Basic Planning

Lesson Plan | Middle and High School

Lesson Time: 15-25 minutes

Finding Time

Objectives & Outcomes

Lesson Objectives: Using a variety of strategies, students will better track and organize their daily schedules.

Lesson Outcomes: Students will be able to ...

- create a time log to track their time
- discuss several techniques to help them manage their time

Subject Area Connection: Language Arts

Getting Ready

Teacher Preparation: You may want to create a sample of a time log and a planner page prior to beginning this lesson. Another option is to model the organizing process with the students.

Materials Required:

- pencils or pens
- paper
- highlighters

Key Vocabulary

time log: a written record of daily activity.

time management: the process of controlling the amount of time spent on an activity.

metrics: a method of measuring something.

Background

Most teens will struggle to manage the chaos of keeping track of assignments, schedules, and events for school. Some are naturally organized while others need explicit guidance. The growing demands on their time each day makes it necessary for them to have a reliable planning system. Explain to the students that finding a system that works for them will reduce their stress and help them get work done before deadlines. Everyone is different, so it's important to find a system that works for you. At the very least, they need a planner. A digital or online planner could be used depending on personal preference. This lesson is best taught at the beginning of the year, but it is appropriate for any time students need help organizing and managing their schedules.

"Everyone is different, so it's important to find a **system that works** for you."

Introduction and Modeling

Ask students, "Have you ever missed an assignment or an event?" Explain that this can happen to anyone. Today, they will learn strategies to help them organize and manage their time.

Strategy 1: Keep a time log to track how your time is spent. Track each day in 15-minute increments, recording everything done throughout each day.

Strategy 2: Record all tasks and activities (including assignments, extracurricular activities, family events, etc.) in a planner. If they are using both a paper planner and a digital planner, have them set aside time to sync the two to ensure they are not double booking their time.

Strategy 3: Break down larger assignments into smaller tasks to be done over a period of time. Use different highlighters to prioritize each task.

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Procedure

1. Have students take out a sheet of paper. Have them divide the paper into four sections, marking each section as 15 minutes. Have them write down the tasks and activities they performed in the last hour but have them record these in 15 minute intervals. Explain that they are creating a time log that will help them recognize patterns in how they spend their time. This will help them understand better where they can find pockets of time to reserve for activities or free, unscheduled time.

2. Have students mark fixed activities that occur within a set time frame each day (such as getting to school, walking to and from class, etc.) with one highlighter. Have them choose a different highlighter to identify other non-fixed activities (such as studying, chatting with friends, etc.) that they listed on their time log.

3. Have students take out their planner and review the assignments and tasks written into their planner. Have them compare the tasks in their planner with the time log they just created. Discuss whether there are any conflicts between the time log they created and the tasks in their planner. Remind students that if they are using a digital planner as well as a paper planner, they should take time each day to ensure that they have recorded all their tasks and activities in both planners.

4. Brainstorm breaking down a long-term task into smaller goals and have students identify how they could fit one of those smaller goals into the hour they tracked on their time log.

Discussion Questions

- What surprised you most about the time log you created? Share your thoughts with the class.
- How would accurately tracking how you spend your time each day help you in school?
- Explain how to use a time log as part of your planning process.
- Why is it important to ensure that digital and paper planners are in sync?

Evaluation

Look at each student's time log to ensure they have accounted for the entire hour tracked. In pairs, have students brainstorm ways to break down a long-term research project into smaller, daily tasks. Have two students role-play finalizing a long-term project. One student has an organized planning system and the other does not.

Tips for Tailoring This Lesson

For Higher Grade Levels

- In groups, have students create a time log for their day and find pockets of wasted time they can use in a more constructive manner.
- Role-play working in a small sales business. Organize a daily shift schedule for 5 parttime employees.

For Lower Grade Levels

- Have students write down, or draw pictures of, things they do every day.
- Have students write their daily assignments in their planners.

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Alignment to Standards and Frameworks

Common Core State Standards:
College & Career Readiness

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Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

CCRA.SL.1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCRA.SL.3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Anchor Standards for Language

CCRA.L.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

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