



College Safety – Lesson Plan

Grade Level: 12

Suggested Duration: 2 hours or 2 class periods

Target Audience: Students who may wish to explore safety issues on college campuses

Video: “How I Got Here: Elvia”

§110.34. English Language Arts and Reading, English IV (One Credit)

(b) Knowledge and Skills

(12) Reading/Media Literacy. Students use comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts. Students are expected to:

(A) evaluate how messages presented in media reflect social and cultural views in ways different from traditional texts;

(B) evaluate the interactions of different techniques (e.g., layout, pictures, typeface in print media, images, text, sound in electronic journalism) used in multi-layered media;

(C) evaluate how one issue or event is represented across various media to understand the notions of bias, audience, and purpose; and

(D) evaluate changes in formality and tone across various media for different audiences and purposes.

(16) Writing/Persuasive Texts. Students write persuasive texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues. Students are expected to write an argumentative essay (e.g., evaluative essays, proposals) to the appropriate audience that includes:

(A) a clear thesis or position based on logical reasons with various forms of support (e.g., hard evidence, reason, common sense, cultural assumptions);

(B) accurate and honest representation of divergent views (i.e., in the author's own words and not out of context);

(C) an organizing structure appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context;

(D) information on the complete range of relevant perspectives;

(E) demonstrated consideration of the validity and reliability of all primary and secondary sources used;

(F) language attentively crafted to move a disinterested or opposed audience, using specific rhetorical devices to back up assertions (e.g., appeals to logic, emotions, ethical beliefs); and

(G) an awareness and anticipation of audience response that is reflected in different levels of formality, style, and tone.

§111.43. Mathematical Models with Applications, Adopted 2012 (One Credit)

(c) Knowledge and Skills

(1) Mathematical process standards. The student uses mathematical processes to acquire and demonstrate mathematical understanding. The student is expected to:

(A) apply mathematics to problems arising in everyday life, society, and the workplace.

Elvia's mom was not too excited about her daughter going off to college—especially in a different city. Concern about Elvia's safety was one source of her hesitation. Fortunately, there are many resources to help students and parents become informed on safety issues, and hopefully put some of their fears to rest. After all, knowledge is power!

Student Objective: Students will utilize a tool that provides campus safety statistics; identify aspects of the public safety infrastructure common on many campuses; and write a persuasive and reassuring letter to their parents about college safety.

Lesson Preparation: While preparing for this lesson with your students, make sure to watch the “How I Got Here: Elvia” video first. (Please note that the U.S. Department of Education website used in this lesson lists rates for various sex-related crimes. Educators may wish to review <http://ope.ed.gov/campussafety> ahead of time.)

Teacher Direction: Play the “How I Got Here: Elvia” video for your class and have students speculate on Elvia's mother's emotions and make a connection to students' own experiences.

Possible Teacher Dialogue (directed to students):

In the video you saw Elvia talk about her mom not wanting her to go to college—do you remember why her mom hesitated? Do you know anyone whose parents were not too excited about their kids going away to college? What were the reasons? (Elicit “safety” as one reason.)

Next, dig deeper into safety issues.

Possible Teacher Dialogue (directed to students):

One of the things people worry a lot about is personal safety at college. After all, you might be in a new city, without parents making sure you're home safe before curfew. Many of you will live among many strangers in a dorm or apartment. You might see drugs or alcohol in college. You might have to walk across campus late at night, alone. These things can appear scary.

However, rest assured that campus security is a high priority at most colleges, and there are many services to help ensure students are safe. And remember, the drug and crime rate is often lower on college campuses than it is in many cities.

Then introduce the U.S. Department of Education's Campus Safety and Security website: <http://ope.ed.gov/campussafety>

Possible Teacher Dialogue (directed to students):

One of the best ways to mitigate fear is to get informed. You've heard that knowledge is power, and that's the case here. Getting informed so you can make sound decisions is part of growing up, after all. Today we'll explore an information treasure trove: the U.S. Department of Education's Campus Safety and Security website.

Spend a few minutes exploring the features of the site with students. Together, look up crime statistics for a nearby college. Compare crime statistics of colleges suggested by students. Offer some higher-thinking exercises as well, such as:

- Raw numbers vs. rates: When comparing campuses in Step 4 of the website comparison tool, be sure to click the "Number per 1,000 students" button, as well as the "Total Number" button. Explain that the "Number per 1,000 students" is a better tool to use for an apples-to-apples comparison because it adjusts for population.
- Crime reporting: The website shows that The University of Texas at Austin (UT) had 43 burglaries in 2014, while Texas A&M University (TAMU) only had seven. Explain to students that this looks like a huge difference, especially considering that TAMU has a larger student population. Ask students if factors such as population density in the surrounding city or differences in reporting rates could play a role in the numbers. In other words, advise students to take statistics with a grain of salt. This website should be considered a starting point for their research on campus safety.

In the next hour or lesson, ask students to review the campus safety websites of the five largest four-year colleges in Texas. If they prefer, they may research campus safety websites for other colleges not on this list. Ask them to write a persuasive letter to their parent(s) or guardian(s) describing how safe the college they selected for the exercise is. Ask students to peer review drafts and revise accordingly. Consider sending stellar letters to the universities themselves as examples of student enthusiasm for their programs.

Texas A&M University: <http://www.tamu.edu/emergency/index.html>

The University of Texas at Austin: <https://operations.utexas.edu/units/csas/>

The University of Texas at Arlington: <http://police.uta.edu/>

University of Houston: <http://www.uh.edu/police/home.html>

University of North Texas: <http://police.unt.edu/>