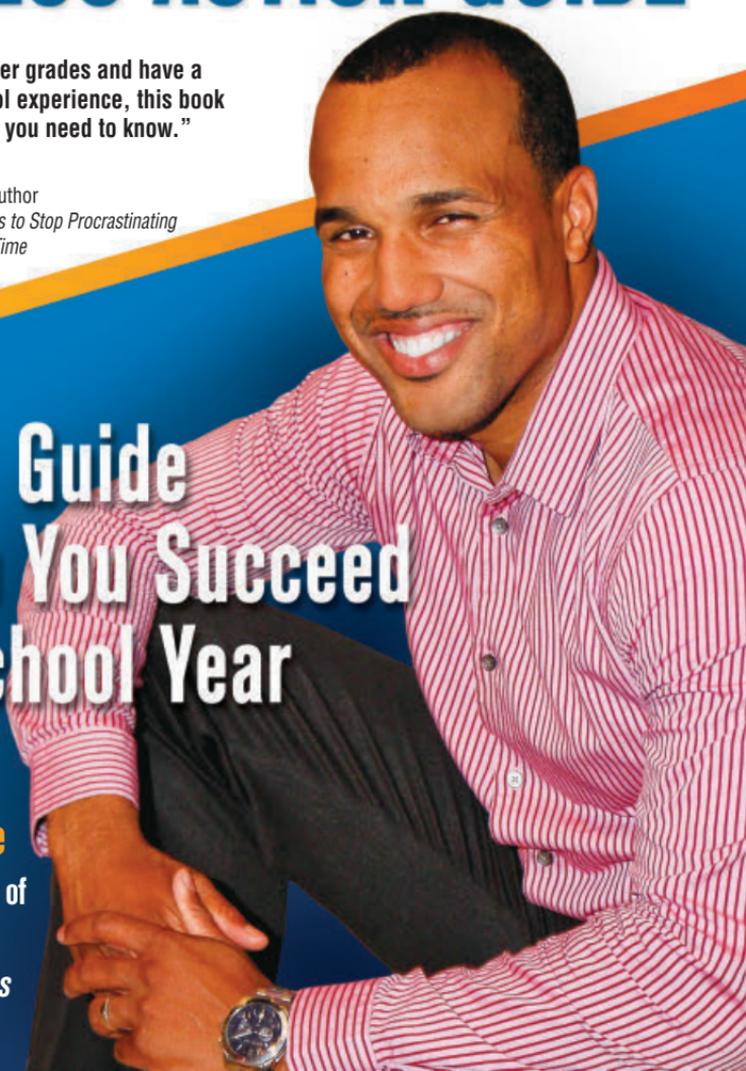


# THE STUDENT SUCCESS ACTION GUIDE

“If you want to get better grades and have a more enjoyable school experience, this book shows you everything you need to know.”

**Brian Tracy**

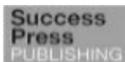
International Best Selling Author  
*Eat That Frog : 21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating*  
and *Get More Done in Less Time*

A photograph of a man with short dark hair, smiling warmly. He is wearing a red and white vertically striped button-down shirt and dark trousers. He is sitting with his hands clasped in front of him. The background is a blue and orange diagonal graphic.

**A Daily Guide  
to Help You Succeed  
This School Year**

**Arel Moodie**

Best-Selling Author of  
*Your Starting Point*  
*For Student Success*



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*For my children and my wife.  
Everyday you make me better.*

*To my editorial and design team,  
Yolanda Febles, Debbie Feldstein, Kristin Walinski,  
Jayme Faye Wonderland & Mélissa Caron, y'all are amazing.  
Thank you for your amazing skills!*

*For you. Yes YOU, reading this book.  
People like you make the world a better place.*





# WELCOME TO AWESOME

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Have you ever felt like you were ready to live a more awesome life? Have you ever heard suggestions like “Be yourself!” or “Go after your dreams!” but no one ever tells you how to actually do it?

One of the most frustrating things in life is wanting to improve yourself but simply not knowing what to do next! Do you want to become more successful, but you just aren’t sure how to start?

Imagine if there were a way for you to take simple steps that barely take any time but can dramatically change your life in school and beyond. How would that affect you?

Well, you are holding in your hands a way to transform yourself into a better version of yourself in just one school year. In the coming pages of this book, you will discover ridiculously simple yet powerfully effective steps you can take every day that will give you an edge in life. You are going to get secrets and strategies that will give you a guaranteed leg up on your peers who don’t take these steps.

*In a world that’s changing really quickly, the only strategy that is guaranteed to fail is not taking risks.*

— Mark Zuckerberg

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## THIS IS NOT A TEST

Each day, you'll read a small passage designed to motivate you to act. That action may simply be thinking about something. Or you may be asked to journal your thoughts. In some cases, you'll be given a strategy to apply and be asked to write about your experience.

Don't worry that you won't do this right. You can't be "right" or "wrong." You can just be honest.

I'm not here to judge you. I'm here to give you everything I've got in my "magic bag" so that you can...

**make your life awesome.**

## WHY I WROTE THIS BOOK FOR YOU

*Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.*

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

At this point, you may be wondering, "Arel, why should I listen to you?"

That's a fair question, and I'd like to answer it now by telling you a little bit of my own story.

I remember growing up in the inner city of NYC. I lived in Brooklyn, in housing known as "projects." It was rough, and looking around my environment, I felt frustrated and trapped.

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I knew I wanted to be successful. I knew I wanted to make an impact on the world. I wanted an awesome life; I just didn't know how to get it. In fact, I wasn't really sure whether I could get it. I was never the smartest kid in class. My family didn't have a lot of money. I didn't wear the nicest clothes. I didn't have any talents that others had.

I used to see others who seemed "gifted" and naturally talented and I would feel upset that I hadn't been given these same skill sets at birth. Could I really compete with them?

Then I got lucky—very lucky. I discovered a magical idea that changed my life completely. This one incredible idea transformed me from a kid who once felt stuck, unhappy, and like a loser into the person I am today. Who is that person, you ask? A man who has built successful companies, has traveled around the world doing what he loves, and has worked with some of the most elite groups in the world, including the White House... all while still in my twenties.

## **THE LITTLE IDEA THAT TURNED OUT TO BE HUGE**

The idea that I learned that allowed me to get more done than most of my peers is this:

**Being naturally gifted isn't nearly as important  
as giving your best effort.**

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Your ability to work hard and take steps every day toward your goals is the key to whether you will become successful. It does NOT matter if you are or are not “naturally gifted.”

Let me ask you something: have you ever had a day go by, and at night, just before your head hits the pillow, you wonder, “What did I actually do today?” You play back the tape of your day in your head and realize it was completely wasted. I used to have days like that, and I hated them. I bet you do too.

It’s time to change your focus and stop looking in the rearview mirror. Your past cannot be changed, but you are in full control of your future. It all starts now!

You’re already on the road to success, by the way. When you got your hands on this book, you decisively took action that will bring you one step closer to your goals. One step at a time... one little action every day... that’s all you need to change your life.

Let’s keep moving...

# MAY I BE YOUR MENTOR?

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I knew I could stick to a success plan if someone would just tell me what to plan to follow! And I was certain that once someone gave me the playbook and I had examples of what successful students do, I could replicate their system and do it on my own.

I have been extremely lucky to be mentored by some of the most successful people in the world. I've learned many strategies and learned many of the secrets of what it takes to get from "here" to "there." But that wasn't always the case, because finding help was hard.

My struggle is what led me to write this book. I don't want you to flounder around the way I did, trying to find someone to help you. That's what I'm here for! I want this book to be your new best friend. I want you and this book to be inseparable for this school year.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

There are 180 steps in this book, one to do each day of the school year (the average school year has 180 school days). By taking one step each day, you will set yourself apart. You'll be

**Doing what most people won't,  
so you can have what most people don't.**

The best time of day to read your daily step is in the morning, as it will jump-start your day. Or, you may prefer to read a step at night in

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anticipation of the coming day. Let me remind you again: there's no right or wrong way to use the power of this book... there's just what's right for you.

Here's another tip: put your book by your bed, in your backpack, or in something that you have with you every day. That way, you won't have to hunt for it when you're ready to get your daily dose of awesome.

I urge you to make this book your own. Feel free to write in it, dog-ear your favorite pages, mark passages with a highlighter, or do anything else that will help you get the most out of what it has to offer.

## **YOU'VE GOT THE POWER**

Before we start stepping, I want to bring your attention to one of the most important, revolutionary concepts you'll ever come across in your life. It's called the "power of one." The power of one is this:

**It only takes one idea, one action, or one person  
to completely change your life.**

It would make me so happy if I could be that one person or if you find the one idea or the impetus to take that one action in this book. It would make me happier still to get an e-mail from you a year from now with a subject line that reads, "Arel, My Life Is AWESOME."

Let's get started!

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**180**  
**STEPS**

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# SHAKE YOUR TEACHER'S HAND TODAY

# 001

Most students don't acknowledge their teacher when they walk into a room. Show that you are different and respectful by walking into all of your classes today, extending your hand, and greeting your teachers with a smile, hello, and handshake.

This is important because fewer and fewer people get the importance of respect. By shaking the teacher's hand, you are giving and getting respect. It will only take a few moments of time. If you miss the handshake on the way in, make sure you get it on the way out.

## REFLECT

After you give the handshakes, come back and reflect on the following questions: How did it feel today when you shook your teachers' hands? How did they respond?

Was it hard or easy for you to do?

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*I speak to everyone in the same way, whether he is the garbage man or the president of the university.*

— Albert Einstein

# 002 SPEND THIRTY MINUTES READING TODAY

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Has reading become a chore in your life? It shouldn't be. There's more to reading than just studying for tests, after all.

**Reading is FUNdamental.**

If you have time to watch TV or play video games, you have time to read. Set the goal that you will read for thirty minutes today.

There are so many wonderful things to read, and I'm not talking about tweets, Facebook posts, and other online content. I'm talking about picking up a magazine, a paperback, or a hardcover book and getting caught up in a story or article about something that really interests you.

## TAKE A STEP

What will you read today, and when will you read it?

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*The more that you read, the more things you will know.*

*The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.*

—Dr. Seuss

# ASK SOMEONE YOU KNOW ABOUT COLLEGE LIFE

# 003

It's good to understand others' journeys to help you discover your own. Finding out what college people attended, the reason they chose it, and their experience there can help you figure out what's important for you to look for in an institution of higher learning. Seeing the steps someone else took is a great strategy to shorten your learning curve on what steps you need to take.

## TAKE A STEP

List the names of adults you know who graduated from college. Of those, list the ones you would feel comfortable asking what college they attended and why.

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*If I have been able to see further than others, it's because  
I have stood on the shoulders of giants.*

— Isaac Newton

# 004 MAKE YOUR CLASS SCHEDULE PICTURE-PERFECT

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When you get your class schedule, take a picture of it with your phone. (Make sure to get the room numbers too!) If you lose your schedule or don't want to go through the work of finding it, you can easily search your phone's pictures for it.

## TAKE A STEP

Check this box once you've taken the picture and put it on your phone.

## EXTRA CREDIT STEP

If it's early in the school year when you get to this step, set this picture as your lock screen so you can easily see your schedule until you've committed it to memory.

*The more you dream,  
the farther you get.*  
— Michael Phelps

Use Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, or whatever social media service you like the most to share updates about what you are studying.

Researchers at Michigan State University found that students who regularly tweet as part of their classes are more engaged with course material and get better grades. So go ahead and talk about what you are learning on social media today!

## **TAKE A STEP**

Check this box after you have sent your first social media update about what you are studying right now.

*But you have to do  
what you dream of doing  
even while you're afraid.*

— Arianna Huffington

# 006

## LIST YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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Keeping a list of all the things you accomplish will help you when you apply for college and scholarships. Having all of your information in one place so you can easily add to it will keep you organized and motivate you to do more.

You can use Google Docs ([www.docs.google.com](http://www.docs.google.com)) or another online platform like Dropbox so you don't ever lose it.

### TAKE A STEP

What will you use to create your activity list sheet?

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*To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to  
make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.*

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

# REGISTER FOR A SCHOLARSHIP WEBSITE 007

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It's never too soon or too late to start looking for scholarships. The first step is to get registered so you can see what's out there.

Set up a profile today on a scholarship site like [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) or [www.zinch.com](http://www.zinch.com). Go to Google and type in "scholarship websites" to see what the newest and best scholarship websites are.

Sign up for one or two scholarship websites to receive alerts about scholarships.

## TAKE A STEP

List the sites you signed up for below:

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*Education costs money. But then so does ignorance.*

— Sir Claus Moser

# 008 MAKE PROGRESS ON PROCRASTINATION TODAY

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Odds are there is work that you know you **should** be doing but aren't doing. The best way to start on any difficult project is simply to start.

Break it down into small, manageable tasks, and just move forward regardless of whether you feel like it or not. The next thing you know, it will be over, and you'll feel so much better about yourself!

## TAKE A STEP

What's one project you've been procrastinating on that you can work on today?

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*It does not matter how slowly you go,  
so long as you do not stop.*

— Confucius

## MAKE FRIENDS WITH FAFSA



Have you ever heard of FAFSA? Hint: F-A-F-S-A are the five most important letters when it comes to paying for a higher education in the twenty-first century.

If you have concerns about paying for college, you owe it to yourself and your future to do a Google search and find out more.

\* Hint: The FAFSA is one of the most important aspects of paying for college. But what is it exactly? Be a detective and find out!

### TAKE A STEP

Answer this question: What is the FAFSA?

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*If your actions inspire others to dream more,  
learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.*

— John Quincy Adams

# 010 GET TO KNOW YOUR COLLEGE COUNSELOR

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Have you introduced yourself to your college counselor yet? He or she is waiting to meet you and eager to help you. It would be a shame to waste this valuable resource.

Stop by your counselor's office just to say hi. Make sure you build a relationship with him or her.

## TAKE A STEP

What's the name of your college counselor? Write it down along with a date and time when you will stop by his or her office to say hello.

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*Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen,  
others make it happen.*

— Michael Jordan

# BE A VOLUNTEER FOR FOURTEEN DAYS

# 011

A person who gives is admired and respected... and often fast-tracked for college, scholarships, and full-time employment. Making a long-term commitment to a good cause can put you on that fast track.

What do you care about? Animals? The environment? Hunger? Whatever your interest, find an organization that inspires you and sign up to help.

## TAKE A STEP

Write down three groups where your help as a volunteer could be needed.

Think about the reasons that would motivate you to volunteer your time with them, then choose an organization that inspires you to want to help.

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*Do one thing every day that scares you.*  
— Eleanor Roosevelt

# 012 DO COLLEGE RESEARCH TODAY

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Starting to know what a college is really all about will help you make better decisions, and it's never too early to start your research. To compare and contrast college options, you need to be able to find information on costs, areas of study, the number of students attending, etc.

Websites such as collegeboard.com can make the research fun. So play around with the website a bit. See if you can find out more about at least three colleges you have heard of.

## TAKE A STEP

List the names of three colleges you will research on [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

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*All our dreams can come true  
if we have the courage to pursue them.*

— Walt Disney

# KNOW YOUR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

# 013

Many options exist for students who want to continue their education after high school. Are you familiar with them?

There are community colleges, public universities, private universities, and trade schools. The more you know about each type and how these types differ from one another, the easier it will be for you to choose what's right for you.

## TAKE A STEP

Do research and define each of the four types of institutions of higher learning listed above.

**Community Colleges:**

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**Public Universities:**

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**Private Universities:**

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**Trade Schools:**

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*I'm going to college. I don't care if it ruins my career.  
I'd rather be smart than a movie star.*

— Natalie Portman

# 014 RESEARCH THE TOP TEN COLLEGES IN THE UNITED STATES

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Colleges and universities are constantly under scrutiny as students look for the best teachers, the best courses, and the best campuses. Today is a great day to research the current top ten colleges in America, there are many lists out there. Find a list and look at the schools.

You can try a Google search to find them, or check out *U.S. News & World Report*, which always has stories on this topic.

## REFLECT

Do any of these schools interest you? Why or why not?

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*As we look ahead into the next century, leaders  
will be those who empower others.*

— Bill Gates

# CONFIRM THAT YOU'RE ON TRACK TO GRADUATE

# 015

It would be a shame to approach graduation day only to find out that you're missing some required credits so you won't be marching to "Pomp and Circumstance" (that graduation song you always hear) with your classmates. Fortunately, your guidance counselor can help you stay on top of this.

Make an appointment to meet with your guidance counselor to review your transcript and make sure everything is in order. Find out what classes you need to take in the future.

## REFLECT

What did you find out at your meeting with your guidance counselor, and what steps do you need to take to ensure on-time graduation?

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*Change will not come if we wait for some other  
person or some other time.*

*We are the ones we've been waiting for.*

*We are the change that we seek.*

— President Barack Obama

# 016 PLAY THE MIRROR-MIRROR GAME

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Do you have a lot of negative self-talk running around in your head—things like “I’m not good enough,” “not smart enough,” or “not attractive enough”? These negative thoughts can keep you from being everything you were meant to be.

Positive self-talk builds self-confidence, so take a moment today to look in the mirror and say something good to yourself. This is called an “affirmation,” and it is a powerful tool for attracting good things in your life.

I know that it may seem a little corny to pat yourself on the back like this. You may also find it difficult to think of something to say. But believe me when I tell you that there is something good in all of us.

What do you see that’s good in you? A kind personality? A good sense of humor? The ability to solve a Rubik’s cube? I don’t know you, but I know from the fact that you are using this book that you’re someone special who isn’t willing to settle and who wants to get the most from your life. That’s admirable!

## TAKE A STEP

What is something positive about yourself that you will affirm in the mirror today?  
(Have fun with this. Go big!)

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*Life isn’t about finding yourself.*

*Life is about creating yourself.*

— George Bernard Shaw

# USE A RECORDING DEVICE TO GET WHAT YOU MISSED

# 017

You miss a lot in class. It happens. So ask your teacher whether you can record your class so you can listen to it later. Most smartphones have a voice memo option, so you can use your phone to record it. You can also buy very inexpensive digital voice recorders online or from an electronics store.

You can save time when listening to the recording by playing it at twice the regular speed. You'll still be able to understand everything, but do it in half the time.

You can use free software like Audacity or any other audio/media player to upload your recording and speed it up.

Then, you can listen to your recorded class while you work out, commute to school, or clean up your room, for example.

## TAKE A STEP

Ask your teacher today whether you can record the class so you can listen to it later.

Check this box once you've done this step.

*The power of choice changes everything.  
If you grasp this, your life is  
completely in your hands.*

— Arel Moodie

# 018 JOIN A CLUB TODAY!

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If you aren't already a member of a school club or activity, today is a great day to join. Being involved with others doing something you enjoy is fun... and more.

Some of your best memories of your school years may come from the groups you are involved in. Group participation builds your people skills, polishes your leadership skills, and is something that colleges and employers look for when weighing candidates' credentials.

## TAKE A STEP

Select one student club you would like to join. Find out when the next meeting will be. Write it below AND in your calendar.

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*You will never catch eagles flying with seagulls.*

— Arel Moodie

The more you know about yourself, the better. The Internet offers lots of ways for you to gain some self-knowledge.

To find a free personality test online, just Google “free personality test” and see what pops up, or try “free career test” or “free personality assessment.”

Finding out more about who you are and your strengths is a great way to move toward people, work, and activities that best fit you.

## REFLECT

What did you find out about yourself when you took the test? Did you find the process interesting?

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*The one self-knowledge worth having  
is to know one's own mind.*

— F.H. Bradley

# 020 TAKE THE 10 PERCENT SAVINGS CHALLENGE

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From now on, save 10 percent of any money that comes your way. It doesn't matter whether it's a birthday check from Granny, a holiday present, or money you've earned at a job. Any time that you receive money, calculate what 10 percent is and put that amount in a safe place. (Hopefully, you have a free savings account set up at a bank in your area.)

Imagine how much money you could have if you started saving 10 percent of everything. If you get \$50, you take \$5 and put it away for savings... and don't touch your savings!

As the money starts to accumulate, you may be tempted to dip into your savings. Don't do it. Ignore it. Don't tell anyone about it, not even yourself. Just pretend it isn't there. Just keep saving no matter what.

## TAKE A STEP

Look at the money you have access to today. No matter how big or small the amount is, take 10 percent of that and put it into your new savings account. (If you don't have a bank account, an envelope in a very safe place will do nicely.)

How much money did you put away today?

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*You must do the things  
you think you cannot do.*

— Eleanor Roosevelt

# VISUALIZE AWESOME ADULTHOOD TODAY

# 021

Have you ever heard of a technique called “visualization”? It’s a way to use the power of the mind to help you get what you want. Having a vision of the future is the first step toward achieving it.

The key to visualization is trying to imagine as many details as you can. How much money do you have? Are you a businessperson? A creative artist? An athlete? Do you travel? Where do you live? What kind of work do you do?

## TAKE A STEP

Write down what an awesome adult life would be like for you.

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*Whether you think you can or you think you can't,  
you're right.*

— Henry Ford

# 022 GET CAREER COUNSELING FROM A SATISFIED WORKER

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Do you know someone who is happy and successful in his or her career? If so, ask whether you can pick his or her brain. Explain that you want advice on choosing a career.

First, find out the person's job title and job description. Then ask what he or she likes and dislikes about the work he or she does. Find out how this person chose his or her career and whether he or she would choose the same career if he or she had it all to do over again.

Career counseling like this will help you discover what type of career might interest you. In turn, that information will help you figure out what type of college or university you should attend to make that happen.

## TAKE A STEP

Name an adult you will interview about his or her current career, and then do it!

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*When you love what you do,  
you'll never work a day in your life.*

— Anonymous

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It's not uncommon for students to head off to college without really knowing what they're going to get out of the experience. That's a shame, because taking the time to understand the benefits you can get from going to college can motivate you to get there.

What's important to you, and how can college help you get it? Do you want to make a lot of money and feel college credentials will help you do that? Are you interested in a specialized career and need a degree to be eligible for the job of your dreams?

## **TAKE A STEP**

List three benefits that you will receive if you graduate from college.

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*If you want to be happy,  
set a goal that commands your thoughts,  
liberates your energy,  
and inspires your hopes.*

— Andrew Carnegie

# 024 FIND YOUR TUTOR

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Education is not a solitary activity; that's why there are teachers. Even with the best teachers, however, we all can use a little extra help from time to time. You may be great in geometry but lousy in algebra. Biology is a breeze, but chemistry stumps you. You speak Spanish like a native, but you're getting C's in your English class.

Instead of struggling, ask for help. Perhaps your teacher or counselor knows someone who can provide some assistance.

## TAKE A STEP

Write down the one subject where tutoring would be most beneficial to you. Then, write down someone who can help you find a tutor. Finally, write down a day and time when you can schedule a regular tutoring session.

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*The best way of learning about anything is by doing.*

— Richard Branson

# PICTURE YOURSELF WITH A GRADUATION CAP ON YOUR HEAD

# 025

If you're still in school, use the promise of graduation day to spur yourself on to greatness. Become a future college graduate today. Visualize yourself walking across the stage to receive your diploma with a mortarboard (the graduation cap). What feelings are you experiencing? Who will be proud of you for reaching this goal?

Spend five minutes visualizing the details of this happy day in your head, filling in as many specifics as you can.

## REFLECT

How did it feel to you after you visualized graduating from high school?  
What was the most exciting aspect of receiving your diploma?

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## EXTRA-CREDIT ACTION STEP

If you know someone who has already graduated and has a cap and gown, ask to borrow it and take a picture in it that you can hang on your wall.

*You don't have to be smart to be successful; you just have to give your best effort.*

— Arel Moodie

# 026

## FIND AN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY YOU'LL NEVER FORGET

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You may be busy, but there will never be a better time in your life to do things that will turn you into a well-rounded individual. An excellent way to broaden your horizons is to apply for a special afterschool program, leadership program, or other extracurricular activity.

Don't join a group just for the sake of joining. Make it something you'll genuinely enjoy, and you'll have a memorable experience that will last a lifetime along with something to put on your college application or résumé.

### TAKE A STEP

Ask five to seven of your teachers or counselors whether they can recommend three activities to you. If they don't have any suggestions, perhaps they can point you in the right direction so you can find out what is offered at your school or in your area.

Make a list of at least three organizations that most interest you below:

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*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens  
can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.*

—Margaret Mead

# DON'T LET SOMEONE ELSE COLLECT YOUR SCHOLARSHIP

# 027

Scholarships are literally free money awarded to help students pay for college and expenses related to college. Many people think scholarships are just for college students, but that's not true. There are scholarships for almost every grade level, including yours!

By the way, scholarships aren't awarded only to academic whiz kids. You may qualify for various scholarships based on the school you choose, your degree program, your gender, your location, and simple financial need, of course.

Do an online search for scholarships for your grade level or from a scholarship website you've already signed up for and apply to it today if you can.

## TAKE A STEP

Take the first step toward an affordable college future with an online search. Look for websites devoted to scholarship opportunities. You may also search for scholarships that are specifically for your grade level.

After doing your online research, what is one scholarship you can and will apply for today?

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*When you take action towards your goals,  
an amazing thing happens;  
you accomplish more than the  
person who does nothing.*

— Arel Moodie

# 028

## LEARN THE LINGO OF COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID

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It's been said that there is an unlimited amount of money in the world, but it may not feel that way when you're trying to fund your college education. However, while the amount of money available may be finite, there are an infinite number of ways you can gain access to it.

### TAKE A STEP

Find out the definition and details of getting a loan, a grant, a scholarship, and a work-study assignment. You should talk to a school counselor for information and advice as well as seek out someone you know who has been to college recently and navigated the financial aid waters.

After your interviews, answer the questions below:

**What is a loan?**

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**What is a grant?**

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**What is work-study?**

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**What is a scholarship?**

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*If at first you don't succeed,  
try, try, try again.*

— William Edward Hickson

You can do many things to make yourself a more desirable candidate for college. The trick is to find a way to start taking classes NOW that will prepare you for the next level.

AP classes, dual enrollment classes, and College Now classes can all help you jump-start your education and leapfrog other students.

## **TAKE A STEP**

Find out what is offered at your school and/or by area colleges for students in your grade. If you can't enroll today, find out what you'll need to do when the time is right.

Make a list of the classes that are offered in your school that will best prepare you for college-level work.

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*Get ready for tomorrow, today.*

— Jvongar

# 030

## CHOOSE A ROLE MODEL

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Following in the footsteps of someone who has “been there and done that” can save you a lot of time and energy in your quest for success. What is a role model exactly? It’s a person who has accomplished some of the goals you would like to accomplish—someone you’d like to learn from so you can emulate his or her success.

You’ll find success sooner if you can “model” your behavior after someone who has graduated from college. Unlike mentors who work with you one-on-one, your role model doesn’t have to be someone you know. You can choose the author of your favorite book or a celebrity you admire and relate to.

The person you choose should have a positive influence on your thoughts and your actions too.

### TAKE A STEP

Choose as your role model someone who has graduated from college, if possible. If you don’t have a well-known person in mind, use the Internet. Look for “celebrity college graduates,” read their stories, and be inspired.

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*I don't want to be a supermodel;*

*I want to be a role model.*

— Queen Latifah

Without a clear destination in mind, it's easy to find yourself going nowhere fast. So this step is about goal setting, both short term and long term.

What is something you can reasonably achieve by the end of this week? What is something else that you can achieve by the end of this semester? How about by the end of this school year?

Have fun and get excited thinking about how amazing it will be when you achieve these goals. The only rule: be specific. Rather than "I'll study more this week," you should write, "I'll spend two additional hours studying my notes from the class that's giving me the most trouble."

## **TAKE A STEP**

Write down your goals on a piece of paper and hang it up somewhere you will see it every day: your closet door, your mirror, etc. This is important because your odds of achieving your goals increase when you write them down and look at them every day.

Why are these particular goals important to you, and where can you hang them so that you're sure to see them daily?

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*If you don't know where you are going,  
you'll end up someplace else.*

— Yogi Berra

# 032 WHOM DO YOU WANT TO MAKE PROUD

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Is there someone in your life that you want to make happy? Someone who would beam with pride to see an improvement on your report card? Someone who would applaud you for graduating and getting into a great college?

The drive to do your best comes from within you, but knowing that your efforts will make someone you care about happy can really keep you going when things get rough.

## TAKE A STEP

Can you think of someone in your life that you want to make happy? Why is this person so important to you? Visualize the smile you would see on his or her face as you accept your diploma. Think about how proud you would both feel and what it would be like to accept congratulations from someone whose happiness is important to you.

Write down the name of someone in your life that you want to make proud of you and explain why you chose this person.

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*Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud.*

— Maya Angelou

# “BRAND” YOURSELF WITH A PERSONAL SLOGAN

# 033

You can call it a slogan, a motto, or a tagline, but today, people and companies alike use catchphrases to remind you of their products and services. Nike’s “Just Do It” is an excellent example.

Your catchphrase will have a slightly different purpose. It will serve to motivate you and give you the strength to “keep calm and carry on” when you feel defeated. Don’t let thoughts like “I’m not good enough” or “I’ll never succeed” invade your mind. Instead, tell yourself “I’m awesome” or “I can get through anything.”

## REFLECT

Write a list of three to five things you can say to amp yourself up during tough times. Pick the phrase that’s the most powerful and make it your own. Write your personal slogan here:

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*Don't let the fear of striking out hold you back.*

— Babe Ruth

# 034

## KEEP TRACK OF DEADLINES

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There's simply no excuse for missing deadlines today thanks to technology. You should write down all of your important deadlines like when papers are due, test days, application submission dates, etc. and make sure they're in your phone's calendar since odds are your phone is with you all the time. Am I right?

Do yourself a big favor and put in a reminder a day or two before the deadline to give yourself a little wiggle room if your schedule gets overfilled. (If this happens to you a lot, you may want to plug in reminders a week or two weeks in advance.)

Put in all the dates you know for the entire semester.

### TAKE A STEP

Select the calendar that will be your main tool. It can be a calendar app on your phone, your computer's calendar function, or even a paper calendar. Write down ten deadlines that you can plug into your schedule today... and then do it.

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*A goal is a dream with a deadline.*

— Napoleon Hill

# DO A SELF-DIAGNOSTIC 035

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Ask yourself, "What is the one area where I can improve so that I will do better in school?"

Are you chronically late? Do you arrive by the skin of your teeth so that you can't pay attention at the beginning of classes? Do you need to work harder to understand a particularly challenging subject better? Have you been sitting on the sidelines and need to become more involved in class and in activities?

Once you've identified the area where you have room for improvement, resolve to make a change and then act on your resolve.

## TAKE A STEP

List the one area where a small improvement could make a big difference.

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What is one change you can make that will allow it to happen?

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*You cannot expect to achieve  
new goals or move  
beyond your present circumstances  
unless you change.*  
— Les Brown

# 036

## ASK YOUR TEACHERS ABOUT BEING A BETTER STUDENT

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We don't always see ourselves as others see us. That makes the people around you an invaluable source of information about yourself. When it comes to assessing your role as a student, there's no better person than a teacher to offer a critique. Most students never ask for feedback, and a large percentage of those who do become defensive and don't act on what they've been told. Those people aren't willing to change their opinion, and that keeps them stuck exactly where they are. On the other hand, people who ask for and accept feedback become very successful. You want to be like them!

### TAKE A STEP

Tell one of your teachers you want to grow and become successful. Ask for advice on how he or she thinks you can improve. If you've got the courage, approach a teacher with whom you have a great relationship and a teacher who isn't your biggest supporter. The input from each is invaluable.

Remember the spirit in which you're asking for advice and the spirit in which it is being given. Your teachers are simply trying to help you, so don't get offended by what they say. Just listen and practice the art of receiving constructive criticism without getting mad and defensive in any way.

Whom did you ask for feedback? What did they say?

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*Criticism may not be agreeable, but it is necessary.  
It fulfills the same function as pain in the human body. It calls  
attention to an unhealthy state of things.*

— Winston Churchill

# GET/BE A STUDY BUDDY 037

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There's safety in numbers... two heads are better than one. Going it alone isn't in anyone's best interest.

This is especially true when it comes to school, studying, and test taking.

It's far easier to tame a difficult subject when you have a buddy to study with. By studying together, you learn more and make studying more fun. As part of studying, you'll find yourself teaching each other too, and that gives you an even greater command of the subject.

## TAKE A STEP

Check your calendar to see when your next test is scheduled. Think of three to five people in your class who would make good study buddies.

Whom will you ask to be your study buddy for an upcoming test?

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*As you grow older, you will discover that you  
have two hands, one for helping yourself,  
the other for helping others.*

— Audrey Hepburn

# 038 TAKE TIME TO GIVE YOURSELF A PAT ON THE BACK

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As you strive for new heights of achievement, it's easy to overlook all the wonderful things you have already accomplished... but you shouldn't. Celebrating your success is empowering and bolsters your self-confidence.

It is also a reminder that hard work pays off and keeps you strong in your commitment to do whatever it takes to graduate from high school with your classmates.

Think of something you worked hard for in the past and finally achieved. Didn't the hard work make the accomplishment even sweeter? Think of how "sweet" it will feel to graduate from high school since you've been working years for that moment!

## TAKE A STEP

What is a past accomplishment you feel proud of?

Write it down and describe the hard work and sacrifices you made to achieve it.

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*There's something powerful about looking  
yourself square in the eyes and saying  
"I'm awesome" as loud as you can.*

— Arel Moodie

You don't have to wait until you're ready to start the college admissions process to familiarize yourself with the ins and outs of the application process. The vast majority of college admissions offices post their application forms online, so you can review them and start to think about how you'll fill them out.

If you feel anxious about applying to college, you may be surprised to learn how simple the forms are. Reviewing them before you need to actually use them will give you a good foundation when the time is right.

Two heads are better than one, so try to go over some forms with your guidance counselor. He or she may be able to point out important questions or areas that you may have overlooked.

## **TAKE A STEP**

What stood out to you the most after looking at a college application?

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*It is never too late to be what  
you might have been.*

— George Eliot

# 040 IT'S TIME FOR A COLLEGE ROAD TRIP

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Have you ever been on a college campus before? Set a date to walk around a college campus with your parents, guardians, or friends just to see what it's like.

## TAKE A STEP

Call the admissions office of a local college to see whether it is giving a free tour that you can attend. If you can't physically make it to a college, find a college website that gives a virtual tour of the campus and take a look. Get familiar with how different colleges look.

What is a college you can visit? What are three free dates in your schedule during the next month when you can make that visit?

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*Everything you can imagine is real.*

— Pablo Picasso

College can be expensive, but there is SO MUCH money out there to be given to you. A scholarship is a great way to pay for college since it's other people's money. Go to a website like [fastweb.com](http://fastweb.com) or [myscholly.com](http://myscholly.com) and find at least five scholarships that you are eligible for or that you can become eligible for and create a plan to apply.

## **REFLECT**

What are the names of the five scholarships you found that you can apply for?

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*Education is the most powerful  
weapon which you can use to  
change the world.*

— Nelson Mandela

# 042 SMILE MORE AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS

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A smile. Everyone's got one lurking somewhere. Interestingly, the simple act of smiling can make you more successful. Other people react positively when they see a smile. Your smile makes you welcoming and approachable—the kind of person college admissions officers will want to welcome to their school.

Maybe you smile with just your top row of teeth or just the bottom row. Maybe you have a wide double-row smile. Or perhaps your smile is subtle, more of a modest smile with your lips closed and the corners of your mouth turned up. It doesn't matter. Every smile is a great smile. You just have to find the smile that best fits your face. Practice different ways to smile in the mirror to find the one you like the most.

Flash that award-winning smile of yours whenever possible, and you'll be amazed at how good it will make you feel.

## TAKE A STEP

Practice your best smile in the mirror for at least ten minutes today. Then try it out on strangers. It's one of the best ways to make friends and build confidence. What did you notice when you smiled more at people?

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*Who cares what you're wearing on Main Street or Saville Row  
It's what you wear from ear to ear - and not from head to toe.*

— Martin Charnin

# FOCUS ON YOUR TOP THREE ATTRIBUTES

# 043

What do you like best about yourself? Are you kind? Artistic? Helpful? Funny? Well-spoken? Healthy? Good with children? Kind to animals?

There are so many wonderful things about you! I bet you would have trouble if I asked you to list just three things that make you amazing. Don't worry—I'm not going to. I'm going to ask you to list as many things you like about yourself as you can think of.

This exercise will teach you to focus on aspects of yourself that you like, which, in turn, will help you develop a positive self-image and lots of self-confidence.

## TAKE A STEP

Write down all the things you like about yourself. Then pick the three things that you feel are your best attributes and mark them with an asterisk.

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*It takes courage to grow up and  
become who you really are.*

— E. E. Cummings

# 044

## IDENTIFY YOUR LEARNING STYLE

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Everyone learns a little differently, but few students take the time to figure out which way they absorb information best. If they did, some students would realize they learn best using a textbook. Others might discover they like to listen to a lecture and take notes. Maybe you like to discuss ideas with others in a study group or one-on-one with a study buddy.

There's no right or wrong way to learn, because not every student is the same. Everyone has unique strengths. A dolphin can't climb a tree like a monkey, but a monkey can't swim as fast as a dolphin.

Understanding which learning style is most effective for you lets you customize a study plan that works for you.

### REFLECT

Of the learning styles described above, which appeals most to you and why?

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*If there is no struggle,  
there is no progress.*  
— Frederick Douglass

Being organized helps you think better. By removing clutter from your life, you remove clutter from your mind. Don't you feel so much better when your room is freshly cleaned? Spend some time today (at least thirty minutes) cleaning up your room, backpack, school locker, or computer files.

**REFLECT**

What will you choose to organize today? When will you do it?

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*The faintest ink is more powerful than  
the strongest memory.*  
— Chinese proverb

# HOW ARE WE FEELING?

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You've just completed the first quarter of this book. Congrats! How are you feeling? Are your success steps helping you master things in a new way? Are you stepping up each day and seeing results?

Before moving on to the next step, take a moment and step back to look at everything you've achieved so far.

Reflecting on your accomplishments doesn't make you prideful or vain. It makes you self-aware. That's a good thing.

## STEPPING SPEED

You've done so well up to this point that I'm going to challenge you a little bit. From here on, we're going to move at hyperspeed. There will be less talk and more action.

Let's put the pedal to the metal and get going...

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Practice tests are the best form of studying. Take as many practice tests as you can because it trains your brain to react in real time.

Ask your teacher for practice exams you can take.

Go to Google and type in “site:edu (SUBJECT) high school exam” or “site:edu (SUBJECT) junior high school exam” or “site:edu (SUBJECT) middle school exam.”

**For example**, go to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and type in “*site:edu geometry high school exam*.”

## **TAKE A STEP**

Which tests will you take a practice test for?

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*We can easily forgive a child  
who is afraid of the dark;  
the real tragedy of life is  
when men are afraid of the light.*

— Plato

# 047 USE THE POMODORO STUDY TECHNIQUE

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Instead of having constant interruptions while studying and surfing the Web, you can use the Pomodoro technique to create chunks of uninterrupted time that are manageable. And, let's be honest, it's pretty hard to study for two hours straight.

## Here's what you do:

Set a timer for twenty-five minutes on your phone.

Put your phone into airplane mode and log out of any sites that would disrupt you. Study uninterrupted for twenty-five minutes.

Take a five-minute break. Repeat this process.

Once you hit the fourth cycle, take a longer break for about twenty minutes.

Repeat until you are done.

## TAKE A STEP

After you try the Pomodoro study technique today, write down what you think about it.

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*Change is a process,  
not an event.*  
— Arel Moodie

# GET AHEAD SO YOU WON'T FALL BEHIND

# 048

It's good to stay up to date on your school assignments, but it's even better to get a little bit ahead. There are no rules saying you can't read ahead, even if it's only a few pages or a chapter or two. This is a great idea because when you make the effort to do more than is required, you'll never find yourself cramming for a last-minute test or deadline.

If you can't get ahead because you are behind in a class, commit to spending a little time each day reading to get caught up. A little a day makes a big difference.

## TAKE A STEP

It's never too late or too early to give it your best. Write down a list of classes where you can read a little extra so that you're ahead of the curve instead of behind it. Select the class where you want to focus your reading energy and put an asterisk next to it.

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*If you give yourself time to plan for tomorrow today,  
you'll find you have a lot more time to do what you love  
than if you just wing it.*

— Arel Moodie

# 049 LOSE YOUR FEAR OF QUESTIONS

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How many times have you felt completely lost in class but didn't raise your hand to ask a question or stay after class to get help from your teacher? This is a very common problem for students who are too embarrassed to let on that they are confused.

It's okay to ask questions! Teachers will appreciate it because questions show you are listening, paying attention, and not willing to let the opportunity to learn go by. Successful students ask questions.

## TAKE A STEP

If you don't fully understand something in class today, raise your hand and ask a question. As soon as you can, write down how you felt when you asked the question. Were you embarrassed? Was the teacher helpful? Did other students thank you for asking the question they were afraid to ask?

Write your responses below:

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*Successful people ask better questions, and as a result,  
they get better answers.*

— Tony Robbins

# BE A READER AND BECOME A LEADER

# 050

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Want to stand out in class? Raise your hand when the teacher asks for a volunteer to read aloud. Most students are unwilling or afraid to take this step, so your teacher will definitely notice you if you do.

The great thing about reading aloud is this: the more you do, the better you become at it. As you master reading to others, you'll gain confidence and self-esteem.

This skill will be valuable throughout your life, regardless of whether you're reading a report to your business colleagues or reading a book to a child of your own.

## TAKE A STEP

Be ready to seize the opportunity to read aloud. Write down everything you felt as you read below:

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*Today a reader; tomorrow a leader.*

— Margaret Fuller

# 051 READ TO THOSE WHO CAN'T

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People love people who read to them, especially young children. Go to your local elementary school's office and ask whether you can volunteer to read to students there. Older kids are rock stars to younger kids, and you might just inspire a whole new generation of readers with your actions.

The principal and administrators will probably make you feel like a rock star too. They'll appreciate your willingness to give up your time to help others... and they'll be excellent resources when it's time to find folks to recommend you to college admissions offices.

## TAKE A STEP

Which elementary school can you volunteer to read in? After you do your first reading session, write some of your thoughts below.

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## EXTRA CREDIT STEP

Older folks also enjoy being read to. Consider volunteering at a senior center or hospital.

*The more you read, just by reading, you become smarter,  
a better person, almost like magic.*

—Arel Moodie

# ASK YOUR TEACHER FOR A READING RECOMMENDATION

# 052

There are so many wonderful things to read in the world that it can be overwhelming. If you don't like to read, it may be because you haven't found a genre of books that excites you. There is a type of book for everyone, including you: historical fiction, sports biographies, how-to books, and on, and on, and on. Discovering what books others like is a great way to find a book that may surprise you and that you'll enjoy more than you imagined. You can consult best-seller lists online or, better yet, ask a favorite teacher for a recommendation to add to your reading list.

## TAKE A STEP

Ask three teachers to recommend a book to you and write the titles and authors' names below. Pick your favorite from among their favorites, draw a circle around it, and put down a date when you will go to the library and check out a copy.

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## EXTRA CREDIT STEP

You can learn a lot about people based on the books they read. This is your opportunity to get inside the head of your teachers and gain some interesting insights about how they think based on their favorite books!

*The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity.*

— Amelia Earhart

# 053 TURN YOUTUBE INTO YOUR CLASSROOM

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It's great to take a break and watch videos of cute cats, red carpet mishaps, sports highlights, adorable babies, and more on YouTube. But did you realize how easy it is to have fun and learn a little something too? Are you struggling in science? Maybe you just need a new way to approach mastering the information. Chances are, there's an educational YouTube channel you can watch that makes science fun so you can learn while laughing.

Go to YouTube and type in "vsauce," for example, and watch some of the cool videos on this channel. What you see will blow (and expand) your mind.

## TAKE A STEP

Find a YouTube channel that can teach you something about school subjects in a fun way. (And, unless you're studying to be a veterinarian or "cat whisperer," silly cat videos don't count.)

Use the space below to list three YouTube channels that you found and enjoyed. Highlight your favorite in yellow.

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*YouTube is becoming much more than an  
entertainment destination.*

— Bill Gates

# GO MINING FOR RESOURCES 054

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Did you know you might be able to rent a video camera at no cost for a school project? Or get free admission to a museum to do research? Were you aware that there are programs that help students pay for their textbooks? And free tutoring programs that can help you prepare for college admissions?

There are literally tons of resources for students out there. Are you taking advantage of them? Most students don't simply because they aren't aware of what's being offered.

Teachers, counselors, and school principals on the frontlines of education work like beavers to tap into beneficial programs. So do businesspeople, the clergy, and others in your community. They all share a single wish: that more students would use these resources to better advantage.

## TAKE A STEP

Make a list of five people you know who are likely to know about resources for students and schedule a date when you can speak with them. Write down their names below, along with the date of your appointment. After your meeting, write down the resources you learned about.



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*Eighty percent of success is showing up.*

— Woody Allen

# 055

## PROGRESS REALITY CHECK

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A lot of students cruise through the semester without really evaluating how they're doing. It's only when they see their midterm and final grades that they admit they've been in trouble.

Rather than waiting until it's too late, "get real" today about where you're struggling... and get help. If you're struggling in English, go to the teacher and ask for extra help or for the name of a tutor.

Or, you can look for help online. If math is making your head explode, visit [www.mathway.com](http://www.mathway.com) for help.

This technique doesn't apply only to classroom issues. If someone is bullying you, for example, find someone who can help you stop it right away.

### TAKE A STEP

Write down three areas where you are struggling either inside or outside of school. Put an asterisk next to the thing that bugs you the most. Then, write down one strategy that will help you improve the situation.

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*It's hard to spend years at a time working in total solitude with no reality check. Don't do it.*

— Russell Banks

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Your memory is like a muscle. The more you practice, the stronger it becomes. Having a stronger memory makes life and test taking easier. If it's easier for you to recall what you learned, you will do better on tests.

At the end of each class today, take at least thirty seconds to ask yourself, "What did I just learn?" At the end of the day, try to recall as many facts and ideas as you can that you learned throughout the day. Taking a few moments to think about what you learned will help you remember more.

The more you do this, the easier it will become, and the more you will remember with less effort!

## **TAKE A STEP**

Write down your experience of how well you did recalling what you learned at the end of the day.

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*Remember to be awesome today!*

— Arel Moodie

# 057 GET REAL ABOUT REAL TIME MANAGEMENT

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Learning how to figure out how long things will take and making that real is an important skill for success.

Today, estimate how long it will take you to finish your homework. Write down your estimate. Then do your homework.

## TAKE A STEP

How long did it take you to complete your work? Write it down and compare how long you thought it would take to how long it actually took.

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## EXTRA CREDIT STEP

Keep practicing this until the two times match.

How Long I Think Homework Will Take

How Long Homework Actually Took

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*Your time is limited,  
so don't waste it living someone else's life.*  
— Steve Jobs

# FLASH CARDS WORK! 058

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Flash cards are a great way to learn. You can purchase blank index cards and create your own flash cards to test yourself. Write the question on one side and the answer on the other. Then, flip through the questions, trying to guess what the answer is on the other side.

The process of making your own flash cards improves your studying: you learn about the subject more deeply than if you just used someone else's premade flash cards.

## TAKE A STEP

Decide which subject(s) you can make flash cards for and prepare to make your own cards. Then, get yourself a pack of index cards and make some flash cards for the class that's giving you the most trouble. Write the questions for one class on one side of the cards and the answer on the other side of the cards.

## EXTRA CREDIT STEP

When you've mastered your flash cards, use them to play "Jeopardy." Show yourself the answer first and try to figure out the question.

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*As long as the mind can envision the fact that you can do something, you can do it, as long as you really believe 100 percent.*

— Arnold Schwarzenegger

# 059 USE GUM TO STIMULATE YOUR MEMORY

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Have you ever smelled something like warm cookies baking that took you back to a certain time in your life? Well, you can use this same phenomenon to get better grades!

Chew a flavor of gum that you don't normally chew while studying. How will this help you? Studies show that the powerful senses of taste and smell bring back memories.

## TAKE A STEP

Studies suggest that there is a connection between chewing a specific flavor of gum (say cinnamon) while studying and chewing that same flavor of gum while taking a test. It will improve your recall of what you learned.

Try it when studying and taking tests in a class that's giving you trouble. What unique flavor of gum or hard candy will you use while studying?

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## EXTRA CREDIT STEP

If your teacher or school normally doesn't allow students to chew gum during class, ask your teacher whether you can chew gum during a test as a way to help you focus, and promise not to blow bubbles. If you ask but are told no, see whether you can use a hard candy.

*To be successful you have to be willing to do what most people  
won't so you can have what most people don't.*

—Arel Moodie

# LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES



Find out what you didn't get right on a test.

When most students get a test back, they simply look at the grade and never look at the test questions again. Not you! Take time to look over where you made mistakes (if any!) and think about what you thought the answer should have been and what it really was.

Do NOT beat yourself up mentally during this process. The goal is to learn. This is how you get better. Get excited about learning! See whether you can find an old test to go over with your teacher.

## TAKE A STEP

Choose which test in which class you will review.

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*In the middle of every difficulty  
lies opportunity.*  
— Albert Einstein

# 061 NEED HELP GETTING UP IN THE MORNING? TRY THIS TRICK.

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Set your alarm sound to be a soothing song. Then schedule your alarm for ten minutes earlier than usual, and put your alarm (probably your phone) across the room. This will allow you to wake up more peacefully and not get scared awake by the usual harsh alarm sound. If you wake up refreshed, you're less likely to hit the snooze button.

## TAKE A STEP

What song will you use for your new alarm clock sound?

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*Life is short,  
and it is here to be lived.*

—Kate Winslet

# PUT A GLASS OF WATER NEXT TO YOUR BED

# 062

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As soon as you wake up, drink an entire glass of water. You can drink before you brush your teeth; it's okay.

Studies show that drinking a glass of water as soon as you wake up will help you awaken more easily, and it has great health benefits for your whole body. How awesome will it be to wake up more refreshed for school?

## TAKE A STEP

Go put a glass of water by your bed now to drink tomorrow morning.

Print out a calendar page for this month, or use your phone's calendar, and put a check mark on every date where you remember to drink your morning water.

Check this box once you've set up your calendar.

*I have not failed.  
I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.*  
— Thomas A. Edison

# 063 LEND A HAND

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People underestimate the importance of kindness and philanthropy. Many people are so focused on their own life that they forget to think about the needs of others.

Be on the lookout today for how you can help someone. See how awesome it makes you feel.

Think about people you can help today... and then go out and do it. The help can be modest: maybe you can wash the dishes for your family or take out the trash for an elderly neighbor. There's no limit to the good you can do and no limit to how good it will make you feel.

Think about how you can go out of your way to help someone today. Think about it and do it.

## REFLECT

Whom did you help today and how? Be specific, and make it good.

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*Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone  
planted a tree a long time ago.*

— Warren Buffett

# SURF THE WEB LIKE A SCHOLAR 064

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When doing research for an essay, book report, paper, project, etc., instead of just using Google, use [scholar.google.com](http://scholar.google.com). You'll find more ready-to-use, acceptable information more easily.

## TAKE A STEP

Give it a shot. Write down a topic for a class that you have to research. Then go to [www.scholar.google.com](http://www.scholar.google.com), search for your topic, and see what results you get.

Check this box when you've done this step.

*To be the best,  
search out the best.*  
— Arel Moodie

# 065 READ ALOUD TO INCREASE MEMORY

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Most students silently read things over and over as they study, but reading them out loud will significantly improve your ability to remember what you've read.

## TAKE A STEP

When you are studying for a class tonight, read out loud to retain more information. Which subject will you read out loud in today?

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*Every moment  
is a fresh beginning.*  
— T. S. Eliot

# MAKE A FIVE-MINUTE REVIEW PART OF YOUR DAILY ACTIVITIES

# 066

You should make it a point to review your notes briefly after school. Taking even five minutes to glance over your notes after the school day is over will significantly increase the amount of information you remember.

Scanning your notes for the day to recall what you learned should be the first thing you do on your way home or as soon as you get home.

## TAKE A STEP

Check this box after you've reviewed your school notes from today.

*What the mind of man  
can conceive and believe,  
it can achieve.*  
— Napoleon Hill

# 067 SEE IT, BELIEVE IT, ACHIEVE IT (BUY IT)

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Getting into good money habits while you're young is the way to go. So today, you need to set a financial goal for something you want to buy.

Think of something you would really love to buy. It shouldn't be something so extravagant that you'll never get it; rather, it should be something just beyond your current reach that will require you to stretch financially.

Maybe it's a new pair of sneakers, a new instrument, or anything that you might want. Create a fund where you save money just for this goal. And when you reach the goal, go get it!

## TAKE A STEP

What do you want to start saving to buy?

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*The more you praise and  
celebrate your life, the more there  
is in life to celebrate.*

— Oprah Winfrey

# MAKE YOUR OWN PRACTICE TESTS (DON'T FORGET TO SHARE)

# 068

Taking practice tests is great, but creating your own practice tests is even greater! Go through your notes and your textbooks and create questions based on what you find. Write them down in a list form and create an answer key.

It may take a little extra time to do this, but research shows this is one of the best ways to study. You learn in multiple ways, and self-testing improves learning and retention.

You can even form a study group around your practice tests. Other students will be super-grateful.

## TAKE A STEP

Create your first practice test today.

Check this box once you've created your first test of at least ten questions.

*A person who never  
made a mistake never tried  
anything new.*

— Albert Einstein

# 069

## START RESEARCHING COLLEGE OPTIONS

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Interview at least three adults you know who graduated from college. Which college did they choose, and why? Find out whether they liked it and would recommend it to others. What could have been better about their college experience? By learning about the experiences of others, you can learn how to make better decisions for your future.

### TAKE A STEP

Who are the three adults you will interview about what college they attended?  
(Teachers and people who work at your school are okay to interview.)

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*An unexamined life is  
not worth living.*  
— Socrates

Go to [www.diycollegerankings.com](http://www.diycollegerankings.com) and use its unique ranking system that's customized for you to find out what colleges you might be interested in. This website gives you the important facts about every college.

### **TAKE A STEP**

Write down what you found most interesting when visiting this site.

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*You can never cross the ocean until  
you have the courage to  
lose sight of the shore.*  
— Christopher Columbus

# 071 TAKE A TIP FROM YOUR PEERS AND UNIGO.COM

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Go to [www.unigo.com](http://www.unigo.com) to read reviews written by actual students about the colleges you have researched. Let this research help you figure out which college is truly best for you.

## TAKE A STEP

Read real reviews from students on at least three colleges that you think are interesting. Which three will you read about?

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*If you hear a voice within you say you cannot  
paint, then by all means paint and that  
voice will be silenced.*

— Vincent van Gogh

# MAKE YOUR NOTES TRULY NOTEWORTHY

# 072

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Taking good notes is a skill you'll use forever, so now is a fine time to start improving your note-taking skills.

Use a highlighter during class or a different colored pen to highlight parts of your notes that you think are important, like examples your teacher used in class. (There's a good chance those could be test questions!)

Do you have a highlighter or different colored pens? If not, go buy some today.

## TAKE A STEP

Check this box when you have your new supplies.

*Aim to make every day  
the highlight of your life.*

— Arel Moodie

# 073 FIND A MENTOR

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Mentors can help you succeed faster because they have experience you don't have yet, so they can help you make better decisions. You can have a mentor for picking a college, playing a sport, and studying—really for any area of your life. Find people at home or at school who can take a more active role in helping you learn what they already know.

## REFLECT

Who do you think could be a good mentor to you and in what way?

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*The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago.*

*The second best time is now.*

— Chinese proverb

As you get deeper into the school year, you may feel like things are getting harder or that the pressure is building. But you can do this. You can make it happen.

Dig deep today and don't quit on yourself. Keep moving toward your dreams. You've got this under control. You can make it through anything!

## **TAKE A STEP**

Make a commitment to yourself to keep going. Agree to not quit by signing the declaration below.

**I AM AWESOME AND I WON'T GIVE UP ON MYSELF.**

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Every strike brings me closer  
to the next home run.*

— Babe Ruth

# 075 PUT SOME OOMPH IN YOUR STUDYING

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Studying is one thing; ACTIVELY studying is another... and it is what you need to do to step up to success.

When reading a textbook for a class, don't just rush to finish it so the work is done. Become actively involved in the text to learn more. Try using highlighters or colored post-it notes, writing summaries of each page, or writing down questions about things you don't fully understand.

The more actively engaged you are in reading, the more you will remember, and the easier tests will become!

## TAKE A STEP

What strategy will you use to become more actively engaged in studying?

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*Strive not to be a success,  
but rather to be of value.*

— Albert Einstein

# CUT AND PASTE YOUR FUTURE INTO REALITY

# 076

Create a vision board of what your ideal life would look like. Think of what you will do as a career, who you will hang out with, where you will live, and how you will feel. This step is all about getting vivid, powerful images that will inspired you to see the awesome life you will live one day.

Cut out pictures and words from magazines that represent your most ideal life and paste them on a cork board. Or, you can make a virtual board using a site like [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com) or [www.dreamitalive.com](http://www.dreamitalive.com).

Look at your board at least once every day, even if it's only for a few seconds.

## TAKE A STEP

Spend some time today creating your vision board. Will you create an actual board or a virtual one?

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*People often say that motivation doesn't last.*

*Well, neither does bathing.*

*That's why we recommend it daily.*

— Zig Ziglar

# 077 GIVE YOURSELF A FULL NIGHT'S SLEEP TONIGHT

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Sleep eight hours or more tonight and see how you feel in the morning. When we sleep according to our body's needs, we think more clearly and can focus better in school. Proper rest is one of the fastest ways to improve your academic performance.

## TAKE A STEP

A sleep schedule ensures that you get the eight hours of sleep you need to be awesome.

Based on what time you have to wake up in the morning, by what time do you have to be in bed, lights out, and ready to fall asleep to get at least eight hours of sleep?

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*Either you run the day,  
or the day runs you.*

— Jim Rohn

# GIVE YOUR EARS A WORKOUT 078

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Practice your listening skills. When you fully listen to people you're speaking with, they feel like you're paying attention and are interested in what they're saying. That makes them feel good about themselves... and about you too.

Not only will they feel good about you, but they'll also be more likely to listen to you when you're talking. That's great because when people listen to you, you're better able to express your ideas and thoughts.

## TAKE A STEP

Choose one conversation today and really listen to what the other person is saying. Do not interrupt this person until he or she has finished speaking.

Reflect on how that conversation went below:

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*The most common way people give up  
their power is by thinking  
they don't have any.*

— Alice Walker

# 079

## DEVELOP AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

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The more you focus on what's going well in your life, the more good feelings you'll develop. One excellent way to do this is to write down the things you're grateful for.

### TAKE A STEP

Write down at least five things that you're thankful for in your life. Try doing this every day for a week and see how you feel.

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*I am not a product of my circumstances.*

*I am a product of my decisions.*

— Stephen Covey

# PIN YOUR QUOTABLE QUOTES FOR ANYTIME INSPIRATION

# 080

Words are very powerful. Go online, find quotes that inspire you, and post them on an online board site like [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com) or print them out and hang them in your room. This step is all about finding phrases that will keep you going when you feel like quitting. \*Hint, this book is filled with great quotes!

## TAKE A STEP

Create at least one online board or print out some positive quotes to hang in your room today.

Check this box once you've completed this task.

*You become what you believe.*

— Oprah Winfrey

# 081 TREAT YOUR BODY LIKE A TEMPLE TODAY

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When you take care of your body, you have more energy and feel better so you can do more with your day. Today's challenge: eat healthfully for an entire day.

Eat real food that came from the earth and stay away from white flour, fried food, sugar, and processed boxed foods. Try it for one day. You may have to prepare a bit to do this.

You may think you don't like healthy food, but there are great ways to make it tasty.

## TAKE A STEP

Try not to eat any sugary food for one day and see how you feel! Make the commitment to say no to sugary foods for one day. Instead of sugary treats, go natural with fruits and tasty veggies.

Check this box if you take on this "sweet" challenge.

*When you take care of your body,  
your body takes care of you.*  
— Usher

# GET YOUR ENERGY FROM PURE WATER

# 082

Drink water as your only beverage for the entire day. When you drink enough water, your entire body functions better. When people are tired or can't focus, it's often because they're dehydrated. When you are properly hydrated, you have more energy.

Sugary drinks like soda actually make you more dehydrated! And so-called energy drinks may give you a boost, but the crash when they wear off is terrible.

You could actually improve your performance in school just by drinking more water!

To figure out how much water you need to drink, divide your current body weight in half. That number is how much you should drink in ounces. For example, if you weigh 120 pounds, divide 120 by 2. You'll need to drink at least 60 ounces, or 7½ cups, every day.

## TAKE A STEP

Commit to drinking water as your only beverage today and write down how many ounces of water you need to drink today (current body weight divided by 2).

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Check this box once you've finished drinking all of your water for the day.

*We should remember that just as a positive outlook on life can promote good health, so can everyday acts of kindness.*

— Hillary Clinton

# 083

## GIVE TO RECEIVE

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When we respect and treat people nicely, people usually reciprocate our behavior. You can say something nice about what they're wearing or one of their unique personality traits, etc.

Give three of your friends or teachers a genuine compliment today.

### TAKE A STEP

Which people did you compliment today? How did it they receive it?

1.

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2.

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3.

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*When the power of love overcomes the love  
of power the world will know peace.*

— Jimi Hendrix

Being physically healthy is important. It keeps you energized and thinking clearly, which can help you get better grades! Studies have shown that a short, intense workout first thing in the morning can give you the same boost as a cup of coffee, and the effects will last much longer!

Your challenge today is to get energized early in the morning.

### **TAKE A STEP**

Do at least ten push-ups or ten jumping jacks (or as many as you can do) as soon as you wake up. This will get your body pumped for the rest of your day.

Check this box after you do your quick morning exercises.

*You—not anyone else—  
are in control of how you feel.*

— Arel Moodie

# 085 SEE YOURSELF IN THE CEO'S CHAIR

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If you have an idea of what you want to do professionally, it's easier to choose a college and a major. So today, you're going to think about your future career.

Research different career options. You can look online for what the fastest-growing careers are, you can go to websites like [www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com) to see what people get paid, and you can look at cool online tools like [www.studentcenter.ja.org/careers](http://www.studentcenter.ja.org/careers) to do some research.

## TAKE A STEP

Spend at least twenty minutes today researching possible careers online.

When you've finished your research, write down three new pieces of information you discovered:

1.

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2.

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3.

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*If you can do what you do best and be happy,  
you're further along in life than most people.*

— Leonardo DiCaprio

Many students spend more time fighting with their teachers than learning from them. That's a mistake. For today, let go of the idea that the information you're learning is a waste of time and trust that what you are being taught is worth your effort.

It's okay—and even important—to ask questions, but it's just as important to trust people who may have more knowledge or information than you do. Instead of resisting so much today, focus on being well behaved, listening, and doing your best to learn without putting up a fight.

## **TAKE A STEP**

Check this box if you commit to doing these things today.

*The more you listen to people,  
the smarter you become.*

— Arel Moodie

# 087 DOUBLE UP ON SAYING “PLEASE” AND “THANK YOU”

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You can't have a magical life without using the magic words! You can never say “please” and “thank you” enough.

Each and every time someone does something nice for you—says “bless you” when you sneeze... picks up a pencil you dropped... offers to study together—make sure to say “thank you.” Even if someone is supposed to do something, it doesn't stop you from using the magic words.

During lunch, thank the people in the cafeteria for your meal. Thank your teacher at the end of class for teaching. Thank the janitor at school who keeps your school clean and the cashier at the store who rings up your stuff. Say “thank you” to anyone who shows you kindness.

Say “please” every time you make a request.

When you start focusing on how so many people in your life treat you kindly, you'll notice more of this kind of behavior by others, and you will start practicing being kind to others.

## TAKE A STEP

After you go through your day saying “please” and “thank you” to people, what did you notice? How did you feel about yourself while doing it? Did anything awesome happen?

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*I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.*

— Maya Angelou

# THE TOP FIVE REASONS YOU LIKE SOMEONE

# 088

Is there anyone in your life whom you truly respect and admire? Write down at least five reasons why you admire this person. Can you start modeling any of the reasons so you can be more like this person?

## TAKE A STEP

Write down three people you respect and admire in your life. Who is at the top of the list? What are five things you respect about this person?

**Top of list:**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

*The battles that count aren't the  
ones for gold medals. The struggles within yourself  
— the invisible battles inside all of us —  
that's where it's at.  
— Jesse Owens*

# 089

## BAD HABITS REALITY CHECK

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Being able to self-reflect to see areas in your life that you need to improve is a huge sign of maturity. The more you can honestly do this without beating yourself up, the more mature you'll become.

### TAKE A STEP

What are some of your bad habits that are holding you back in some way? Write down three of them and describe what will continue happening if you maintain these habits:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_

Then write down your worst bad habit and one thing you can do to start changing it:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Keep your face to the sunshine and  
you can never see the shadow.*

— Helen Keller

# RELAX YOUR MIND TO ENERGIZE YOUR STUDIES

# 090

Some may think not having a thought in your head makes you stupid. On the contrary, being able to meditate successfully and remove thoughts from your head is a sign you are enlightened! How cool is that?

Meditation is a way to help your mind relax. Whenever you feel anxious about a test, a homework assignment, or anything that challenges you, practice mindful meditation.

The easiest way to do this is to focus on your breathing in the middle of a thought or feeling. Another way to do this is to light a candle and focus on the flame. If you start thinking random thoughts, refocus your attention. The goal of meditation is to not think at all.

## TAKE A STEP

Go ahead and give it a shot. Aim to do this for five minutes. Set an alarm on your phone and do your best to meditate. See how long you can go without letting thoughts pop into your head.

After you meditate, write down some words that describe the experience. Was it hard? Easy? Calming? Peaceful?

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*In the midst of movement and chaos,  
keep stillness inside of you.*

— Deepak Chopra

# HALFWAY POINT! YAY!

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## Can you believe it?

You've made it to the halfway point. I bet you didn't see this day coming when you started stepping up to success.

The great thing is that you can just keep on doing what you've been doing. With each new step you take, you are becoming more awesome every day.



Let's keep going  
so you don't lose momentum...

# WHAT'S YOUR LEARNING STYLE?

# 091

Did you know that almost everyone has a primary learning style? Some people learn best visually (by seeing things), others are auditory learners (hearing things), and some students learn best with tactile (touch) teaching methods. Take a short online quiz at [www.educationplanner.org/students/self-assessments/learning-styles.shtml](http://www.educationplanner.org/students/self-assessments/learning-styles.shtml) to see what your predominant learning style is and how you can better learn and study for school based on your preferred way of learning.

## REFLECT

What did the self-assessment reveal about your learning style? How accurate do you think it was? Did you learn anything from the test results?

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*Be yourself. Everyone else is already taken.*

— Oscar Wilde

# 092 YOU ARE WHO YOUR FRIENDS ARE

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Your life is the average of the five people closest to you. If your five closest friends are doing well in school, chances are you are too, and vice versa.

Think about your five closest friends. Do these five people act, behave, and live a life that you really want? If not, you should consider whether you should hold onto these friendships.

## TAKE A STEP

List the five people (outside of your immediate family) that you spend the most time with.

Put a plus sign next to the people who are a positive influence in your life, and put a minus sign next to the names of the people who are a negative influence.

Name of Friends:

+ or -

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

*The person who says it cannot be done should not  
interrupt the person who is doing it.*

— Chinese proverb

Do you complain about stuff yet don't do anything to make things better? If so, you're not alone. There's a quote that says, "Don't complain about the things you aren't willing to change."

The truth is that most people complain about many things but do nothing to change their circumstances. But you're not most people. You're AWESOME.

## **TAKE A STEP**

For one day, do not complain about anything, no matter how justified your complaint may seem. Just learn to accept certain things and move on.

How do you feel about yourself by the end of the day after not complaining about anything and just accepting things and moving on?

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*Everything has beauty,  
but not everyone can see.*

— Confucius

# 094 WRITE IT DOWN

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Successful people manage their time well and plan their schedules in advance. Relying solely on our memory is what gets us into trouble. Creating good scheduling practices is a great trait.

How do you manage your day? You should really write down all the classes, school activities, practices, appointments, etc. you have for each day. Use your smartphone calendar or a planner to keep track of your time commitments.

## TAKE ACTION

Gather all of the activities that you have to do and tasks you need to complete and schedule them into your calendar for at least this month and next month.

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Check this box once you've completed this task.

*First, have a definite, clear practical ideal: a goal, an objective.*

*Second, have the necessary means to achieve your ends:  
wisdom, money, materials, and methods.*

*Third, adjust all your means to that end.*

— Aristotle

# GIVE YOURSELF A “GOOD” TALKING TO 095

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Have you ever noticed yourself saying mean things that make you feel bad about yourself and stop you from trying and learning because you think you'll fail or you just can't do it? How we talk to ourselves determines how we feel about ourselves, so today, you're going to change the way you think about who you are.

## TAKE A STEP

Look at the chart below to see how you can turn a negative thought into a positive statement. When you notice yourself saying any of the things in the left column, make a conscious effort to replace that thought with a phrase in the right column.

Instead of:	Try Thinking:
I'm not good at this.	→ What am I missing?
I give up.	→ I'll use some new strategies I've learned.
This is too hard.	→ This may take some more time and effort.
I can't make this any better.	→ I can always improve, so I'll keep trying.
I just am not good at math.	→ I'm going to train my brain in math.
I made a mistake; I'm dumb.	→ Mistakes help me get better.
Plan A didn't work.	→ Good thing the alphabet has twenty-five more letters!

*A problem cannot exist without a solution.*

— Arel Moodie

# 096 NURTURE TALENT AND LEARN SKILLS

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There's a difference between talent and skill. Talent is when you're born with a natural ability to do something really well without much effort. Skill is based on effort and hard work that allows you to be better, often better than a naturally talented person.

What is something that you've always wanted to do but haven't tried because you believe you need to be naturally good at it? Challenge yourself to start trying whatever that is while keeping the mind-set that you don't have to be great at it immediately. Rather, you just have to start trying and give your best effort so that you can eventually be good at it.

## TAKE A STEP

What is an area of your life (school related or personal) that you'd like to improve in? What can you do today to become better at it with practice?

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*I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.*

— Michael Jordan

There is a difference between a fixed mind-set and a growth mind-set. A fixed mind-set believes that you are the way you are and you can't change anything about yourself or your circumstances. A growth mind-set believes that you can improve yourself and your life by changing the way you do things and think about things.

If you were to fail an exam, what would you say to yourself? A fixed mind-set would say, "I'm stupid and I'll never do well, no matter how hard I try." A growth mind-set might say, "I didn't do so well on this test and I'm upset about it, but that just means I need to study more next time, and I will."

## **TAKE A STEP**

Think about the different kinds of mind-sets. Be honest with yourself, and write down which mind-set you have right now. Are you happy with it? Are there any changes you would want to make? If so, what are they?

*We become what we think about.*

— Earl Nightingale

# 098

## BE A PROBLEM SOLVER TODAY

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When you face a challenge in your life, do you just dwell on the problem and maybe even complain about it but really do nothing about it, or do you find a way to solve your problem? The most successful people look for solutions to their problems and then move on.

### TAKE ACTION

What's a problem you're facing now? Think of at least three ideas of how you might improve your situation or solve your challenge.

1.

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2.

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3.

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*No matter how small a step you take in the right direction,  
it is better than doing nothing.*

— Arel Moodie

# RESPONSIBILITY —THIS TIME IT'S PERSONAL

# 099

One way to succeed in school and in life is by taking personal responsibility for your choices. When something happens that you don't like, that means you understand you made a choice and it's your responsibility to accept the consequences of your choices as well as how you will deal with those consequences.

It doesn't matter how much you think it's someone else's fault. When you start owning your choices in life, you can start dealing with them, which gives you power and control over how you create your life.

Learn to practice taking self-responsibility for your results and actions.

## TAKE A STEP

Think about a time where something didn't go right in your life and you felt it was someone else's fault. If you really think about it, did you play any part in why the situation happened the way it did?

What was the situation, and what could you have done differently to change it?

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*The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.*

— Mark Twain

# 100

## SET STANDARDS FOR HOW OTHERS TREAT YOU

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There is a quote that says, “We teach others how to treat us.” It means that when we let people treat us in a certain way, we are telling them it’s okay to treat us in that way.

How do you let people in your life know what is an acceptable way to treat you? If you have a friend who picks on you a little too much, have you let him or her know that you don’t appreciate it?

### TAKE A STEP

Name someone who should give you more respect. How can you respectfully let this person know that it’s not okay to treat you poorly?

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*Just because you are alive is proof  
you deserve the best in life.*

— Arel Moodie

Stretch your comfort zone today. Do something you've been meaning to do but haven't done yet. Maybe you've been scared to try it. Maybe you keep procrastinating. Maybe it's something you know will be good for you but it falls outside of your current comfort zone.

The goal is to become more comfortable doing activities that will move you closer to success even if they feel uncomfortable.

## **TAKE A STEP**

What is something you can do today to stretch your comfort zone?

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*Everything you've ever wanted  
is on the other side of fear.*

— George Addair

# 102 HELP SOMEONE FOR THE SAKE OF HELPING

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Don't ask for any fanfare. Don't make a big deal about it. Do something for the reward of doing it. Most people only want to do something if there is a reward or recognition. Becoming the type of person who does good for the sake of good will make you a standout student. You won't have to look for the awards or notoriety; it will find you.

## TAKE A STEP

Who is someone you helped today for the sake of simply helping?

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*How wonderful it is that nobody need wait  
a single moment before starting  
to improve the world.*

— Anne Frank

# MAKE NEXT SUMMER SOMETHING SPECIAL 103

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Look for ways this summer or next to get involved in a summer enrichment program such as a leadership camp, a tutoring center, a specialized program, or something that will grow your skills. Summer is not a time to be lazy and just veg out. It's a time to get an edge and come back in the next school year better than ever.

## TAKE A STEP

Find one program that would be a good fit for you this summer. Ask your teachers, counselors, or principals, or search Google for options. Which program did you find?

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*Winning isn't everything,  
but wanting to win is.*

— Vince Lombardi

# 104 DON'T SAY IT IF YOU DON'T MEAN IT

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Your word is your bond. When you say something, you should mean what you say and stick to it.

Practice being a person of integrity. Promise to do something for someone today and actually follow through on it without needing the person to remind you or ask you about it.

## TAKE A STEP

What did you do today to practice being a person of your word?

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## EXTRA CREDIT STEP

If you go above and beyond what you promised to do, you'll go far fast.

*Always remember, you have within you the strength,  
the patience, and the passion to reach for  
the stars to change the world.*

— Harriet Tubman

# BECOME “THE SHADOW” 105

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Knowing what you want to do as a career will help you create a clearer pathway for your future. A great way to do this is to find someone you can shadow on the job after school.

Shadowing basically means following someone around for a day to see what kind of work he or she does. This person could be a parent or a trusted family friend.

Ask a few adults that you trust whether you can spend a few hours shadowing them after school or on the weekend. See whether you like or don't like what these people do and why.

## TAKE A STEP

Who can you ask to shadow?

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.....

.....

*Find out who you are and be that person.  
That's what your soul was put on this Earth to be.  
Find that truth, live that truth and everything else will come.*

— Ellen DeGeneres

# 106 DRESS FOR SUCCESS

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There's a saying that goes, "Dress for the job you want, not the job you have." For one day, dress for school in a professional manner, if for no other reason than to do it. Dressing professionally will make you feel like a success and make you look like a success to others.

If you don't own professional clothes, make a goal to get some in your wardrobe. You don't have to get an expensive set of clothing. You can go to the Salvation Army or any thrift shop and find really nice clothes for next to nothing.

## TAKE A STEP

How did you feel walking around in your professional clothes? How did adults treat you? How did your friends treat you?

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*Look up at the stars and not down at your feet.  
Try to make sense of what you see, and wonder about what  
makes the universe exist. Be curious.*

— Stephen Hawking

# BECOME A JOURNALIST FOR A DAY 107

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Build your communication skills. Learning how to communicate, whether orally or in writing, in a clear, straight-to-the-point way is an important skill.

Try this fun activity:

Write about your favorite musician or celebrity and why he or she is your favorite in one page, one paragraph, and then one sentence. You can only use full sentences, and don't use any abbreviations like LOL or emoticons. :)

## TAKE A STEP

Who did you write about? How was your experience shortening your thoughts?

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*Two roads diverged in a wood,  
and I—I took the one less traveled by.  
And that has made all the difference.*

— Robert Frost

# 108 PUT YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD IN E-MAIL

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If you ever need to communicate with an adult, having an e-mail address like `ilovehoneybooboo2@yahoo.com` is a bad idea. Make sure you have an e-mail address that is either your first name and last name, your first initial and your last name, or some other more professional combination: for example, `johndoe@gmail.com`, `jdoe@gmail.com`, or `johndoe3@gmail.com`.

## TAKE A STEP

Check this box when you have set up a professional e-mail account.

*Never let lack of preparation stop you  
from becoming successful.*

—Arel Moodie

# LEARN TO PLAY FOLLOW-THE-LEADER 109

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Being a leader is important, but being a good team player is equally important. Some leaders are called servant-leaders, which means that they lead by serving. This is also known as being a team player.

Think of an area in your life where you can be a team player. Maybe you can wash the dishes at home. Maybe you can pick up garbage at school. Doing work that's for the greater good builds humility and servant leadership.

## TAKE A STEP

What did you do today to be a team player?

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*It is our choices that show what we truly are,  
far more than our abilities.*

— J. K. Rowling

# 110 UNLEASH THE ARTIST WITHIN

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Being creative allows you to express yourself and discover parts of yourself you may keep hidden. And yes, we all have a creative side!

Choose a medium for creativity that suits you best. You can paint, draw, sing, dance, make a video, write, sculpt, or do whatever you find interesting.

## TAKE A STEP

What will you do to express your creative side today?

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*Every child is an artist.  
The problem is how to remain  
an artist once he grows up.*

— Pablo Picasso

# MAKE FRIENDS WITH FLOSS

# 111

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Taking good care of yourself shows that you respect yourself and makes you feel and look better. It also helps ensure that people don't pull away from you because you have bad breath.

Make sure to brush your teeth in the morning AND before you go to sleep. Don't forget to floss. Seriously, floss more. Chances are, you should floss more. At least, that's what most dentists complain about. So go floss!

## TAKE A STEP

Did you floss today?

*There are no traffic jams  
along the extra mile.*

— Roger Staubach

# 112 FIND OUT WHETHER YOU'RE AN EXTROVERT OR INTROVERT

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People display both extroverted and introverted traits, but we tend to lean toward one over the other. Which one are you? One is not better than the other; they are equal and just different.

Extroverted people get energized by being around people. They like socializing, talking to, and hanging out with people most of the time. An extrovert generally enjoys working with groups and talking about problems and solutions with others.

Introverted people prefer to have time alone to recharge their energy levels or prefer to spend time with just one or two close friends. They typically like to do things alone and spend a great deal of time reflecting and thinking.

## TAKE A STEP

Think about how being an extrovert or introvert affects how you learn, how you socialize, and how you think.

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*Limitations live only in our minds.  
But if we use our imaginations,  
our possibilities become limitless.*

— Jamie Paolinetti

# PLAY EMOTIONAL SELF-AWARENESS “MAD LIBS”

# 113

Emotional self-awareness is the ability to recognize one’s feelings. Emotional intelligence is as important as intellectual intelligence.

## TAKE ACTION

Get to know yourself by filling in the blanks below. There are no right or wrong answers. It’s like Mad Libs. Just have fun!

I’m happiest when .....

I think negatively of myself when .....

I think the world needs more .....

I like to spend my free time .....

I think I’m pretty good at .....

I’m not that good at .....

*Life shrinks or expands  
in proportion to  
one’s courage.  
— Anais Nin*

# 114 FOCUS ON YOUR GOALS AND MAKE THEM CLEAR

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Setting clear goals is crucial to success, no matter what you want to do. Most people either don't spend time thinking about goals or don't know how to make a goal. You will do both! Spend some time thinking about a goal and get really clear about what you want.

Saying your goal is "to do better in school" is not clear enough. Saying "I want to get B's or better in every class this semester" is better. Also, make sure not to set negative goals. Saying "I'm dumb and I'm going to fail all of my classes" is a goal—believe it or not—just not a positive one!

## TAKE A STEP

Think of any negative goals you've said to yourself and replace them with positive ones. Make sure to write them down too!

What goals do you currently have?

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*There is only one way to avoid criticism:  
do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing.*  
— Aristotle

# TAKE A TRUE/FALSE TEST ABOUT Y-O-U

# 115

Our perception is our reality; therefore, we must work at improving how we see ourselves. Regardless of whether something is true, it doesn't matter when it comes to beliefs about ourselves. Whatever we believe to be true is true. If your friends see you as smart and awesome but you see yourself as stupid and a loser, your belief about yourself is what you think is true, even though there is evidence that your beliefs are false. Are the beliefs that you have about yourself TRUE or FALSE?

## TAKE A STEP

Write three sentences that describe how you FEEL about yourself most of the time.

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Now crank up the positive energy on those words. If you "feel that you are okay in school," turn that into "you are a hard worker who is about get the best grades you have ever gotten in your life so far!"

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*Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it.  
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.  
— Goethe*

# 116 LAUGH YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS

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Laughing has amazing benefits. It makes you feel good, it helps you think clearly, and it even makes you healthier. Make sure to do something or be part of something that really makes you laugh. Call up someone who you think is really funny. Watch a funny video online. Make sure you get a good laugh in today. Laughing is a great way to de-stress from the pressures of studying and school!

## TAKE A STEP

What did you get a good laugh about today?

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*Laughter is the best medicine.*

— Anonymous

# TUNE OUT OR TUNE IN? 117

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Take time to understand the difference between hearing and listening.

- **Hearing** is the taking in of words.
- **Listening** is the ability to absorb information being spoken to you and processing it.

Most people don't listen in a conversation. They just wait for their turn to speak, or they space out and don't pay attention.

Focus on listening today. When people speak to you, do your best to focus 100 percent on what is being said, and wait for them to finish before cutting them off (even if you are confident you know what they are about to say next).

Listening is a skill we all have access to, but many of us don't develop it. Don't be one of the many; be awesome!

## TAKE A STEP

How was your experience today being a good listener?

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*You must not lose faith in humanity.  
Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean  
are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty.*

— Mahatma Gandhi

# 118 PUT BLINDERS ON YOUR BRAIN

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How much do you daydream during class? Of course, you understand that when you're daydreaming, you're not aware of what's going on around you, and that means you're not listening what others are saying to you.

Today, do your best to be conscious when your mind wanders and bring it back to focus. Keep track of how many times you daydream. When you realize you are daydreaming and come back to attention, make a roman numeral mark on a piece of paper and see how many times you actually space out during the day.

It's a great way to learn about yourself.

## TAKE A STEP

How many times do you think you will daydream during class today?

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How many times did you actually daydream during class today?

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*We must accept finite disappointment,  
but never lose infinite hope.*

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

# LEAN IN FOR LEARNING 119

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Today in class, be more attentive. Use this little trick that boosts your focus instantly. Most students slouch in their seat and sit far back in their chair. Instead, lean forward and sit straight up at attention with a good upright posture that your grandmother would be proud of.

Just by doing this, you will be more attentive in class, which will help you learn!

## TAKE A STEP

Did this sitting technique improve your focus?

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*If you can't fly then run,  
if you can't run then walk,  
if you can't walk then crawl,  
but whatever you do you have to  
keep moving forward.*  
— Martin Luther King, Jr.

# 120 **ACTIVATE THE LITTLE VOICE INSIDE YOUR HEAD TO LEARN MORE**

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Another great way to learn more during class is to ask yourself throughout the day “What am I learning right now?” or “What did the teacher just say?” And do your best to repeat in your head what’s currently going on.

Just by making yourself present in the moment and rephrasing things you’ve just learned, you’ll retain more information.

And if you don’t know what’s currently happening in class when you ask yourself this, ask your teacher a question!

## **TAKE A STEP**

How did this technique help you learn during class today?

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*Be fearless. Have the courage to take risks.*

*Go where there are no guarantees.*

— Katie Couric

# BE THE PILOT OF YOUR SHIP, THE CAPTAIN OF YOUR SUCCESS

# 121

Accept that no one is responsible for your success except you. Your teachers, counselors, and school make success possible. YOU make it happen. Regardless of past failures, you can be an awesome student today and in the future, but you have to take control of your life.

Get engaged in your success. Find out what steps you should be taking but aren't or where you can do better. Ask teachers and other people in your school for advice.

Don't wait for opportunities; go after them!

## TAKE A STEP

Take the pledge and agree to commit to being in control of your life by signing below:

**Print Name:**

.....

**Date:**

.....

**Signature:**

.....

*If you love what you do and are willing to do what it takes,  
it's within your reach. And it'll be worth every minute  
you spend alone at night, thinking and thinking about  
what it is you want to design or build.*

— Steve Wozniak

# 122 TAKE A BREAK FROM MULTITASKING

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Get focused when studying. Some of us try to study in front of the TV while scrolling through our phone. Spend time studying without distractions, and you'll get more done more quickly. If you must study with music, make sure it's music that has no words so you don't get distracted and get the words of the song stuck in your head instead of your notes!

## TAKE A STEP

Check this box to agree to try this today!

*In three words I can sum up everything  
I've learned about life:  
it goes on.  
— Robert Frost*

# REMOVE CHEATING FROM YOUR VOCABULARY

# 123

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Do not cheat. Cheaters always get caught. And if you do, the results are so much worse than you can imagine. If you feel tempted to cheat or do something you know is wrong today, focus on doing the right thing—focus on the future you really want.

No matter how many times people get away with cheating, they only need to get caught once for them to be in big trouble. Don't put yourself in that spot.

## TAKE A STEP

Commit to being a person of integrity today and do not cheat.

*You take your life in your own hands,  
and what happens?*

*A terrible thing; no one to blame.*

—Erica Jong

# 124 MAKE A LIST AND KEEP ADDING TO IT

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Get a clear vision of the kind of person you want to be. Think about the character traits you have that you value the most.

Are you hardworking? Honest? Loyal? Nice? What kind of person would you consider to be one of the best kind of human beings and why?

## TAKE A STEP

Make a list of those traits you would want to demonstrate if you were being the best version of yourself.

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*If you can see yourself a certain way in your head,  
you can become that person.*

— Arel Moodie

# GET UP AND GET MOVING 125

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Get some physical fitness in today. Believe it or not, exercising has been linked to getting better grades. Working out clears your mind and enables you to handle stress better.

Make sure to get a good workout of at least thirty minutes today. Walk, run, or lift weights—anything counts as long as you break a sweat!

## TAKE A STEP

Check this box once you've completed your workout!

*If the wind will not serve,  
take to the oars.*

— Latin Proverb

# 126 PAY IT FORWARD AS A TUTOR

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If you've been tutored, you can tutor someone else. No matter where you are in your studies, there's someone out there who needs your help.

Maybe it's someone who is a few grade levels below you. Maybe it's someone in your class not doing as well as you. Whoever that person is, you can change his or her life the way your tutor changed yours.

Helping feels good, and when you teach others, you learn ideas in a more powerful way. You can give help even when you are looking for help.

## TAKE A STEP

Who can you tutor? What subject can you tutor in?

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*We must believe that we are gifted for something,  
and that this thing, at whatever cost,  
must be attained.*

— Marie Curie

**PICK A  
MR. OR MS.  
ACCOUNTABILITY**

**127**

Make sure a parent, guardian, or adult you care about knows about your upcoming test dates. This creates accountability. Tell this person when your next tests are and have him or her keep you accountable to staying on track to study as best you can.

Having an adult you respect know about your exams will force you to work harder to make him or her proud. Don't do this alone. Get someone else involved.

**TAKE A STEP**

Whom will you tell about your test dates to help keep you accountable?

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*Happiness is not something readymade.*

*It comes from your own actions.*

— Dalai Lama

# 128 LIGHT A MATCH TO START A FIRE

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Find something that will motivate you today. Being motivated is important for any achievement. Maybe start reading an inspirational book like *Your Starting Point for Student Success*, or go to YouTube and type in “motivation.” Make sure you are focused for a great day!

## TAKE A STEP

What did you do to gain motivation today?

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*Few things can help an individual more than to place responsibility on him, and to let him know that you trust him.*

— Booker T. Washington

# PLAY THE “WHAT WILL YOU BE WHEN YOU GROW UP” GAME

# 129

Think about when you were younger and people asked you what you wanted to be when you grew up. What did you say? Now think about WHY you chose that career. What about that job was so interesting to you?

Most of us don't think about why a potential career seems interesting, and the “why” can help you figure out what kinds of careers are the best fit for you.

## TAKE A STEP

Write down what you wanted to be and most importantly why. What did you learn about yourself once you wrote the reasons behind your choice?

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*When I was 5 years old, my mother always told me that happiness was the key to life. When I went to school, they asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up. I wrote down “happy.” They told me I didn't understand the assignment, and I told them they didn't understand life.*

— John Lennon

# 130 PRACTICE MAY NOT MAKE PERFECT, BUT IT HELPS

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You can never take too many practice tests. The more tests you take, the more familiar you will become with the test, and the better you will score.

You can take practice tests for standardized exams such as the SAT or the ACT online for free. No matter where you are, getting an idea of what these tests will be like and gaining more experience with them is a great idea.

## TAKE A STEP

Schedule a time to take a practice test for fun. How did you do?

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*You can't fall if you don't climb.  
But there's no joy in living your whole  
life on the ground.*  
— Unknown

# SEEING THE SILVER LINING IN A MISTAKE CLOUD

# 131

Learn from a past mistake. Sometimes our best teachers are our biggest mistakes. Think about a mistake you've recently made. Instead of beating yourself up about it, ask yourself what you learned from the experience.

You can always learn something from a mistake. This way, you will always get better, even when you mess up.

## TAKE A STEP

What is a recent mistake you've made? What could you learn from it that will help you in the future?

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*When you lose, make sure not to lose the lesson.  
This way you will never be a failure in life.*

— Arel Moodie

# 132 CHECK IN ON CHANGES FOR COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

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Getting into college is competitive, and the rules change constantly. Have a conversation with someone at your school (counselor, teacher, or principal) about college entrance requirements.

Make sure you know what it will take to get into college, including how you currently stack up and what you still need to do.

## TAKE A STEP

What did you find out about college entrance requirements?

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*Start where you are.*

*Use what you have.*

*Do what you can.*

— Arthur Ashe

# CONSULT A HUMAN “GUIDE” TO FINANCIAL AID

# 133

You can read a lot online about financial aid programs for college. Start there. But when you're done, have a conversation with someone at your school (counselor, teacher, or principal) about what financial aid for college is and how it works.

Make sure you start figuring out how you can get all the money you need for your higher education.

## TAKE A STEP

What did you learn about financial aid for college?

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*Go confidently in the  
direction of your dreams.  
Live the life you have imagined.*  
— Henry David Thoreau

# 134 THE UNEXCUSED ABSENCE CHALLENGE

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Today is a great time to set a goal to have your longest streak of attending school without being absent.

Make it a game. See how long you can go without having an unexcused absence (For example, an excused absence is a doctor's appointment, not a day playing video games).

## TAKE A STEP

What date will you start this challenge?

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*The best revenge  
is massive success.*

— Frank Sinatra

# THINK BEYOND YOUR OWN BACKYARD 135

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What's one college that you'd like to visit that isn't local to you? Set a goal of visiting this college at some point.

If you are not sure which school you'd like to visit, spend some time doing research at [www.unigo.com](http://www.unigo.com) or [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com), or check out a school on the *U.S. News & World Report* Best Colleges rankings to find some inspiration.

## TAKE A STEP

Write down the name of a college you would like to visit and why.

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*Certain things catch your eye,  
but pursue only those  
that capture the heart.*  
— Ancient Indian proverb

# 136 DEVELOP A WINNING MIND-SET ABOUT LOSING

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Learn from your losses. Many people think winning is everything. But even when you lose, don't lose the lesson. What that means is that even if something doesn't go your way, you can learn from it and be better next time.

Often times we repeat the same mistakes over and over. This doesn't mean you are stupid, it means you are human. It also means that you have another opportunity to fix a behavior or correct a mistake to make yourself better. Make it a goal to repeat your past mistakes as little as possible.

## TAKE A STEP

Think of a past mistake that you still keep repeating. Maybe it's chronically being late, or misplacing your keys. Remind yourself that you don't have to keep repeating old mistakes. What will you do today to fix a current mistake you keep making?

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*Dream big  
and dare to fail.*  
— Norman Vaughan

# BE A DANIEL FOR A DAY

# 137

To achieve success, you must first know what the word means. Daniel Webster is best known for defining words in his dictionary. Well today, you get to be Mr. or Ms. Webster and define “success.”

## TAKE A STEP

How would you define the word “success”? How will you know when you are successful?

Write the answer below.

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*If you can dream it,  
you can achieve it.*

— Zig Ziglar

# 138 STRIKE A BLOW AGAINST PROCRASTINATION

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Think of the most important task that you need to complete. Think of something you've probably been procrastinating on. Think of something that may make you feel sick to your stomach because it's so big or scary.

That's the most important task you can do.

If you get the most important task done as soon as you can in the day, the rest of your day is not as stressful. Think of what is most important and move toward accomplishing that as soon as possible today!

## TAKE A STEP

What is your most important task to accomplish today?

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*If you do what you've always done,  
you'll get what you've always gotten.*

— Tony Robbins

## ADD A TO-DO LIST TO YOUR TO-DO LIST

# 139

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Creating a list of things you want to do is important for getting more done. A list makes you much more effective and productive.

You can write the list on a piece of paper. You can write it in your phone, or you can use an app. The most important aspect is to make a list of what you need to do every day.

Give it a try today and find joy crossing items off your list.

### TAKE A STEP

Check this box when you finish making your to-do list for today.

*Too many of us are not  
living our dreams because  
we are living our fears.*

— Les Brown

# 140 PRACTICE WRITING TO BECOME BETTER

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Whether you feel like you aren't good at writing or you just need improvement, practice will make you better at what you do.

The more often you write—Facebook posts, e-mails, or even silly post-it notes that you stick on the refrigerator—the better you become at it. The better you become at writing, the faster you'll get work done, and the easier it will be for you to get your ideas together.

It's tough at first, but it's possible.

Today, spend some time writing about whatever you want for fun. You can write about what happened today or how you feel about something, or you can make up a story. The goal is to just write.

Don't judge it. Try to get three to five pages on any one subject. Have fun with this!

## TAKE A STEP

What will you write about today?

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*You can't use up creativity.  
The more you use, the more you have.*  
— Maya Angelou

Journaling is a powerful tool for many. Getting in the habit of journaling what happened to you in a day, what you thought about, and simply what's on your mind is a great way to end the day.

Today, take some time to journal.

There is no right or wrong way to write about what happened in a day. Give it a try.

## **TAKE A STEP**

Check this box after you finish writing your journal entry.

*The mind is everything.  
What you think you become.*  
— Buddha

# 142 GET OUT OF YOUR NEGATIVITY RUT

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Many times, we get into ruts where we talk negatively to ourselves. This stops us from being the best version of ourselves. Having confidence and remembering how good we are can lead to success.

## TAKE A STEP

Think of a time when you did something well. (We all have something!)

Why were you successful? What did you learn from that experience?

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*Well done > well said.*

— Arel Moodie

# FIGURE OUT HOW YOU STUDY BEST

# 143

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Do you like a really quiet environment, do you like soft music playing in the background, or do you prefer studying with others? Notice what things distract you from studying. Does listening to music or having the TV on in the background disrupt your ability to concentrate? Create the environment that suits you best for concentrating and study there.

## REFLECT

What is the best environment for you to study in?

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*The only person you are destined to become  
is the person you decide to be.*

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

# 144 DON'T LET PERFECTION KEEP YOU FROM BEING GOOD

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We avoid working on a lot of projects because we want to make them perfect and are afraid to mess up. The result: nothing gets done.

I've got news for you: sometimes being done is better than trying to be perfect. If there is a book report or other project that you've been working on for quite some time, maybe you should focus on just finishing it. If you can't finish it today, do a little work toward making sure it will get closer to being completed. Don't procrastinate today.

A little bit of effort daily makes a big impact. Sometimes good enough is good enough!

## TAKE A STEP

What project will you work toward completing today?

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*No matter how slow you go,  
you are moving faster and further  
than the person who quit.*

— Arel Moodie

# BLOW YOUR OWN HORN AS LOUDLY AS YOU LIKE

# 145

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When something awesome happens, we often tend to downplay it. Many times, we see other's victories as amazing and our own as no big deal. Getting into the habit of celebrating even the smallest victory will build momentum and create more victories.

Get 100 percent okay with celebrating your own victories today. You are worth it. You are awesome. If you do something well today, celebrate that victory. Feel good about yourself, pat yourself on the back, fist pump, or do a little dance—whatever it takes to make you feel great.

Celebrate your victories in person and online via social media. It's all good.

## TAKE A STEP

What victories did you have today? How did you celebrate them?

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*Life is what we make it,  
always has been, always will be.*

— Grandma Moses

# 146 **FIGURE OUT WHAT PRESSES YOUR BUTTONS AND WHY**

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Self-awareness is having a well-defined picture of your personality, such as your strengths, areas that need improvement, beliefs, motivation, and emotions. Being self-aware allows you to better understand yourself, which will allow you to make better decisions on how to improve yourself.

We can all get better; no one is perfect.

Take time to be very self-aware today by focusing your attention on the elements of your personality and behavior. What causes you to get angry? Happy? Nervous? Jealous? Confused?

## **TAKE A STEP**

Making changes in your behavior is easier when you can catch negative behaviors early on. Become a detective of who you are today!

What did you discover about yourself by bringing your attention to what caused you to feel different emotions today?

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*Change your thoughts and  
you change your world.*  
— Norman Vincent Peale

# WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP? 147

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This is a magic question. Many times we get caught up in scrolling through the Internet, looking at pictures online, or watching silly videos when we should be moving toward our goals. Sometimes we don't know what to do since there are so many things we could do.

Asking yourself "What's my next step?" will focus you out of daydreams or time-killing activities.

Put a few reminders in your phone to go off at random times to ask "What's my next step?" and see how much more productive you can be today!

## TAKE A STEP

So what is your immediate next step to take?

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*Nothing is impossible,  
the word itself says,  
"I'm possible!"*  
— Audrey Hepburn

# 148 **BREAK IT DOWN TO MAKE IT WORK**

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When you have something big to do, you want to work smart, not work hard. This strategy will let you get more done in less time with way less stress.

Think of something big you have to work on right now. Instead of thinking about it and getting nervous, start writing a list including everything you need to do regarding the task.

If you have to write an essay, what are all the specific steps you need to do?

- Research sources for your bibliography?
- Do a Google search?
- Read a chapter on the subject?

No matter what the task is, write ALL of the steps down. By the time you are done, you will know what your next steps are for the project. Then simply work on crossing them off your list.

## **TAKE A STEP**

List all of the steps you need to take for a big project you are working on.

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## **EXTRA CREDIT STEP:**

Fight the urge to say things like “finish writing my essay.” That’s too big of a step. If your goal can be broken down more, break it all the way down to the smallest step.

*How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.*

— Creighton Abrams

# SEE THE OTHER SIDE OF THE OBSTACLE 149

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Think of something you are stuck on right now—something that seems hard or feels impossible to overcome. Now imagine that you have actually overcome it. Just pretend. See it in your head.

How would you feel to finally have it done?

Experience that feeling. Now think of what you would have had to do to get to this point. What steps did you have to take?

This way of thinking will help you break through barriers that you feel are holding you back.

## TAKE A STEP

Think of a challenge you are currently facing that you could apply this technique to today.

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*I have learned over the years that when  
one's mind is made up,  
this diminishes fear.*

— Rosa Parks

# 150 RELEASE A CREATIVE STORM IN YOUR MIND

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Many times when we think we don't know how to do something, we actually do, but we just haven't figured it out yet. That's when brainstorming can help you find the answer.

Think about a problem you are facing right now that you want to overcome. It can be anything that you've been dealing with. Take some time to brainstorm. All this means is that you write down as many ideas as you can.

When you first do this, you may be tempted to say, "This is stupid! I don't know what to do! If I knew what to do, I would be doing it!" Just push past that thinking. Many times, one idea will lead to another and will eventually lead to your solution, but you had to go through a bunch of really bad ideas to get there.

Brainstorming with someone else is helpful to get a new perspective. Spend at least ten minutes today thinking of as many ways as possible to solve that problem you are facing. Don't judge your answers; brainstorming is just practicing creativity and problem solving.

## TAKE A STEP

What will you brainstorm about? Write down some possible solutions:

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*Challenges are what make life interesting and  
overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.*

— Joshua J. Marine

# SUMMARIZE FOR QUICK STUDYING

# 151

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When reading a book, write a one-sentence summary on the bottom of every page (if you own the book). If you don't, write a one-sentence summary in your notebook. When it's time to study, to quickly review the book, just read the one line to remember what was on the whole page!

The up-front work now makes studying so much easier later. You can boil a 100-page book down to around five pages. Try out this strategy today!

## TAKE A STEP

Which book will you try this strategy with first?

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*Life is 10 percent  
what happens to me and  
90 percent of how I react to it.*

— Charles Swindoll

# 152 MAKE MORNINGS EASIER

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Being stressed in the morning can negatively affect the rest of your day, and getting ready for school in a rush while you're still waking up is really a pain.

One way to make your mornings easier is to get as much done as you can the night before. Pick out and iron your clothes. Have your school supplies ready to go. If this is all set the night before, your morning will be peaceful and start you off right for the day.

## TAKE A STEP

Check this box once you've prepared everything tonight for tomorrow morning.

*You miss 100 percent of the shots  
you don't take.*  
— Wayne Gretzky

# MAKE, “FEED,” AND ENJOY GOOD FRIENDSHIPS

# 153

Friendships are about spending time with people who share common interests, goals, and values with you. Trying to fit in with the crowd or looking to have friends who don't support you will waste your energy and usually hurt more than it will help you.

Spend time with people who care about you and whom you care about. Make sure to focus on spending time with the people who support you today, and be appreciative of your friendships. Appreciating a friendship makes it deeper. Maybe make time to have a one-on-one conversation with someone you haven't spoken to in a while, or send someone an e-mail or message letting this person know how much you appreciate your friendship.

The sky is the limit on how to show appreciation!

## TAKE A STEP

Which friend will you show appreciation for today?

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*If you want deeper friendships,  
don't wait for someone else  
to make it happen.*

— Arel Moodie

# 154 ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO SPEAK UP

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Good listening skills actually require that you do more than just sit and listen quietly. You want to be actively engaged in the conversation, even as you are listening.

You can be an active listener by using statements to draw more out from people. Saying things like “Tell me more...” or “What do you think can be done...” encourages others to talk.

This encouragement benefits you in multiple ways: you learn more and can become creative while getting more people to like you because you encouraged them to talk!

Try this out today!

## TAKE A STEP

How were your conversations today when you encouraged others to talk more compared to your normal conversations?

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*The more we make others feel successful,  
the more we feel successful.*

— Arel Moodie

# MAKE SOMEONE FEEL LIKE A V.I.P. 155

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Making people feel important makes you feel important. This feeling is a crucial precursor to success. If you feel who you are is important, then the work you are doing will be important too.

And when we help others by making them feel important, it makes them happy, and their pleasure makes you happy in return.

It's a win-win!

A really great way to make people feel important is by remembering to use their name. Don't just call your teachers "Mr." or "Ms." in conversation. Use their last names too.

If it's a friend, use his or her first name. And if you're in a restaurant, movie theater, or other place where people are wearing nametags, use those names to show people you see them as individuals. They'll like that. (Wouldn't you?)

Remembering names and using them is a surefire way to make someone feel important.

## TAKE A STEP

How will you make someone feel special today?

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*Every positive action fixes the world.*

— Arel Moodie

# 156 DON'T LET YOUR STUDIES PILE UP LIKE DISHES

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Have you ever let the dishes pile up in the sink? Or have you ever let your room get really dirty? Then it feels like it takes forever to actually get it clean.

Studying, like cleaning, is best done in small bits every day.

Regardless of whether you have a test coming up, set aside some time every day to study. If you do a little every day, by the time the test comes up, you won't have the fear of cramming and not doing well. Create some time today, and plan time as best as you can every day to be your study time. You can review your notes from class.

Skim your textbook. Just make the time, a minimum of fifteen minutes, and you'll be surprised how much easier tests are.

## TAKE A STEP

What time will you study today?

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*The best way to not feel hopeless  
is to get up and do something.*

— Barack Obama

# COMPARE AND CONTRAST YOUR NOTES

# 157

When studying, compare your notes with a friend's notes. This is a great strategy that will help you catch things you missed or see perspectives you did not think about. It's also a great way to see how someone else processes the same information you received.

Take a day of notes and ask to see a friend's notes (hopefully you choose a friend who takes note taking seriously) and see how they compare.

Are there notes that you think you should write down that you didn't? Can you pick up any tricks from how your friend takes notes?

This is a great strategy to learn while building your skill set.

## TAKE A STEP

Who will you compare notes with?

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*If you want to lift yourself up,  
lift up someone else.*

— Booker T. Washington

# 158 **EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE**

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Have you ever misplaced a book? Have you ever been unable to find a pen? Or maybe you had no idea where your house keys were? Today, find one place in your house where you will put all the things you need for school. You can put a box there to store your items in; you should label it too.

This will keep you organized and stress free. Just think about how much time you waste looking for a lost item every week!

## **TAKE A STEP**

Did you successfully leave the house without needing to find anything?

*A place for everything  
and everything in its place.*

— Benjamin Franklin

# STAGE A GPA COMEBACK 159

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Improving your GPA will get you noticed by colleges! Many students think that if they had a bad year or a bad semester, their GPA is doomed. But showing a steady increase in your GPA is a great thing, and many colleges will look on it favorably.

It's never too late to make a comeback. Regardless of what your GPA has been, improving it can help. Today, resolve to get your grades on an upward trend.

As long as you get a little bit better, you are on the right path. Never give up!

## TAKE A STEP

Check this box to commit today to increasing your scores in your classes.

*Dreaming, after all,  
is a form of planning.*

— Gloria Steinem

# 160 JOIN AND LEAD YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS

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Being actively involved in groups is something that will help you build skills, become happier, and make colleges look more favorably upon you. Aim for depth, not breadth. What that means is that demonstrating significant involvement in a few groups is better than doing a little bit in a lot of groups.

Think about your current activities. In which of these can you step up and take on a more engaged leadership role?

Being involved is the first step. After that, you must show how you took on responsibility in the group. For example, this means that you must not only participate in a 5K walk, but organize it as well.

## TAKE A STEP

How can you get more involved?

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*You may be disappointed if you fail,  
but you are doomed if you don't try.*

— Beverly Sills

# MAKE YOUR CASE NOW FOR COLLEGE ENTRY

# 161

When applying to college, you will need to provide letters of recommendation from school staff members like your teachers, principal, or counselor. Start thinking about which people would be the best choices to write about your integrity, character, skills, and belief in your future based on your demonstrated results.

It's important to have good letters of recommendation from people who have seen you in action in the academic arena. Who are people at your school who could sing your praises in a solid letter of recommendation? Make sure to stay in touch with them if you are no longer in their class or if you don't have a direct reason to stay in touch. Aim for at least two people who will be happy and excited to write you a letter of recommendation by the time you need one.

## TAKE A STEP

Who would be good people to write you a letter of recommendation when you need it?

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## EXTRA CREDIT STEP

Ask your teachers (or principal or counselor) as early as you can in your senior year for the letter of recommendation to give them enough time to write a good one. Assume multiple students will be asking them. With more time, they'll be more likely to write you a glowing letter.

*I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do.*

—Leonardo da Vinci

# 162 PRACTICE YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY-WRITING SKILLS TODAY

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Get ready for the college application process. It's never too early or too late to understand how the college application process works. For some colleges, it's just a standard form. Others will require an essay.

The college application essay usually falls into one of these five categories:

- Tell us about yourself.
- Examine some idea or special interest.
- Why do you want to attend this particular college?
- What do you hope to accomplish in your life?
- A "what if" question that tests your imagination.

Pick one of these categories and ask yourself what you could write about. You don't have to write the actual essay. You can just write down some ideas or make a bulleted list of points. The goal of this exercise is to become familiar with the process, so by the time you need to write an essay, you'll be prepared.

## TAKE A STEP

Jot down some points you could write on one of the five topics above.

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*It's not the years in your life that count.*

*It's the life in your years.*

— Abraham Lincoln

# GET INSIDE YOUR HEAD 163

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Our thoughts are always running through our minds while we're awake. This is called automatic thinking. Time yourself for one minute and write down every thought that comes to your head.

Go through your list of thoughts, and see how many are kind and how many are negative. Learning how to determine whether your thoughts are accurate will help you be nicer to yourself and enable you to take a step when things seem out of whack.

The next time you start thinking about yourself in an unfavorable way, remind yourself that you don't have to believe everything that comes into your mind.

## TAKE A STEP

Be conscious of what kinds of thoughts come into your head today. Were they more positive or negative in your opinion? What could you do to turn those thoughts around?

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*When I let go of what I am,  
I become what I might be.*

— Lao Tzu

# 164 RELOCATE FOR BETTER STUDYING

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Sometimes studying is hard because we do it in unproductive locations. Sometimes we just need to change things up to get a new outlook.

Do your work in a different room, go outside if the weather permits, or go to the library or even a coffee shop. Just try a new environment with no distractions. This will help you stay focused and have a new attitude toward your work.

## REFLECT

Where is a new place that you can study today?

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*I would rather die of passion  
than of boredom.*  
— Vincent van Gogh

# WHAT CAN YOU CHANGE; WHAT CAN'T YOU CHANGE?

# 165

One of the biggest and most helpful mind-sets you can have is to understand the difference between what you can and cannot change. Sometimes we feel like things are out of our control, or we overdramatize situations and act like we can't do anything about them. Write down at least three things that you feel about yourself that you think you cannot change. Let's say these were the things you wrote down: "I am short," "I am too shy," and "I am not good at school."

Now go through your list and think about each one. Decide whether you can change that situation.

- I am short: In this case, you cannot make yourself taller, but you can learn to accept it and focus on how being short can actually be cool.
- I am too shy: Here, you can improve by learning skills that will help you feel more comfortable in social situations. You can learn strategies that will enable you to start conversations more easily with people or to participate more in activities. With these techniques, you aren't limited to being shy. You can actually do something about it.
- I am not good at school: You can always learn to be better at school. You can read about how to study better, you can ask your teacher for help, etc. This means you can actually get better grades in school with extra effort and assistance.

The most successful people in life focus on what they can change rather than thinking they have no power over the situation.

## TAKE A STEP

Write down three things about yourself that you think you can't change. Now ask yourself whether you really CAN change them or whether they are set in stone.

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*You can be so much more if you simply get out of your own way.*

— Arel Moodie

# 166 TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

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If you know that you are having a really difficult time with a situation, do not keep it to yourself. Talk to a counselor, a trusted family member, or a friend.

When we are troubled, it is hard to focus on bettering ourselves and fulfilling our potential to be as awesome as possible. It takes great strength to admit that you need help and even greater strength to seek the help you need.

It doesn't make you weak to ask for help; it's actually a sign of strength.

## TAKE A STEP

Who is someone you trust that you can just talk to if you ever needed to.

Write their name below. Now contact them to set up a time to talk with this person and just connect.

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*When one door of happiness closes,  
another opens, but often we look so long at the  
closed door that we do not see the one that  
has been opened for us.*

— Helen Keller

# DON'T BE SOCIAL MEDIA MEAN 167

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Act respectfully on social media. These days, schools, colleges, future employers, and even peers will judge you based on how you present yourself on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or whatever you are on now.

When you post something, think of how you would feel if a college that you might want to attend or a future employer where you might like to work sees what you're about to post. If you feel uncomfortable with your post after analyzing it from these viewpoints, that's a sign you should reconsider what you post.

Everything you put on social media reflects your brand—who you are. Act like a detective and look at your social media pages. See what you would think of yourself if all you had were social media to figure out who you were. Would you think this person is respectable, cares about important issues, and contributes to society? Being respectful online doesn't mean you can't be you; it just means portraying yourself in a way that people will respect.

## TAKE A STEP

Spend at least twenty minutes looking through your old social media posts and see whether there is anything you should delete.

Check this box once you've completed this step.

*It takes 20 years to build a reputation  
and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that,  
you'll do things differently.*

— Warren Buffett

# 168 **BECOME A BETTER DECISION-MAKER**

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Making a decision is about weighing two or more options and determining which one is the best. It sounds easy, but it isn't always as cut-and-dried as that.

Whenever you are about to do something—something that makes you question whether it is right or wrong—ask yourself this simple question:

“If what I’m about to do were put on the front page of every newspaper, magazine, and website across the country, would I feel comfortable with everyone knowing about it?”

If you would feel ashamed if a certain action were broadcast to the world, it's a clear sign you shouldn't do it.

Start applying this decision-making process in your life today.

## **TAKE A STEP**

When you asked yourself this question, did you notice anything different about what you did or didn't do today?

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*You can't make decisions based on fear  
and the possibility of what might happen.*

— Michelle Obama

## SEND A MESSAGE FROM YOU TO “FUTURE YOU”

# 169

I want you to imagine that you want your future self to hear something that you think you tend to forget. Maybe you need to remember to respect your friends or say “I love you.” Maybe you want to send yourself some inspiration, guess what you think you’ll be up to in the future, or write about what you feel now that you want yourself to remember.

This is a really cool exercise that gets you thinking not just about today but also about the future so you can create a long-term vision for yourself.

You can write a message to yourself to deliver a year from now or maybe around high school graduation time. To do this, you can use services like [www.futureme.org](http://www.futureme.org) or [www.whensend.com](http://www.whensend.com).

### TAKE A STEP

Compose and send an e-mail to your future self today.

Check this box once you’ve completed this task.

*It is not what you do for your children,  
but what you have taught them  
to do for themselves, that will make them  
successful human beings.*

— Ann Landers

# 170 WHEN IS THE LAST TIME YOU DID WHAT MADE YOU HAPPY?

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What's something you really enjoy doing for fun—something that makes you feel happy? Maybe it's playing a certain sport or talking with a family member. What's something that's really awesome to you? How long has it been since you actually did this activity?

That's too long!

Set a goal to do one of the things that you really enjoy doing today. Fun is very important to staying relaxed and focused and simply enjoying life.

Don't let too much time go between doing things you really love.

## TAKE A STEP

What's something that you enjoy that you haven't done in a long time that you can do today?

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*Success is liking yourself,  
liking what you do  
and liking how you do it.*  
— Maya Angelou

# TURN FREE TIME INTO ME TIME WITH SKILL LEARNING

# 171

No matter what time of year it is, start thinking about what skill you can build during your next summer break. Most students think the summer is a time to be lazy and “rest up” for the upcoming school year. You’re awesome however, so you think of summer as a time to do something you love that will put you one step closer to the success you want too.

No matter what you choose to do, also use that abundance of free time to do more than just watch a bunch of TV and play video games. Think about your life from a holistic perspective. What’s one skill that you could learn or improve that would make you better in school and in life? (For example, think speed-reading or improving your memory.)

Or what’s one fun skill that you’ve always wanted to learn but didn’t have the time (think juggling or learning some magic card tricks)? Whatever it is, make it a goal to get better at some specific skill each summer. It will be a great way to make the upcoming school year easier or a cool way to wow your friends with your new juggling skills.

## TAKE A STEP

What skill will you work on developing this summer?

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*You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.*

— Zig Ziglar

# 172 APPLY FOR A JOB— NO MONEY REQUIRED

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A job that puts a little extra spending cash in your pocket is nice, but any position you fill shows that you are ready for the responsibility of working, no matter what that job is. It demonstrates your work ethic... that you are able to show up on time and make your own money.

Find a way to get a part-time job. If the job market is tough in your area, an unpaid internship or a volunteer spot is a fine alternative. If you have extracurricular activities that stop you from working, plan to get a job during the summer. Ask a local business when it starts hiring for summer employment, mark the date, and start building a relationship with that employer now. That way, by the time you are ready to apply, you'll have increased your odds of landing that job!

## TAKE A STEP

List five places you think you could work, volunteer, or intern:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

*One day, you will wake up and there won't be any more time to do the things you've always wanted. Do it now.*

— Paulo Coelho

# GO EYE-TO-EYE TODAY 173

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Build confidence by practicing eye contact. Eye contact is a lost art. Many people don't have the courage or confidence to make and hold eye contact. It shows respect and focus.

Practicing eye contact is easy yet hard at the same time. All you have to do is maintain eye contact with the people you speak with today.

Do your best not to look away often. You probably will a few times, but when you notice yourself avoiding eye contact, bring your gaze back to the eyes of the person you are speaking with.

This little aspect could be the difference between getting and losing the opportunity of your dreams. It is a very important soft skill for interviews, including college admissions interviews and job interviews.

## TAKE A STEP

After you go through the day practicing eye contact, what was your experience? Was it hard? Was it easy to do? Was it easier to maintain eye contact when you were speaking or listening?

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*The only person you have to be better than tomorrow  
is who you were today.*

— Arel Moodie

# 174 TAKE A YOUTUBE TOUR OF THE COLLEGE OF YOUR CHOICE

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There are great videos on social media made by colleges and by students who attend them. It's a really good way—and often a humorous way—to get a feel for a college.

Go on YouTube or another video-sharing site, watch a few videos, and see what you can find!

## TAKE A STEP

Which colleges did you find videos for on YouTube? Which did you think looked the most appealing? Why?

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*All I knew is that  
I never wanted  
to be average.*  
— Michael Jordan

# WRITE A HANDWRITTEN THANK YOU NOTE

# 175

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Everyone appreciates a thank you, especially educators. A handwritten note from a student lifts the spirits of teachers, principals, guidance counselors, and others involved in your schooling.

Think of someone who helped you in some way or someone you look up to. Let this person know all the specific reasons why you appreciate and are thankful for him or her. Few students take the time to say thank you, so your expression of gratitude will really stand out and be appreciated.

You don't have to write a novel; a single handwritten page will do. It's important to *write* the note with a pen and paper—don't use e-mail here.

## TAKE A STEP

Who will receive your handwritten note? Why?

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*Make it a habit to tell people thank you.  
Truly appreciate those around you, and you'll soon  
find many others around you.  
Truly appreciate life, and you'll find that you have more of it.*  
— Ralph Marston

# 176 MASTER CRITICAL THINKING

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Learning how to think more critically is a skill that colleges and employers seek in applicants. The good news is that it isn't as difficult as it sounds. Critical thinking simply means examining a question from all angles. It's like staging a debate, only you're arguing both sides.

For example, you have to be over a certain age in your state before you can drive a car. Think of all the reasons why this is a good idea. Now think of all the reasons why this is a bad idea. See how many reasons you can objectively come up with on both the pro and the con sides. The more ideas you can think of for each side, the better. Having the ability to analyze both sides of an argument is a huge skill needed to succeed in college and life, and it can be fun too!

## TAKE A STEP

Think about a rule you had to follow today. Write down at least three reasons you think the rule is in your best interest and at least three reasons why you think the rule should be struck down.

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*There are two sides to every story and  
more often than not, somewhere in the middle,  
you will find the truth.*

— Bono

# MAKE FRIENDS WITH A BANKER

# 177

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If you don't have checking and savings accounts, it's time you did. You can open free versions of both types of accounts at your local bank. Smart money management starts now. Take the responsibility and have fun with it.

## TAKE A STEP

Write down what you found most interesting when visiting this site.

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*Twenty years from now  
you will be more disappointed  
by the things that you didn't do  
than by the ones you did do.*

— Mark Twain

# 178 PERFORM A RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS

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Do something for a random person, for no reason at all except to do something good. The aid you offer can be large or small.

Who needs help? Choose a friend of yours and do something out of the blue that will make his or her day. Or perhaps pay for a stranger's school lunch today (if that's in your budget).

A random act is best done for someone you don't really know or don't need anything from in return. Get into the act of helping and make it a habit.

## REFLECT

Whom did you do a random act of kindness for? What did you do?

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*Carry out a random act of kindness,  
with no expectation of reward, safe in the knowledge  
that one day someone might do the same for you.*

— Lady Diana Spencer

# PRACTICE PERSISTENCE AND PERSEVERANCE

# 179

The only time you truly fail in life is when you stop trying. As long as you continue to strive and put your best effort into everything you do, you'll never be a failure. If you're having problems in a tough class or struggling with emotional issues, you are in complete control of the situation. You can give in and become overwhelmed, or you can fight back with everything you've got.

## TAKE A STEP

Think of a specific class, extracurricular activity, or sports team you might be on where things have gotten so tough for you that you feel like quitting. Instead of throwing in the towel, make a commitment today to persevere by finding a new approach to your old problem. Write down your problem and your possible new approach to solving it.

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## EXTRA CREDIT STEP

If you get stumped figuring out a new approach to your problem, reach out to someone who can lend a hand. It's more than okay to ask for help... it's awesome!

*Inside of a ring or out, ain't nothing wrong with going down.  
It's staying down that's wrong.*

— Muhammad Ali

# 180 CONGRATULATIONS YOU ROCKSTAR YOU! HOW WAS IT?

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You did it. You made it to the last step. Congratulations, you rock star you! You did it. You made it through 180 steps of pure awesome.

Now take some time to reflect on how this entire process has been for you.

How do you think you've grown since starting this book? What stands out to you the most from this experience? What was the best part for you? Do you feel more successful? How so?

## TAKE A STEP

Write your thoughts below:

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*Every champion  
was once a contender  
that refused to give up.*  
— Rocky Balboa

# GRADUATION!

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Congratulations! Assuming you didn't jump to this page to read the last part first, you've just completed 180 steps that have brought you to where you are right now and more successful than you've ever been before as a student... and as a person!

I've got a secret for you: it doesn't really matter where you started or even that you completed every single step. Perhaps you found your way to this manual midyear and you've done at least six months of awesome work. That's great. However many steps you took and whenever you took them, you accomplished your goal to "step up to success."

And you know what?

## **That makes you awesome in my book!**

It's time to reward yourself. You've certainly earned it. Maybe you'd like to kick back and play your favorite video game. Or perhaps you'd like to grab a bowl of rocky road ice cream and binge on episodes of your favorite series on Netflix. I don't recommend that you overindulge, of course, but I do recommend that you enjoy your reward to the fullest... guilt free!

You've put in a lot of work, and your reward night is the first of many benefits that hard work will bring you. When you applied (all or some of) the simple yet amazingly effective steps in this book, you brought yourself to a better place.

On the way, I hope you picked up some great strategies that you can continue to use as you see fit. You should have learned more about yourself, and you should be ready to meet the world head-on.

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So go on. Enjoy your accomplishment. Enjoy your reward. Enjoy your new place in the world.

Don't hold back: celebrate your victory. You deserve it.

***Yours in Awesomeness and Success,***

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and lines.

**PS: Let me know how you did!**

Shoot me an email at **info@arelmoodie.com**  
or send me a tweet **@arelmoodie**

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Arel Moodie is the best-selling author of *Your Starting Point for Student Success*. He speaks to students across the country to turn on their “light switch” so they can see the importance of education in their life now and in the future.

Arel has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Forbes*, *BusinessWeek*, *Black Enterprise Magazine*, *Young Money Magazine*, and *USA Today* and has been recognized by President Obama for his insights on youth engagement.

*Inc. Magazine* called Arel a “high-energy motivator” and named him to its “30 Under 30 List” of America’s coolest entrepreneurs under thirty years old, joining people like Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook.

He started his first Internet business in college and has built a million-dollar event production and education company. As a professional speaker, he has spoken to hundreds of thousands of students, parents, and professionals in almost every state and five countries.

Arel accomplished all of this after growing up in the projects of Brooklyn, New York. Education was his only way out, and he took advantage of it to change his life. In fact, *Essence Magazine* said, “Arel Moodie should be the poster boy for rags-to-riches stories; he made it to college and is America’s Top Young Speaker.”

# APPENDIX

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If you are a teacher who wants to focus on specific topics with your students or you are someone who just likes working in chunks, below are categories of ideas you can work on that cover similar topics. For the purpose of variety, in the book, each day is a new activity to keep things fresh. If you prefer to work on more similar topics at a time, you can use the categorization below as a guide.

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<b>GETTING MONEY FOR COLLEGE</b>	<b>STEPS:</b> 7, 9, 27, 28, 41, 133
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<b>PERSONAL FINANCE</b>	<b>STEPS:</b> 20, 67, 177
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<b>COLLEGE PREP</b>	<b>STEPS:</b> 6, 10, 15, 23, 29, 39, 127, 130, 161, 162
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<b>COLLEGE RESEARCH</b>	<b>STEPS:</b> 3, 12, 13, 14, 40, 69, 70, 71, 132, 135, 174
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<b>HEALTH</b>	<b>STEPS:</b> 61, 62, 77, 81, 82, 84, 111, 125, 166
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<b>ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS</b>	<b>STEPS:</b> 34, 45, 114, 124, 139, 152, 158
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<b>TIME MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>STEPS:</b> 47, 57
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**CAREER****STEPS:**

22, 30, 73, 76, 85, 105, 106, 129, 172

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**SELF-DEVELOPMENT****STEPS:**

2, 8, 16, 74, 80, 88, 89, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99,  
100, 101, 109, 110, 116, 128, 131, 136, 138,  
142, 144, 145, 148, 149, 150, 168, 171, 179

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**GRATITUDE/RESPECT****STEPS:**

1, 63, 79, 83, 87, 102, 153, 154, 155, 175, 178

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**SELF-AWARENESS****STEPS:**

19, 21, 31, 32, 33, 35, 38, 43, 92, 112, 113,  
115, 137, 141, 146, 147, 163, 165, 169, 170

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**COMMUNICATION SKILLS****STEPS:**

42, 78, 104, 107, 108, 117, 167, 173

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**IMPROVE YOUR GRADES WHILE LEARNING MORE****STEPS:**

4, 5, 17, 24, 25, 36, 37, 44, 46, 48, 49, 50,  
52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 64, 65, 66, 68,  
72, 75, 86, 90, 91, 94, 118, 119, 120, 121,  
122, 123, 126, 134, 140, 143, 151, 156, 157,  
159, 164, 176, 180

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**EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES****STEPS:**

11, 18, 26, 51, 103, 160

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# NOTES



A series of horizontal dotted lines spaced evenly down the page, providing a template for writing notes.

Motivation

# THE STUDENT SUCCESS ACTION GUIDE

A DAILY GUIDE TO HELP YOU SUCCEED THIS SCHOOL YEAR

**Achieve *STUDENT SUCCESS* by applying these *SIMPLE STEPS!***

This quick and easy read gives students strategies, techniques, and tips to succeed in school today and every day. With practical and proven advice that's easy to follow and even easier to do, every student can benefit and gain the skills to succeed now.



## Arel Moodie

Arel Moodie believes education was the key to helping him overcome the harsh and challenging circumstances of his environment. He grew up in the projects of Brooklyn, NY, to today becoming a best-selling author, entrepreneur and founder of The College Success Program.

His passion now is to pass on that message, by empowering students with the knowledge that they too, can succeed through education and personal determination. Through his highly popular keynotes, workshops, books, and curriculums, Arel is helping students to not only go to college but to gain the confidence to excel.

Arel Moodie has been quoted in *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Forbes*, *Essence*, *Black Enterprise*, and *Inc. Magazine*. As a featured speaker at the White House, Arel was recognized by the president for his insights into youth engagement. His first book, *Your Starting Point for Student Success*, was a national best-seller.



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