

Name and amount of scholarship	Who is eligible?	Application process	How many scholarships will be awarded?	How well do I meet the qualifications?
McDonald's National Employee Scholarship *$1,000* *$5,000*	*High school seniors who work at McDonald's* *(15 hrs/week, 4 months)*	*Fill out application*	*50 $1,000 prizes, one per state,* *one grand prize winner of $5,000*	

1. Has reading about your scholarship options made you more or less comfortable paying for college? Why?

   _____

2. What could you do to improve your chances of receiving a scholarship or financial aid?

   _____

   _____

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