TOOL 2:

Self-Direction Road Map Grades 6-8

Teacher Instructions

My Self-Direction Road Map

STEP **1** — **Task Goals & Action Plan**

Understand the task and learning goals
Make my action plan

STEP **2** — **Self-Direction Goal & Action Plan Review**

Select one self-direction goal for this task
Get input from others and make changes to improve my plan

STEP **3** — **Mid-Task Checkpoint**

Reflect on my progress
Get input from others
Make changes to my plan, if needed

STEP **4** — **Post-Task Reflection**

Reflect on my work and learning
Share evidence of progress, learning, and reflections

Below, please find teacher instructions to guide your use of Tool 2. These instructions are designed to address the following questions:

Why was Tool 2 developed?

When should teachers and students use Tool 2?

Where, in which courses, should Tool 2 be used?

Who should use Tool 2?

How should teachers and students use Tool 2?

Why?

Self-direction is a skill that includes both the intrapersonal skills of self-awareness and reflection, and the interpersonal skills of collaborating with others eliciting feedback and support in the learning process. The Self-Direction Road Map supports and provides evidence for growth in students' self-direction skills such as **Self-Awareness** of their interests and learning goals, **Initiative and Ownership** in establishing their inquiry questions, **Goal Setting and Planning** by creating an action plan, **Engaging and Managing** the flow and efficiency of their work along the way, and **Monitoring and Adapting** their progress through a process that includes peer review and feedback.

This toolkit is a product of the Building Essential Skill Today (BEST) Research-Practice Partnership. For more information visit best-future.org. Unless noted otherwise, all materials in this toolkit are copyrighted under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

2

When?

The Self-Direction Road Map is designed to be used in conjunction with an assigned project or performance task. The Self-Direction Road Map provides guidance to students as they follow the four steps in the project planning process as illustrated in the Self-Direction Road Map graphic.

Additional Options: Teachers may use this as an instructional tool for a wide variety of purposes throughout the school year. It can also serve as an evidence collection tool for assessment.

Instructional supports can be found at best-future.org.

Where?

The Self-Direction Road Map may be used within any content area or course where students are involved in a performance task or project-based learning.

Additional Options: Instructional supports can be found at best-future.org.

Who?

Teachers provide initial orientation and guidance to students in using the Self-Direction Road Map. After students demonstrate that they know how to use the tool and review protocols, teachers can determine the degrees to which students need ongoing support or could be expected to use the tool independently (see additional options below).

Additional Options: Teachers, especially those with students who have limited experience with self-direction, may want to use the Self-Direction Road Map primarily as an instructional support tool for

building students' self-direction skills. Alternatively, teachers may want to use the Self-Direction Road Map primarily as a means for gathering the evidence needed to assess student self direction. In this case, teachers will want to orient students and ensure that they clearly understand its use, but then refrain from offering teacher support as students complete the Self-Direction Road Map independently. In either scenario, it is suggested that students be expected to complete Step 4: Post-Task Reflection questions on their own.

How?

Prior to introducing the Self-Direction Road Map, review the self-direction rubric and the *Tool 1: Student Assessment of Self-Direction Growth* with students, allowing them the opportunity to ask clarifying questions. The rubric introductionmodule in the self-direction toolkit provides guidance on introducing the rubric.

Introduce the Self-Direction Road Map to students at the start of the task or project (i.e., when it is first assigned) and walk them through the Self-Direction Road Map graphic to provide an overview of how the tool will be used to document and support their work. Each student should have a copy of the entire Self-Direction Road Map packet, including:

Self-Direction Road Map

Step 1: My Goals and Action Plan

Step 2: My Self-Direction Goal and Plan Review and the Action Plan Review Protocol

Step 3: Mid-Task Checkpoint and Mid-Task Checkpoint Review Protocol

Step 4: Post-Task Reflection and Self-Direction Skills Table

Appendix: My Updated Action Plan

STEP 1:

Task Goals and Action Plan

At this initial step, you will orient students to the tasks for completing Step 1 and ensure that they are clear on the expectations listed below. Students can use either the paper form of the action plan (Table 1) or you may provide students with an electronic copy that can be updated over time.

- Students articulate their learning goals, taking into consideration their interests that may support their motivation through the task; e.g., *asking themselves what about this learning is important to me.*

- After determining the learning goals and inquiry questions, students design their action plan (Table 1), listing the steps they need to complete the task and the strategies they will use to accomplish each step.

  - For example, one step may be to research the topic and find reliable resources—a strategy to achieve that step is to contact the librarian and access the educational research databases.

- Students identify resources for each step, and apply a target start and end date.

- Students "check off" the step once it has been completed.

Additional Options: If you are using formative assessment instructional strategies, then the teacher or students could add success criteria to this section.

Instructional supports can be found at best-future.org.

This toolkit is a product of the Building Essential Skill Today (BEST) Research-Practice Partnership. For more information visit best-future.org. Unless noted otherwise, all materials in this toolkit are copyrighted under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

5

Self-Direction Goal and Action Plan Review

Orient students to the tasks for completing Step 2 and ensure that they are clear on expectations—selecting a self-direction skill to focus on during their task or project. At this step, students will review the self-direction rubric and the Tool 1: Student Assessment of Self-Direction Growth, and identify the skill that they will focus on in this project. Gathering and responding to feedback is a key aspect of self-direction and is identified in the self-direction rubric. While the peer review protocol is recommended for all grade levels (but not required), teachers should model and always monitor how to respectfully give and receive feedback. If students completed the Tool 1: Student Assessment of Self-Direction Growth, they can refer to that self-assessment at this time to help them select their skill focal area.

- **Consider the self-direciton skills needed for this task.** Students review Table 2: Self-Direction Skills, including all five Self-Direction skills—self-awareness, initiative and ownership, goal setting and planning, engaging and managing, and monitoring and adapting in the rubric. For each skill area, students consider whether that skill area is needed for the task and if it is a skill area that is a strength or an area for improvement.

- **Select a self-direction skill area to focus on.** After completing Table 2, students select one self-direction skill area to focus on during the task.

- **Gather feedback from a peer on your goal and action plan.** Once students have selected their focal area, it is recommended (but not required) that they engage in a peer review protocol to gather feedback from others on their goals and plans. The Action Plan Review Protocol outlines the steps for the peer review.

- **Update your action plan.** After the peer review, students will incorporate the feedback into their action plan and make adjustments if needed *(see Appendix for a blank action plan template)*.

Time Needed: Plan on 25-30 minutes for each student (60 minutes per pair) to complete the Action Plan Review Protocol

Additional Options: Instructional supports can be found at best-future.org.

STEP 3:

Mid-Task Checkpoint

The mid-task checkpoint is a pause midway through the task or project when students will again engage in a peer review protocol and reflection on their progress in the task. At this time you will want to orient students to the tasks for completing Step 3 (listed below) and ensure that they are clear on when to engage in this step, who they will work with, and any specific expectations for documenting their peer review and any planned changes to their action plan.

- Students will share their action plan progress with a peer reviewer and explore adjustments to their plan. The Mid-Task Checkpoint Review Protocol outlines the steps for the peer review.

- Students will reflect on the peer feedback they received and consider how they might change their action plan. Students will document feedback and planned changes and submit the changes made to the action plan by updating their action plan or using the blank action plan template in Appendix A.

Time Needed: Plan on 25-30 minutes for each student (60 minutes per pair) to complete the Mid-Task Plan Review Protocol

Additional Options: Instructional supports can be found at best-future.org.

STEP 4:

Post-Task Reflection

Ask students to complete Step 4 **only** after they have submitted their task or project. Orient students to the tasks listed below for completing Step 4, then ask students to complete Step 4 independently.

- Refer students to the Self-Direction Reflection Questions. All students should respond to the common questions in Step 4.

This toolkit is a product of the Building Essential Skill Today (BEST) Research-Practice Partnership. For more information visit best-future.org. Unless noted otherwise, all materials in this toolkit are copyrighted under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

7

- In addition, students should refer to Table 5.0 to find the specific questions for the self-direction skill they chose as a focus area for their task or project. Students should **only** answer the questions for their selected skill area.

- Students do this final reflection independently (i.e., this step should not be done with a peer or with teacher support).

Additional Options: If students are building a portfolio to showcase their growth in self-direction, teachers will want to provide instructions and guidance to students for how to select and submit evidence to illustrate their growth in their selected skill areas during the project or task.

This toolkit is a product of the Building Essential Skill Today (BEST) Research-Practice Partnership. For more information visit best-future.org. Unless noted otherwise, all materials in this toolkit are copyrighted under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

8

TOOL 2:

Self-Direction Road Map Grades 6-8

My Self-Direction Road Map

STEP 1

Task Goals & Action Plan

Understand the task and learning goals
Make my action plan

STEP 2

Self-Direction Goal & Action Plan Review

Select one self-direction goal for this task
Get input from others and make changes to improve my plan

STEP 3

Mid-Task Checkpoint

Reflect on my progress
Get input from others
Make changes to my plan, if needed

STEP 4

Post-Task Reflection

Reflect on my work and learning
Share evidence of progress, learning, and reflections

STEP 1 | My Task Goals and Action Plan

Today's Date: Your Name:

Course Name:

1. Briefly describe the task or project you will complete.

2. What is the **learning goal** you have for this task or project?

3. What is your **action plan?**

    What are the steps you will take to complete this task or project? (Column A)

    What actions or strategies will you use to accomplish each step? (Column B)

    What resources will you need for each step? (Column C)

    What are the target start and end dates for each step? (Column D)

Use the My Action Plan table on the next page. You can add extra steps if you need them.

TABLE 1.0 | My Action Plan

A Steps I will take to complete this task or project	B Actions or strategies I will use to accomplish each step	C Resources I will need or use for each step	D Target start and end dates I will work on for each step	E Date completed

STEP 2 | My Self Direction Goal and Plan Review

1.   Before you get started, think about which self-direction skills you will need to be successful with your task. For each of the five self-direction skill areas in Table 2 below, indicate with a check mark whether you think each area is:

A) "important" for your task or project, and

B) whether the area is "already a strength," or is an area to "improve."

Important Hint: Look at your ***Tool 1: Student Assessment of Self-Direction Growth*** results to give you ideas!

TABLE 2.0 | Self-Direction Skill Areas

	A	B	
	Important for this task	Already a strength for me	An area for me to improve
Self-Awareness Reflect on past experiences so I can use my strengths and interests and overcome challenges.			
Initiative and Ownership Take responsibility for my own learning by asking questions, getting input from others, and shaping the task to better fit my interests and strengths.			
Goal Setting and Planning Set task and learning goals and plan out the steps and strategies I will need to be successful.			
Engaging and Managing Get the relevant resources and help I need and stay on track with agreed upon deadlines.			
Monitoring and Adapting Check my progress and make changes to my plan to better manage my work, improve work quality, or expand my learning.			

This toolkit is a product of the Building Essential Skill Today (BEST) Research-Practice Partnership. For more information visit best-future.org. Unless noted otherwise, all materials in this toolkit are copyrighted under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

12

2. Select **one** self-direction area that you will focus on during this task.
   Check your selection from the list below.

   Self-awareness   **Engaging and Meaning**

   Initiative and Ownership   **Monitoring and Adapting**

   Goal Setting and Planning

3. Now explain your task, self-direction goal, and action plan to someone else to get ideas to make the plan better (see Step 2: Action Plan Review Protocol). You can use this table to take notes and write down the action plan changes you will make.

TABLE 3.0 | **My Action Plan Review**

	Notes from peer review	**Changes I will make to my action plan**
How I can better manage my work • Meet my target dates, make better progress • Get the resources and help I need • Avoid problems along the way		
How I can improve the quality of my work and learning • Use my strengths and interests • Produce a higher-quality final product • Learn more		

Based on your reflections in Table 3.0, you can make changes on your original plan or make a new one!

STEP 2 | Action Plan Review Protocol

The steps in the protocol provide an opportunity for a peer review and personal reflection on the progress of your project. The recommended timings are indicated for each step in the process. Use Table 3.0 to record your notes from the meeting.

1 | **Present and share with your peer reviewer and explain your task/project, your self-direction goal, and your action plan. (3-5 minutes)**

2 | **Your reviewer will share the things that they liked about your plan and then ask the questions listed below, and you will respond: (7-10 minutes)**

- How will you use your selected self-direction skill area as part of your action plan?
- Are there any steps or strategies you need to add—or remove—from this plan?
- Are there any steps or strategies you need to move around (to do sooner or later than you first thought)?
- Is there any other information, or are there any examples or other resources you will need?

3 | **Now it is your turn to ask your peer reviewer for any help or feedback you would like. (5 minutes)**

4 | **Based on this peer review, what changes will you make to your plan to better manage your work? For example: (10 minutes)**

- Can you meet your target dates for each step?
- Do you have the resources you need?
- Can you avoid problems along the way?
- What strategies are working well—and should you keep using?
- Can you improve the quality of your work and learning?
- Can you use your strengths and interests?
- Can you produce a high-quality final product?
- Can you learn more?

This toolkit is a product of the Building Essential Skill Today (BEST) Research-Practice Partnership. For more information visit best-future.org. Unless noted otherwise, all materials in this toolkit are copyrighted under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

15

STEP 3 | Mid-Task Checkpoint

1. Review your action plan and think about the progress you have made so far.

   - *Are things going the way you expected? If not, why not?*

   - *Have you been able to use your selected self-direction skill area?*

2. Share your progress with your peer reviewer and consider how you might want to change your action plan *(see Step 3: Mid-Task Checkpoint Review Protocol)*. You can use this table to take notes during your peer review, and write down the action plan changes you will make.

TABLE 4.0 | My Mid-Task Checkpoint Review

	Notes from peer review	Changes I will make to my action plan based on peer feedback
How I can better manage my work • Meet my target dates, make better progress • Get the resources and help I need • Solve problems and get help along the way • What strategies are working well—and which I should keep using		
How I can improve the quality of my work and learning • Use my strengths and interests • Produce a higher-quality final product • Learn more		

3. What changes will you make to your plan? You can make changes on your earlier plan or make a new one!

This toolkit is a product of the Building Essential Skill Today (BEST) Research-Practice Partnership. For more information visit best-future.org. Unless noted otherwise, all materials in this toolkit are copyrighted under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

16

STEP 3 | Mid-Task Checkpoint Review Protocol

The steps in the protocol provide an opportunity for a peer review and personal reflection on the progress of your project. The recommended timings are indicated for each step in the process. Use Table 4.0 to record your notes from the meeting.

1 | **Present and share with your peer reviewer the progress you have made with your task or project. (3-5 minutes)**

2 | **Your reviewer will ask the following questions and you will respond: (7-10 minutes)**
- How are things going so far? What important steps have you already accomplished?
- Have you been able to use your self-direction skills?
- Have you been able to meet the target dates you set for steps? Do you expect to finish on time?
- Have you run into any unexpected problems or challenges?
- What problems or challenges have you faced?
- What might you do differently to overcome or prevent these challenges?
- Have you been able to get the resources or help you needed?
- Is there anything else you still need—or need help with? How will you get the resources or this help?

3 | **Now it is your turn to ask your peer reviewer for any help or feedback you would like. (5 minutes)**

This toolkit is a product of the Building Essential Skill Today (BEST) Research-Practice Partnership. For more information visit best-future.org. Unless noted otherwise, all materials in this toolkit are copyrighted under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

17

4 | **Based on this peer review, what changes will you make to your plan to better manage your work? For example: (10 minutes)**

- Can you meet your target dates for each step and make better progress?
- Can you get the resources and help you need?
- Can you avoid or resolve problems along the way?
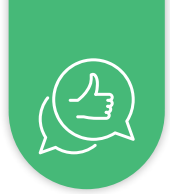
STEP 4 | Post-Task Reflection

Now that you have submitted your performance task, take time to reflect on your experience, your accomplishments, and your learning. ***Feel free to share evidence that shows your learning—and your answers to these questions!***

1. What did you learn from this task or project that you are most excited about? (What is your greatest takeaway?)

2. How did you use your selected self-direction skill area to help you during this task? (Respond to questions for your selected area on the next page.)

3. Overall, did you improve in your selected area of self-direction, did it decline, or stay the same? Why do you think this happened?
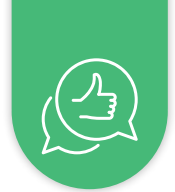
4. What examples or evidence can you share to show your growth in self-direction during this task?
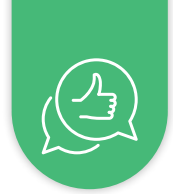
Find and respond only to the questions for your selected "self-direction" area.

TABLE 5.0 | **Self-Direction Skills Reflection**

Self-Direction Skill Area	Reflection Questions for Grades 6-8
Self-Awareness	**a)** What is the most important thing you learned about yourself as a learner? • *Your interests and strengths?* • *Areas to improve?* **b)** What did you learn about the strategies that were most helpful? Were any of these strategies you had used in the past? Did you try any new strategies? **c)** What is one problem, mistake, or challenge you had? How did you solve it—or try to solve it?
Initiative and Ownership	**a)** How did you take responsibility for your learning? • *How did you use your strengths and interests?* • *What did you do to find the right resources and get the help you needed?* • *What is one way you got help from others, or cooperated with others?* **b)** What is the most important change you made to your plan or project to improve the quality of your work or expand your own learning?
Goal Setting and Planning	**a)** Are you satisfied (or happy) with the action plan you had? • *Were you able to stay on track with your steps and schedule/timeline?* • *Were you able to find the right resources and get the help you needed?* **b)** Are you satisfied (or happy) with how your task or project turned out? • *Were you able to meet (or exceed) the learning goals for this task or project? If so, how?*
Engaging and Managing	**a)** Think about how you managed your work during this task or project—and what you learned along the way. • *What did you do to stay on track with your steps and schedule/timeline?* • *What did you do to find the right resources and get the help you needed?* • *What is one problem, mistake, or challenge you had? How did you solve it—or try to solve it?* **b)** What is the most important change you made to your plan or strategies to make better progress?

Self-Direction Skill Area	Reflection Questions for Grades 6-8

Monitoring and Adapting	**a)** Think about how you managed your work during this task or project.
	    • *What did you learn about the strategies that were most helpful?*
	    • *Were any of these strategies you had used in the past?*
	    • *Did you try any new strategies?*
	b) What is the most important change you made to your plan or strategies:
	    • *To make better progress?*
	    • *To improve the quality of your work or expand your own learning?*
	c) If you had the chance to do a task or project like this again, what would you do differently next time?

This toolkit is a product of the Building Essential Skill Today (BEST) Research-Practice Partnership. For more information visit best-future.org. Unless noted otherwise, all materials in this toolkit are copyrighted under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

21

APPENDIX A | **My Action Plan Template**

Steps I will take to complete this task or project	Actions or strategies I will use to accomplish each step	Resources I will need or use for each step	Target start and end dates I will work on for each step	Date completed