Welcome and Introductions
Lesson 1.
Welcome and Introductions
Handouts:
• First Day Packet
Lesson 2.
Thought for the Day – Master Lesson
Lesson 3.
Goal Setting
Handouts:
• Top 10 Goals
• Goals Worksheet
• Learner Note Taker
• EFF Standard Plan
Homework:
Bill Cosby Success Story

Lesson 4.
Take Responsibility for Learning
Handouts:
• Learner Note Taker
• Pre-Survey: Take Responsibility for Learning
• EFF Standard Take Responsibility for Learning
• Post-Survey: Take Responsibility for Learning
Lesson 5.
Why We Assess
Handouts:
• Learner Note Taker
ACTIVITY: TABE Locator Test
Homework: Academic Survival Guide

Lesson 6.
Reading Strategies
Handouts:
• Learner Note Taker
• EFF Standard Read With Understanding
ACTIVITY: TABE Complete Battery
Homework: Academic Survival Guide—Note Taking

Lesson 7.
The Communication Process
Handouts:
• Learner Note Taker
Lesson 8.
How We Learn
Handouts:
• Learner Note Taker
• Comparing Cognitive and Affective Domains of Learning
Lesson 9.
Weekly Review
Handouts:
• EFF Standard Reflect and Evaluate
Homework:
The Communications Loop

“Wherever we are is okay.”

LEARNING SKILLS

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Lesson 1

Welcome and Introductions

Overview: The “Welcome and Introductions” lesson is the first lesson that all new learners hear when they come into Learning Skills. This lesson creates a clear message to all learners starting the class. It focuses on getting started, the adult education system, the Learning Skills course, and getting to know the teachers and all learners in the class.

Educational Goal: The goal of this lesson is for learners to:
1) Comprehend where they are, where they are going, and what Learning Skills is about.
2) Value getting started back to school and how Learning Skills applies to their life and goals.

Objectives: Learners will be able to:
Cognitive — Explain what getting started means.
— Explain why Learning Skills was created.
— Identify some of the Key Concepts introduced.
Affective — Participate in class discussion—spark an interest, believe “I Can,” positive thinking.
— Predict how they will benefit from Learning Skills.

Teaching Strategy: This is one of the most important lessons that a learner will hear and should be thought of as the lesson that sets the tone for the entire course. It is a morning of getting motivated, feeling comfortable with where one is, and instilling the “I can!” attitude.

The environment of the classroom is set up so that students who have already been attending the Learning Skills course are seated at a different table from the new folks. This group will be called the “leadership table.” This allows the tables to work on two different lessons and subjects depending on where they are in the course. The teacher should begin the lesson by asking the leadership table to review their notes, reflect over their own thoughts about what they have learned, and reflect on some of the feeling that they may have had their first day of Learning Skills. The leadership table should be aware that all new learners will look to them for guid-

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Time: 1-2 hours

Teacher Materials:
— Equipped for the Future Content Standards and Framework chart
— Markers
— Handouts
— 1st Day Packet
— Sample work

Student Materials:
— Pencil and paper
— 1st Day Packet
— Copy of EFF Framework chart
Welcome and Introductions

Lesson 1

Lesson 1

Leadership Table should be reminded to be positive, speak with integrity, and to pass on any valuable tools or information to the new group.

During the first half hour of class, the leadership table is kept separate from the new table. This allows them time to reflect, review, and plan what they are going to share with the new people when it is their time to speak. While the leadership table is reviewing, the teacher or teachers will then begin the "Welcome and Introductions" lesson by telling the new group a little bit about themselves, leading into what Learning Skills is, why it was created, and how it will help. The basic information that all new learners need is also addressed during this time. Learners need to know how the adult education system works. They also need to know that there will be testing and when. Basic things like the class schedule, telephone number, and attendance are discussed. The key to the first half hour is to be as clear and honest as possible. Being clear and honest will help the class to feel more comfortable about where they are while at the same time allowing them to feel open about their previous experiences in school. The teachers should share background information about themselves—why they became teachers, some of the struggles that they went through in school, that they are all learners, and that everyone is just trying to get better.

After the small-group discussion the entire class will be asked to join in on a whole-group introduction discussing key concepts, thought for the day, lessons taught, and any thoughts or feelings from anyone about Learning Skills and previous experiences.

The new people should also know that this is the first big step that they will have to take. Let them know that they have overcome whatever barriers that were in the way to be here today and we commend them for that. Help them to see that this day is about them and that it's about taking ownership of their education for their life and goals. After the whole-group discussion, allow time for the new folks to summarize what they have heard during the introductions.

End lesson with a preview of the first “Thought for the Day.”
Lesson Plan

Introduction
Welcome to Learning Skills. My name is___________________. We are happy that you are here today.

Question: Have any of you heard anything about Learning Skills?

Question: How are you feeling this morning?

Motivation: Today you are beginning a big step in your life. You are preparing for your future by being here today. You have probably heard the saying, “Today is the first day of the rest of your life.” This is very true today. It’s going to be an exciting day. So let’s get started.

Question: Why did you decide to come back to school?

Overview: It is important for you to let us know why you came back to school. That is why we gave you the interview when you enrolled into our program. We want to know what you want and what you need so that we can help you to be successful and attain your goals. We are going to be very honest and open with you. We are here to help you in any way that we can, but first let me tell you a little bit about myself. This will help you to understand where we are coming from, why I became a teacher, and the experience that I had when I was in school.

Body of Lesson

Main Point 1. Welcome
It doesn’t matter how you got here. What matters is that you are here today. This is your time to achieve the goals that you want to achieve in your life whether it be for your family, a better job, or even to improve your community.

Let me tell you a little bit about myself.

A. The Past
Question: There are many different types of teachers. Some of us may have had some good experiences in school, while other times it may have been hard. Who remembers having some good teachers?

It is normal for many of us to have had some not-so-great experiences in school. Sometimes teachers made it hard for us. Sometimes other learners
made it uncomfortable. Maybe we didn’t fit in or the teacher didn’t see the potential that we had. Not all teachers or peers are great. Maybe it was we who held ourselves back. We may not have seen the potential in ourselves or we just didn’t care. That was the past.

**B. The Present**

As an adult, you probably see more of the value in your education and you see some things that you want and need. Today is the present and you are preparing for your future by being here. You can make whatever you want better. You have the abilities as an adult to get the most out of this experience. Your goals will lead you to your future. Today is about getting started and helping you to see what this class is about and how it will help you.

**C. The Three A’s**

The three A’s are a kind of check-off list that you can use to help you become successful.

1. **Attendance** – Your attendance is very important. We have found that if you are here at least 90% of the time you will have a better opportunity to get everything that you need to get out of this class. You are less likely to miss important information when you are here. We realize that you may have to miss. If you need to miss a class, just call our number and let us know that you will not be attending that day. It is up to you to ask for the things that you missed and to make up any missed work. Remember, as adults you are just as responsible for your education as anyone else. In fact, in many ways you are more responsible for your education. You have more freedom as an adult to do what you want. We cannot force you to attend or do the work. But realize that you will not get what you need out of this class if you do not take responsibility for your learning.

2. **Attitude** – Having a positive attitude is really the key to success. You will learn tools that will enable you to set goals and solve problems in your life. You have to believe in yourself. It is good to have support from others like family and friends, but it does come down to how you feel about yourself and your situation. Check your attitude. The way you feel will affect how you do. If you do not feel like being here or doing the work, chances are you won’t be as successful as you could be. We believe that learning should be fun. We will have fun in *Learning Skills*. Try to get interested in what you are learning. Interest will help you to retain and remember information that you receive. There may be times when learning isn’t easy. It may be challenging or somewhat difficult for you to grasp at times. Try to stay positive and remember that you can do anything that
you want as long as you believe in yourself. Your attitude can also affect others. We want the class to be a positive environment. Staying positive will help others to do the same. If you ever do have a problem or a bad day, discuss it with the teacher first. He or she may able to help you and hopefully lift your spirits. We don’t want to bring others down with us when we are feeling blue. Problems do occur in life, but just realize that this time in class is for you. Try to resolve problems outside of class. If they can’t be resolved, at least try to get the most out of the time in class that you have. Remember, “I CAN!”

3. Achievement – Try to achieve as much as you can. Work hard and try your best. When you have assignments, finish them on time. Asking questions is just as important. Get the most out of your class time that you can. Take notes, listen effectively, and learn. You will learn how to do all of these things throughout this course.

Main Point 2. Tennessee Adult Education System—How Does the System Work?
Wherever you are is okay. Some of us may have difficulty in some subjects, while we are good at other skills. Maybe I am a great reader, but I have difficulty when it comes to learning and doing math. The system helps us to place you into the appropriate class. After Learning Skills you will be placed in a class that will focus on the things that you want and need to learn.

The Levels
The Tennessee Families First adult education system is broken down into four main levels. When thinking about skills like reading, math, and language, skill level can range anywhere from a basic skill level to a GED level. A person may be really good at reading but have difficulty in math. This would place them on a basic skill level. Other people may be really good in math but need some help in language or reading. Some people are on the basic skill level for all subjects. It can be difficult for some people to remember all of those things that we had to learn in elementary school. We might have known certain skills at the time but when we don’t continue to use them, we can begin to forget certain skills. To give you an example, think of grammar and punctuation, a person may sometimes have difficulty remembering when to use a comma. This might be because we don't go around talking about where commas go in everyday life. Skills are easier to remember if we have to use them in the real world. If we don’t use certain skills, it is easier to not retain them as well.
A. Level One, 0-1.9, is called the Beginning Literacy level.

B. Level Two 2.0-5.9, is called the Basic Skills level.

C. Level Two 6.0-8.9, is called the Pre-GED level. This level begins to focus on higher-level skills and more subject areas and helps to begin a plan for the next level. Subjects like algebra and geometry begin here.

D. Level Three 9.0-12.9 is the GED level. The third level gives more intense study and focus devoted to practice of the GED.

You will not just take a test and that’s it. One thing that we do a little differently in Learning Skills is a test review. After you finish taking the entire test we ask you to go back over the problems you missed, review them, and take notes on why you missed a problem. This is another “Behind the Scenes” look at learning. What we’ve found is that many times a person just read the question wrong, was in a hurry, felt frustrated, or maybe just filled in the wrong answer by mistake. Many people are surprised when they find out why they missed a problem.

**Question:** How do you think that reviewing the test would help you?

Allowing you to review the test gives you more control over your education. If you know the specifics of what you missed you have a better chance of taking responsibility for your learning. Taking responsibility for learning helps people to no longer leave it in the hands of the teacher. The teacher can give you the information that you need and can help you, but she cannot do it for you. We feel that it is important for you to have just as much control and input as the teacher does.

Reviewing the test is not cheating. We give you a completely different test the next time you take it.

Everyone who enters our program is asked to take a pre-test. This is how we know what skills to help them with. You will hear more about how the testing works tomorrow, but it is important that you understand the process.

Everyone is also asked to take a post-test so that we can measure what you have learned since you’ve been a part of the program. It also tells us when to move you on to the next level. If you look at the bottom of each answer sheet on the poster, you will see the word “objectives” along with a list of other words. This is how teachers know what they should teach. Objectives
are things that you need to know and be able to do. When you miss a problem on the test, we as a team will look for the number of that problem and see what objective it falls under. To give you an example, if you miss a question in the reading portion of the test, we can find that problem/question number and see what part of reading you might be having difficulty in. The problem could fall under “recalling information,” which could mean that you need work on remembering things that you read.

**Question:** What do you think so far?

Let’s look at the test answer sheets and see how they work. Each test area—math, reading, and language—has a separate answer sheet. When you finish the test we will open up the answer sheet together and see how you did.

To help you understand how these levels work, let’s look at a scenario.

**Scenario:** Sarah received her test scores yesterday. Her scores are:

- Reading .................. 9.3
- Math Computation ........ 3.6
- Applied Math .............. 2.2
- Language .................. 7.5
- Spelling .................. 5.9

Look at your adult education system handout and place all of Sarah’s scores.

**Question:** On what level is Sarah on in her reading?

**Question:** What level is Sarah on in her Math Computation?

That’s a pretty big jump in scores. Maybe she does a lot more reading than math in her everyday life, or maybe math was never easy for her. She may not have been interested enough in math.

It looks like her scores are in every level. After the test is complete, all of the scores for every skill area are averaged together for an overall grade equivalency. In order for Sarah to get to the GED level she needs to take a few classes that focus on the basic skill level and one that focuses on pre-GED language. Her lowest scores are in math. This will mean that Sarah will need to work really hard on math. She may even get a one-on-one tutor. For our program Sarah’s math and spelling scores need to be a 6.0 before she can leave the literacy level. Her scores need to be 9.0 in order to get into the GED program. Sometimes there are situations when someone’s scores are all on a GED level except one. If someone has high scores except in one subject, then that person would probably do intense work.
in the subject that he or she needs the most help in and be placed into the GED class. Looking back at the objectives and which ones Sarah is having problems in will help us to know what to teach, but just as important, reviewing the test allows Sarah to know where she is, what she missed, and what she really needs to work on. By doing all of these things, Sarah can take more responsibility for her learning.

This scenario is just one example of a student’s scores.

Over the next few weeks, you will begin to learn more about how the system fits with your test scores. All of this information will begin to make more sense after you begin receiving your test results. We will also continue to relate information to the adult education system throughout the course. This handout is your map through our program.

We will talk more about testing later today and tomorrow, but for now realize that you will be tested in several areas. We will give you a test in reading, math, language, and spelling. Remember, wherever you are is okay. Many times people have difficulty remembering a particular subject if they haven’t used it in a while. This may mean that you will have to review or even learn some new skills.

This is how you and your teacher will know what you need to learn. These tests help us know what you need to learn and they also show us what you already know. Testing is no big deal, but without it we would not know what you should learn. This would be a waste of your time if we taught you something that you already knew very well. Another thing that we do is a review of the test that you take. When learners are allowed to look back over the test, they find things that they did right and things that they did wrong. Many times they will discover that they didn’t take their time, they didn’t read the question carefully, or maybe they just filled in the wrong answer. Think about all the other times that you have taken a test. What if you only missed a problem because you filled in another answer by mistake? You could have scored higher if you had taken your time or read the question more carefully. These are called test-taking strategies. You will learn more about test-taking strategies later on in the course. After you have taken all of the tests, we will ask you to go back over each test individually and see what mistakes you made and why. We will ask you to take notes on the mistakes that you made so that you will be better prepared for the next time you take the test.
Questions and Answers
Are there any questions, concerns, or comments that you have about what you have heard so far?

Main Point 3. The Learning Skills Course
The Learning Skills Course was developed for several reasons. One was because we wanted to give you, the learner, a better idea of how the adult education system works, what is expected from you and us, and to help you see where you are and how you can be successful. We call it the “behind the scenes” look at learning. Learning Skills will help you to find the true learner in you. Learning never stops. As adults, we have had enough experiences and prior knowledge that we can learn some things much easier than when we were kids.

Learning Skills has been broken down into four weeks. Each day of instruction allows several lessons to be taught in one day. We have created it as a developmental course. You will hear a lesson and concepts more than once. We will continue to discuss and review everything that we have learned.

A. Let’s talk about some of the key concepts and lessons in this course.

Question: Who remembers learning about something in school but not really knowing why you had to learn it?

In this class you will learn why it is important to learn. You will also learn how to learn. There are certain steps that everyone must go through in order to really learn a subject. Knowing is not enough. We need to know certain subjects and skills and be able to use what we have learned in our life. Learning Skills will help you to see the connection between life and education. It’s not about doing the work while you are in school and then leaving it alone until the next school day. It’s about taking what you have learned in class, seeing its value, and understanding how it can make your life better. One of the questions that you will hear us ask is, “How can you use it?” When we ask this question it will allow you to predict how a tool, subject, or concept can be applied to your everyday life and goals. You will learn many things in Learning Skills that will help you throughout your life and educational journey. The things that we teach in this class will help you to be more prepared for your next classes.

Let’s talk a little bit about communication.
Welcome and Introductions

Lesson 1

Learning Skills

Question: Look at the Communication Loop on the board. Right now I am the sender, sending you a…?

Question: If I am the sender and I am sending you a message, what does that make you?

Question: How will I know if you received my message correctly?

Question: Does this make sense?

This is called the Communication Process or Loop and it is taught in college. As adults, we can think on a higher level. Understanding the Communication Process is not difficult if we keep it simple enough.

Question: Why do you think that it would be important to know how to communicate effectively?

We teach several concepts that are taught in college. But we simplify the concept. Learning Skills is an orientation class. We are helping you to prepare for this new experience and change while at the same time providing you with helpful tools and lessons that will help you to succeed. Others we teach in Learning Skills are Note Taking, Study Skills, Time Management, and the Writing Process.

Are there any comments or questions about anything we have talked about so far?

B. Many of the things that we have discussed are about how our education connects to our lives. We have talked about some of the ways that your education will affect your life. When we asked you about your goals, many of you mentioned your family or better jobs.

You see the value of knowing how to do things for yourself and others. There is a framework that we use in our program. It is called Equipped for the Future (EFF). Equipped for the Future is a framework that describes what adults need to know and be able to do in the 21st century. Many people helped to come up with all of the things that you see listed here. (See Appendix III for EFF Lesson.)
We also have the Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes (KSAs). These are skills that have been identified as needed by the state of Tennessee. We will continue to use the EFF Standards and the KSAs throughout the course.

Main Point 4. Class Introduction

**Key Concepts.** Many things that *Learning Skills* teaches are based on several key concepts. Key concepts are important tools that can help you in this class, your next classes, and even in your everyday life. When you graduate from *Learning Skills*, some of the classes that you may be assigned to use the same key concepts. These concepts have become a common language for our entire program.

1. **The STAR Method** – The STAR method stands for *Stop, Think, Act*, and *Review*. Can you remember a time when you just acted instead of stopping to think about the consequences of your actions? I can remember several times when I acted without thinking. This can be dangerous. Many times people make mistakes because they didn’t stop to think about how they should do something or how to handle a situation. If some of us had only stopped to think about the importance of education, it might have prevented us from not caring about education. Think about how our families could benefit from this. If we could get our children to understand and use the STAR method, they would make better decisions. Can you think of a time when you could have used STAR?

2. **The Shewhart Cycle** – The Shewhart Cycle is a problem-solving process that is broken down into steps. It starts out with the Planning step. Everyone should have a *Plan*. Having a plan helps people to be better prepared for whatever it is that they want to achieve. Even coming here today you had to plan when to get up, what to wear, how to get here, how to get the children off to school, etc. Right now you are in the second step—the *Do* part of the Shewhart Cycle. You had a plan and now you are doing what you had planned to do today. The third step of the Shewhart Cycle is the *Study* step. The study step allows us to reflect and evaluate how our process is going. For example, this afternoon you will probably think about how it went today. This is the time when you will study what went well or what needed to improve. We all do these steps naturally in our everyday lives. We just haven’t taken the time to discuss it or even name what it is that we do. The last step is the *Act* step. You start with a plan, then you do, the you reflect and study what went well and what didn’t, and finally you act by improving the process for the next time you have to do whatever it is you need to do. Tonight you may think of a better way of doing this for tomorrow. Maybe you will discover how to manage your

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**Teaching Tips**

Provide posters or handouts with all parts of the *Equipped for the Future* Framework listed.

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**Teaching Tip**

Now is the time to open up the discussion to the entire class, including the leadership table. The leadership table members should have reviewed their notes and thought about what they want to share with the new people. This should be an upbeat and motivating discussion with a lot of humor throughout. Remember to keep the discussion informative but light.
time more wisely, or perhaps you will choose a more appropriate time for homework. The Shewhart Cycle is just a tool that anyone can use to improve a process. Some businesses, organizations, churches, and programs like ours use the Shewhart Cycle to do things better. It is a tool that if kept simple can make a world of difference.

3. **The Five W’s and H** – The five W’s and H are: Who, What, When, Where, why, and How. These are key words that help people find or give information. Think about a news report. Journalists use the five W’s and H to describe what happened, where it happened, why it happened, etc. We can also use the W’s and the H to gain information about a particular subject. The key is to ask questions and get answers. It is very important to ask questions. Asking questions is extremely valuable. Never feel afraid of asking a question. If you don’t ask, how will you find the answer? There are no stupid questions, and chances are someone else has the same question. The Five W’s and H will help you to learn, and using it can also help you to teach others. Whenever you are writing a paper consider asking yourself the five W’s and the H. What are you writing about, why are you writing about it, etc. We will use the five W’s and H throughout Learning Skills and you will be expected to use it in other classes.

4. **Read, Write, Discuss** – Read, Write, and Discuss is a model that we use in Learning Skills and in all classes in the program.

- **Read.** People are usually eager and able to read something they have just written. Since an issue may be emotionally charged, reading should be invited, but never mandatory.
- **Write.** Depending on the writing level of the group, this may begin with a group language experience piece or may lead directly to individual writing.
- **Discuss.** Discuss what you’ve read or written. The teacher may use mind mapping during this time, while facilitating the discussion.

Not only do people need to read and write, but they also need to voice and share what they have written. You may enter this model at any point. We will use the Read, Write, Discuss model every morning when we do the “Thoughts for the Day.” The “Thought for the Day” is just that. It is a thought that will be written on the board each morning that you come into Learning Skills. As a group, you will be asked to read the thought for the day, discuss some of the key words and thoughts that you have about it, and then write about the “Thought” by answering four questions about it. The questions will be the same for every “Thought.” They are:


1. What is the author saying?  
2. What does it mean to me?  
3. Why is it important?  
4. How can I use it?

These questions will help you to know what is being said, but more importantly, they will help your understanding of what you are reading and will allow you to predict the connection between what you are learning and how you can apply it to your life. You will have your first “Thought” this morning. The “Thoughts for the Day” ask you to critically think about things.

5. The Two C’s: Everyone thinks using two different types of thinking. They are critical thinking and creative thinking.

- **Critical Thinking** – Critical thinking is about breaking things apart and analyzing them. You will be asked to critically think about many things that you learn. Critical thinking will help to improve your thinking skills.
- **Creative Thinking** – Everyone also thinks creatively. Creative thinking happens when you are looking at things in a different way or when you are inventing new and different things.

Both critical and creative thinking are valuable and should be used.

There are many other key concepts that we will talk about later. Also know that we will always go back and review the key concepts. You will hear them many more times. This will make it easier for you to remember them.

**Main Point 5. Paper, Presentation, and Graduation**

During the *Learning Skills* class, you will be asked to write a three- to five-page paper about any topic that you choose to write about and then present it on graduation day. There are a few reasons why we ask you to do this. The first reason is so you can learn about the writing process and how to begin writing effective papers. If you plan to get your GED, you will be asked to write a 200-word essay. Using the writing process will give you the practice that will help you to be better prepared for the next time you have to write a paper. We also want you to write it and then present it. You will be asked to present your topic, research, and thoughts to the group on the last day of class. This will help you to feel more comfortable about speaking in front of others. It also gives you the opportunity to share your voice with others. Don’t feel overwhelmed by this. Many people come into *Learning Skills* having never written or presented a paper before. If they can do it, so can you.
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Lesson 1

6. Graduation Day – Graduation Day is a very special day. We will ask you to present your papers on that day and we will have a ceremony for you celebrating all that you have achieved in Learning Skills. Graduation Day is important because it proves that you started and completed the first and sometimes the most difficult step in your educational journey. Starting Learning Skills can be challenging, but if you can hold on and try your best, you will make it to graduation day. You just need to maintain the three A’s.

Question: What are the 3 A’s?

If you have good attendance, have a positive attitude, and try to achieve you will have a better chance of success.

Question: You have heard a lot of new information today, but how are you feeling about being here?

Conclusion

Re-Motivation: We hope you are feeling better about Learning Skills now that you have heard the welcome and introductions.

Question: Do you feel that Learning Skills is something that will help you?

Remember, wherever you are is okay. Maintain that “I can!” attitude. If you have any questions, just ask. We are all here to help. Today is a good day. You are taking ownership of your education. We are proud that you are here.

Close: We will take it step by step. We will help you in any way that we can. Let’s get ready to prepare for the future.

We will begin your first “Thought for the Day” next. Great work!

Teaching Tip

Some learners may feel overwhelmed or frustrated about certain things that they will be asked to do. If you start to see this happen, stop the conversation and address those feelings with the group. Try to keep it positive. If any concerns cannot be resolved during introductions, ask that the concerns be held until you the teacher can talk with that student during a break.

Teaching Tip

Let the new folks summarize what they have learned by a guided discussion, such as:

1. Explaining and identifying some of the lessons that will be taught and key concepts discussed.
2. Explaining getting started, the system.
3. Participating in class discussion.
4. Predicting how they can benefit from Learning Skills.