



## GPA Game

### Introduction

The GPA Game engages students in an enjoyable mock-admissions simulation. The purpose is to help students understand the many factors that are weighted in admission decisions and generate thoughtful discussion.

### Materials

- Print the Profile Cards that follow (preferably on cardstock) and fold on the dotted line. This will make a two sided card with the GPA printed on one side and bulleted statements on the back.

### Instructions

- Ask for 8 volunteers. Give each student a Profile Card, and allow a few moments for them to read over the card.
- Have students line up in front of the classroom in order of GPA. Then hold up the card with the GPA facing the remaining students, so only the volunteers can read the information on the back.
- Another student (or an adult) will need to play the Director of Admissions. They will read each statement from directions, and the students will in turn move up or back according to what is written on their Profile Card.
- After all qualities have been read and candidates have been sorted, have the candidates read through the GPAs, pointing out the new order and note which candidates are likely to be admitted.
- One option is to stop after each quality is read in order to discuss why this helped or hindered the candidate. As an example: you may ask, “why do you think it might not be helpful to declare your major as pre-med or psychology?” After reading the “Greek Major” quality, point out that many selective colleges have Classics Professors who are covered with cobwebs and are really hoping to get a few kids in their classes.
- An additional step at the end would be to simulate an admissions review by assigning a “student on paper” to every scholar (or a small group of scholars) and have them create an argument as to why their student should be accepted over another candidate.

### Game Directions

1. If you have taken an exceptionally strong academic program, move up two spaces.
2. If you play a musical instrument in the school band, move up one space.
3. If you clearly stated that this college is your first choice by making an early decision application and commitment, move up two spaces.
4. If your intended major is psychology or pre-med, move back one space.
5. If your intended major is Computer Science, move up one space.
6. If you do not know any of your teachers well enough to ask for a recommendation, move back two spaces.



# CORE PRACTICES

## PATHWAYS



GROUP ACTIVITY

7. If, when you typed your college essay, you forgot to change the name of the college you were applying to, move back three spaces.
8. If you are a legacy, move up two spaces.
9. If you did not write the optional college essay, move back one space.
10. If the topic of your Personal Statement (College Admissions Essay) was sports as a metaphor for life, move back one space.
11. If you wrote a Personal Statement (College Admissions Essay) that was passed around the office because it was so good, move up two spaces.
12. If you plagiarized your Personal Statement (College Admissions Essay) and got caught, sit down—you're out of the competition entirely.
13. If you will be the first in your family to attend college, move up two spaces.
14. If you attended an enriching summer program between your junior and senior years, move up two spaces.
15. If you come from a single-parent household and must work part-time to help with expenses, move up two spaces.
16. If you have participated in no extracurricular activities, move back three spaces.
17. If you have participated in a significant community service project, move up one space.
18. If you are an Eagle Scout, move up two spaces.
19. If you are a varsity athlete, move up one space. If you're all-region in a sport, move up another space.
20. If you earned a "D" in an academic course at the end of your junior year, move back three spaces.
21. If you wrote a letter to the college admission officer and explained the extenuating circumstances surrounding a grade of "D," move up one space.
22. If you decided to protect your GPA by not taking AP classes offered at your school, move back two spaces.
23. If you are in the top 10% of your graduating class, move up two spaces.
24. If the college library is named after a family member, move all the way to the front of the line and stay there.

### Take it from here

- A key takeaway for the students is how important it is to be not only a strong student, but also involved in activities that create a well-rounded profile. Students should also consider how they will be represented on paper when their applications are being reviewed by college admission officers.
  - What were the factors considered during the game? (courses taken, grades received, essays, legacy, recommendations, etc.)
  - Does the highest GPA always determine college admission at a selective college?
  - Does having a mediocre record in high school mean you will never get into your "dream" college?
  - What other factors besides the ones covered in the game can determine where you go to college? (money, proximity to home, diversity, unusual life experiences, etc.)



**GPA**

**4.0**

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**4.0 GPA**

- You're in the top 10% of your class.
- You forgot to change the name of the college when typing the essay that was sent to several different schools



**GPA**

**3.9**

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**3.9 GPA**

- You attended an enriching summer program between your junior and senior year.
- You decided not to take A.P. classes (even though your school offered them) because you wanted to protect your G.P.A.



# GPA

# 3.7

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## **3.7 GPA**

- The topic of your Personal Statement (College Admissions Essay) was sports as a metaphor for life.
- You're an Eagle Scout
- You're all-region in basketball



**GPA**

**3.5**

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**3.5 GPA**

- Your intended major is Computer Science
- You participated in NO extracurricular activities
- You attended an enriching summer program between your junior and senior year.



**GPA**

**3.3**

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### **3.3 GPA**

- You applied early-decision to your first-choice college.
- Your intended major is psychology.
- You plagiarized your Personal Statement (College Admissions Essay) and got caught.



**GPA**

**3.1**

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### **3.1 GPA**

- Your intended major is psychology or pre-med.
- You wrote a Personal Statement (College Admissions Essay) that was passed around the office because it was so good.
- You're the first in your family to attend college.
- You're a varsity athlete.
- You earned a "D" in your junior year but wrote the college to explain extenuating circumstances.
- You've taken an exceptionally strong academic program.





# GPA

# 2.9

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## 2.9 GPA

- You play a musical instrument in the school band.
- You are quiet and don't know your teachers well enough to ask for a recommendation.
- You've participated in community service.
- You've taken an exceptionally strong academic program.
- You're from a single-parent household and must work to help with expenses.



**GPA**

**2.8**

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**2.8 GPA**

- You're a legacy at the college to which you are applying.
- You did not write the optional essay for your college application.
- You've participated in some community service.
- Your family member was a big donor and the college library is named after them.