Arresting Time Bandits
Managing Large Tasks

Critical Learning

☑ Understand how time management differs in high school and college
☑ Recognize your unique ways of procrastinating
☑ Understand how to self-motivate
☑ Understand how to manage a large task by breaking it into a series of small tasks

Materials & Interactions

- Student Response Page: Arresting Time Bandits
- Access to the Internet
- Power Learning
- Online videos. Centre for Student Development, McMaster. Available at http://maclife.mcmaster.ca/academicskills/online_resources.cfm

Minds On

１ You can locate a series of online videos at the Centre for Student Development (see internet address, above). Each video is short (3-5 minutes) but informative. Although designed for university students, the content applies equally to college students. Bookmark this site for future reference.

２ A schedule of classes at a college differs greatly from a high school schedule. College students tell us that because time isn’t tightly scheduled, it’s easy to waste it. It is essential to identify and use time-management strategies.

Locate the Centre for Student Development page at the internet address, above.

Locate the video “Under Time Pressure” (2:57 minutes long). As you watch, respond to the following

| Typical number of hours in a classroom per week |
| Time-consuming items |

Locate the video, “Procrastination Avoidance Made Practical” (3:57 minutes long). List the following.

| Personal distraction habits |
To procrastinate is to postpone or delay needlessly. The word derives from a Latin word for “tomorrow”.

Locate the video, “Winning Through Wedging” (4 minutes long). Either explain the following to your teacher or explain the following in writing, as if you were speaking to a fellow student:

- “the five-minute technique”
- “wedging”
- zones of “initiation”
- “inertia”
- “willpower”.

Explain, either in conversation with your teacher, or in writing in your notebook how these techniques combat procrastination.

College students are sometimes faced with tasks that seem overwhelming. The techniques above can help. Assume that Brian Martin’s essay “Technological Vulnerability” is the focus of a writing assignment. (We know a college student who was assigned this essay as part of an assignment!) To do the assignment, you have first to read and understand the essay.

Locate the essay “Technological Vulnerability” at the internet address above. Do the following on your Student Response page or in your notebook, or in a think-aloud with your teacher.

**Step 1:** Preview the essay, for example by reading the title, headings, and abstract. Make a prediction about what the essay is about.

**Step 2:** Listen to your inner voice. For example, are you saying: “I don’t get it. This essay is too hard for me”? If so, take steps to manage this negative response.

**Step 3:** The essay is divided into 5 parts, so this means you have 5 small tasks instead of 1 large task. Use the five-minute technique. Set the timer. Read the introduction, highlighting parts that support your predictions. Adjust your predictions as necessary.

**Step 4:** After 5 minutes, make your
decision to take a break or continue.

**Step 5**: Continue, as suggested by the video, using your willpower for each five minutes, highlighting and adjusting predictions.

### Connections and Next Steps

→ You’re now prepared to complete the instructor’s writing assignment based on this essay. That lesson is “Set your Cites” (Lesson 5.6).

→ Apply what you’ve learned! Use the “wedging” technique on any learning task that seems overwhelming, including readings and studying for tests and exams. Chunking your assignment into smaller manageable parts can give you the sense of accomplishment you need to complete your work.

→ Complete activities in “Making the Most of Your Time”. This chapter begins on page 57, *Power Learning, 3rd Edition*.
  - **Try It! 2**: Identify the Black Holes of Time Management, page 63 of *Power Learning, 3rd Edition*.
  - **Try It! 5**: Find Your Procrastination Quotient, page 75 of *Power Learning, 3rd Edition*.
  - Read “Time for success”, pages 59-79 of *Power Learning, 3rd Edition*, and complete “The Case of…Where does the Time Go?” on page 83. This is a lot of reading. Remember to chunk into sections, use strategies such creating a concept map to hold your thinking. You may wish to ignore the inserts (the coloured blocks with related activities).
Arresting Time Bandits – Student Response
Managing Large Tasks

🔍 You can: (1) Work on this template online and print a completed copy. It will expand as you work or (2) print a blank copy after adjusting the spacing to leave room to write or (3) use this as a guide to structure responding in a notebook.

Minds On...

🔍 “Under Time Pressure”

| Typical number of hours in a classroom per week |
| Time-consuming items (add your own ideas) |

🔍 “Procrastination Avoidance Made Practical”

| Person distraction habits |
| Examples of your internal dialogue |

Action!

🔍 Explain

- “the five-minute technique”
- “wedging”
- zones of “initiation”
- “inertia”
- “willpower”.

🔍 How these techniques combat procrastination

Consolidation

🔍 In writing or in conversation, do the following for the essay:

Step 1: Preview, e.g., by reading the title, headings, and abstract. Make a prediction
about what the essay is about.

**Step 2:** Listen to your inner voice. What is it saying? What steps will you take to manage if it is a negative response?

**Steps 3, 4, 5:** What are your predictions for each part? How do you adjust your predictions after reading each part?

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**Connections and Next Steps**

- Identify another assignment you have had or do have to which you could apply these steps.

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**Teacher’s Feedback:**

- Successful

- Still to do: ________________________________

Comments:
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Literacy Learning Self-Assessment Checklist

orna Check items you have completed confidently in this lesson. Highlight items about which you have questions or need to consolidate further.

Critical Learning

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Minds On

☐ I can locate specific resources online using an internet address.
☐ I can identify items that ‘eat up’ unscheduled time.
☐ I can recognize my own habits of procrastination and decide to overcome them.
☐ I am aware of my internal dialogue and can decide to change the dialogue.

Action!

☐ I can name and explain key concepts from the video “Winning through Wedging”.
☐ I have strategies I am prepared to use to combat procrastination.

Consolidation

☐ I know how to preview a long reading.
☐ I know how to chunk a long reading into shorter sections.
☐ I know how to listen to and manage my inner voice.
☐ I know how to make and adjust predictions.
☐ I know how to use the 5-minute technique.

Connections and Next Steps

☐ I have applied these techniques to an assignment in my high school classes.
☐ I have applied these techniques to an assignment in my college class.