



Middle School

National FFA Organization

Lesson MS.11

BEING A SELF-STARTER

Unit.

Stage One of Development—ME

Problem Area.

What Foundational Skills Do I Need for Leadership?

Precepts.

A1 Work independently and in groups to get things done.

National Standards.

NL-ENG.K12.7 - Evaluating Data - Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 Define the qualities of a self-starter.
- 2 Identify qualities of an independent worker.
- 3 Assess his or her qualities and shortcomings when working independently.



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Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.



Resources

Connellan, T.K. *How To Grow People into Self Starters*. Ann Arbor, MI: The Achievement Institute, Inc., 1988.

National FFA Organization's Essential Learnings, 2003.



Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ Battery-powered drill with screwdriver attachment
- ✓ Phillips head screwdriver
- ✓ Overhead projector
- ✓ Paper slips with roles for *Party Host Moment*
- ✓ MS.11.TM.A
- ✓ MS.11.TM.B
- ✓ MS.11.TM.C
- ✓ MS.11.Assess—one per student



Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

- ▶ Independent worker
- ▶ Self-starter



Interest Approach

Walk around the room, holding up a rechargeable drill with a Phillips head bit. Simultaneously, pass around a conventional Phillips head screwdriver.



Pay careful attention to the object being passed around the room. Examine carefully the object I am holding, as well. Be prepared to answer some questions.

What is the object you are passing around the room? What is the object in my hand? Have you used either of these tools before? Great!

Most all of you have had some experience with one of these tools or have at least seen them used before. Today, you are going to use your knowledge of these simple tools to examine your own work habits and patterns. First, think back to your own experiences with the two tools we have in our classroom. How have you used them? Take a few moments to think of when, where, and how you used these tools. Be ready to share your experience with the class.

Call on willing volunteers to share their experiences in using the tools. Ask questions to compare the ease of using the hand tool versus the power tool.



Which tool sounds like it was easier to use to put screws in place: the power drill with the screwdriver bit or the hand driver? Why was the power tool easier to use?

Take student answers.





Right, it did require less effort to use! You simply pushed a button, held it in place, and it went to work, whereas the hand driver required you to twist and turn your hand as you put the screw in place.

Relate this to the students' independent work.



Think for a second about your own work habits. Which tool best represents you? Are you the power tool or the hand tool? Take the next few minutes to answer these questions in your notebooks. Do you work easily on your own, or does it take someone else's hard efforts to get you working? Are you a self-starter, or does it take you some major encouragement to begin a new task?

Call on volunteers for personal answers to the questions.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. Define the qualities of a self-starter.



Good! All of you were able to identify with one of the tools. Some of you described yourself as easy to start, while others realized that many times, it takes others to get you started. Today we are going to look at what it takes to be a self-starter. You will also evaluate your own work habits and determine what you can do to become a self-starter. Let us now take our notebooks and capture the definition and some key points of a self-starter.

Show the overhead MS.11.TM.A containing the definition and qualities of a self-starter, or transfer the information to a clean writing surface.

I. Self-starter

A. Definition: A ***self-starter***: is a person who is independently motivated to begin a task

B. Qualities of a self-starter. A self-starter:

1. Holds a sense of ownership and responsibility
2. Has a sense of self-worth
3. Is self-motivated
4. Is success-oriented
5. Is committed to completing a task
6. Works independently



Activity: Use a Bob the Weather Guy Moment to explain the components of a self-starter.



Quietly think of a time when you exhibited the qualities of a self-starter. What motivated you to begin and to successfully complete a task? What was the outcome of your task? How were you and others involved in the project affected?

Pause and take student responses.



Now, look ahead. In what situation would it be useful to be a self-starter? Just as the local meteorologist produces a weather prediction, forecast a situation in which you would want to be a self-starter. What steps will you take? How will your actions affect others and your task? What will the result be? Record your answers to these questions in your notebooks. Be ready to share your forecast with your neighbor.

Possible student responses: new job; high school; college; parenting.

Objective 2. Identify qualities of an independent worker.



We identified one of the major qualities of being a self-starter as the ability to work independently. Now, let us point out the qualities that distinguish an independent worker from someone dependent solely on others.

Use the Party Host Moment to identify the qualities of an independent worker. Pass out papers to the students that list qualities of an independent worker, and give each student a number from one to four, depending upon the number of groups you will have. Several students will receive a paper entitled Party Host and a number from one to four. Break the students into groups of five or six, matching up with the party hosts.



As you receive your slip of paper, read the quality listed on the paper and show it to no one. Think of a way to act out your quality. If your paper reads "Party Host," it will be your mission to guess what qualities the guests at your party possess. You also have a number at the bottom of your paper. As I call out your number, come to the location where I am standing to meet your group. When I say "Party on!" your party may begin. Remember guests, you may talk and act out your quality, but you may not say any words appearing on paper while at your party. Are there any questions? It sounds like you are ready. Party on!

Good job, everyone! Please record in your notebooks all of the qualities that I have placed on the board, along with the definition of an independent worker.

Supply the qualities of an independent worker on a clean writing surface, or use the overhead MS.11.TM.B provided.

II. Independent worker

A. Definition: An ***independent worker***: is someone who possesses the following qualities:

1. Self-motivated
2. Begins tasks without assistance from others
3. Follows through with tasks until completion



4. Solves problems on his or her own
5. Seeks advice and assistance only when needed

Objective 3. Assess his or her qualities and shortcomings when working independently.



Now that you know what qualities an independent worker possesses, assess your own qualities of working independently. Write down the following questions on a blank sheet of paper, but do not answer them. Be sure to leave ample space between each question to record your answer later.

Provide the following questions on a handout or on a clean writing surface, or use the transparency MS.11.TM.C to display the information.

III. How well do you work independently.

- A. Do you complete any chores at home on a daily basis? Why or why not?
- B. Do you complete homework assignments and turn them in on time? Why or why not?
- C. Do you begin new tasks on your own? Why or why not?
- D. Do you complete every task you begin? Why or why not?
- E. When you encounter a problem with a homework question, do you seek help? Why or why not?
- F. When you begin a task, do you become easily sidetracked with events going on around you? Why or why not?
- G. Do you feel a sense of accomplishment when you complete a task you chose to begin? Why or why not?
- H. Do you feel a sense of accomplishment when you complete a homework assignment? Why or why not?
- I. Do you feel a sense of accomplishment when you complete your daily chores? Why or why not?
- J. Are you responsible for the success and completion of a task you begin? Why or why not?

Use the Eyewitness News Moment to retrieve student answers to the ten previous questions.



Using the questions you have in front of you, rely on your investigative skills to determine what kind of independent worker your partner is. In groups of three, take turns playing the reporter and the witness so all three of you have a chance to interview and to be interviewed. When you are the reporter, write down your witness's responses to the questions on your page. Then give your question and answer page to the person you interviewed.





Review/Summary

Students should write a one-page assessment of their independent worker skills. Looking at their answers to the questions from their interview, they should formulate solutions that may improve their ability to work independently.



Now based on your answers to the survey given by your partner write a short, 1-page assessment on how you stack up as an independent worker. Be very specific based on the answers to the questions. Great class today. You may now begin writing.



Application

►Extended Classroom Activity:

Using tasks they will complete within the next 24 hours, students should record in one to two paragraphs an event in which they worked independently to complete a task in their home, church, or community. Students should tell what the task was and what steps they took to complete it successfully.

►FFA Activity:

Students should become committee members for a standing or special committee in which they help to plan, implement, and evaluate a chapter activity.

Or

Help to plan and implement a community service or chapter recreational activity.

Or

Serve as an active member in planning your chapter's Program of Activities.

►SAE Activity:

Students should create a detailed plan of practice, explaining each step they will use to carry out their SAE program.

Or

Identify one specific task they completed without receiving outside assistance in their SAE program. Record a narrative of the task and the time and experience involved in completing it. Include drawings and pictures.



Evaluation

A written test, MS.11.Assess, is provided to measure the material presented in this lesson.

Answers to Assessment:

1. d



2. b
3. Self-motivated; success-oriented; committed until completion of tasks; works independently; sense of self-worth; holds a sense of ownership and responsibility
4. Is self-motivated; begins tasks without assistance from others; follows through with tasks until completion; solves problems on own; seeks advice and assistance only when needed
5. Both are easy to begin work and complete a task quickly without much assistance and outside effort.



BEING A SELF-STARTER

Instructions: Circle the most appropriate answer.

1. Qualities of a self-starter include all of the following except:
 - a. Self-motivated
 - b. Success-oriented
 - c. Commitment until completion
 - d. Dependent upon others to finish task
2. An independent worker can best be described as:
 - a. An unmotivated person who relies on others to complete tasks
 - b. A self-motivated person who follows through with tasks until their completion
 - c. An unmotivated person who follows through with tasks until their completion
 - d. A self-motivated person who relies on others to complete tasks

Instructions: Answer the following.

3. List four qualities of a self-starter.
4. List three qualities of an independent worker.
5. Compare and contrast a rechargeable drill/screwdriver to a person who is a self-starter.



WHAT IS A SELF-STARTER.

◆ **A person who is independently motivated to begin a task**

WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES OF A SELF-STARTER.

◆ **Holds a sense of ownership and responsibility**

◆ **Sense of self-worth**

◆ **Is self-motivated**

◆ **Is success-oriented**

◆ **Is committed until the task is completed**

◆ **Works independently**



QUALITIES OF AN INDEPENDENT WORKER:

- ◆ **Is self-motivated**
- ◆ **Begins tasks without assistance from others**
- ◆ **Follows through with tasks until completion**
- ◆ **Solves problems on his or her own**
- ◆ **Seeks advice and assistance only when needed**



HOW WELL DO YOU WORK INDEPENDENTLY.

- ◆ Do you complete any chores at home on a daily basis. Why or why not.
- ◆ Do you complete homework assignments and turn them in on time. Why or why not.
- ◆ Do you begin new tasks on your own. Why or why not.
- ◆ Do you complete every task you begin. Why or why not.
- ◆ When you encounter a problem with a homework question, do you seek help. Why or why not.
- ◆ When you begin a task, do you become easily side-tracked with events going on around you. Why or why not.
- ◆ Do you feel a sense of accomplishment when you complete a task you chose to begin. Why or why not.
- ◆ Do you feel a sense of accomplishment when you complete a homework assignment. Why or why not.
- ◆ Do you feel a sense of accomplishment when you complete your daily chores. Why or why not.
- ◆ Are you responsible for the success and completion of a task you begin. Why or why not.

