

A GUIDEBOOK FOR JUNIORS

College Application Process



PUBLISHED BY

**American Heritage
Guidance Department**

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GUIDANCE WEB PAGE

Go to www.ahschool.com
Click on "Plantation"
Select "Guidance"
Look under "12th Grade"

COUNSELORS

Make an appointment by calling (954) 472-0022 or by emailing:

Academy A-Z	Mr. Robin	X3084	srobin@ahschool.com
Heritage A-GI	Ms. Mandal	X3200	lmandal@ahschool.com
Heritage Go-O	Mrs. Motoyama	X3020	mmotoyama@ahschool.com
Heritage P-Z	Ms. Traslavina	X3055	straslavina@ahschool.com
Director	Mrs. Bennett	X3094	kbennett@ahschool.com

JUNIOR SPRING CONFERENCE:

Students (and their parents) need to make an appointment with their Guidance Counselor to go over college plans, to select senior courses, to prepare a resume and to review the high school transcript (to see that all classes taken in summer school or night school have been recorded). Students need to bring the completed Autobiography form, the Worksheet for Student Resume, and results from a college search at <http://www.guidanceoffice.com/americanheritage>.

SAT I, SAT II, ACT and TOEFL TESTS:

American Heritage's school code for SAT and ACT tests is **101-422**.

Students should take at least two SAT I or ACT tests in the spring of their junior year. SAT II tests should also be taken for subjects in which they might achieve a high score, for subjects they are just completing or for subjects that are required by their prospective college. Check the college web site to see if SAT II tests are required. Colleges use results from these tests for admission and placement. Most colleges require that these tests be taken by December of the senior year.

Test registration forms are available online or in the Upper School Office. Online registration must be done with a credit card. Students may reregister for tests either online or by phone, using a credit card.

SAT:	www.collegeboard.com	(800) 728-7267
ACT:	www.act.org	(800) 525-6926

Sample test questions can be found online. Students should take practice tests to improve scores. Paper copies are available in the Guidance Office. Test dates and registration deadlines are posted in English classrooms. The 2003 and 2004 test dates and deadlines are listed below:

SAT Test Dates (Deadlines)

May 3, 2003 (March 28, 2003)
June 7, 2003 (May 2, 2003)
October 11, 2003 (September 9, 2003)
November 1, 2003 (September 26, 2003)
December 6, 2003 (October 31, 2003)
January 24, 2004 (December 22, 2003)
March 27, 2004 (February 20, 2004)
May 1, 2004 (March 26, 2004)
June 5, 2004 (April 30, 2004)

ACT Test Dates (Deadlines)

June 14, 2003 (May 9, 2003)
Sept. 27, 2003 (Aug. 22, 2003)
October 25, 2003 (Sept. 19, 2003)
December 13, 2003 (Nov. 7, 2003)
February 7, 2004 (Jan. 2, 2004)
April 3, 2004 (February 27, 2004)
June 12, 2004 (May 7, 2004)

SAT I, SAT II, ACT and TOEFL TESTS : (continued)

SAT I, SAT II, ACT and TOEFL TESTS : (continued)

Students need to request that their test scores be sent directly to their prospective colleges. Use our high school code to request scores at the time of taking the test. Scores may also be requested online or by phone, for an additional fee.

Students with a documented learning disability may request a Nonstandard Test, such as an Extended Time Test which is offered at American Heritage. Test dates are announced each year. Documentation must be current (within the last three years), must be signed by a licensed psychologist and must indicate the specific disability and the battery of tests used to determine the disability. Nonstandard Tests may also be taken on regularly scheduled test dates at other test centers.

Some colleges require the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) for students whose native language is not English. Applications are available in the Guidance Office or online (www.toefl.org). TOEFL should be taken in the spring of the junior year or in the fall of the senior year.

REGISTERING WITH THE NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE:

Students who are planning to play Division I or Division II athletics in college need to register with the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Clearinghouse at the beginning of their senior year.

Go to www.ncaaclearinghouse.net to register. Complete the Release Form and bring to Guidance so that your transcript can be sent. Students who have attended more than one high school must send a Release Form to each high school they have attended, requesting a transcript to be sent to NCAA.

SAT/ACT scores may be sent directly to NCAA (code 9999) or sent by Guidance.

Athletes with a diagnosed learning disability must submit documentation of the disability to NCAA (address below); however, no documentation needs to be sent if the student has been approved by SAT or ACT to take a nonstandard test.

Disability Services, NCAA
P.O. Box 6222
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6222
(317) 917-6222

CHOOSING A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY:

Students should start with an original list of 12-14 colleges. Narrow the list to 6-8 colleges that reflect the student's abilities and interests. Perform an online search at <http://www.guidanceoffice.com/americanheritage>. Consider a college's level of difficulty, admission requirements (GPA and test scores), majors offered, geographic location, size, cost, faculty-student ratio, and extracurricular programs, such as athletics and fine arts. The rule of thumb is to apply to two "reach schools," two "realistic schools," and two "safety schools." Ask Guidance for help in determining which schools fit these categories.

COLLEGE RESOURCE MATERIALS:

Use American Heritage's Guidance Web Page to search for information about colleges, scholarships, financial aid, etc. Go to www.ahschool.com, click on "Plantation," select "Guidance" and look under "12th Grade."

Review Peterson's *Get A Jump*, which is given to every student in grades 9-12 at the beginning of each school year. Look at college guidebooks such as *Barrons*, *Petersons*, etc. These books contain detailed information covering all of the factors mentioned in the previous section *Choosing a College*. Search for colleges by major with Collegeboard's *Index of Majors*. Use the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* or the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* to research careers and the projected employment in a particular field or go online to www.bls.gov/oco/. For information on financial aid, use *Need a Lift*, published by American Legion.

Students can also view college catalogs or videos in the Guidance Office or online. All of the above mentioned resources are available in the Guidance Office, at public libraries and in bookstores, such as *Barnes and Noble* or *Borders*.

COLLEGE VISITS:

American Heritage will hold its first annual college fair on Thursday, October 23, from 1-3 P.M.! Several other College Fairs are held locally. In addition, individual college representatives will visit American Heritage's campus in the fall. Some colleges hold information sessions at local hotels.

A schedule of college representative visits is posted in English classrooms and display cases outside the 9000 building and on the morning announcements.

Students are also encouraged to visit colleges in person. They must take a College Visit form (available in the Upper School Office) to the College, have it signed by an Admissions Counselor, and then return it to the Upper School Office to have their absence marked as a school activity.

SENDING COLLEGE APPLICATIONS:

Students need to make an appointment with Guidance to send out college applications. A minimum notice of two weeks is requested in order to process applications, along with recommendation letters, counselor forms, etc.

Students should check carefully the type of admission for which they are applying (early decision, early action, regular admission), the college requirements, and the deadlines. Post dates on a calendar. Students also need to prepare a resume and essay(s) to accompany their application. See Peterson's *Get A Jump* for examples. Have English teacher proofread essay(s).

Students need to fill out requests for recommendation letters. Request forms are available in the Guidance Office and should be given to teachers by the end of the junior year. If colleges require specific forms, give forms to Guidance in the fall.

Students need to bring completed application with check, resume, and essay(s) to Guidance. If students apply to colleges online, they need to download a copy of the application for Guidance. Guidance will review the application with the student and photocopy everything for the student's file. Students who have earned college credits must request that official transcripts from that college be sent to their prospective college(s).

Students may prefer to mail their own applications, but they should allow Guidance to review and photocopy the applications first. All school materials, such as the recommendations and transcript, will be placed in a sealed envelope (not to be opened by the student). This sealed envelope can then be placed inside a larger envelope with the student's application and mailed by the student. Guidance can mail your application by regular US Postal Service. A \$5.00 fee will be charged per application after the first six.

Students may request only one final transcript to be mailed to the college of their choice at the end of the year. Guidance will hand out Final Transcript Request forms in English classes shortly before graduation.

Students need to turn in a copy of all acceptance letters, scholarship awards, etc. to Guidance for record keeping purposes.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID:

Scholarships are available through colleges, organizations and corporations. For scholarship sources, check college web sites or other internet sites, including www.wiredscholar.com, www.fastweb.com and www.salliemae.com. See Guidance Updates and Morning Announcements on the Guidance Web Page.

National Merit Scholarships are awarded for high PSAT scores from the junior year. Colleges or corporations will contact students directly.

Florida Bright Futures Scholarships are outlined in the back of American Heritage's Student Handbook, and on the Guidance Web Page, which provides a direct link to the web site and the student application. Requirements are reviewed annually with all students in grades 9-12. Seniors must apply online by filling out the FFAA (Florida Financial Aid Application) at www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org. This can only be done in the senior year. Students may not apply once they leave high school; therefore, students who are eligible for Bright Futures but do not plan to attend a Florida college should apply anyway, in case they change their mind later.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) may be filed after January 1st of the senior year. This form is required for a student to receive any federal aid or need-based scholarships. Forms are available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Some paper copies are available in the Guidance Office, but FAFSA prefers online applications. Some colleges also request a CSS/Financial Aid form to be completed, in addition to the FAFSA. Check with the individual colleges.

DEADLINES:

Students need to watch college and scholarship application deadlines carefully and turn in applications to Guidance at least two weeks before the deadlines. Counselors process hundreds of applications; therefore, students may not bring in applications a day or two before the deadline and expect everything to be ready in time. Applications for Florida's public universities should be sent in August or September of the senior year for the best chance of acceptance. Students should mail all college applications before Winter Break.