

Today's Challenges; Today's Leaders:

REAL WORLD CONVERSATIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

Lesson Number: **TCTL.3.2**

Making the Impact of our Personal Actions Sustainable

Quick Reference:

Time Required:

45 minutes

Objectives:

After completing this lesson, students should be able to:

1. Determine how to make personal actions sustainable.
2. Develop a sustainable personal action plan.

Materials:

- ✓ TCTL.3.2.AS.A (one copy per student)
- ✓ TCTL.3.2.AS.B (one copy)
- ✓ TCTL.3.2.AS.C (one copy)
- ✓ TCTL.3.2.AS.D (one copy per student)
- ✓ TCTL.3.2.AS.E (one copy)

Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to help students identify what steps need to be taken to make their personal actions sustainable.

Directions:

The bulleted information below is important to know as background information.

- If you did not teach TCTL.3.1, refer to the Connection Questions from that lesson as a preview for students before teaching this lesson. (In lesson TCTL.3.1, students were asked to look at existing needs in the community that they could impact. Students were also asked to work with another student to make everyday actions sustainable actions. Refer to TCTL.3.1.AS.B.) Have a brief discussion on the topics and Connection Questions from the previous lesson before beginning this lesson.
- In this lesson, students will discuss the specific things that they can do to make their actions sustainable.
- LifeKnowledge lessons are listed at the end of this lesson to help students identify needs in the community and how to set SMART goals. SMART goals include an action plan that can help make the goals more sustainable.
- For personal actions to be sustainable, they should include:
 - a. How they relate to an individual's overall mission and vision in life and how these actions connect to the individual's values. With these in mind, actions tend to be more sustainable.
 - b. Sustainable action plans include benchmarks (such as daily actions) and short-, intermediate- and long-term term goals.
 - c. Sustainable actions are ones that align with a life philosophy or a way of living. These are taken into account each day.
 - d. Time management is also key to sustainable personal actions.



- e. Another way to continue developing sustainable actions is to identify others to hold one accountable to one's action plan.

After reviewing the information above, begin with the lesson activities below.

1. After a brief review with students on the Connection Questions from lesson TCTL.3.1, choose one of two discussion options to proceed:
 - a. **Option 1.** Have a discussion with students about the housing crisis that began in 2006-2007. If available, have students complete online research about what led to the housing crisis; or, you may print articles and have them review these with a partner. Students should be ready to share. If none of these are available, hold a teacher-led discussion about what led to the crisis – focusing on the rapid building boom that led to too many homes in a depressed market. Eventually, the oversupply led to a rapid decline in prices. The construction of new homes, increase in home prices leading up to 2006 and unethical mortgage lending practices were NOT sustainable actions. It is easy for us to look back now and discuss how we could have prevented this crisis (there are many causes that combined to form a “perfect storm”). Discuss with students how lack of sustainability led to the home and financial crises. How could we have made more sustainable decisions that would have averted such a disaster? Have students share. Connect ideas to how we can develop plans in our own lives that will be sustainable.
 - b. **Option 2:** Have a discussion with students about the importance of planning with the end in mind and choosing options that will benefit, not sabotage, the outcome. For example, have students consider how a professional sports player at the beginning of his career plans differently from one at the end of his career. Does he spend his money differently? Does he play more carelessly or cautiously? In life, whatever the career or goal, we need to make sure that we don't squander our resources. We need to think long term to make our decisions and actions sustainable.
2. Begin the activity by asking students what they value most. Use TCTL.3.2.AS.A to have students record their thoughts.
 - a. Make the connection that people tend to be more accountable for things that they value. It is important to realize that for an action to be sustainable, it must be tied to one's values.
 - b. On the writing surface, share TCTL.3.2.AS.B, which contains examples of some common personal actions. Ask students to choose one and to work through the process that speaks to them or to create one of their own that
 - c. After the selection, ask students to define how this action is tied to their personal values. If it is not, they should choose another example. Why is this action important to them? Allow for students to share with a partner.
 - d. Unveil TCTL.3.2.AS.C strategies to making personal actions sustainable. Students have just addressed the first step, tying the action to their values. Discuss the remaining steps with them and give examples.
3. Pass out TCTL.3.2.AS.D. Using the same example, ask students to continue making their actions sustainable. They will follow each step as addressed in TCTL.3.2.AS.C and give justification below each question. Tell them to leave the last item (involving others to hold us accountable) blank for now; it will be completed later.
 - a. Work with students and provide guidance as they plan.
 - b. Be available to provide guidance through the process. If absolutely necessary, use TCTL.3.2.AS.E as an example.

- c. When students have finished, ask them to partner with a student to complete the final step, “involving others to hold us accountable.”
 - d. Partners should look directly at each other when sharing their ideas.
 - e. If it is believed that the requirements have been met, partners will sign their names at the bottom of the page on the line noted “Accountability Partner.”
 - f. When all students have finished, re-emphasize that when we share our action plans with those who will hold us accountable, we help make these actions more sustainable. We also need to practice self-discipline to keep the plan moving forward.
 - g. Discuss with students the option of working with a mentor or coach to help them keep their plans sustainable.
 - h. If time permits, have the students work on a second personal action plan. You can make more copies of TCTL.3.2.AS.D.
4. As the lesson begins to come to a close, reinforce that action plans are only sustainable if there is a conscious effort to stick with them. Share with students the following example: Many times, students hear a new idea or attend a conference, FFA Greenhand Conference for example, and make a decision to work on a personal action plan. Most of them experience excitement for a few days after the conference, but without a plan to implement their ideas, the excitement soon fades and the action plan is not sustaining. With a plan and the support of others, growth can be sustained.

Connection Questions:

1. What other areas of my life would benefit from creating a sustainable action plan?
2. How can I use what I have learned to impact my family and community?
3. How can I help others make their personal actions more sustainable?

LifeKnowledge Connections

Precept(s) addressed:

Action

A3. Plan Effectively

Vision

C1. Contemplate the Future

C2. Conceptualize Ideas

C4. Adapt to opportunities and obstacles from multiple perspectives

Character

D2. Accurately assess my values

D5. Practice Self-discipline

Awareness

E1. Address issues important to the community

Decision Making

N2. Demonstrate problem-solving skills

LK Lesson Suggestion:



HS.2 – Defining Personal Growth

HS.13 – Understanding responsibility and accountability

HS.18 – Vision and personal success

HS.45 – Goal-Setting Strategies

HS.48 – The role of mentors and coaches

MS.15 – Setting Goals

MS.46 – Identifying Planning Skills

Resource:

National FFA Organization. (2011). *LifeKnowledge Materials*. Indianapolis, IN: National FFA Organization

National FFA Organization. (2011). *Reaching New Heights*. Indianapolis, IN: National FFA Organization

What are my Values?

1. If you could take only four people with you on a trip for one year, who would you take?

2. How would you spend your time if you learned today that you had six months to live?

3. If you won \$10 million in cash, what would you do with that money?

4. If you had three things you could change in your community, country, or world what would they be?

5. If you could have lunch with anyone, living or dead, who would it be?

6. What is your belief about serving others (servant leadership)? Why is it important?

7. What are your short- and long-term goals?

8. What do you enjoy doing?

Examples of Personal Actions

- Increasing my involvement in a club
- Helping out more at home
- Volunteering at a local charity
- Increasing my GPA
- Participating in a sport
- Saving money for college
- Taking on a leadership position
- Becoming more physically fit
- Increasing my communication skills
- Making an effort to stay in contact with friends
- Practicing healthier eating habits
- Treating others fairly
- Having a more positive attitude
- Giving more of my time to others

Making Personal Actions Sustainable

1. Values Based

Why is this important to me? How does this relate to my values or life philosophy?

2. Create an Action Plan

What specific things do I need to do to get there?

How will I get there? List short-, intermediate- and long-term goals to get there.

3. Time Management

How much time am I willing to commit each day, week, month or year to get there? Plan with my time commitment in mind (use a planner!).

4. Accountability

Who can help hold me accountable to working on the action plan? Who will make sure it is sustainable? Is this something I can do over a long period of time? Is it realistic for me?

5. Adapt and Revise

Periodically, I need to take stock in where I am in the process. What have I learned? Do I need to adjust? Am I getting the help I need?

My Plan for Sustainable Action

Name _____

My Personal Action I will focus on here is: _____

1. How is this related to my values? Why do I care? How am I motivated to do this? Will I still be motivated over time?

2. What do I need to do to get there? What specific short- and long-term goals will get me there? What specific actions will I take? What will it look like?

3. How will I manage my time? How much time will I commit each day, week, month or year to accomplish this action over time? How can I use my planner/calendar to make sure I prioritize enough time in the short and long term?

4. Who will hold me accountable? Who can I go to for help? Who can serve as my coach or mentor (specific names)?

5. When (set a specific date) will I check in to see the progress I have made and where I am in the process?

Accountability Partner: _____

My Plan for Sustainable Action

Name Jeff Smith

My Personal Action I will focus on here is: Increasing my GPA

1. How is this related to my values? Why do I care? How am I motivated to do this? Will I still be motivated over time?

I believe that I should always do my best, and I know I can do better in school. I care because this affects my future, and I want to take pride in all that I do. I will stay motivated over time, because I will reward myself after every grade report (a night with friends, take a night off homework, dinner out or favorite dinner from my parents).

2. What do I need to go to get there? What specific short- and long-term goals will get me there? What specific actions will I take? What will it look like?

I will set aside time for schoolwork and GPA improvement each school night. I will turn in all homework on time and study at least one hour extra for each test in any class that I have C or lower in. I will attend study sessions for every class I have a grade lower than a B in. My short-term goal is to raise my GPA by at least half a grade level by this time next quarter and one grade-point level by this time next year.

3. How will I manage my time? How much time will I commit each day, week, month or year to accomplish this action over time? How can I use my planner/calendar to make sure I prioritize enough time in the short and long term?

I will commit two hours per school night for getting work done and for studying. On weekends, I will spend two hours additional time on schoolwork, for a total of seven hours per week. I will schedule these times in my planner and set my alarm in my phone to remind me. I will update these times and plans after each grade report, adding additional time if necessary.

4. Who will hold me accountable? Who can I go to for help? Who can serve as my coach or mentor (specific names)?

I will share this plan with my ag teacher, Ms. Miller, and my dad. I can go to either of my teachers for help as well as my older brother. My uncle will serve as my mentor, and he will check in on me to hold me accountable.

5. When (set a specific date) will I check in to see the progress I have made and where I am in the process?

I will re-evaluate this plan every grading period (October 10, December 10, March 10, and June 5) or as grades are posted. I will share these grades as well as any plan changes with my uncle, teacher and dad.