

In this activity students will brainstorm and discuss strategies for making the most of their high school years.

HIGH SCHOOL: ACTIVITY 1

TAKING CHARGE

Ask students to read and consider the particular circumstances and challenges faced by the four students in the article. Then ask students to consider — and share if they are willing — their own challenges. Are they similar? How are they different?

Discuss different ways students can set themselves up for success and then brainstorm specific action steps for the four principles listed below. Record their responses on the board.

1. *Get (and Stay) Organized*
 Examples may include using a planner or mobile calendar app, setting up a notebook for each class, dedicating a particular space for studying and materials at home.
2. *Develop Good Study Habits and Time Management Skills*
 Examples may include reviewing class notes daily, staying on top of deadlines and not over scheduling, creating a plan to complete long-term assignments in smaller chunks.
3. *Maintain Healthy Habits and Friendships*
 Examples may include making smart choices about diet and exercise and honestly reflecting on whether your friends are positive influences.
4. *Ask for Help When You Need It*
 Examples may include taking advantage of tutoring or learning lab resources, organizing group study sessions, emailing or setting up time to meet with teachers and counselors.

Ask students to choose one or two ideas to implement for themselves. After a couple of weeks, follow up and ask them to reflect on what helped (and what did not).

To follow reading and discussion of *What Does Taking Charge Mean to You?* on page 10.



Florida Standards Assessment

- SP.PK12.US.8.11b
 Apply skills of self-advocacy and self-determination in a variety of situations, such as communicating interests and preferences in planning for the future.

Materials/Preparation

- Chart paper/board
- Paper and pen or pencil