EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

Students learn how to develop effective study habits and time management skills, and how to use these abilities to set future goals.

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Introduction to Urban Tech and the Youth Leadership Academy

Who We Are

The National Urban Technology Center, Inc. (Urban Tech), a 501(c)(3) education not-for-profit, was founded in 1995 to provide access to technology and training to address the widening computer literacy and achievement gap in inner-city communities. Urban Tech's primary focus is to transfer educational tools to schools and community-based organizations nationwide for promoting life skills, academic performance, and workforce preparation among young people, ages 10 to 19. Urban Tech accomplishes its mission through its two flagship programs, SeedTech® and the Youth Leadership Academy (YLA).

What We Do

The Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) was developed by the National Urban Technology Center (Urban Tech) to equip youth with the practical skills necessary to become productive, self-fulfilled and achievement-oriented adults. The life skills taught in YLA are the tools needed to make healthy lifestyle choices, to effectively present oneself in the workplace, to manage one's income resourcefully, and to make positive life goals and decisions. YLA was also designed to teach computer skills, and to address a range of important issues including school dropout, drug awareness and teen pregnancy. YLA empowers young people by opening the doors to education and career options, and by raising the self-esteem of young people so they are comfortable pursuing new opportunities. It encourages participants to become self-sufficient and instills behaviors such as punctuality, the spirit of teamwork and cooperation, and the ability to accept constructive criticism.

12-Year Track Record

✔ **460,000 people served**
✔ **500 Computer Training Centers**
✔ **200 Youth Development Programs**
✔ Recognized by the Verizon Foundation for "improving academic performance and workforce preparedness among at-risk youth." *Success Award: Partnership for Developing America's Future Leaders given by the Verizon Foundation, 2005*
✔ Recognized by the Ford Foundation and Harvard University, Urban Tech's SeedTech program with the U.S. Department of Justice is considered an "...exemplary program in American Government." *Innovation Award given by Harvard University and Ford Foundation, 2000*
✔ Recognized as a "...model for bringing technology to people in inner-cities and remote rural areas." *"International Journal of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation," 1997*

Outcomes

✔ **Engaging Students –** "Students in Urban Tech programs respond with sheer enthusiasm to learning and exemplify the higher order thinking skills necessary to master classroom material and extend learning into their daily lives." *"Youth Leadership Academy 2-Year Evaluation in Newark, NJ", Martin Finkelstein, Ph.D., 2007*

✔ **Increased Reading and Math Skills –** YLA participants' reading scores improved by 46% and math scores increased by 40% over 3 years, accompanied by a 26% increase in attendance, and a 100% graduation rate after the introduction of YLA into the curriculum. *"Evaluation of YLA in Montclair High School," Elaine M. Walker, Ph.D., 2003*

Overview of "Educational Planning"

Education is becoming increasingly important to achieving economic security in our current knowledge-based economy. Individuals who receive post-secondary degrees have a wide variety of job opportunities and greater monetary rewards as compared to individuals who do not finish high school or do not pursue higher education. According to the 2004 U.S. Census, the yearly income averages for different education levels clearly demonstrate the financial benefits of holding educational degrees. On average, non-high school graduates earn $18,144 a year. Recipients of a high school diploma or a GED earn $25,360 per year. Individuals who have taken some college classes or have earned an associate's degree earn $30,891 on average. Bachelor's degree holders earn an average of $42,404, while graduate or professional degree holders earn $55,065.

In a society where post-secondary education is vital to financial independence, students must learn early to realize their skills and talents, become high-performing students by developing effective study habits, increase their productivity by managing their time and practicing discipline, and plan for post-secondary education or training to achieve their long-term goals. Through interactive games and exercises, YLA promotes a new image that "it's cool to be smart" and instills the belief that post-secondary education and a successful future are realities for all students. YLA guides participants through the steps of applying for college or vocational school, maximizing their score on the PSAT, SAT or ACT, and accessing resources that help them build a supportive network. They learn to use the Internet to explore options—including two- and four-year colleges, technical/vocational schools and financial aid resources—that will allow them to pursue their educational goals.

Goals for Learning

✔ Understand the influence of community, culture, media and peers on the value one places on education;

✔ Be aware of the benefits of finishing high school and the consequences of dropping out;

✔ Identify interests and aptitudes and map these to career options; define education and work experience needed for this career;

✔ Recognize the relationship between education, careers and lifestyle;

✔ Identify all of the available options for post-secondary education and alternative education programs;

✔ Develop both short- and long-term goals, and be able to distinguish between them;

✔ Develop effective study habits, time management skills and test-taking strategies and commit to a daily routine of doing one's homework and finishing assignments;

✔ Learn to use online resources for college and technical/vocational school searches, financial aid, internships, etc.;

✔ Seek positive relationships with people who support one's educational goals; volunteer to help others who also want to become successful.

Instructor Preparation Guide

YLA's *Educational Planning Curriculum Guide* is divided into ten sections. Each section examines a different theme and together encourages participants to plan for their future. The following is a list of suggestions that will make the implementation of this curriculum enjoyable and feasible for the instructor. Use this guide, as well as the Session Plan on pages 9–10, to plan your lessons.

Prepare before class
- Watch the *On the Reel: Dirty Laundry* animation and use the note-taking worksheet on pages 7–8 to record your thoughts.
- Become familiar with all the activities in the Session Plan, the content of YLA's online Interface and the procedures in the Instructor's Notes of the curriculum guide, so that you are comfortable teaching this material.
- Collect related news articles and other materials to bring the topics covered into context. Good examples are articles that demonstrate the importance of education and the opportunities that exist for young people who graduate high school and go on to college or vocational school. Also, because young people are often interested in the lives of media and sports stars, collect articles about the educational backgrounds of celebrities.

During class
- YLA recommends that Instructors direct participants to bring in, or provide, a "Educational Planning" journal. This is a place where they can record their present interests and goals. The journal can be a place where they reflect at any time on the information being presented to them and record the changes they are electing to make in their own lives based on the topics of the curriculum.
- Vocabulary found in the curriculum will often be new to participants. Provide participants with a photocopied glossary of these words to use as a reference. The participants can then highlight the glossary words on the list as they are used in each activity. The instructor should also use the glossary words at all times to model and reinforce the correct usage of the words, helping to make them part of the participants' everyday vocabulary.

Review Worksheet: Weighing Your Options

▸ Describe what happens in the animation in your own words.

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▸ Summarize in your own words the key ideas in the following Break It Down activities:

Identify the Influencers

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Take Your Inventory

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_____

Create a Vision for Yourself

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Review Worksheet: Planning Your Success

▸ Summarize in your own words the key ideas in the following Break It
Down activities:

Develop a Plan for Success

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Step Up Your Game

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Seize Your Opportunities

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Educational Planning Session Plan: Sessions 1–6

This is a suggested session plan to integrate YLA's components. It offers an order, time frame, and page number for activities that are in this Curriculum Guide.

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
Final Answer: First Answer Participants complete a pre-program survey of their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors with respect to educational planning. **CG p. 11 • 10 Minutes**	**Break It Down: Identify the Influencers** Participants identify the influences that others have on their educational goals. **CG p. 21 • 30 Minutes**	**We Got Game: Perpetrating Rhymes** Participants compete in teams to identify songs. They also analyze lyrics to better understand the messages that are being sent to teens about education. **CG p. 30 • 30 Minutes**	**Break It Down: Making the Brand** Participants create slogans that encourage students to stay in school. **CG p. 41 • 30 Minutes**	**Break It Down: Take Your Inventory** Participants match the things they like to skills they can build. **CG p. 59 • 30 Minutes**	**Write to the Point: Take Your Inventory** Participants tell a story about a time when they felt proud about something they did. **CG p. 69 • 15 Minutes**
Break the Ice: Get to Know Yourself This exercise previews the importance of successfully completing high school. **CG p. 14 • 30 Minutes**	**Write to the Point: Identify the Influencers** Participants tell a story about a time when negative criticism caused them to give up. **CG p. 27 • 30 Minutes**	**Hot Link Library: The Missing Link** Participants review the web site directory and write suggestions for additional sites to help enrich the listing. **CG p. 39 • 30 Minutes**	**We Got Game: Tricky Situations** Participants role-play to demonstrate key points about successfully completing high school. **CG p. 45 • 20 Minutes**	**Final Answer: Interest Inventory** This inventory helps participants find a career path that suits their interests. **CG p. 63 • 20 Minutes**	**Break It Down: Create a Vision for Yourself** Participants define their educational options. **CG p. 72 • 15 Minutes**
On the Reel: Dirty Laundry Grandma finds a note from school in Shawna's jeans indicating that she is cutting classes and is in danger of being expelled. **CG p. 17 • 10 Minutes**					**We Got Game: Face Off** Participants debate the pros and cons of 2-year colleges, 4-year colleges and vocational schools. **CG p. 78 • 30 Minutes**

Educational Planning Session Plan: Sessions 7–11

This is a suggested session plan to integrate YLA's components. It offers an order, time frame, and page number for activities that are in this Curriculum Guide.

Session 7	Session 8	Session 9	Session 10	Session 11
Break the Ice: Planning Your Success This exercise previews the importance of studying for the SATs, defining goals and becoming an attractive applicant to colleges. **CG p. 87 • 10 Minutes**	**We Got Game: Manny's Picks** Participants go on a scavenger hunt to find the colleges that best fit Manny's needs. **CG p. 100 • 45 Minutes**	**Write to the Point: Step Up Your Game** Participants tell a story about a time when refusing to ask for help led to further problems. **CG p. 109 • 30 Minutes**	**We Got Game: Q's Clues** Participants test their knowledge about subjects related to higher education in this Jeopardy-style game. **CG p. 116 • 40 Minutes**	**Final Answer: Pays to Play** This quiz tests retention of educational planning topics. **CG p. 128 • 20 Minutes**
Break It Down: Develop a Plan for Success Participants define long-term plans for educational success. **CG p. 90 • 15 Minutes**	**Break It Down: Step Up Your Game** Participants discover how to become a more attractive applicant to colleges. **CG p. 105 • 15 Minutes**	**We Got Game: Freddy's Feud** Participants form two teams for a Family Feud-style competition that tests their knowledge of educational options. **CG p. 112 • 30 Minutes**	**Break It Down: Seize Your Opportunities** Participants brainstorm ways to maximize the benefits of the relationships they have. **CG p. 120 • 20 Minutes**	**Final Answer: Final Answer** Participants complete a post-program survey of their knowledge, attitudes and behaviors with respect to educational planning. **CG p. 131 • 15 Minutes**
Final Answer: Daily Planner Participants learn the importance of time management as they create schedules for themselves that include the amount of time required to reach their educational goals. **CG p. 95 • 35 Minutes**				

Instructor Notes

Final Answer: First Answer
Pages 12–13

Background Note

Administer *Final Answer: First Answer*, YLA's pre-assessment survey, to participants **before** *Educational Planning* is introduced. This is recommended because it allows you to assess the participants' background knowledge and tailor the activities according to their needs.

Objectives

- Demonstrate prior knowledge, understanding and awareness of Educational Planning.

Instructor Preparation

First Answer requires access to computers with an internet connection to utilize the YLA Educational Planning module. Review the survey's questions prior to implementation to address any barriers that may arise due to reading comprehension. Please note: participants must be logged into their online user account to save the results of their survey.

Materials

Computers; internet access to YLA; and the *Educational Planning Curriculum Guide*.

Instructional Procedures

- Before every exercise, you should present an overview of what the participants are about to do.
- Follow the instructions on page 12 to guide you through *First Answer*.
- Tell the participants to read the "Set Up" directions as you read them aloud.
- Tell participants that they will only be able to answer the *First Answer* survey once.

- Participants can view their progress in meeting the module's goals for learning by accessing their portfolios. If this is the first time participants have completed a *First Answer* survey direct them to "My Portfolio," found on the participants' main home page after logging into their YLA account.

Learning Extensions (optional)

If you need to provide additional support for students with little prior knowledge of the objectives in this activity, here are some suggested activities:
Ask participants to write a question about a topic on the survey they would like to know more about. Post the questions on a bulletin board in your room. Tell participants they will find out the answer to their questions by the end of the unit.

Assessment

The results of the survey become part of the participant's portfolio in APOLLO. View the surveys' results in APOLLO by accessing your "Instructor Menu's Assessment and Status Viewer." If time constraints prevent you from viewing each participant's survey individually, take a sampling of surveys to gauge participants' prior knowledge.

After reviewing results, tailor the module's activities to the needs of participants, taking full advantage of the extension and enrichment activities found in this guide.

Go to www.urbantech.org and click YLA Login .

2. Enter [YLA Login: Username: Password:] then click Enter .

3. Click on YLA Interactive!

4. Once the interface has appeared on your computer screen, click ▼ MODULES .

5. Select **DIRTY LAUNDRY** .

6. Roll mouse over fifth icon from left on the "Choose an Activity" screen:

7. Click .

8. After reading the instructions on screen, click start .

9. Select 1. FIRST ANSWER .

FIRST ANSWER

SET UP:
This survey helps your instructor understand what you know and how you feel about topics covered in this module. Be honest when indicating your answers and don't worry about what you think the answer should be. You will have the opportunity to take the survey again at the end of the module to see how much you have learned.

DIRECTIONS:
Click the link below and take the questionnaire.
FIRST ANSWER QUIZ

10. After reviewing the First Answer directions, click FIRST ANSWER QUIZ .

continued on next page ▶

The best responses are indicated on the following page, in blue. Participants will only be able to answer the Final Answer quiz once.

Final Answer: First Answer (continued)

First Answer Quiz

1. **What is the SAT or the ACT?**
   a. A national aptitude test used in the college admissions process (4 points)
   b. A placement test for 1st year college courses
   c. A test to help you decide on a career in line with your interests
   d. A high school achievement test

2. **What is the FAFSA?**
   a. The name of a college admissions test
   b. A standardized application for admission to colleges
   c. A single form that makes you eligible for all federal student financial aid (4 points)
   d. An income tax return

3. **College students receive financial aid based on:**
   a. Total family income
   b. The cost of going to college
   c. The number of children in the family
   d. All of these (4 points)

4. **The most important factor in choosing a college is:**
   a. How I like the campus
   b. My interests and career plans (4 points)
   c. Where my friends are going
   d. The quality of its sports teams

5. **Dropping out of high school will NOT limit my options..**
   a. Strongly agree (1 point)
   b. Agree (2 points)
   c. Disagree (3 points)
   d. Strongly disagree (4 points)

6. **I believe that applying to several colleges will improve my chances of being accepted.**
   a. Strongly agree (4 points)
   b. Agree (3 points)
   c. Disagree (2 points)
   d. Strongly disagree (1 point)

7. **Building a professional network is a very important strategy for connecting me with resources and people who can help me reach my goals.**
   a. Strongly agree (4 points)
   b. Agree (3 points)
   c. Disagree (2 points)
   d. Strongly disagree (1 point)

8. **I have talents and interests that I can build on to reach my future educational and career goals.**
   a. Strongly agree (4 points)
   b. Agree (3 points)
   c. Disagree (2 points)
   d. Strongly disagree (1 point)

9. **I am committed to a daily routine of doing my homework and completing school assignments.**
   a. Strongly agree (4 points)
   b. Agree (3 points)
   c. Disagree (2 points)
   d. Strongly disagree (1 point)

10. **I will assess the advantages and disadvantages of a particular career choice by:**
   a. I haven't given my career choice any thought yet (1 point)
   b. Assessing my talents and interests (2 points)
   c. Getting information on educational requirements, training costs and starting salary (3 points)
   d. All of these (4 points)

11. **I plan to get letters of recommendation for my college applications from:**
   a. My teachers and guidance counselors (4 points)
   b. My coach or minister (3 points)
   c. My friends (2 points)
   d. I have not yet made plans to apply to college (1 point)

12. **I use the Internet to check out career and college options.**
   a. Daily or Weekly (4 points)
   b. Once or twice a month (3 points)
   c. Once in a while (2 points)
   d. Never (1 point)

Instructor Notes
Break the Ice: Weighing Your Options

Background Note
Educational Planning is divided into two parts. *Break the Ice: Weighing Your Options* opens Sections 2–5 with an opportunity for participants to preview the importance of completing high school and planning for the future.

Objectives
• Discuss the goals of Sections 2–5 of the *Educational Planning* module:
  – Take a closer look at the people with whom you surround yourself; learn to identify the "Supporters" versus the "Underminers" of your educational goals;
  – Reflect on how influencers can affect the value you place on your educational performance;
  – Observe the things that you like to do and the achievements that make you proud;
  – Explore what educational options and opportunities are available to you;
  – Learn how to set short-term and long-term plans to reach your goals;
  – Learn to identify resources and seize opportunities that allow you to accomplish their goals.

Instructor Preparation
Collect related news articles and internet resources to bring the topics covered in Sections 2–5 into context. Good examples are articles that demonstrate the importance of education and the opportunities that exist for young people who graduate high school and go on to college or vocational school. Also, because young people are often interested in the lives of media and sports stars, collect articles about the educational backgrounds of celebrities.

(optional) Ask participants to bring in journals that will be used throughout the unit. You should also prepare a modeling activity to demonstrate what is expected of the participants during journaling activities.

Materials
News articles and internet resources; journals (optional); and the *Educational Planning Curriculum Guide*.

Instructional Procedures
• Let participants know that the goal of the first half of the module is for participants to identify their interests, debate the pros and cons of various options for post-secondary education, and then choose the option that is best for them.
• Start a discussion about education to open up the topic. Ask questions like:
  – Do you think it is important to graduate high school?
  – What do you need to do to succeed in school?
  – What is your idea of a successful lifestyle after high school?
  – Do you see a connection between education and your future lifestyle?
• Review the objectives of the unit with participants.
• Read selected articles or internet resources with participants to bring these issues into context.

Learning Extensions (optional)

If you need to provide additional support for students with little prior knowledge of the objectives in this activity, here are some suggested activities:

Journal writing affords participants with time to reflect and speculate on paper, confident that their thoughts will be accepted without criticism. Ask participants to begin their journals by writing down a goal they would like to achieve during *Educational Planning*.

Ask participants to reflect on the discussion questions by writing in their journals. Model the desired journaling techniques and format requirements by providing a sample journal entry.

Enrichment (optional)

Here are some suggested activities to extend participants' knowledge:

Create a bulletin board for the *Educational Planning* module. The purpose of the board is to chart participants' progress towards reaching their goals. Participants can post work, submit artifacts for their individual portfolios, or generate a "Wall of Ideas." A "Wall of Ideas" is a place where participants add questions and comments as the unit progresses. Encourage participants to seek out the answers to these questions independently. Acknowledge those who actively submit answers by creating a rewards system, an example would be to record their names on an area of a bulletin board entitled "Wall of Ideas: Leaders."

Assessment

Use the Journal Scoring Guide on page 16 to assess the level of understanding participants have, as well as their levels of journal keeping skills. Print multiple copies of the Journal Scoring Guide for participants to review so they understand how they will be assessed. Make sure participants understand that they will not be judged on the value of their ideas, but will be evaluated based on the criteria outlined in the Journal Scoring Guide.

Journal Scoring Guide
Break the Ice: Weighing Your Options

Name _____ Teacher _____ Date _____

Directions: Periodically review YLA participants' journals. Use this scoring guide to determine their need for specific instruction in good journal keeping habits. If at all possible, meet with the students after you have used the Scoring Guide and discuss the results and plans for improving his or her performance.

Primary Traits	Performance Criteria			
Mechanics				
Format: All entries clearly list *in the margin*:	1	2	3	4
Date of entry				
Title of entry (e.g., *My Daily Routine*)				
Organization: Entries appear in chronological sequence or as otherwise assigned	1	2	3	4
Effort				
Includes all assigned work	1	2	3	4
Is legible, presentable, coherent	1	2	3	4
Writing				
Fluent: Write with ease about a range of subjects	1	2	3	4
Developed: Includes examples, details, quotes when appropriate	1	2	3	4
Understanding				
Thorough: You write for the full time; your entries show you trying to fully understand or communicate an idea in writing	1	2	3	4
Insightful: The student responds to questions by self-questioning, retelling, predicting, or assuming the role of a character	1	2	3	4

Performance Evaluation Rubric	
Level	**Control of trait or skill**
1	Little or no evidence of use of target trait or skill.
2	Performance is characterized by many errors. Minimal evidence of use of target trait or skill. Does not meet performance standard.
3	Performance is characterized by few errors. Adequate evidence of us of target trait or skill. Beginning to meet performance standard.
4	Performance is characterized by minimal errors and compares favorably with same age peers' performance. Consistent evidence of appropriate use of target trait or skill. Meets performance standard.

Instructor Notes

On the Reel: Dirty Laundry
Pages 19–20

Background Note
The quote at the beginning of "Dirty Laundry" is by Mohandas Gandhi. Mohandas Gandhi was given the title Mahatma (which means "great" in Sanskrit) by the Indian people. Gandhi was a non-violent leader who sought to free India from its British colonizers. He also worked to secure peace between Muslims and Hindus and advocated for more rights for women. Gandhi was assassinated in 1948, but his non-violent methods have continued to inspire millions of activists, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Objectives
- Examine Manny's study habits and time management skills.
- Identify the benefits of finishing high school and the consequences of dropping out.
- Examine Manny's options to pay for post-secondary education.

Instructor Preparation
Review the objectives for the activities found in Sections 2–5 of the *Educational Planning Curriculum Guide*. On pages 7–8 you will find note-taking pages to record your observations and thoughts while watching *On the Reel: Dirty Laundry*. After reviewing the results of the participants' pre-assessment surveys, you may need to tailor your notes to the participants' needs while watching *Dirty Laundry*.

Materials
Computer(s); internet access to YLA or YLA CD-ROM; projector and/or speakers (optional); journals (optional); and the *Educational Planning Curriculum Guide*.

Instructional Procedures
- Before every exercise, you should present an overview of what the participants are about to do.
- Recap the material from *Break the Ice: Weighing Your Options*. Participants need constant reinforcement as they absorb the material.
- The quote that appears on-screen sets the tone for the module. Have a participant read it aloud.
- Follow the instructions on page 19 of the curriculum guide to watch the animation.
- For younger participants, provide a second viewing, this gives them additional time to think clearly about the content matter.

Learning Extensions (optional)
If you need to provide additional support for students with little prior knowledge of the objectives in this activity, here are some suggested activities:

After viewing *Dirty Laundry*, have participants reflect in their journals on the following questions:
- What is Shawna's attitude towards school?
- Why does she value her job at SuperCuts more than her education?
- How does Shawna's attitude towards education contrast with Manny's?
- How is Manny preparing for his future?
- If you were in the grandmother's place, how would you explain to Shawna the importance of graduating from high school?

Enrichment (optional)
Here are some suggested activities to extend participants' knowledge:

Organize participants into small groups to analyze what they've seen. You may also suggest that they summarize, illustrate, or write down their thoughts.

Assessment

Use the Journal Scoring Guide on page 20 to assess the level of understanding participants have, as well as their levels of journal keeping skills. Print multiple copies of the Journal Scoring Guide for participants to review so they understand how they will be assessed. Make sure participants understand that they will not be judged on the value of their ideas, but will be evaluated based on the criteria outlined in the Journal Scoring Guide.
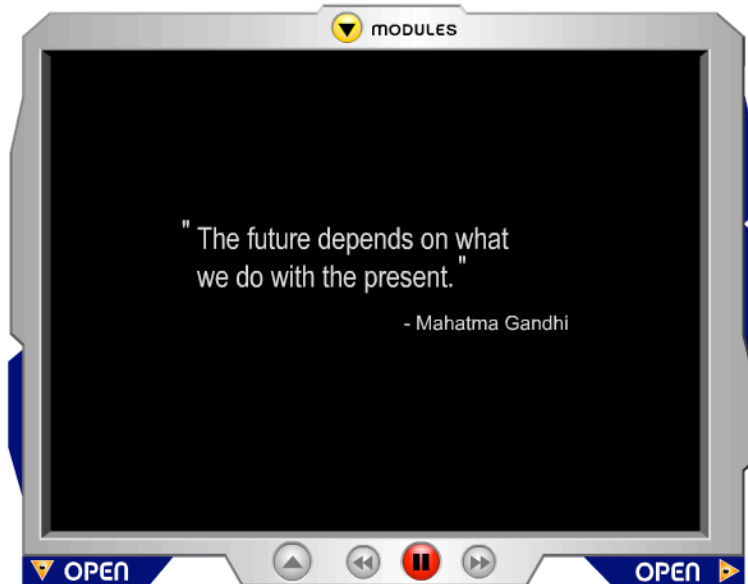
1. Roll mouse over first icon from left on the "Choose an Activity" screen:

Notes:

2. Click .

The epigram that appears on-screen sets the tone for the module. Have a participant read it aloud. Click ⏸ on the interface to pause the screen for more time. Click ▶ to resume play.

Journal Scoring Guide
On the Reel: Dirty Laundry

Name _____ Teacher _____ Date _____

Directions: Periodically review YLA participants' journals. Use this scoring guide to determine their need for specific instruction in good journal keeping habits. If at all possible, meet with the students after you have used the Scoring Guide and discuss the results and plans for improving his or her performance.

Primary Traits	Performance Criteria			
Mechanics				

Format: All entries clearly list *in the margin*:
       Date of entry
       Title of entry (e.g., *My Daily Routine*)
	1	2	3	4

Organization: Entries appear in chronological sequence or as otherwise assigned	1	2	3	4
Effort				
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Instructor Notes
Break It Down: Identify the Influencers
Pages 23–26

Background Note
In *Break It Down: Identify the Influencers* participants discuss how negative influences impact attitudes on education. They examine how Shawna acts as an "Underminer", while the grandmother plays the role of "Supporter."

Objectives
- Identify examples of negative criticism.
- Discuss how negative influences affect attitudes about school.
- Distinguish between "Supporters" and "Underminers".

Instructor Preparation
Review *Break It Down: Identify the Influencers* to become familiar with the content of the activity.

Materials
Computer(s); internet access to YLA or YLA CD-ROM; and the *Educational Planning Curriculum Guide*.

Instructional Procedures
- Review the objectives with participants.
- Follow the directions on pages 23–25 to access *Break It Down: Identify the Influencers*.
- After your discussion, have participants list the negative messages they hear from their peers, media and/or community about education. For example: "It's not cool to be smart," "Stop trying to be something you're not," etc.
- Ask why negative messages cause teens to drop out or perform poorly in school.

Learning Extensions (optional)
If you need to provide additional support for students with little prior knowledge of the objectives in this activity, here are some suggested activities:
Brainstorm with participants the possible reasons that students do not value education and are opting to drop out of school rather than graduate. Ask them to list the consequences of dropping out that they observe among their peers and in the media. Some of the consequences that they may mention: teens with nothing to do because of limited skills, teens joining gangs, taking part in illegal activities to make money, and going to prison and becoming disconnected from family and friends.

Enrichment (optional)
Here are some suggested activities to extend participants' knowledge:
Ask participants to pick a slogan (e.g. "knowledge is power") that would communicate a positive message about education and encourage teens to stay in school. Brainstorm ways to get the message out to the greatest number of teens, perhaps using the slogan on T-shirts, caps, etc.

Assessment
Use the Discussion Scoring Guide on page 26 to assess participants' levels of discussion skills. Give copies to the participants to review the characteristics of a good discussion and how to self-evaluate their own discussion skills.

Use this discussion as an opportunity to assess the level of understanding the participants have of the objectives of *Identify the Influencers*. This will help you to plan and facilitate instruction based on the specific needs of the participants.

Assessment

Use the Discussion Scoring Guide on page 26 to assess participants' levels of discussion skills. Give copies to the participants to review the characteristics of a good discussion and how to self-evaluate their own discussion skills.

Use this discussion as an opportunity to assess the level of understanding the participants have of the objectives of *Identify the Influencers*. This will help you to plan and facilitate instruction based on the specific needs of the participants.

Vocabulary

identify, influence, negative, effect, Supporter, Underminer, college

1. Roll mouse over second icon from left on the "Choose an Activity" screen:

2. Click [icon].

3. After reading the instructions on screen, click **start**.

4. Select **1. IDENTIFY THE INFLUENCERS**.

Roll mouse over Shawna's image to see what she is thinking.

WITHOUT BASKETBALL MONEY, WHO'S GONNA WANT YOU?

I'M UPSET BECAUSE I'M IN THE SPOTLIGHT RIGHT NOW. AT LEAST MANNY'S TRYING. I SHOULD GET MY ACT TOGETHER.

Identify the Influencers

Keep only the friends who encourage you. All others pull you down.

✔ Be aware of **negative** comments about education

✔ See the **effect** on your attitudes about school

✔ Describe the actions that could occur

identify
(verb) To name, describe, or recognize. *It is important for Shawna to identify whose opinions she should and should not be listening to.*

influence
(noun) Power to sway or affect opinions. *A close friend can be a strong influence on your attitude about education.*

negative
(adjective) Disapproving, criticizing, or depressing. *Shawna tried to pull Manny down by making negative comments about his chances of going to college.*

effect
(noun) A result or consequence. *Shawna's discussions with friends may have had an effect on her educational goals.*

5. Review the text, then click on the title IDENTIFY THE INFLUENCERS to display the supplemental pop-up.

Sometimes friends can be: ⊠
SUPPORTERS

next

6. After reviewing the text and image on-screen, click next.

Sometimes friends can be: ⊠
UNDERMINERS

prev

7. Click ⊠ to close the pop-up window, then click next.

supporter
(noun) A person who encourages someone else to reach her goals. *Freddy always tells Maria when she has done a good job; he is her biggest supporter.*

Underminer
(noun) A person who weakens or holds someone back from reaching his goals. *Underminers try to tear you down and make you feel like a failure.*

Break It Down: Identify the Influencers (continued)

1. **Why is Shawna trying to make Manny feel bad about himself?** She is being defensive because Grandma found out that she has been cutting school. Shawna thinks Manny told on her, so she wants to put him down.

2. **Why do you think Shawna is being so negative about Manny's plans to go to college?** Shawna may be projecting her own fears on to Manny.

3. **How do you think Shawna's comments will influence Manny's attitude about his education?** Manny could lose his confidence and decide not to go to college. Applying to college is hard work and requires sacrifice on his part. Shawna's comments may make it easier for Manny to give up.

4. **Why is Grandma's support so important to Manny?** Grandma is giving Manny the support he needs by telling him that she believes that he can be successful. Her positive re-enforcement may be able to counteract the negative comments that he is hearing from Shawna and others who do not support his plans.

college
(noun) A school offering specialized instruction in professional or technical subjects. *If you are interested in a career in the business world, you may want to go to a business college.*

5. **Why hasn't Grandma been able to motivate Shawna to stay in school?** Sometimes friends are a greater influence on us than our family members. Shawna's boyfriend, Anthony, may not be encouraging Shawna to stay in school because he does not value education.

6. **Tell a story about a time when negative criticism caused you to doubt yourself or give up.** What were you doing? Who criticized you? What did he or she say that caused you to doubt yourself or give up? What would you do differently today to prevent negative comments from interfering with your goals?

> Participants will be asked to address #6 in writing during another exercise called Write to the Point.

Discussion Scoring Guide
Break It Down: Identify the Influencers

Name _____ Teacher _____ Date _____

Directions: Periodically observe a few students during a discussion. Use this scoring guide to diagnose their need for specific instruction in individual discussion characteristics. Or, use the scoring guide to evaluate the quality of control of discussion characteristics for grading purposes. If at all possible, meet with the students after you have used the Scoring Guide and discuss the results and plans for improving his or her performance.

Listener Demonstrates Behavior:	Always	Sometimes	Never
Body is turned towards speaker			
Makes eye contact with speaker			
Nods or smiles if appropriate			
Does not interrupt speaker			
Jots a brief note while listening with the intent of questioning or extending speaker's point			
Waits for speaker to finish before responding			

Quality of Discussion:	Above Average	Average	Below Average/ Needs Work
Asks relevant questions to clarify and show interest			
Asks the speaker to express him/herself in another way when unsure of what the speaker is saying			
Paraphrases/ summarizes speaker's main ideas to show understanding			
Reflects the speaker's feelings			
Shares ideas, thoughts and facts about the topic			
Sticks to the discussion topic by not including unrelated ideas or facts			
Comments express appreciation and respect towards speaker even when disagreeing			
Speaks clearly			