

 **BUILDING BLOCKS STUDENT WORKSHEET**

Planning your financial path to college graduation

After you graduate from high school, you'll have many options for continuing your education. Most of those options will cost money.

Understanding how much college might cost and ways to cover those costs can help you start planning your education path after high school.

Instructions

- 1 Review the scenario below.
- 2 Follow the instructions below and refer to the "Emmett compares three financial aid offers" handout to use the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's "Your financial path to graduation" tool.
- 3 Record the answers from the tool on the worksheet.
- 4 Answer the reflection questions.

Scenario

Imagine that your friend Emmett has been accepted to three colleges, and each school offered him a financial aid package. He's asked for your help understanding these financial aid offers so he has a true sense of what his actual costs will be.

Figuring out Emmett's costs to attend college

1. Write your assigned school's name in the blank space above the table on the next page.
2. Go to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's "Your financial path to graduation" tool at <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/gradpath>.
3. Review the instructions and click the "Get started" button to begin.



4. Enter your assigned school's name in the tool.
 - You'll find the name of your imaginary college in the tool.
5. Complete the questions in the tool by using data from the handout where possible and your own creative answers when you don't have specific information.
 - Note: To enter the handout's Parent PLUS loan amounts, go to the tool's section list at the top of the page on the left side. Click "Covering your costs" and then "Make a plan." On the "Make a plan to cover this year's costs" page, scroll down to the "Parent PLUS loan" line and enter the amount from the handout.
6. Enter the totals for each category in the table below.

Name of assigned school: _____

School & living situation	Costs	Grants & scholarships
Work-study	Federal loans	Other sources

Helping Emmett plan for the future

Once you've entered all the information into the tool, review the tool's final three sections: "Covering your costs," "Affording your loans," and "Worth your investment." As you review each section, answer the following questions:

1. **Covering your costs:** What strategies might Emmett use to save money on the cost of his student loans?

2. **Affording your loans:** Based on the information in this section, what advice would you give Emmett about taking on this much debt?
3. **Worth your investment:** Do you think the loans Emmett and his parents would take out to go to this school are worth the investment? Why or why not?

Reflection questions

Three strategies high school students can use to help pay college costs are:

- Start reviewing grants and scholarships
- Make a budget and start saving
- Get college credits in high school through special courses or programs

Which strategy would work best for you? Why did you choose that strategy?