**Time Management: Developing a Middle School Study Plan**

**Summary**

Session 1:  In the first session, students will reflect on how they spend their time by referencing the **Time Tracking Log** they completed the week prior to this session.  Students will identify personal challenges with respect to time management and learn strategies they can use to improve their time management skills.

Session 2:  Students will discuss the importance of studying and the benefits of establishing a study plan.  A study plan is defined as a tool used to help students develop a strategy for achieving their academic goals. Following the class discussion, students will develop a personalized **Middle School Study Plan**.  Students’ plans will include the amount of time they will study each subject daily, items they can use to help them study, and individuals they can contact if they need assistance with a subject.

**Grades**

* 6

**Content Modules**

* Student Success Skills

**Objectives**

Students will:

* Describe how time management techniques can improve one’s academic performance.
* Create a list of ways to manage time effectively.
* Create a study schedule to maintain throughout middle school.

**Length**

2 Sessions

**Additional Resources**

* [Round4.SuccessSkills.6th - Time Managment Middle School Study Plan\_Time Tracking Log.pdf](https://www.6to16.org/files/attachments/48393656e4f6253fa084b20df37ebe7c.pdf" \t "_blank)
* [Round4.SuccessSkills.6th - Time Managment Middle School Study Plan\_Study Plan.pdf](https://www.6to16.org/files/attachments/2adae0b38ad79b6c72c63d07eb01e48b.pdf" \t "_blank)

**Related Lessons**

* Goal Setting: My Success Plan – 6th Grade

**Related E-Learning**

**Materials and Resources**

**Offline:**

* 6to16 Notebook
* Time Tracking Log (Should be distributed the week before).
* Middle School Study Plan
* Hill Harper’s Letters to a Young Brother (Additional Activity)

**Online:**

* A Day in the Life of a College Student e-Learning Activity (Additional Activity)

**Prep-work**

1)  Distribute the **Time Tracking Log** one week prior to teaching this lesson. Instruct students to use the log to track how they spend their time for a week.  Students should keep track of their activities from the time they wake up in the morning to the time they go to bed.  Instruct students to answer the questions at the bottom of the handout.

**Higher-Level Thinking Skills**

Comprehension, Synthesis

**Vocabulary**

Time management, Study Plan, Time tracking log, Value

**Session 1**

**Do Now (10 minutes)**

1)  Ask students to answer the following questions in their **6to16 Notebooks**:

* What do you value (e.g., education, getting into college, friendships)?

**Teacher’s Note***:  Students may not know the word ‘value’ or the concept of "valuing."  Explain that valuing something means to regard it as very important, dear, or precious.*

* How much time do you spend on the things you value per week? (*refer to your Time Management Log*)

2)  Ask students to share their answers to the ‘Do Now’ questions with a classmate.

3)   Ask students to share their answers to the ‘Do Now’ questions with the class.

**Class Activity (35 minutes)**

**Class Discussion:**

1)  Divide the class into groups of 2-3 students.

2)  Ask students to review and discuss the ways that they each spent their time during the past week by referencing their time logs.

**Teacher’s Note:** *Throughout this lesson, model effective note-taking by recording the essence of students’ responses to discussion questions on the board. Instruct students to follow your example by effectively taking notes in their* ***6to16 Notebooks****.*

3)  Ask students to reflect on and discuss the following questions with their groups:

* What activities do you need to do to reflect your priorities?
* How much time should you devote each week to these activities?
* Does your time log indicate that you spend enough time on the activities that reflect the things you value?
* How could you manage your time differently to better reflect your goals and values?

4)  Reconvene the class and use the following questions to lead a group discussion about how students spent their time:

* What patterns did you observe in the way you spent your time? (e.g., certain times of day, certain days of the week, certain amounts of time)
* What do these patterns tell you about how you spend your time?
* Do you feel like you used your time to get important things done?  What are examples of this?
* How much time was unaccounted for?  How can you explain this?
* What are the specific changes you would make in order to get more important things done?

5)  Note that time management is the practice of planning the amount of time one should spend on given activities. Acknowledge that time management can be a challenge.

6)  Use the following questions to engage the class in a discussion about the challenges they face with respect to time management: 

* What are the challenges you face when making decisions about how to manage your time?
* What distractions are hard to overcome when studying?
* What are the things that may cause you to procrastinate? Why?
* What are the tradeoffs you make when deciding how to spend or manage your time?

7)  Ask students to find a partner and discuss strategies they could use to overcome the challenges they face that prevent them from effectively managing their time.

8)  Ask students to share their ideas with the class.

9)  Write a list of the time management strategies that student identify on the board.

10)  Add the following strategies to the list if students do not identify them:

* Create a schedule for tracking assignments and events.
* Create a To-Do list.
* Prioritize assignments by considering due dates, level of difficulty, and amount of time required to complete each task.
* Don’t wait until the last minute to complete a long homework assignment. Start the assignment as early as possible and work on it in measured stages. (e.g., If you expect a two page paper to take 4 hours to complete, you could spend 1 hour on the paper on four consecutive days).
* Ask teachers, peers, and mentors for help when planning and prioritizing your schedule.

**Teacher’s Note:** *Reference the time management strategy list throughout the lesson and throughout the semester.*

11)  Ask students how effective time management could help a student accomplish the following goal:

* Goal:  Improve my grades in math and reading.

**Session 2**

**Do Now (10 minutes)**

1)  Instruct students to answer the following questions in their **6to16 Notebooks**:

* What is the difference between completing assignments and studying?
* Do you think that you spend enough time studying?  Why or why not?
* What prevents you from spending more time studying?

2)  Ask students to share their answers to the Do Now questions with a partner.

3)  After a few minutes, ask several students to share with the class.

4)  If students do not know the difference between studying and completing homework assignments, explain that studying is the self-directed practice of reviewing material learned in class to deepen one’s understanding.

**Class Activity (35 minutes)**

**Class Discussion:**

1)  Ask students to discuss the difference between the schoolwork they completed in elementary school (i.e., Kindergarten – 5th grade) and the school work they complete in middle school with a partner.

2)  Ask students to share their responses with the class.

3)  Ask students if they expect the school work in middle school to be easier or harder than the work assigned in high school and college.

4)  Explain how high school and college curriculums are rigorous. Emphasize how learning how to study effectively in middle school will prepare them for high school and college.

5)  Explain that each student has a unique study schedule, study techniques, and studying style. Some students may prefer to work alone, while others work well with a partner. Ask a few students to share their personal study schedule, study techniques, or studying style with the class.

6)  Discuss how students should take ownership over their performance in school. Ask students what they should do if they are receiving a bad grade in a subject because they don’t understand the material. Explain that part of studying is recognizing when you need help.  Students may need to seek assistance from their teacher or tutor if they have difficulty understanding a topic.

7)  Ask students how long they currently study and completing homework for one class (e.g., math class).

8)  Relate students’ middle school study habits to high school and college by explaining the following:

* Students must practice studying effectively in middle school not only to improve their grades, but also to practice for their high school and college courses.
* In order to prepare students for studying in high school and college, students should plan to study for at least three hours each week for every subject. Students will need to devote more time to studying especially difficult subjects.
* A full-time college student takes 4-5 classes.

9)  Ask students the following question:

* How many hours per week should a full-time college student plan to study at a **minimum**? (*Answer: 12-15 hours per week*)

**Small Group Discussion:**

1)  Divide students into groups of three.

2)  Ask students to discuss what they can do to improve their grades in a particular.

3)  Ask students to share their responses with the class.

4)  List students’ responses on the board. Include the following in the list if students do not mention them:

* Completing homework assignments
* Completing the extra practice problems
* Creating questions with a friend and solving them
* Playing practice math games on the internet
* Working with a tutor
* sking an older sibling for help
* Studying with friends

**Assessment:**

1)  Distribute the **Middle School Study Plan** worksheet to each student.

2)  Instruct students to list the classes they currently have and rate the difficulty of each subject on the worksheet.

3)  Explain to students that middle school students should plan to spend at least 15 minutes per evening studying for each subject.  Students should spend more than 15 minutes a day for particularly challenging subjects or homework assignments.

4)  In small groups, instruct students to list the approximate amount of time they will spend each night studying and completing assignments for each subject.

5)  Instruct students to also list the resources that can be used for each subject.  Resources may include a dictionary, thesaurus, calculator, or highlighter.

6)  Ask two or three students to share examples of the materials that are needed for each subject.

7)  Ask students to list at least one person they can contact if they need assistance for each subject. Contacts may include teachers, parents, tutors, mentors, or friends.

8)  Ask one or two students to share examples of people they chose as contacts.

**Homework**

Challenge students to commit to following their **Middle School Study Plan**.  Remind students that their grades are a component of their Student Profile and that studying consistently can help them improve their grades. Reiterate that studying regularly will be essential for success in high school and college courses. Encourage students to explore different study techniques to determine what works best for them.

**Additional Activities**

A Day in the Life of a College Studente-Learning Activity

Instruct students to access the e-Learning activity, **A Day in the Life of a College Student**, from 6to16 Online.  Explain the features of the activity and how students will have a limited amount of time to follow their schedule before time runs out.  As you explain the activity to students, reinforce the following points (tying them back to the points students raised during the class discussion on the time tracking activity, as appropriate):

* Make good decisions about tradeoffs when you have multiple priorities.
* Prioritize activities and assignments.
* Stay focused and avoid distractions.

Engage the students in a discussion after completing the online activity about the numerous demands on their time in college. What did they have time to do?  What didn’t they have time to do?   What, if anything, surprised them?  How will learning to manage their time well now benefit them in the long run?

Hill Harper’s “Letters to a Young Brother”

Distribute copies of the chapter, Effort: Working Hard at Working Smart from Hill Harper’s book, “Letters to a Young Brother.” Lead a discussion with the class based on Colin Powell’s quote from the letter:

“There are no secrets to success.  It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.”

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