Goals and Objectives of Academic Time

Education and Learning Enrichment

Y.O.U structures after school time activities, both to assist with school work and to move beyond homework completion. We use a myriad of interconnected activities to stimulate interests, encourage creativity, and help youth become more interested and engaged in learning so that youth understand that learning is their most important work and that each individual child feels ownership and pride in that work. And most importantly, we help youth develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed academically and socially and emotionally.

The personalized academic needs of Y.O.U participants will be met through:

- Providing a safe and structured environment to complete homework
- Small group and one-on-one tutoring and homework help
- A low staff-to-youth ratio, allowing student accessibility to knowledgeable tutors
- A student-centered model prioritizing student’s individual learning strengths
- Accessibility to technology such as computers, online curriculum, and textbooks
Structure of Academic Time

Y.O.U programming takes place Monday through Friday at the end of the school day. Students should check into Y.O.U shortly after the school day has ended. The academic portion of programming takes place during the first hour. Students are expected to come to Y.O.U with an academic assignment, whether it is homework, projects, or exam preparation. Staff members should work with youth to make sure that they are engaged in school assignments or have some other academic enrichment activities to occupy them.

Staff and Youth Group Assignments

Staff and youth will be assigned to consistent groups to complete homework, with one additional group for youth without homework who are engaging with academic enrichment activities. Consistency in group assignments allows youth to feel a sense of constancy and build relationships with specific staff members. Each of these groups will meet in a separate space, which will be pre-assigned. These groups will be rotated in regular intervals. Please see Section 1: Program Structure to view the staff and youth group assignment form, which should be filled out for each rotation and posted or distributed to all staff.

If youth have homework:

Youth may choose to work independently or in small groups. In some sites, students have access to text books and lap tops to complete their assignments. Please see Guidelines to Facilitating Academic Time on page 6 of this section.

If youth do not have homework:

Even if youth do not have homework, it is important that students are engaging in academic-related activities during this hour of programming. Staff have a number of options for facilitating academic enrichment:

1. Youth can engage in academic enrichment activities either independently or through staff facilitation. Activities for English/Language Arts can be found in the binders of Social and Emotional Enrichment activities, while other activities for different academic subjects can be found online or in various workbooks at the program site. These activities can be a wide range of structures, from worksheets, to response questions, to discussions and hands-on activities. Youth can also engage in silent reading.

   It is highly recommended that staff make use of these materials and incorporate them daily into academic time. These activities are designed to supplement school material and will help students strengthen academic skills.
2. Youth often have long-term projects, assignments, or tests to study for. If a youth does not have homework, staff can engage youth in working on these long-term assignments and preparing for future tests.

3. Staff can also take the opportunity to help youth get organized and work on executive functioning skills, such as time management or goal setting.

   Staff can help youth empty their book bags, organize papers, make a “homework folder”, or make a calendar to keep track of future assignments (especially for future projects that may be due).

Reinforcing Social and Emotional Learning During Academic Time

Homework and academic enrichment provide many opportunities for reinforcing thinking about the Theme of the Day and the specific aspect that is the day’s focus. For instance, completing assignments is an act of responsible decision-making and independently deciding to go to the book shelf rather than distract other youth is an act of self-management. Furthermore, examples of these core competencies can be found in assignments themselves: often in reading and history assignments, examples of characters or other figures who demonstrate core competencies can be pulled and discussed during the completion of an assignment.

For more information on the Theme of the Day, please refer to Section 1. For more information on the Core Competencies and Social and Emotional Learning, please refer to Section 3.

Guidelines to Facilitating Academic Time

Before starting the homework session:
Check in.
Greet the student by name: Ask the student how they are doing, how was their day?

Set goals for the session.
Take a look at what the homework load is for the day.
Ask to look at their assignment notebook or homework folder.
Talk to the youth. Try to determine which assignments will they need help with and which can they do on their own.

During the homework session:
Try to break down broad concepts into small, more manageable steps.
Study tip: Help students establish goals and timelines that break their assignments and projects down into smaller parts.
Study tip: Have youth write down emphasized words (boldface, italicized, etc.) on a separate sheet of paper/notecards that can serve as a study guide.
Study tip: Help students determine what information they will need to study for quizzes or tests and practice answering anticipated questions with them.

Encourage questions from youth.
If you don’t know the answer, help the youth find resources that will help him or her.
If you don’t understand a concept right away, take a few minutes to try and understand it through the youth’s textbook.
Study tip: Provide resources (for example, books and Web sites) on study skills for students, and review these resources yourself to help identify any additional skills your students may need.

Use positive feedback to increase the student’s confidence.
Make your positive feedback specific. For example, don’t just say “good job;” say, “Good job on using a topic sentence at the beginning of this paragraph. I really like the way that helps make what you are going to talk about much clearer for the reader.”

Some homework facilitators use tools like stickers with a small notebook to keep track of accomplishments.

Use time facilitating homework to help with organizational and study skills.
Encourage youth to use good organizational tools, such as writing down their assignments and due dates every day, taking good notes, keeping track of their papers, and keeping a list of concepts they understand and concepts they need to work on as they go through homework or study.

Keep in contact with your site coordinator. They may have insight into a specific child and are always available to help you finesse your academic facilitation skills.
Y.O.U. Homework Log

A homework log is included on page 15 of this manual for use during academic time. This homework log should be started by each youth at the beginning of each week and completed by the end of the week; each day should be filled out at the beginning of academic time (the assignments that the youth has for that day) and at the end (any notes on homework).

Y.O.U. Academic Time Tracker

The Y.O.U. Academic Time Tracker should be filled out by the academic time facilitator. Each youth in programming should have his/her name on a line of the Academic Time Tracker, and marks can be made for each task that the youth accomplishes (e.g. “Brought Y.O.U. folder and supplies,” “Completed homework,” etc.).

Academic Intake Form Procedure

The Academic Intake Form will play a key role in helping Y.O.U achieve its goal of improving the academic standing of our youth and building important skills for their future both in and out of school by:

Providing Y.O.U staff with a basis of understanding for where academic supports are needed
Creating a dialogue between parents, youth, and Y.O.U regarding short and long-term academic goals
Quantitatively and qualitatively measuring progress and areas for improvement

The importance of the intake forms should be communicated and stressed to parents. Y.O.U Staff should allocate a portion of the first family night or enrollment nights to guide parents and students through the Academic Intake Form, emphasizing the importance of goal-setting and how Y.O.U will be able to support students. These forms should be kept on file or their answers entered into a spreadsheet so that staff can refer to them when working with specific youth.

CONNECT at ETHS

Students entering Y.O.U Connect at ETHS will be expected to complete the Academic Intake Form found at www.surveymonkey.com. (The survey can be accessed at surveymonkey.com. Username/ Password: youeths) This self reflective process will allow students to assess their areas of strength, interests, and personal goals as well as provide a forum to begin taking steps toward improvement.

District 65 Program Sites (Oakton, Washington, Chute, and Nichols)

The Academic Intake Form will be an aspect of the enrollment process. For the elementary and middle school sites, parents will be asked to complete the form using their own observations with significant input from their child. Once completed, they will be expected to submit the form with enrollment forms to the site coordinator.

Y.O.U. Academic Intake Form

This form is designed to be completed by you with input from your child. Please be as specific and honest as possible in your responses, as they will help us to better support your child during Y.O.U Programming.

Name of Y.O.U Participant:___________________________________________________
What areas does your child need the most academic support?

What kinds of grades does your child mostly receive? (Please Circle One)
- Mostly A’s
- Mostly B’s
- Mostly C’s
- Mostly D’s
- Mostly F’s

How often does your child turn in homework assignments? (Please circle one)
- Always
- Most of the time
- Sometimes, but many are late or missing
- Most assignments are not completed or turned in
- Never

Incorporating Outside Academic Resources

Y.O.U. partners with a number of outside agencies and organizations in Evanston and Chicago to bring enrichment activities and projects to Y.O.U. youth. These outside providers come to Y.O.U. programming or Y.O.U. brings youth to the outside provider site. The agencies and organizations with whom we partner specialize in a wide range of enrichment, from athletics and recreation, to arts, to hands-on science and engineering. By working with partner agencies, we are able to bring even more fun and education enrichment opportunities to our youth.
Academic Subject Area Resources: Literacy

Key Elements for Afterschool Literacy Planning
Research indicates that afterschool literacy activities benefit students most when staff:
- target texts and integrate skills;
- identify standards, assess needs, and define goals;
- incorporate real-world activities;
- consider student choice, grade, age, and skills; and
- assess student progress.

Target Texts and Integrate Skills
Read a wide variety of texts: fiction, non-fiction, books, magazine or newspaper articles
Choose texts that speak to student interests
Balance activities among reading, writing, listening, and speaking to help youth develop a wide range of skills

Identify Standards, Assess Needs, Define Goals

Incorporate Real-World Activities
Explore the world beyond the classroom with literacy activities. Engage reluctant readers with directions for cooking, carpentry, or games. Talk and write about their experiences after field trips or during science experiments. Interview community members about themes like work, family traditions, or history, and create books that tell their stories. Afterschool programs can help literacy feel less like a requirement and more connected to ideas and experiences that are useful in real life.

Consider Student Choice, Grade, Age, and Skills
Ask students about their favorite books and topics, and what interests them and why. Consult with classroom teachers and librarians to identify texts that correspond to grade, age, and skill levels appropriately. Use this research to plan fun and engaging activities that will reinforce school-day curriculum and goals.

Assess Student Progress
Frequent informal assessment—when staff and students share feedback about progress—will lead to growth in literacy skills. Establish learning goals that address student needs. Use journals, rubrics, displays, performances, and informal notes to frame positive discussions about how students use different learning strategies; how instructors can encourage positive risk-taking; what skills and strengths students are developing; and in which areas they can improve.

Literacy Activities: Book Groups
Book Discussion Groups use stories to engage students in discussions about what they're reading. Lively discussions give students a chance to ask questions and voice their opinions while building reading and analytical skills.

Choose a book or story that youth are interested in reading.
Ask them for their suggestions or for topics they would like to explore, or talk to their teachers to extend what they're learning in school.
If you have many students with different reading levels, you may want to form small groups.
Develop questions and model a discussion so that students understand how to analyze what they're reading.
Be sure to talk about listening and respecting each other's opinions. After you have modeled a discussion, students can take turns leading and facilitating future discussions. You can
give roles to other members of the group, such as writing a summary, keeping a list of new vocabulary, and recording questions and key points during the discussion. Encourage students to write down their own questions, reflections, or favorite quotes as they read. For students who are less comfortable speaking in a group, writing will help them prepare for discussions and develop their ideas more fully.

Academic Subject Area Resources: Math

Key Ideas for Supporting Mathematics Learning

Encourage Problem Solving

Problem solving involves engaging students and helping them use what they know about math facts, skills, and strategies to figure out the solution to a given problem.

Good problem solving is developed through problems that are interesting to students and that encourage them to ask questions and use their critical thinking skills. Some strategies to encourage problem solving include having groups of students discuss problems together and having the facilitator ask leading questions that help youth make connections.
Try to develop fun, hands-on activities that develop math skills to build enthusiasm and interest

Develop and Support Math Talk

Encourage youth to talk out their thought processes. Math talk helps them to clarify their thinking, construct their own meaning, analyze and interpret mathematical ideas, develop reasoning and reflective skills, make connections to what they already know, become aware of areas in which they need further clarification or explanation, and stimulate interest and curiosity. Students engaged in math talk might put ideas into their own words, explain their reasoning, present methods for finding solutions, or ask questions to clarify meaning.

Emphasize Working Together

Small-group work is a powerful way to support problem solving and math learning. When students are seated in groups of two, three, or four they are encouraged to collaborate; they can face each other when they talk and see each other's work. Having students work together ensures that they all contribute and participate in the small-group tasks. The role of the instructor is to facilitate learning, ask good questions, guide thinking around strategies, and help students understand that there is more than one way to approach a math problem.

Y.O.U. HOMEWORK LOG

Neatly write down your Homework assignment under the right subject.
If you do not have homework write “No Homework”

If you have to study for a quiz or test, write “Studying for Test”

Week of (Monday’s date): __________________                 Student Name: _______________________

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