

## MANAGING YOUR TIME

**A G E N D A**

- Starter
- Work It Out
- Priorities
- Time's on Your Side
- Conclusion
- Questions for Assessment

**Objectives**

Students will recognize the ability to manage time by creating to-do lists.

Students will recognize the importance of prioritizing activities in order to manage their time.

Students will apply time-management skills to their own lives.

**Materials Needed**

- One copy of the “Sam’s Schedule” activity sheet (#2) for each student (Part I)
- One copy of the “Your Schedule” activity sheet (#3) for each student (Part III)

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**Starter** (5 minutes)

Prompt students to begin thinking about the concept of time by commenting on how many minutes have passed since class began. Say, “One minute doesn’t sound like much time, does it? But a lot can happen in a minute. Do you know that light can travel 11,160,000 miles in a minute?” (The speed of light is 186,000 miles/second.)

Ask students to imagine that they will be paid one dime for every minute they are in your class. Ask how much each student would have at the end of the day. (*Students should say \$5.00 if your class is 50 minutes long*). Then, ask how much each student would have at the end of the school year. (*Students should say \$900 if your school calendar covers 180 days*.)

Lead students to the realization that minutes can really add up. Tell students that they’ll learn how to manage their time so that those minutes add up in their favor.

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**Part I Work It Out** (20 minutes)

*Purpose:* Students recognize the ability to manage time by creating to-do lists.

**1. STUDENTS READ A STORY.**

Distribute copies of the “Sam’s Schedule” activity sheet (#2). Ask one or two students to read aloud the paragraphs about Sam at the top of the page.

Point out that Sam has a lot to do this weekend and that he values his promises. Tell students that they’re going to help Sam manage his time, and they are going to find out if he can get everything done.

**2. STUDENTS ORGANIZE A TO-DO LIST.**

Direct attention to the list of directions at the side of Sam’s list. Read them aloud, giving additional information about each one:

- Under “Things to Do” on Sam’s list, write down all the tasks Sam wants to complete this weekend.
- Under “Priority,” assign the task a rating of one if it absolutely must be done this weekend. Assign the task a rating of two if it’s important, but could be done at another time, if necessary. Assign the task a rating of three if it really does not need to be done this weekend.
- List the tasks that Sam could do each day that would allow him to keep his promises and get things done.
- Be sure to put a star by the tasks that have been assigned a number one for most important.

Give students time to complete the activity sheet. If students are having difficulty setting priorities, remind them that Sam values his promises.

### 3. STUDENTS SHARE THEIR LISTS.

Ask students to name the tasks that they listed in Sam's "Things to Do" column. Write their responses on the board. There should be eight tasks listed on the board: cut three lawns, go to the movies, clean his room, clean the bathroom, wash his father's car, babysit, shop for a present, and make changes on his paper for school.

Invite students to share their ratings for each task. Encourage students to explain the reasoning behind each rating. Try to reach a general consensus on the ratings. They should recognize, however, that cutting the lawns and completing the schoolwork are most important, followed by helping his father. They should also identify the shopping task as one that could be done some other time.

Ask students to share the schedules they worked out for Sam, identifying the priority-one tasks that they marked with a star. Ask students if they think that it is possible for Sam to do everything he wants to do this weekend.

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## Part II Priorities (10 minutes)

*Purpose:* Students recognize the importance of prioritizing activities in order to manage their time effectively.

### 1. STUDENTS DEFINE "TIME MANAGEMENT."

Tell students that they should now have a good idea of what time management is. Ask students to define "time management." (*Students might respond: identifying tasks that need to be done, identifying the most important tasks, arranging tasks in a manner that allows them to be completed by a certain time.*)

Explain that in Sam's case, students reduced Sam's level of stress. By making a to-do list, they helped him manage his time and accomplish everything he wanted to get done.

### 2. STUDENTS DEFINE "PRIORITIES."

Point out to students that when they identified the most important things that Sam had to do, they were identifying his priorities. On the board, write, "A priority is something that is more important to you than something else."

Ask students to decide, from among the following pairs of tasks, which they would do first and why:

- Work on a project that's due next week, or work on an assignment that's due tomorrow
- Invite a friend to spend the night, or talk to a parent about inviting the friend to spend the night

- Keep a promise to take a younger brother or sister to the park, or talk to a friend on the phone

Tell students that identifying priorities may seem like a difficult thing to do, but will be easier if they take the time to think about their values and tasks.

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### Part III Time's on Your Side (15 minutes)

*Purpose:* Students apply time-management skills to their own lives.

#### 1. STUDENTS WORK IN PAIRS TO IDENTIFY THEIR TASKS.

Hand out copies of the “Your Schedule” activity sheet (#3). Explain that students are going to do for themselves what they did for Sam.

Ask students to work with partners to tell each other what they need to do tomorrow. Tell them to think about everything, including such things as eating breakfast, going to school, doing chores, spending time with family or friends, going to practices, watching a favorite TV show, or studying for a test.

Explain that as students tell about their day, their partners will write their answers on the activity sheet. Give students about five minutes to complete this step. Alert them when it's time for them to change roles.

#### 2. STUDENTS PRIORITIZE THEIR TASKS.

Ask students to work independently to prioritize their tasks and make their own to-do lists, using what their partners wrote on the “Your Schedule” activity sheet. Before they begin, ask students to recall the rating system that they used for Sam. If necessary, write brief summaries of the ratings on the board.

#### 3. STUDENTS SCHEDULE THEIR TIME.

As students complete their prioritizing, tell them to fill out a schedule of events for the next day. Remind them to star the number-one priority tasks on their schedules.

When they have finished, ask students if they think that they can accomplish everything they want to do. Point out that if they cannot, they should be able to identify those tasks that can be done another day. (These are the number-three priorities.) Suggest that students place a question mark after these tasks on their schedules as reminders that they are the least important.

Emphasize that it's not important how many tasks students have to do, or how quickly they do them, but rather that they complete them in a way that makes them feel proud.

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**Conclusion** *(2 minutes)*

Ask students to explain the benefits of effectively managing their time. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- In order to manage your time well, think about and identify the tasks that you want to complete.
- When you have a lot of things to do, make a to-do list and identify your priorities.

**Questions for Assessment** 

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1. List three of the steps to good time management.
2. Make and prioritize your to-do list for the upcoming weekend.

## LESSON EXTENSIONS

**Extension:** Using Quotations

**Quote:** “Time is the scarcest resource and unless it is managed, nothing else can be managed.”—Peter Drucker

**Activity:** Have students discuss why Drucker calls time a “resource.” Have them brainstorm other things they might be able to manage once they have a handle on their use of time.

**Extension:** Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

**Activity:** Distribute paper, markers/crayons, and other art supplies to students. Have students draw their ideas of a perfect cell phone. They should include functions that will help them manage their time and organize their days.

Have students share their drawings in small groups.

**Extension:** Writing in Your Journal

**Activity:** Have students read the “Ivy League Girl” activity sheet (#4).

Have students write about how Tatyana Ali is able to manage her time as a touring singer and a student at Harvard. Have students discuss how this information puts their days in perspective.

**Extension:** Using Technology

**Activity:** Have students bring in songs with time as a theme. You might play “Turn! Turn! Turn!” by the Byrds or “Time Is on My Side” by the Rolling Stones.

Have students compare the lyrics to these songs. Have them consider why time was important to the writer of each song. Create a playlist of the class’s favorites or have students make up lyrics of their own.

**Extension:** Homework

**Activity:** For one week, have students estimate the amount of time they need to complete their homework, and then record how long it actually took them to complete each assignment.

Have students report the accuracy of their estimates. Discuss their work styles (e.g., working while watching TV) and remind the class that people work at different paces. Explain the importance of these estimates in budgeting time.

**Extension:** Additional Resources

**Activity:** Have students read *See You Later, Procrastinator! (Get It Done)* by Pamela Espeland. Discuss how procrastination can affect time management.

Have students create weekly calendars on construction paper. Have them write their schedules on the calendars, and then block off time for studying.







# IVY LEAGUE GIRL

**From Fresh Prince to freshman at Harvard,  
R&B smash Tatyana Ali keeps her stardom in perspective.**

Tatyana Ali definitely doesn't live the life of an ordinary Harvard University freshman. Sure, the R&B star who became famous playing Will Smith's cousin on *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* lives in a dorm, takes a full course load and hangs out with friends around Harvard Yard. But on most weekends, you won't find Tatyana, 19, hanging around Boston; she's usually traveling to promote her debut album, *Kiss the Sky* (Epic). "It's crazy," she says. "Every two weeks I'll have a little breakdown, and I'll be like, 'This is insane.'"

Don't believe her? Consider this typical week: She attends class twice a day on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. On Thursday afternoon, she flies to Chicago to perform, then flies back that night to make a class on Friday. Then, she's back on a plane to San Francisco and Portland for more gigs, and finally returns to Harvard on Sunday night.

But even with her crazy schedule, Tatyana remains firmly grounded. Like most new students, she says she was a bit nervous about meeting her five roommates. She moved in days later than the rest because she was on tour, and she worried that they'd think she was a diva. But as soon as Tatyana showed up—carrying her own bags, with her mom at her side—her roomies knew she didn't want special treatment.

During her first semester at Harvard, Tatyana took Spanish, genetics, African-American studies and an expository writing class. She also joined a campus choir and

theater group and became a coxswain for the men's crew team. Like many college students, she stays up late listening to loud music. ("We have loud parties all the time," she admits.) And not surprisingly, she has trouble getting up for 9 a.m. classes. "I basically roll out of bed in my sleep sweats, brush my teeth, wash my face, pick up my bag, go to class and then come back to my room and shower," she says with a laugh.

Tatyana credits her parents for her ability to balance college and a career. "In my family, college is what you do," she says. "My parents were very supportive of what I did in the past, but if something had to go, it certainly wasn't going to be school."

Even though she's fully involved in campus life, Tatyana's roommates can't forget their friend is a celebrity. They all crowded around a TV to watch her and Will Smith present an award to Madonna at the MTV Video Music Awards last fall. "Madonna came up, and she kissed me on my cheek," Tatyana recalls. "I was, like, so excited. And my friends were too. We really did share it."

But will the Fresh Prince himself—who produced her debut album and lent vocals to the second single, "Boy You Knock Me Out"—ever pop by her dorm for a little hello? Tatyana shakes her head. "That would be insane," she says. "People would freak out. It would be a horrible scene."

Then she smiles. "Well, maybe he can come in for my graduation."

**—Marc S. Malkin**

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Module Four: Managing Personal Resources Middle School

