Take Responsibility for Learning

**Overview:** This lesson is focused on the Equipped For the Future Standard *Take Responsibility for Learning (TRL)*. This is a foundational standard that can be used in all *Learning Skills* lessons. Students will learn that they are responsible for their learning and identify their strengths and weaknesses as a learner. They will be asked to identify and use strategies to help them reach their goals and to monitor their progress toward their goals.

**Educational Goal:** The objective of this lesson is for each learner to (1) Comprehend what *Take Responsibility for Learning* is and how it works and (2) Respond positively to the standard and value it enough to see how it can be applied in their everyday lives and goals.

**Objectives:**

*Cognitive:* Learners will:
- Explain what *TRL* is and each of its components.
- Identify strategies to reach their goals.

*Affective:* — Participate in classroom discussion.
— Begin to see the value in taking responsibility for learning and predict how they can use it in their everyday lives and goals.

**Skill Standard Connection:** This lesson links to future lessons by introducing students to the skills they need in order to take independent action and learn how to learn. This skill will help prepare students to adapt in a changing world. Many learners come back to school without a full understanding of what it takes to become a successful learner. They need to understand that what they need to learn and what they do to learn are different. This lesson has connections to the Tennessee KSA – *Do the Right Thing*; the GED – *To Achieve*; and the EFF Standard – *Take Responsibility for Learning*. (Appendix II)

**Teaching Strategy:** Use the Read, Write, Discuss model to teach this lesson. Teaching students the skills they need to become lifelong learners links this lesson to future lessons.
This lesson will begin with a pre-survey to determine the students’ prior knowledge (in Appendix I). Students will be asked to tell what *Take Responsibility for Learning* means, why it is important and how they can use it. Learners will be expected to build on their prior knowledge and understanding while using their previous experiences and opinions about learning throughout the lesson. The 3A’s = Success visual will be used to focus students’ attention on attendance, attitude, and achievement. The visual should be posted in the room.

Introduce the topic and ask students to reflect on their past actions and practices associated with the standard. Give each student a copy of the Standard, *Take Responsibility for Learning* (in Appendix I). After a brief discussion, ask students to take turns reading portions of the standard and components. After each element has been read, allow time for discussion, input, and understanding. Learners will begin to see how learning is an independent effort as much as a team effort. Teachers and learners should work together to identify needed skills.

The Read, Write, and Discuss model will be used throughout the lesson. As student discuss the topic, write their comments on the board. Ask students to take notes about the topic.

Two of the EFF Purposes for learning—*Independent Action* and *Creating a Bridge to the Future*—are key concepts in this lesson. Learners should begin to see the importance of independent achievement and at the same time value guidance and support from others when needed and accepted. Continue leading learners through a guided discussion about the standard handout and what it means. End the lesson with learners’ giving a summary of taking responsibility with specific examples. Using the same questions from the pre-survey, give a post-survey to measure the growth in learning.
Lesson Plan

Introduction

Homework Review

Thought for the Day
“All rising to great places is by a winding stair.”

—Frances Bacon

The future is yours, so embrace it. You may not know what the road ahead has to offer, but you can prepare yourself to achieve. Remember to carefully and thoughtfully take it step by step. Reaching your goals can be challenging. You may encounter several twists and turns. But in the end you will have succeeded.

Attention: Today you will learn a skill that will allow you to become more independent and able to change as the world changes around you. In order to be successful as parents or family members, citizens and workers, we must be able to take responsibility for our own learning. This is a skill that you can use for the rest of your life.

Motivation: The EFF Standard, Take Responsibility for Learning, is an EFF Lifelong Learning skill. If we are going to keep up in the 21st century we need to set goals, identify our strengths and weaknesses, collect a series of strategies to help us acquire knowledge, use those strategies, monitor our progress, then try out the new things we learn in real-life situations. In order to keep pace with change, we must always be learning.

The skill we are learning today will build a strong foundation for your growth and independence. So, let’s look at the Standard, analyze what it means, then identify how we can use it.

Overview: You have made the decision to return to school to improve your education and achieve your goals. This lesson will give you the strategies to use to reach your goals. It also lays the foundation for your future. This is a skill that asks you to take action. If you take action you will become an independent learner who knows how to learn and who will be able to change as the world changes.

Teaching Tip

Begin each day with a review of the previous day’s homework. Allow 15-20 minutes to review the homework.

Then begin the “Thought for the Day.” Give students time to answer the four questions. Then discuss the “Thought for the Day.”
Body of Lesson

Main Point 1. What Is *Take Responsibility for Learning*?

Taking responsibility is doing away with excuses for not performing. It is accepting that you must take action or make a change. In order to take responsibility for learning, adults need to be able to understand their learning style and the styles of others, value differences between individual styles, and learn from these differences. You need to be able to identify your strengths and weaknesses, identify strategies for learning, and know when existing strategies are not working or when they are challenged.

When learners take responsibility for their learning, they are using all of the components listed above.

**Question:** Who is responsible for your learning?

— *Record student responses on the board.*

Taking responsibility for learning includes the learner as well as the teacher. It is always a good idea to ask, “What am I doing to learn as much as I can?”

**Question:** Can you think of a way that you have taken responsibility for your learning?

Those are all ways that we take responsibility for learning. The components that we read are a kind of check-off list that a person can use in order to see if he or she is doing everything possible to take responsibility for their learning. Let’s take a deeper look at the components.

Main Point 2. The Five Components of the *Take Responsibility for Learning* Standard

Now let’s take a closer look at the five components of the skill. (Read the components and discuss.)

A. Establish learning goals that are based on an understanding of one’s own current and future learning needs.

B. Identify own strengths and weaknesses as a learner and seek out opportunities for learning that help build self-concept as a learner.

C. Become familiar with a range of learning strategies to acquire or retain knowledge. There are several different ways to learn something,
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Lesson 4

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not just one. Example: If I asked someone how to get to Chicago, she could give me one way or several depending on where I am coming from. There are several routes to any destination. Just like traveling, learning something can be taught and received in different ways. There are options to how you learn something. Everyone learns in a different way. Just like no two snowflakes are alike, neither are people and their learning styles. We all require special and unique strategies. One person may learn best by looking at pictures, while another may need to simply listen to directions.

D. Identify and use strategies appropriate to goals, task, context, and the resources available for learning. Once you are aware of the different learning styles and strategies, choose one that is best for the learning situation that you are in. No one is better than another, but having several different learning strategies will ensure your growth and learning.

E. Monitor progress toward goals and modify strategies or other features of the learning situation as necessary to achieve goals. If we are not making progress, then we must ask the question, “Why not?” To achieve our goals we must control the things that might get in the way of our learning. Several things can get in the way of learning. Sometimes other people in our lives can become barriers. Sometimes we can be barriers to ourselves. Barriers might include negativity from others, low self-esteem, a teacher that doesn’t teach to different learning styles or even something as simple as hunger or time barriers. Once we identify what is wrong, we can make corrections in our strategies and get back on course. This requires that we focus on our goals and constantly check to see whether our strategies are working. In order for anyone to learn the best that they can, a person must monitor her progress and make adjustments when necessary.

F. Test out our new learning in real-life applications. Take what you learn in class and apply it in your family life, social life and community. You will want to be able to access your new learning and knowledge readily in a variety of settings and situations. Always try to connect your new learning to something that is significant and realistic to your life and goals. Reviewing what you have learned will help you to increase your ability to use what you have learned in other parts of your life. It is important that you not only understand what you learn, but also see how you can apply it to other parts of your life.

Teaching Tips

(Refer to components at left.)

A. Ask students to identify their learning needs and list them on their Note Taker. Then ask if they have set a goal to meet that need. If they have set a goal, have them record it on their Note Taker. If they have not set a goal to meet their needs, ask them to set a goal now.

B. They will have a more difficult time identifying their strengths. If students have been tested, give them copies of their tests to review and have them identify their strengths and weaknesses on their Note Taker.

C. If students have not had a learning styles assessment, remind them that when they complete the assessment, they will know how they learn best and can begin to identify strategies that will help them acquire new knowledge. Discuss with them how they feel they learn best. Many students already know what works best for them.

D. You may have to help students identify learning strategies that will help them. Make sure that they understand you are available to assist them in identifying appropriate strategies. There are many books available to help students learn different strategies.
Main Point 3. Purpose of Taking Responsibility

Taking responsibility for learning (TRL) prepares us for the unexpected and for the future. The following are reasons for taking responsibility for learning.

A. **Adapt to or prepare for change**—Change is bound to happen throughout your educational experience and life. TRL can help you be proactive instead of reactive.

B. **Respond to new challenges**—Be motivated and up to the unknown. Resistance to change is almost always a dead-end street. Take personal responsibility for adapting to change.

C. **Gain information**—Try to get all the information that you can about the subject. Learn how and where to access it.

D. **Help make decisions and take action**—TRL will help you to make better decisions when solving problems or planning. TRL can help you to be in control of the situation.

E. **Achieve goals**—TRL can empower you to get where you want to be by helping you to realize where you are and what it will take to succeed.

F. **Perform one’s responsibilities**—You are the owner of your learning. What you will learn and be able to do is mainly up to you.

**Conclusion**

*Give students the Post-Survey (in Appendix I).*

**Summary:** *Take Responsibility for Learning* means that you have decided to take charge of your life and become independent. It means that you have: (1) Set goals, (2) are aware of your strengths and weaknesses, (3) have a range of learning strategies, (4) use those strategies, (5) monitor your progress and make changes when necessary, and (6) test out your new learning in real-life applications.

**Re-Motivation:** *Take Responsibility for Learning* is a very important skill to understand and be able to apply in order to become a more successful lifelong learner. When you take responsibility for your learning, you will become more aware of what you need to do to improve and can measure your own growth in learning. You will have entered the race with no finish line. But you now have the knowledge to help you have a successful race.

**Close:** Continue to learn about yourself, master yourself, and improve yourself. When you do this you will create your own future.