

MYTH VS. REALITY QUIZ: ANSWER KEY

<p>The standardized tests (ACT, PSAT, SAT) are more important than your high school grades.</p> <p>Your performance in high school is a better predictor of college success than the standardized tests. Colleges know that. That does not mean that most colleges won't look at your SAT or ACT scores. Some state institutions where they have far more applicants than they can fairly assess may use scores to determine if you are eligible.</p>	<p>You can't get into a selective college if you did poorly in ninth and tenth grade.</p> <p>Colleges look for improvement in performance as a sign that you can and will do the work. In fact, a vast improvement as a junior and senior indicates to a college that you have settled down. However, do not expect to catch up for three poor years in one good semester as a senior.</p>	<p>A lot of out-of-class activities will compensate for poor grades.</p> <p>Admittedly, colleges consider out-of-class activities such as athletics, student government, and music when they review an application. But colleges look at your academic performance first. Lots of out-of class activities help only if the college already believes you can do the work. "The thicker the file, the thicker the child" is an expression admissions counselors use when a prospective student submits materials on all that they have done, but they have poor high-school grades.</p>
<p>You should go to the most prestigious college to which you are admitted.</p> <p>You should go to the college that "fits" you best. If it happens to be prestigious, that's fine. However, fit has to do with how you feel when you are on campus, the match with how you learn and how the professors teach, and the academic pressure you can handle. If the college and you are not a good match, you will be unhappy regardless of the prestige</p>	<p>Big colleges are best if you haven't decided on a major field.</p> <p>Many students think because there are more courses to choose from, a large college offers greater options for undecided students. However, choices alone should not be the deciding factor. If you are undecided, the best college is one that has core requirements or distribution requirements that ensure you will explore new areas and fields. Also, look for colleges with the strongest academic advising and career counseling programs regardless of their size. Good advising can help you choose an academic and career path you will enjoy rather than one you think you might like right now.</p>	<p>The best time to visit colleges is after you have been admitted.</p> <p>Many students have fallen for this myth only to find that none of the colleges to which they were admitted "felt" right when they visited. If possible, visit before you apply and again after you have been admitted. If you can visit only once, make it before you apply.</p>
<p>College is only for four years.</p> <p>This is wrong on two fronts: 1) You can't trade in your degree for another one if you didn't go to the best college for you the first time. Your college is with you for life. 2) Only about one of five students</p>	<p>Your life will be ruined if you don't get admitted to your first choice college.</p> <p>Thousands of students each year do not get admitted to their first choice college and most are happy, healthy individuals today. Yes, rejection is hard on your ego, but you will not be alone. Additionally,</p>	<p>Only the very best students receive financial aid from colleges.</p> <p>If you are admitted and have financial need, colleges generally want to make it possible for you to attend. In fact, the greatest proportion of financial assistance at a private colleges tends to go to students in the middle of the class.</p>

<p>completes college in four years. In fact, only two of five students complete college in six years. If you plan to be out of college in four years, learn what each college's four year graduation rate is.</p>	<p>the vast majority of students who settle for their second choice end up happy at that institution anyway. Remember, college admissions, especially at the more selective colleges has to be subjective. With thousands of applications and only a small staff, it is impossible to assess each applicant objectively. Some applications stand out. Some don't.</p>	<p>High-ability students or students with special talents may receive "merit-based scholarships."</p>
<p>Even if I get financial aid, I will have large loans to repay when I graduate.</p> <p>To see that you don't have too much debt at graduation, most colleges only allow you to borrow a reasonable amount. Nationally, on average, students will usually have only \$2500 -\$3500 per year in loans. At most private colleges this represents less than 20 percent of the annual charges. Depending on the loan, you will usually have 10 years to repay and you don't start the repayment until after you graduate. The difference between what you can pay plus a loan, if there is one, will be made up by grants that you will not have to repay.</p>	<p>The federal government provides most of the financial aid.</p> <p>Government funds comprise only a very small proportion of the financial aid available. In fact, the government continually reduces the amount of grant money -- money that does need to be paid back. Private colleges, especially, supply the largest portion of financial aid.</p>	<p>If I haven't heard of a college or university, it can't be very good.</p> <p>You may not hear of many of the nation's finest colleges until you are well into your adult life. Athletics on television is how most colleges get to be known, but many colleges do not get that kind of exposure. Some of the nation's finest colleges don't play big-time athletics. Judge a college on its own merits. Don't let name recognition determine a good or bad college.</p>