



***FAFSA or TASFA: Which One's Right For Me? – Lesson Plan***

**Grade Level:** 7-9

**Suggested Duration:** 1-2 hours or 1-2 class periods

**Target Audience:** Students in the beginning stages of thinking about possible ways to pay for college

**Educator Video:** "How I Got Here: Maria—Educator-focused Video"

**§110.31. English Language Arts and Reading, English I (One Credit)**

(b) Knowledge and Skills

(23) Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience. Students are expected to synthesize the research into a written or an oral presentation that:

(A) marshals evidence in support of a clear thesis statement and related claims;

(B) provides an analysis for the audience that reflects a logical progression of ideas and a clearly stated point of view;

(C) uses graphics and illustrations to help explain concepts where appropriate.

*We learned from the video that, while Maria dreamed of going to college, she thought her undocumented status would prevent her from doing so. Thanks to her GEAR UP counselor, Maria found out about applying for TASFA, which is different from the FAFSA that most students apply for. In this activity, students will learn the difference between these two applications for student aid and figure out which one is right for them.*

**Student Objective:** Students will create a Venn diagram about the differences and similarities between FAFSA and TASFA to determine which is right for them.

**Lesson Preparation:** While preparing for this lesson with your students, make sure to watch the "How I Got Here: Maria—Educator-focused Video" available on both iTunes U and Project Share under the "Overcoming College Prep Obstacles with Texas GEAR UP" course. The video will provide guidance on how to navigate the lesson with your students and highlight the key messages for them to take away.

**Teacher Direction:** Play the "How I Got Here: Maria—Student-focused Video" for your class or student. Video is available on both iTunes U and Project Share under the "Overcoming College Prep Obstacles with Texas GEAR UP" course.

For this activity, students will end up completing a Venn diagram. If they need to be reminded of what this type of graphic organizer is, please take time to remind them where the information belongs on the diagram.

Divide students into groups of 2 or 3. Once they're in their groups, assign them the number 1 or 2.

Tell students that those in Group 1 will be responsible for researching information about FAFSA. Group 2 students will research information about TASFA.

Pass out the FAFSA or TASFA: Which One's Right for Me? Worksheet. Allow students to research for the next 10 minutes in their groups using a computer or mobile device. **All** members of the group should take notes in the designated section of the FAFSA vs. TASFA: Which One's Right for Me? Worksheet (#1). Students should list at least eight facts.

After they've had time to research, ask students to find a partner with a different number (bring the 1s and 2s together). Give each pair a total of 6 minutes (3 minutes each) to discuss what they learned about the FAFSA or TASFA. The listener should take notes to fill in the information on their "Notes" section.

Teacher Dialogue (directed to students):

*Talk about determination! Maria tells us she was afraid of applying to college because she was undocumented. Luckily, her GEAR UP counselor helped her understand her options. For Maria, applying for the TASFA helped her figure out how she would pay for college. For others, the FAFSA may be a better option. In this activity, we'll learn how the two avenues for applying for student aid are similar and also how they're different.*

*Once you learn which version you'll research, dig in using the following sites to guide you. You'll have about 10 minutes to complete this portion.*

*FAFSA: <https://fafsa.ed.gov> or <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa>*

*TASFA: <https://collegeforalltexas.com>*

Finally, distribute the FAFSA or TASFA Venn Diagram Worksheet to each student. Have students return to their original groups and complete their Venn diagram with all information gained (differences *and* similarities) about each.

When students finish, ask them to *think* about which option will be best for them. Please do not ask them to share their answers, as this is a private matter for some students.