

Short-Term Planning

The **BIG** Idea

- How can I make time for everything that's important to me?

AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up: Chasing Time (5 minutes)
- II. Roberto's Day (10 minutes)
- III. First Things First (10 minutes)
- IV. The Daily Plan-It (15 minutes)
- V. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

MATERIALS

STUDENT HANDBOOK

- Student Handbook page 35, Roberto's After-School Plans
- Student Handbook page 36, Roberto's Plan
- Student Handbook page 37, The Daily Plan-It Instructions
- Student Handbook page 38, The Daily Plan-It Activity

FACILITATOR RESOURCE

- Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW: Short-Term Planning
- Highlighters (one per student)

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Use a 4-step process to create a daily schedule.
 1. List activities
 2. Prioritize
 3. Estimate how long each task will take
 4. Timed events first

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students schedule a hypothetical student's after-school plans and discuss how they arrived at their conclusions. They review a 4-step process for managing their time (list, prioritize, estimate, timed events first) and create a daily schedule of their own.

PREPARATION

- The following handouts can be made into overhead transparencies or copied onto chart paper:
 - **Student Handbook page 35, Roberto's After-School Plans**
 - **Student Handbook page 36, Roberto's Plan**
 - **Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW: Short-Term Planning**
- Have your own to-do list or calendar filled in for the following day so you can model the "First Things First" activity. You may wish to create a transparency.
- List the **BIG IDEA** and day's activities on the board.
- Check with your school to determine whether assignment books/planners are distributed to students. It's also helpful to know and reinforce individual teacher's requirements for writing down homework.
- You may want to write the questions below on chart paper, to assist in debriefing Roberto's Plan in **Activity II**.
 - How did they decide what to schedule first?
 - What were the benefits of doing certain activities?
 - What were the consequences of not doing a particular activity?
 - Were there any things that could easily be postponed to another day?
 - Did any of his activities have to happen at a particular time?
 - Why were these activities important to schedule first?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Students making the transition to middle school often have difficulty getting organized. Even good students may have difficulty balancing the conflicting demands of various classes, family obligations, and an increasing need to hang out with their friends.

Students may be moving from an elementary-school environment where one teacher helped them keep track of everything and was well aware of individual strengths/ weaknesses in getting organized and following through. If students were in a self-contained classroom, it was relatively easy for the teacher to issue an end-of-the-day reminder about which assignments needed to be finished and which books needed to go home.

This lesson introduces the idea of planning and prioritizing as a process of making conscious choices, including responsibility to oneself as well as others. The National Middle School Association (NMSA) says that “learning to weigh options, recognize consequences, and plan ahead before making choices is what responsibility is all about.”

The NMSA offers the following tips for parents of middle-school students:

- Remind students about appointments and due dates.
- Encourage students to think ahead.
- Help students break big chores into small parts.
- Encourage students to keep a daily list of things to be done each day, crossing off items as they’re completed. (A weekly “to-do” list is too much.)

(For more, see www.nmsa.org, “Publications,” “The Family Connection,” or search for topics discussed in the “Middle School Education News.”)

VOCABULARY

Prioritize: a process of putting tasks in order of their importance.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

DO NOW:

(You may choose to present the Warm Up activity as a written DO NOW. Present the questions on the board or overhead, and have students write only their answers on index cards.)

Questions:

1. Do you agree with the statement below? Why or why not?
“Middle school is more stressful than elementary school because you have to learn to

- manage your own time.”
2. List all the things that you might need to do after school. (This can be homework, sports teams, after-school clubs, family obligations, reading, etc.)

[Give the students 3 minutes to answer these questions. Call on students to volunteer their answers. List the students answers to question #2 on the board, overhead, or chart paper. Then continue the discussion as written in the **Warm Up**.]

With lower-level learners, you may prefer to do Roberto’s Plan on the overhead as a whole-class activity.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. Warm Up: Chasing Time (5 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** How many of you agree with this statement? “Middle school is more stressful than elementary school because you have to learn to manage your own time.”

Take one minute to write down all the demands a middle-school student might have on her time.

[Have students share the items on their lists; write these on the board, overhead, or chart paper.]

Have you ever noticed how some people manage to cram lots into their day and others never seem to quite get it together? Today we’ll talk about the Secrets of the Super-Organized that will help you remember important assignments, meet your family obligations, and survive and thrive in the seventh grade.

II. Roberto’s Day (10 Minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Let’s use this teen Roberto as a typical example. He’s stressed. Everybody in his family wants something from him, plus he’s got math homework, a science test tomorrow, and a few things he wants to do for fun. Your mission is to have a look at one day in his life and see if you can come up with a way for him to fit in everything he *has* to do and still have time left over for the things he’d *like* to do.

[Refer students to **Student Handbook page 35, Roberto’s After-School Plans.**]

Let’s try one part together. What time does Roberto get home from his basketball game? [Give students a minute to skim **Student Handbook page 35, Roberto’s After-School Plans.** Then allow students to respond.]

If Roberto doesn’t get home until 5:30, what’s the first slot of time on the sheet he can do something else?

[Allow students to respond and ask them to explain their answers. Then direct the students’ attention to **Student Handbook page 36, Roberto’s Plan.** Using the board, an overhead, or chart paper model for the student what activity should be filled in from 3:00pm to 5:30pm. Then assign students to pairs.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: You are going to be collaborating with your partner to make a schedule that works for Roberto. You will have 5 minutes to create his plan. Remember there is no *right* answer: you just have to figure out how he can fit everything in. [If students are still having difficulty beginning, prompt them with this question:

- “If Roberto’s sister needs to go to bed at 9:00, what’s the latest he can start playing computer games with her?”]
2. [When students are done, have them share their results and talk about the process:
- How did they decide what to schedule first?
 - What were the benefits of doing certain activities?
 - What were the consequences of not doing a particular activity?
 - Were there any things that could easily be postponed to another day?
 - Did any of his activities have to happen at a particular time?
 - Why were these activities important to schedule first?]

Write the questions above on chart paper, before class, to assist in debriefing this activity.]

III. First Things First (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now let’s talk about what Roberto’s Plan has to do with organizing your own life. I am going to give you a 4-step, can’t-miss process for managing your own time. It’s an easy way to remember all the things we just talked about. Let’s call this the L-P-E-T plan. I use the acronymic sentence “Let’s pile everything together” to help me remember the order of the steps. (You may want to reference back to Lesson 3 when students learned acronyms and acronymic sentences.)

[Write the following acronym on the board, chart paper or overhead projector:

List
Prioritize
Estimate
Timed events go first

If time permits, give students a few minutes to create their own acronymic sentence for LPET. Have two volunteers share their sentences with the class.]

Step 1. List

In Roberto’s plan, there was a written list of all the things he had to do. This is the most important step, and will help you get organized even if you don’t do anything else. In

this step, it doesn't matter what thing needs to be done first or how long it will take. Just write everything down. Writing things down frees your brain to think about other things.

Step 2. Prioritize.

Figure out which things you must do first. How will you decide? Sometimes the answer will be obvious, like you have to know what the homework assignment is before you can begin to study. Sometimes what you do first will be more of a personal choice. Take a look at these four things and decide which one you'd do first.

2. [Write the following on the board, and allow pairs a minute or two to discuss, and share results.]
Study for a test.
Clean my room.
Talk on the phone.
Take a nap.
3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** You can get away without prioritizing if you don't have a lot to do. But if there's a chance that you'll reach the end of the day without finishing everything, you want to make sure you've done the most important stuff first.

Step 3. Estimate.

Try to figure out how long you'll need for the most important items on your list. This helps you stay realistic about what you'll get done.

Step 4. Timed events go first.

If you have a basketball game at 6, you know everything else will need to be done before you leave for the game or after you get home.

4. [Give students the opportunity to review the four steps, using the LPET acronym.]

Now, let's use the LPET steps to create your own after-school schedule for today.

IV. The Daily Plan-It (15 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now turn to **Student Handbook page 37, The Daily Plan-it Instructions**, and follow the directions for planning how you'll use your time after school tonight.

[Give each student a highlighter. Instruct students to use this highlighter to identify the activities in **Roberto's After-School Plans** that had to happen at a particular time of day (e.g. dinner, ball game, bedtime).

Have students read directions aloud and answer any questions they have about the assignment. Next, have students turn to **Student Handbook page 38, The Daily Plan-It Activity** and complete the page. Note the alternate activity at the bottom of the page for students who don't have much to do after school.]

V. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

1. [Bring the class back together as a whole group and have a student pass out one index card to each student. Direct students' attention to the board and have a volunteer read the big idea aloud.]
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** On the index card you just received I want each of you to write a short response to today's Big Idea. Think about what you had to do in order to fit everything you wanted and needed to do into your Daily Plan. Feel free to include any difficulty you had in completing this activity. I am going to give you three minutes to work on this. After that time I will ask for two volunteers to share their responses with the class.
3. [After three minutes, ask all students to put their pens and pencils down. Then ask for two volunteers to read their responses. Collect each student's index card before they leave class.]

DO NOW: Short-Term Planning

Directions: You will have three minutes to read the questions below and write your responses. (You do not need to write the questions down.)

Questions:

1. Do you agree with the statement below? Why or why not?
“Middle school is more stressful than elementary school because you have to learn to manage your own time.”

2. List all the things that you might need to do after school. (This can be homework, sports teams, after-school clubs, family obligations, reading, etc.)

Roberto's After-School Plans

Use the chart on the next page to help Roberto plan his day. Write each thing next to the time when he will do it.

- Roberto has a basketball game right after school today. He will probably be home by 5:30.
- Roberto's dad is working out of town this week and his mom will be picking up his sister from ballet, so Roberto needs to start dinner and set the table. They will all eat together at 6:30.
- Roberto promised his younger sister he would play a computer game with her. This will probably take an hour. His sister's bedtime is 9:00 p.m.
- Roberto has about 1 hour of math homework.
- Roberto would like to relax and have time to read the latest Sports Illustrated.
- Roberto needs to study about $1/2$ hour for his science test tomorrow.
- Roberto would like to get on the Internet to check his email and to send a message to a friend who lives across the country.
- Roberto goes to bed at 10:30 p.m.

Roberto's After-School Plans adapted from www.dayrunner.com

Roberto's Plan

Time	Activity
3:00–3:30 p.m.	
3:30–4:00 p.m.	
4:00–4:30 p.m.	
4:30–5:00 p.m.	
5:00–5:30 p.m.	
5:30–6:00 p.m.	
6:00–6:30 p.m.	
6:30–7:00 p.m.	
7:00–7:30 p.m.	
7:30–8:00 p.m.	
8:00–8:30 p.m.	
8:30–9:00p.m.	
9:00–9:30 p.m.	
9:30–10:00 p.m.	
10:00–10:30 p.m.	

Roberto's After-School Plan adapted from www.dayrunner.com

Daily Plan-It Instructions

Use this schedule to create your own plan for the day. Use the four steps below.

STEP 1: LIST

In the “Things to Do” column, write down all the things you have to do after school. Include homework assignments, sports, chores, and things you want to do to relax.

Things to Do	How long will it take?

STEP 2: PRIORITIZE

In the first column, put a star next to the things you need to do first.

STEP 3: ESTIMATE

Next to each item with a star, write the amount of time you think it will take.

STEP 4: TIMED EVENTS FIRST

Schedule first things first. Start with things that must happen at a certain time, like a doctor’s appointment or after-school sports. Highlight things that must occur at a particular time.

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If your own list of things to do is short, try making a schedule based on the story below instead.

Radio Reporter

You are a high school student who has a music show on the local radio station. Tomorrow after school you will interview a new artist live on the radio. To prepare, you want to listen to both her CDs and read a 5-page article about her in *People Magazine*. After you’ve researched her life and music, you’ll make a list of questions you want to ask her. You also want to check out a band that you’re going to interview next month. They are playing in a place about 10 minutes from your house from 8:00pm to 10:00pm.

Daily Plan-It Activity: (_____ 's Plan)

Time	Activity
3:00–3:30 p.m.	
3:30–4:00 p.m.	
4:00–4:30 p.m.	
4:30–5:00 p.m.	
5:00–5:30 p.m.	
5:30–6:00 p.m.	
6:00–6:30 p.m.	
6:30–7:00 p.m.	
7:00–7:30 p.m.	
7:30–8:00 p.m.	
8:00–8:30 p.m.	
8:30–9:00p.m.	
9:00–9:30 p.m.	
9:30–10:00 p.m.	
10:00–10:30 p.m.	

Roberto's After-School Plan adapted from www.dayrunner.com