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How to Build an Impressive Resume for College Admissions



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“

INTRODUCTION

When you apply to college, admission officers look at more than just your grades — they also take note of what you have done outside the classroom. Your extracurricular activities, such as jobs, sports, clubs and volunteer work, give colleges a better sense of who you are and show them what you can bring to their campus community.

Since applying to college is a very competitive process, developing a well-crafted student resume can put you ahead of other applicants. So, how do we prepare our impressive resume for college admissions?

Read on to find out the answers from six professionals!

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JENNIFER CHIN
FOUNDER & CEO

WHIZPA



Whizpa.com is one of Hong Kong's leading online education platforms, helping to connect families with educators and activity providers. We enable parents to search for, review, and sign up for kids' activities and classes all on one convenient platform.

With over 6,000 providers listed on Whizpa.com, it is now easier than ever for parents to find the right programs for their children!

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JOHN JALSEVAC

School Director

American School Hong Kong

Complete the IBDP

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme provides a holistic curriculum where students can thrive and grow. Through the different approaches to teaching and learning, it encourages students to become globally-minded citizens, promoting compassion and an understanding of intercultural differences - both key skills highly prized by employers today.

The IBDP is recognized worldwide for producing students that are well prepared for university study. Universities look favorably on students who have completed this program since it shows a greater likelihood of success at university. Hence, the IBDP provides the golden passport to students, as it opens opportunities for students to attend both local and international institutions. The diverse opportunities extend beyond university, as this programme is also recognized by employers more than others, providing a wider range of career opportunities in an increasingly interconnected world.

Maintain strong grades from grade 9 and up

Taking ASHK as an example, in high school, students are given a wide array of learning opportunities in a supportive and rigorous environment. Universities often take a close look at students' high school scores to see how a student has performed. When applying to university, a student's grade 10 and 11 transcripts are sent to universities before final grades are determined. Therefore, it is important to maintain strong grades.

At ASHK, students learn about self-awareness and discipline as they balance academics, athletics, arts, and service. The grade 9 and 10 programs are aligned with American and International curriculum standards, promoting critical and analytical thinking. This allows for a smooth transition into grades 11 and 12 where students will study the IB Diploma Programme. In addition, ASHK provides college counseling and career guidance for students, including support and assistance for those students choosing to take SATs. Opportunities for students to interact with representatives from top US and Canadian universities will be made available.

Get involved in sports, clubs, and school ECA's

The best way to support students' holistic development is to offer a wide assortment of Extra-Curricular Activities outside of the classroom and to encourage students to participate in ones that meet their interests and needs, and this is also what we do at ASHK.

Moreover, universities want well-rounded students who show interest in more than just academics. Participating in activities such as clubs, service activities, performing arts, and sports allow students to practice communication skills. It is important that students learn to respect the rights and contributions of others and appreciate the importance of teamwork. One of the goals at ASHK is to develop students collaboration, teamwork, and leadership skills, which are all highly valued at university.

Volunteer in the community

Students can look for opportunities to volunteer in areas that they are passionate about, and where they feel they can make contributions to. By joining volunteering activities, it shows that students are all-rounded, they care about the community and the world, and not only focus on academics. Students can look for volunteering opportunities both within the school or outside of the school. For example, they can talk to their teachers or counselors and discover what opportunities are available.

The experience in volunteering can be valuable for students. Students should view it positively and think of it as a chance to expand their network, learn more about the world, and relieve stress from their academics, if there is any. By volunteering in the community, it shows leadership and commitment, which is something that students can write about in their university applications. Perhaps it's a highlight that students can mention during their university admissions interviews!

Develop excellent time management skills

Students may find that they have a busy schedule in their high school studies. By developing their time management skills, it can help students to maintain a high grade point average and balance the time between school and other activities such as sports, arts, and volunteering. The ability to manage deadlines and complete work in a timely manner may also be reported on by those who write the letters of recommendation.

Time management reflects the planning capability of a person. People who do careful planning are more likely to succeed not only at school, but also in their future careers. Students can make good use of technology to help their planning, for example making use of a calendar app to remind them of the activities that they need to participate in, or using project management tools such as Trello to manage and prioritize their tasks.

Attend career webinars and/or internships

These opportunities allow students to make better choices about what their future careers might be, which in turn, allows them to choose the best university programs for themselves. Students can

share what they learned during internships on their applications; it shows interest and commitment to study towards a specific career.

It is good if students can understand their strengths and weaknesses at an early stage. It can help them to think about what university programs they want to enrol into, which has a great impact on the choice of their future careers. By attending career webinars, they may have the opportunity to understand more about different industries. Sometimes employers may even arrange job shadowing for high school students, which gives students a chance to understand the day in the life of a job. And by doing internships, students can gain real life experience and understand how working is like. These are all valuable experiences which help university applications.

Demonstrate good written English

Make sure the university applications and personal statements are well written with no spelling or grammatical errors. Since English is the language of instruction at most universities, they want to see that students can write English at an academic level. Do not use fancy language or write too many words; be clear and concise with the writing. It is important to have different people, such as teachers or parents, to proofread the essays before sending them out to the universities.



American School Hong Kong is an international school which offers a holistic American education, taught by North American teachers. The school is operated by Esol Education, bringing 40 years experience in operating K-12 international schools and currently educating 10,000 pupils in 11 schools across three continents. ASHK delivers a rigorous curriculum, focused on developing well-rounded, motivated, and thoughtful global citizens. It equips students with the academic, social, and entrepreneurial skills required for success in the 21st century.

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JULIANNA YAU

Founder

Ampla Education

The college application cycle never ends. As soon as one class is done, the next one is already beginning. The majority of college admission results are about to come out this week, so congratulations to this year's applicants for getting through one of the toughest tests you have ever faced!

Meanwhile, college admissions offices will be catching up on a little bit of rest before turning their attention to next year's class.

If you are applying to college next year, you might already be thinking about how you can prepare. The summer before your application is a great time to review your resume and consider how you might put together the best profile to present in the Fall. Think about all of the things that you do, what they mean to you, and how you might explain them to a college admissions officer who is keen to learn more about you. Here are seven things that they often look for:

Community Service

Community service covers a broad range of activities. Maybe you have raised money for a charity, volunteered at a food bank, or coached someone in a mentorship program. Service features prominently in the activities of many colleges, who have important civic missions as educational institutions. Thus, they value community members who know how to connect with and give back to other people. Think about the times that you have volunteered your time and effort. How have you made a difference? What did you find most memorable or rewarding?

Sports

If you play sports at a high level, or even just recreationally, colleges like to know about it. Sporting competitions can bring out valuable qualities in people, like teamwork, sportsmanship, etc. Many colleges recruit talented players for their teams, so if you play at a high level, you could reach out to the coaches to see if they need you. Even if you play only recreationally, physical fitness is an important indicator of physical and mental balance that colleges like to see in successful students, so definitely mention your sporting hobbies on your application.

Leadership

Leadership is sometimes easy to see from a title, like if you are the president of a club. Other times, leadership is revealed as you answer some common college application questions – for example, you might write an essay about how you led a group of your friends to overcome a difficult challenge. Many colleges will say that they aim to train the “future leaders” of the world, so they value leadership qualities in their students. You can also use this as an opportunity to show them how you interact and cooperate with other people.

Fine Arts

Many students have talents in music, performing, or visual arts. Often, these things take lots of practice over many years, so they demonstrate positive qualities of commitment and mastery of skills. These are desirable qualities to have in a student. Besides, depending on the circumstances, colleges often recruit for specific talents to fill gaps in their student body. If you practice art at a high level and believe that you could make a direct contribution in that regard, you might consider submitting a portfolio of your work. A portfolio is a specialized piece of application material that takes some thought and preparation, so get started early if you are considering it.



Unique Experiences

A common college application essay choice invites you to talk about your experiences growing up. Some students like to write about unique experiences that have shaped them in a special way. For example, some people spend significant time in a foreign country, have a distinctive cultural background, or have special family traditions. Often, there are specific stories that encapsulate those experiences and make for an attractive application essay. As you tell your story, remember that the reader may not have the same cultural perspective, so think about how to help the reader understand and appreciate your story, as well as to see the positive qualities that it shows about you.

Interest in the College

Colleges are always looking for students who will make the most positive contribution to their community. One factor is whether you have a demonstrated interest in that specific college. Experience shows that students with a deep interest in a college are more likely to attend and do well if admitted. If you have a specific connection through family or friends, you can note that on your application. You can also show interest by visiting the campus, attending information sessions, and paying attention to the promotional materials sent by the college. This will also help you prepare for the popular essay question, "Why do you want to attend X college?"

English Skills

English skills are critically important for all applicants. Many colleges require you to take four years of English classes at the high school level before you can even apply. It goes to show the importance of English reading and writing for success in college. If you are an international applicant, you might be required to take a

language proficiency test, usually TOEFL or IELTS. If so, study well and get a good score. But everyone should understand that good test scores, alone, are not enough. Use the essays as an opportunity to show off your ability to express ideas through writing at college-ready level.

You might have experience with any or many of the above. Brainstorm some of your favorites and document the stories surrounding them. Together, they will create a more complete picture of you as a candidate. You can read other people's stories for inspiration, but everyone's stories are different, and you will have to come up with your own that reflect your unique character. The important thing is to understand why your experiences are meaningful to you, and to convey that in a genuine and heart-felt way. Your passion will make you stand out in the applicant pool.



With tutors experienced in local and overseas education systems, Ampla Education specialises in school admissions and after-school tutorial services, and helps students achieve their academic goals by delivering high quality teaching.

By combining the best teaching methods around the world, Ampla offers tailor-made classes specific to students' needs, optimising their performance inside and outside school.

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GERRY CHU

Director

Apply Ivy

The first step in building an impressive resume for college admissions is to take some time to reflect on 3 important questions:

1. What are your strengths?
2. What are your interests?
3. What do you want to study in college?

Why are these questions important?

Because your answers to these questions should be apparent when someone reads your resume. For example, if you have an interest in public speaking and global events, you could participate in school activities including Model UN and Debate. Joining these types of activities and developing your public speaking skills while gaining experience and accomplishments over time will highlight your commitment to your interests, the skills you have developed, and hopefully, how these relate to what you want to study in college.

It's ok if you aren't sure what you want to study in college, but it is always a good idea to have an interest that you can develop related to a major/area of study that you can pursue in college. The reason is that if you have a specific interest, you can start to build your resume and gain experiences related to your interests and potential major/area of study.

Stand out through your activities

This is an area that you can do a lot to

stand out. Are you deeply involved in some school activities? Highlight your accomplishments and distinctions. You can also mention responsibilities that you have taken on and leadership that you have demonstrated. Activities outside of school can be another important entry in your resume. These can come in any form, from sports and music to more niche interests like building drones and film making. Any activity can be significant if you demonstrate dedication, continued improvement and progression, and leadership.

Get involved in community service

Colleges love to see community service in your resume. Any service activity shows that you are interested in giving back to the community while helping give you new perspectives of the world around us. Leveraging your interests can make volunteering even more meaningful. For example, if you play a musical instrument and use your talents and skills in this area to provide lessons to kids who don't have access to musical instruction, this combination can make your involvement in this activity even more significant.

Include your academics

While colleges will primarily see your academic achievements in your transcript and grade reports, you should still have a section in your resume about your academics. A strong resume will

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I had no knowledge of US applications but Apply Ivy relentlessly helped me build my essays 'fit for an Ivy', with fine subtleties that highlighted a different aspect of me for each university. Their knowledge about what each admission committee looked for was priceless and I could not have submitted a stronger application. When it came down to picking the right school out of all my acceptances, their concern for my academic and social nourishment at each university was what made the advice so valuable. Apply Ivy not only drastically changes your chances of acceptance at the top schools, but I believe working with them on such a personal level brings you to a new level of self discovery.

”

include your achievements in academics, especially as it relates to your potential major/area of study. Good grades and relevant courses should be included. You can also supplement this section with online classes taken outside of school and any summer courses.

Don't forget about any work experience

While many college applicants may not have work experience, it is something that can certainly add to a resume. Having a job or internship can demonstrate important skills including teamwork, communication, responsibility, and leadership.

Be sure to think about the person reading your resume and proofread it

What can the reader tell about you after reading it? They should be able to answer those 3 questions from the first tip and be able to tell what your interests are, what your strengths are, and what you plan to study in college. Also, make sure that your resume is easy to read and makes sense by organizing it well.

Reviewing your resume is a good practice to make sure there aren't any typos or grammatical errors. It is also always helpful to share your resume with others

to make sure it all reads coherently and is well-organized.

Start planning early

A key difference between a good resume and a great resume is planning ahead early. If you can start thinking about your interests and how to dive into these interests to build experience and accomplishments earlier, you will have the time to build a strong resume by the time you start working on your college applications. Feel free to contact Apply Ivy to learn more about how we help students build a strong resume and distinguish themselves through the college application process.



Apply Ivy is a team of expert educational consultants. For over 15 years, we have helped students prepare for and apply to universities, colleges, and boarding schools in the US, UK, and Canada.

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DR. ANGELINA K.Y. LO

Founder Director

CreativeKids™

A Visual Voice

Adolescence can be a turbulent time for many teenagers. Pressure to conform to peers and standardised assessment may make teenagers, especially those with unconventional interests and strengths, feel undervalued. Art offers a visual voice for teenagers to express their unique personality and perception of the world. Exposure to art develops self-understanding and enhances a creative spirit that turns a dreamer into a doer through visualising and implementing ideas. Teenagers can look beyond present constraints to new possibilities, turning what is to what can be. An art portfolio can be a mirror, besides academic performance, to reflect an individual's unique strengths and skills. It can also be a strong supplement to a non-art-major application to a university by demonstrating above-average visual art ability and personal area of interest. There are some practical ways to build a portfolio that contributes to an impressive application to art/design/architecture schools or university programs.

Art Portfolio - Product

A portfolio is a body of artwork, design outcomes and creative products that showcase an individual's best potential as an art/design/architecture student. The creative products can be drawings, paintings, photographs, videos,

sculptures, installations, prototypes, digital images or experimental expressions. These creative outcomes should reflect the individual's ideas and visualising skills, such as observational drawing of life model, still life or landscape. Portfolio reviewers are looking not necessarily for images of realism but the ability to translate 3D objects or scenes into 2D space. Referencing too heavily on secondary sources (e.g. photos from the internet) is not advisable. Applying for a reputable art/design/architecture school is competitive. Parents do not have to be artists or designers themselves but they can advise their teenagers to meet the specific requirements and submission deadlines. Some art schools require further creative challenges to be supplemented after initial portfolio submission.

Art Portfolio - Process

It is common for sketchbooks to be part of the required submission. A sketchbook demonstrates the exploratory process: research, ideation and material experimentation. An impressive art portfolio is not just a 'catalog of beautifully finished artwork' but a well-organised document of explorations, with trials and errors, failed attempts and records of an individual's growth as a creative thinker and problem-solver. Mind-maps, collages of research information and annotated diagrams can richly illustrate the birth and development of ideas. The portfolio reviewer or college admissions officer can gain insights into an individual's ideation habits, problem-solving strategies and a variety of styles, media, approaches and visual language. A sketchbook is an accumulation of creative efforts over time and cannot be crammed. Starting early in the school term and effective time management are crucial to success.

Art Portfolio - Person

The college admission officers and reviewers are evaluating portfolios to

The portfolio class was a sanctuary for my daughter during her stressful IB years. Being a creative introvert, she naturally found her voice in creating her art portfolio. It gave me tremendous pleasure seeing her gain confidence through the experience.

admit creative people, not products. By looking at a series of art/design works, they find clues to an individual's capability, creativity and versatility to determine if he/she would be a good fit to their school or university culture. The art portfolio ideally carries a creative voice that communicates a person's sense of individuality and values. The body of works should be a reflection of a unique eye for aesthetic enjoyment or critique of the world around us. An important reminder is that all works of art or design submitted must be original creations. Plagiarism or paid artwork will be considered unethical and a violation of copyright law.

Art Portfolio - Presentation

Requirements of portfolio submission usually have definitive parameters. There are ways to organise the flow of art/design works (usually 10-20 digital images of recent works) into an appealing portfolio, not a random collection of pictures.

- Visual appeal - Create a consistent look by using a grid (to organise images and text), an appropriate font (style and size) and an uncluttered layout (without unnecessary graphics). The visual arrangement displays an individual's thinking and technical skills.
- Story appeal - The order of the art/design pieces is important especially if they can tell a story of the individual's journey with ideas and media exploration. The first and last images must be chosen carefully to arouse interest and to make a memorable impression. Writing concise captions for each art/design piece can create continuity that links together a diverse range of content, style and media.

Art Portfolio - Perspective

Art is a process of making choices on different elements, e.g. topics, techniques and tools. Building an art portfolio calls for choices of art pieces that demonstrate not just artistic abilities but also creative

content that shows the individual's own stories, experiences and unique perspective of the world. Applying to art/design/architecture schools also involves choosing the learning culture and environment most compatible to an individual's strengths and aspiration. Making these important choices can be daunting to many teenagers who are still struggling with academic studies and personal growth. Parental and professional guidance will be a timely and invaluable compass to help teenagers navigate through these struggles.



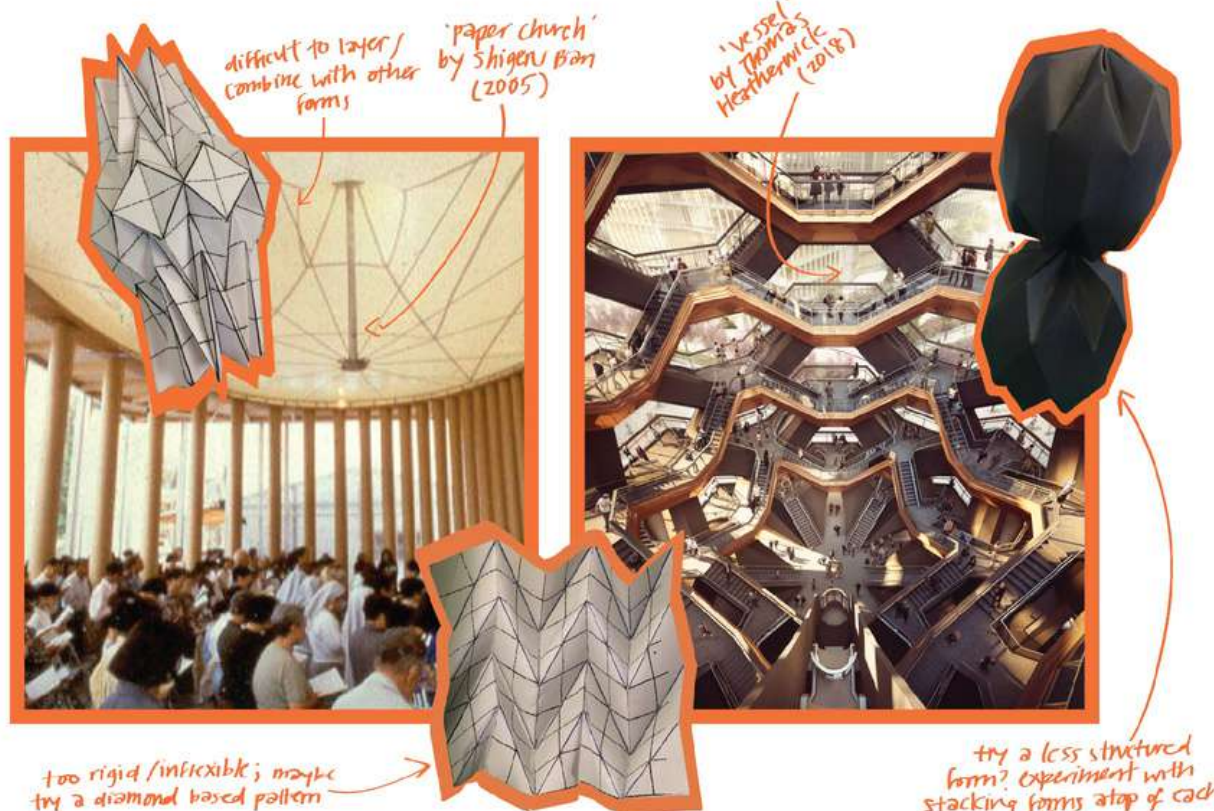
Since 1991, CreativeKids has committed to advance creative development in children and teenagers, bond families and mobilise communities with art, design and architecture programs. The comprehensive and age-appropriate after-school art and design programs for youngsters aged 1.5 to 18 are designed to foster flexibility and adaptability to flourish in the ever-changing world of the 21st century.

With an expanding student and alumni body, professional team and scope of services, CreativeKids has ignited a creative spirit in the community, collaborated with schools, organisations and corporations, and reached out to families from diverse backgrounds. As a recipient of local and international awards, CreativeKids is affirmed as being at the forefront of creative art and design education, as well as research and development of innovative teaching and learning approaches.

CreativeKids is characterised by long-term enrolment of many students who are guided to develop personalised portfolios for interviews, assessments, competitions and applications to well-established schools, universities and colleges.

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From a Portfolio to a Future

Individualized portfolio-building program for students aged 14+

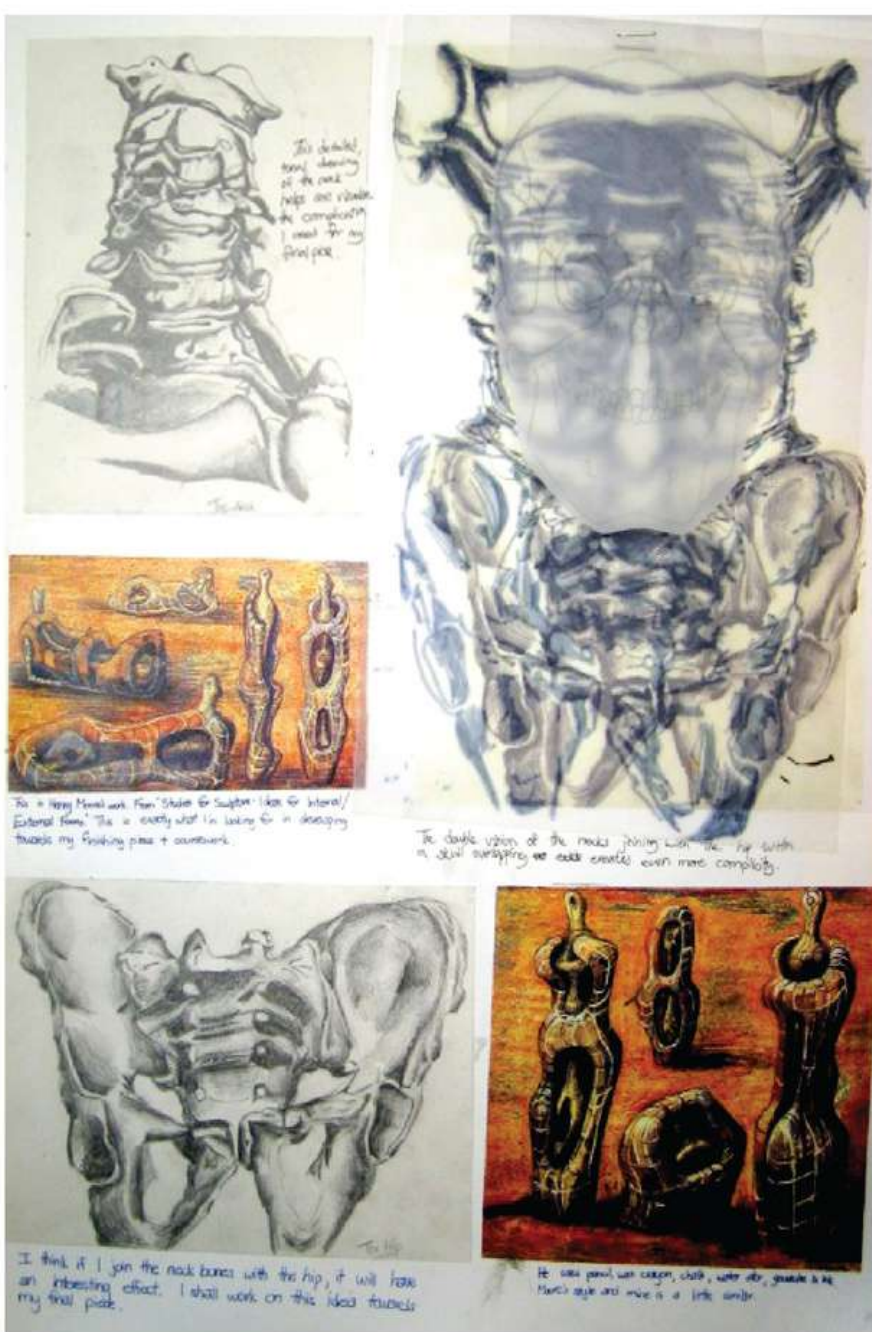
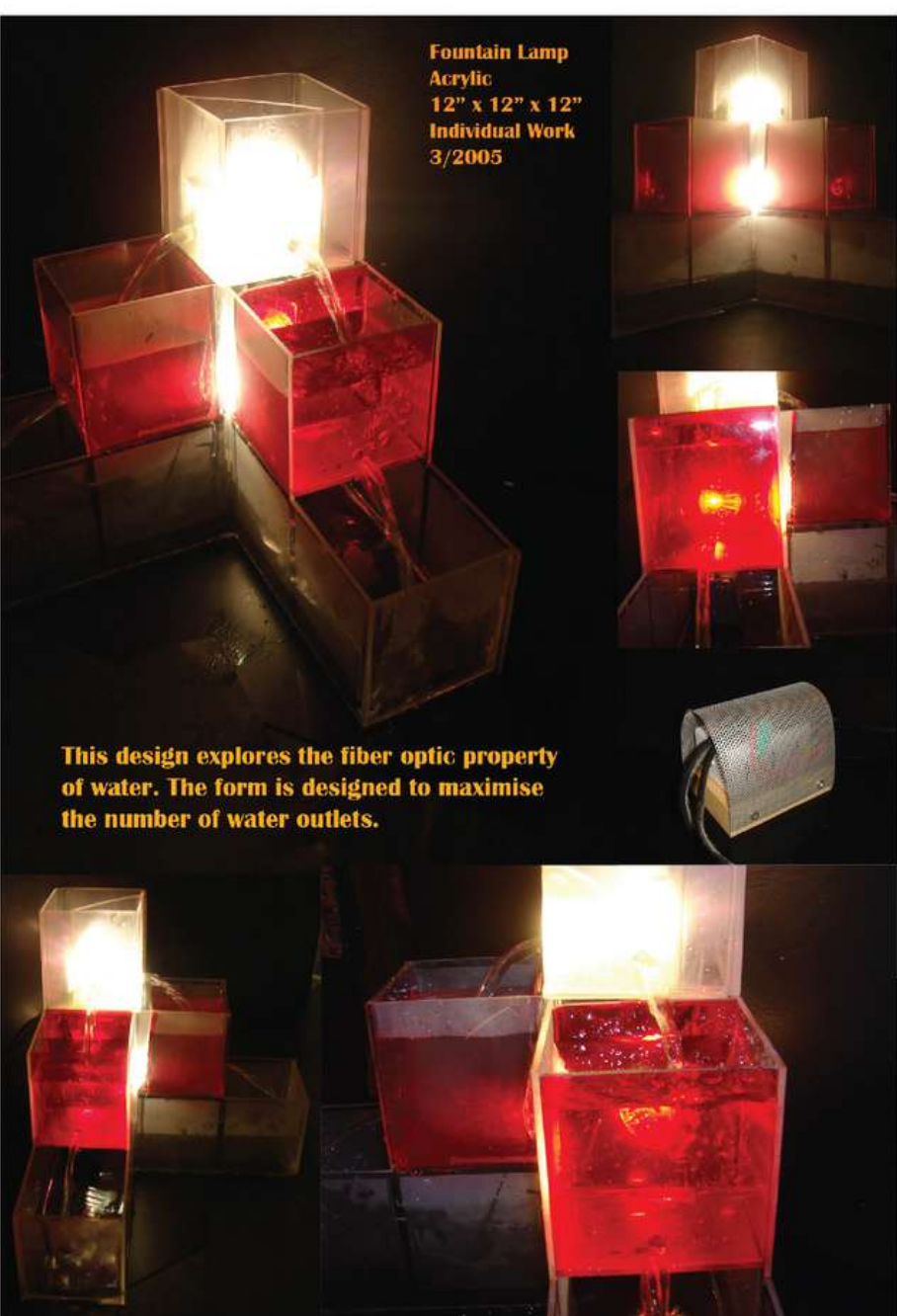
This tailor-made program has been recognized as highly effective in helping students build a body of artwork in an impressive manner for interviews, assessments, competitions and admissions to reputable art / design / architecture schools and universities. Its individualized nature offers flexibility to students who wish to discover and present their unique strengths and styles that set them apart among competition locally and abroad.

Book a consultation at info@creativekids.com.hk



Record of students' acceptance into art, design or architecture programs in schools or universities

- Academy of Art University
- Architectural Association School of Architecture
- Art Institute of Chicago
- Cambridge University
- Cardiff University
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Central Saint Martins College of Arts & Design
- Cooper Union
- Cornell University
- Emily Carr University of Art and Design
- Hong Kong Polytechnic University
- Kingston University
- London College of Fashion
- Loughborough University
- Maryland Institute College of Art
- Minneapolis College of Art and Design
- New York University
- Ontario College of Art & Design University
- Oxford Brookes University
- Oxford University
- Parsons The New School for Design
- Pitzer College
- Pratt Institute
- Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication
- Rhode Island School of Design
- RMIT University, Hong Kong Art School
- Ryerson University
- Savannah College of Art & Design
- School of Visual Arts
- Technical University of Delft
- The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- The University of Edinburgh
- The University of Hong Kong
- The University of Manchester
- UCL Bartlett School of Architecture
- UCL Slade School of Fine Art
- University of Bath
- University of Brighton
- University of British Columbia
- University of California, San Diego
- University of Glasgow
- University Of Huddersfield, UK and Hong Kong College of Technology
- University of Nottingham
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Southern California
- University of New South Wales
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Yale University



From a picture to a future

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Constructive Creativity in Children & Community

Find us on:





TERESA TUNG

Secondary School Principal

Hong Kong Academy

Focus on quality over quantity

It's okay for a secondary school student to not fully know what their passions are or what they want to do in the future, and instead to show a range of different interests and experiences in the university application process. It's important, though, to be intentional about what one includes and why. Rather than compiling the longest possible list of every different activity, committee and club a student has been involved in, highlight experiences that have been personally fulfilling.

Express a journey

College admissions officers know that high school is a time of exploration. Through the creation of a resume, a student can express the journey that they've been on, choosing examples of what they have done that collectively tell the story of who they are as learners and community members. If a student has stopped doing something, they should be prepared to explain why. Likewise, if they have started something new, they should share how it has contributed to their growth.

Demonstrate one's contributions

How will a university applicant be a positive influence on a new community? Will they be someone who works well with others and contributes to a future college or university? To convince university admissions teams that an applicant will be a good fit for their community, it helps to see how that individual has connected to others within their current school community and beyond. Students should share ways that they have interacted with others as a collaborator and contributor, how they have led and how they have integrated, what they have learned about teamwork and how they will apply that learning to their next setting.

If someone Googles "how to write a High School resume," they will find a vast array of tips, tricks and resources from around the world. Most articles focus on the development of the resume itself, offering suggestions like "keep it concise," or "format it professionally," helping students with the actual technical act of putting together a resume rather than delving into what a resume truly reflects and represents.

The following tips go beyond the technical act of writing a resume and provide ideas for how a student might showcase who they are as both a learner and global citizen. Through an intentionally reflective process that spans the years of secondary school, a student can demonstrate why they are the right fit for a university and inspire an admissions team to determine, "Yes, this is someone we want to join us!"

Be true to oneself

High school students often wonder, "What do college admissions officers want to see on my resume?" What they want to see is a unique and interesting individual. Secondary School is an important time to discover one's interests, skills and talents and uncover what one values and how they want to contribute to the world. Rather than trying to engage in experiences that look good on paper, students should focus on the experiences that immerse them in a feeling of energised focus.



Hone critical and creative thinking skills

It has become increasingly apparent that to succeed as learners and to thrive in the world of work, skills are just as, if not more, important than knowledge. Students with strong information literacy and research skills are flexible, adaptive and agile.

Individuals who can identify problems, propose innovative solutions and evaluate a range of outcomes have the capacity to contribute in dynamic and meaningful ways. Applicants who can demonstrate the ways they bring critical and creative thinking skills together will really shine.

Earn intentional credentials

There are seemingly infinite badges, workshops and assessments available for today's students to complete, earning some sort of credential in the process. Rather than taking every possible test or course, students should focus on the ones that will best highlight their academic strengths and aptitudes based on where they want to go after secondary school. By working with the adults in one's school, a student can be sure to match where they want to go with how they spend their time during and beyond the school day. At HKA, our Post-Secondary Counsellor and IBDP Coordinator work closely with students and parents to determine the academic courses and co-curricular activities that are the best fit for their future ambitions and map out a pathway to develop and emphasise the areas that will prepare a student to pursue those next steps.

Curate one's digital footprint

In today's world, a resume is only a tiny slice of what an admissions committee looks at to find out about an applicant. One quick Google search or social media check can be much more revealing than an application itself, underscoring the importance of actively managing one's social media presence and digital footprint. This also means that students can effectively leverage social media to tell their story in a positive way. If a school provides opportunities for students to create online portfolios, like the Global Citizen Diploma we have here at HKA, these digital spaces can complement and strengthen the formal resume submitted through the university application process.



Hong Kong Academy is a non-profit, through-train school offering a rigorous, student-centered education for children aged 3 to 18 years. The school was founded on the belief that all children bring a unique set of talents and strengths to their learning, with HKA providing a personalised approach that recognises this and encourages all students to reach their full potential.

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HONG KONG ACADEMY

A Joyful and Dynamic Community

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open houses or
contact us today**



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Hong Kong Academy is a through train IB World school offering a rigorous, student-centred education for children aged 3-18 years.

Our highly qualified faculty and award-winning sustainable campus provide a safe and inspiring environment in which students are encouraged to reach their full potential and contribute to their communities. Join our open houses or connect with us on campus to experience the HKA difference and discover how your child could benefit from our exceptional educational programmes.



NICK STRONG

Regional Coordinator for Careers and University Guidance

Yew Chung International School

Why do I need a résumé?

The résumé is normally just one part of an application process to university or college, and is an opportunity for you to provide both a summary of your achievements that are directly relevant to the subject for which you are applying, as well as provide important information about yourself that doesn't appear anywhere else in your application materials, such as your essay or personal statement and so on. It provides, normally, in reverse chronological order, a list of your knowledge, skills and experience that will make you stand out from other candidates, as well as convey simply to the reader that you have everything required to be a successful applicant.

Do all résumés look the same?

No. A good résumé will reflect what is specific to you, and will emphasise those aspects which are most appropriate to the relevant application you are making. For example, a résumé for fine art or graphic design may look quite different from a résumé for physics or for sports and exercise science. The first might emphasise your creative skills and experience while the second might emphasise your relevant analytical and academic skills and experience. You might change the order of the material within the résumé to put more emphasis on the

most relevant aspects first. Extra-curricular activities and experience will be very important for some university applications (it varies from country to country) so a simple list of your extra-curricular achievements such as charity or community work, hobbies, sports and so on will look very different from another's, and will indicate your uniqueness. Remember, it is better to emphasise consistent and prolonged engagement with a small number of activities rather than less meaningful and shorter engagements with too many activities. It is the quality, not the quantity that is important.

What should I be emphasising in my résumé?

Your résumé should indicate strongly that you have the knowledge, skills and experience to make you an ideal applicant.

- **KNOWLEDGE:** In terms of knowledge, that would normally be the relevant academic knowledge, which you would express in terms of the academic subjects you have taken and the examination results you have. So at least one section of your résumé should show your schooling, subjects studied and academic results. However, you could also include a sample of the relevant super-curricular reading that you have done (relevant books and articles you have read which are not part of your school curriculum).



• **SKILLS:** The skills you would emphasise are those which are relevant to your subject of study directly and indirectly. For example, if you intend to study a science subject you might want to emphasise any relevant laboratory skills you have learned, or in the case of music the instrument skills you have developed, but for other subjects it might be research or creative or skills. Equally there are other important skills which are relevant to most subjects, such as communication skills, team skills, inter-personal skills, time management skills and the skill of self-directed learning (which is highly valued by universities).

• **EXPERIENCE:** You should emphasise the experience which shows you understand your subject of study and its relevance to real-world applications. So in the case of music, dance or drama you might want to talk about performance / orchestral / concert experience, in the case of law or business you might want to mention any internships, summer programmes, or relevant work experience that you have had. For every subject there will be opportunities for gaining experience, you should take these and include them in your résumé.

Should my résumé change?

Yes. As your skills, knowledge and experience develop, change and increase you should make sure that you reflect it in your résumé. If you develop new skills, have new experiences and increase the breadth or depth of your knowledge then make sure you update your résumé to reflect that; an excellent résumé will grow and develop as you do, and will last a lifetime. Also, depending upon the specifics of a particular degree programme you might want to rearrange the order of the material to emphasise one or more elements which are directly relevant. Try to put yourself in the place of the admissions selector, and ask yourself what he or she might want to see profiled and

have I provided that clearly. There are plenty of résumé templates available online, but choose wisely and remember that it is perfectly acceptable to modify the structure to suit the particular application. It is important that you ask an expert to look over your résumé before you submit it, so seek the advice of your school Careers and University Guidance Counsellor.



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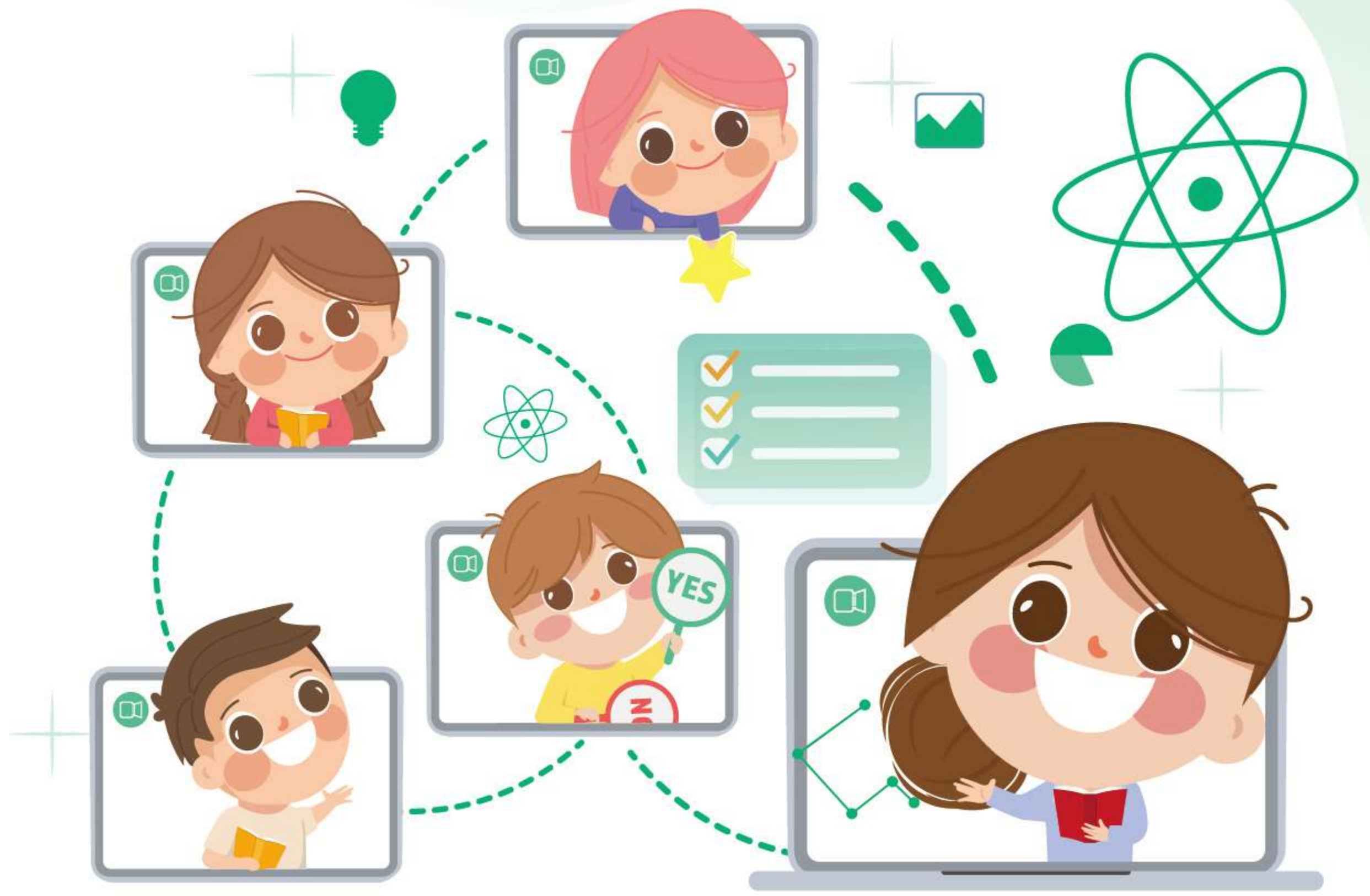
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