Brag Sheet Builder

The master record behind recommendation letters, applications, and essays. Free to copy, print, and share.

Keep one master log; share one curated page. Start in 9th grade, add every semester with dates and numbers, then pull the strongest entries onto a single polished page for recommenders in spring of junior year. **The entry formula: action + scale + outcome** — numbers and results are what recommenders lift straight into letters. See the worked example on page 2.

The Basics

Name, school, grad year • GPA (unweighted/weighted), ACT/SAT, rank • rigorous courses (AP, honors, dual credit).

Activities & Leadership

Clubs, teams, music, roles. Formula every time: what you did, at what scale, with what result. Titles optional.

Work & Family Responsibility

Jobs (hours/week, how long), caring for siblings, translating for parents. Real experience — colleges ask about it directly.

Service & Community

Volunteering, church and civic involvement — with total hours and what you actually did there.

Awards & Honors

Honors and recognitions — school-level counts (NHS, Beta Club, band awards, employee of the month).

Character, Strengths & Goals

How would teachers or coworkers describe you? What do you want to study — and what experience made you want it?

What a Strong Entry Looks Like: A Worked Example

The Basics: Jaylen M., Central High, Class of 2027 • 3.5 GPA (3.8 weighted), ACT 24 (retesting in spring) • AP Biology, AP English Language, dual-credit U.S. History

Activities & Leadership: Section leader, marching band (120 members) — ran twice-weekly sectionals for 8 freshman saxophonists; all 8 passed their fall music checks.

Work & Family Responsibility: Cashier, 15–20 hrs/week since sophomore year — trained 3 new hires. Picks up younger sister from school daily and covers dinner two nights a week while Mom works second shift.

Service: Community food pantry, 60+ hours across two years — moved from shelf stocking to running the Saturday intake table.

Awards: Beta Club • Band "Most Dependable" award • Employee of the Month

Character & Goals: Teachers describe him as steady and the first to help. Wants to study nursing after helping his aunt manage her diabetes care — long-term goal: working in a rural clinic.

What's Listed vs. What It Actually Says

What's listed on the brag sheet	What it actually tells a reader
Works 20 hrs/week as a cashier	Time management, maturity, dependability
Babysits siblings daily after school	Family responsibility, sacrifice, multitasking
Section leader in marching band	Leadership, mentorship, organizational skills
3.8 GPA while taking AP classes	Academic discipline, strong work ethic
Volunteered at food pantry (60+ hrs)	Community focus, follow-through, empathy
Translates for parents	Real-world responsibility, communication skills
Started a tutoring group	Initiative, service, leadership without a title

Where This Sheet Gets Used

- **Recommendation letters.** Hand the one-pager to each recommender when asking — it turns a generic letter into a specific one (see our Reference Request Kit).
- **Application activity lists.** Formula-style entries compress almost word for word into the Common App's 10 activity boxes (150 characters each).
- **Essays.** Every entry in the master log is a story candidate for the Discovery Questionnaire in our Essay Toolkit.

The timeline: start in 9th grade • update every semester • curate the one-pager in spring of junior year, before recommendation asks • final update in senior fall.

Free Resources — No Account, No Cost, No Data Collection

Brag sheet guide + this template	collegereadyparent.org/brag-sheet-builder
Reference request kit (who to ask, what to say)	collegereadyparent.org/reference-request-kit
Essay toolkit for parents	collegereadyparent.org/essay-toolkit

Produced by CollegeReadyParent.org — an independent, parent-built resource. No paywall, no accounts, no lead forms, no student data collection. Sources are cited on every scholarship and state aid page.

Counselors and educators: you may freely copy, print, and distribute this sheet. Questions or corrections: leo@collegereadyparent.org

Application requirements and recommendation processes vary by college and scholarship. Always confirm current requirements with each program and your school counselor.