

Performing Like a Star

"I know the price of success: dedication, hard work, and an unremitting devotion to the things you want to see happen."

—Frank Lloyd Wright

REFLECTION

In this experience you will use the **Performance Analysis and Assessment worksheet** as a tool to help you begin reflecting on who you are now, who you would like to be in the future, and how to begin to achieve the goals that will get you there.



ON MY OWN

PURPOSE

In this course we want you to be able to visualize what you want to be, analyze what it takes to perform like a star, believe in your potential, and develop the tools, practices and mindset to become what you want to become. The first step is, of course, seeing that goal or target. After all, the better you can see a target, the greater your chances of hitting it.

Self-efficacy, the strength of belief in one's self, is a very significant factor in determining short- and especially long-term success. While most people believe that there is a limit to how well any of us can perform—"Know your limitations" is an oft-heard piece of advice—this self-limitation becomes probably the greatest barrier to becoming a star performer. This course will offer you tools, techniques, practices, and a mindset that will help you unlock your unlimited potential.

As you begin to do that unlocking, you will learn and explore many things about yourself. This foundational and first experience will focus on five critical components: 1) the Theory of Performance and the Classification of Learning Skills, 2) how to analyze a performance area, 3) analyzing your past performance as a learner, 4) seeing quality learning as a performance, and 5) challenging yourself to believe in your unlimited potential as a learner.

The Theory of Performance is comprised of five different aspects that provide structure for this course. The course will help you improve your performance as a learner and self-grower by strengthening your 1) identity, 2) learning skills, 3) level of knowledge about learning and self-growth, and 4) ability to transfer your learning and self-growth performance to new situations. Finally, the fifth component—personal factors—will be addressed by strengthening your resolve to maintain success even though life may throw you a major curve. Later in the course you will explore how an individual's personal factors, if not controlled, can negatively impact performance.

OBJECTIVES

1. Learn that all people have unlimited potential in learning how to learn and improving themselves.
2. Develop strategies to improve performance in each aspect of the Theory of Performance.
3. Understand how the structure and tools of the course can help you learn to be a star performer.

DISCOVERY EXERCISE

Use the **Performance Analysis worksheet** to analyze the performance of a self-grower as reflected in **Cody River's Self-Growth Paper**. Feel free to work with another student in the course as you document that performance.

READINGS

What Kind of Learner Do You Want to Be? and *Classification of Learning Skills*

RESOURCES

Cody River's Self-Growth Paper

Performance Analysis worksheet

EXPLORATION QUESTIONS

1. How does the Classification of Learning Skills impact level of performance?
2. How would you describe an identity?
3. How many identities do you have? Which are your strongest and why?

4. What is the relationship between learning and knowledge?

5. What is the difference between learning and growth?

6. Which aspects of the Theory of Performance focus on learning and knowledge, and which focus on growth and unlimited potential?

AM I READY FOR CLASS?

☐

I have completed the readings

☐

I have answered the Exploration Questions

☐

I have filled out a Performance Analysis worksheet focused on Cody River's Self-Growth Paper

What Kind of Learner Do You Want to Be?

Welcome to the start of your new learning journey! Seeing college and life as a series of journeys is a cliché, it's true. And yet, college *is* in many ways a journey. This book will help you navigate the exciting and challenging road ahead. This road will not end when you graduate, of course. It will continue on to new destinations, doubtless with a few detours and rest stops along the way. The learning skills presented in this book will help you become a more confident traveler.

Some of you may have taken a cross-country trip with friends before you started college. Chances are you planned for the trip and packed according to your plans. You probably had a great adventure, and you now know more about how to plan for the next trip: how to read and navigate from a map, how much money to bring, how to negotiate disagreements among travelers, how to leave behind what is not needed, and where you might like to go next. You have increased your foundational skills for traveling. This book and course will offer you a similar kind of guide for college and beyond. Despite good planning, there are skills you may not even know you need for college. This book will make those skills explicit and provide you with activities and reflections that will help you strengthen them.

"It is good to have an end to journey towards; but it is the journey that matters, in the end."

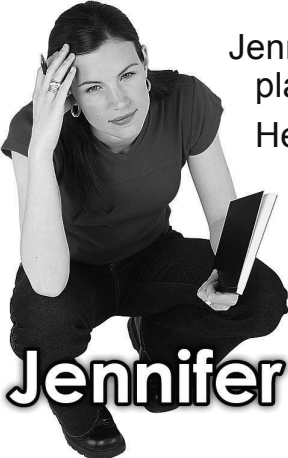
Science fiction writer
Ursula K. Le Guin



Regardless of what career path you have chosen to follow, your main identity now is as a learner. What kind of learner do you want to be? A passive, "back seat" learner? Or an active learner who performs well and receives positive feedback from instructors? To help you meet this goal, we will explain a theory of performance that identifies factors that will affect your level of performance. Based on the Performance Model, you can evaluate yourself as a learner and identify your goals for the course.

Being in this course and in college makes you part of a learning community. You will be given many opportunities to work with others. You will all enrich each other's learning and the development of your skills. We have also created a learning community for this book, made up of fictional students. Their job is to help turn theory into visible practice and to give you an overall story that may parallel your own or that may give you points of contrast with your own story.

Let's meet Jennifer...



Jennifer is eighteen and a first-year student who plans to major in journalism.

Her aunt is a photojournalist who works for travel magazines, and she inspired Jenn to do a lot of writing in high school. Jenn worked on the yearbook during her junior and senior years and won a few writing contests along the way. Although she did well in high school, Jenn is a bit nervous moving from a small school to a large college.

The Performance Model

For a moment, think of all the things you know how to do well. Now, think about how you went from being a beginner to an accomplished performer in these areas. You integrated skills and knowledge to produce a valuable result. For example, if you have been asked to design a logo for the student newspaper, you will integrate multiple factors to perform well as an artist, even if you are not aware of them.

$$\begin{array}{l}
 \text{IDENTITY} \\
 \text{SKILLS} \\
 \text{KNOWLEDGE} \\
 \text{CONTEXT} \\
 \text{PERSONAL FACTORS} \\
 + \text{ FIXED FACTORS} \\
 \hline
 = \text{PERFORMANCE}
 \end{array}$$

A group of educators from all over the country has outlined the factors that make up a theory of performance. This Performance Model consists of: identity, skills, knowledge, context, personal factors, and fixed factors. You have some control over all of these, with the exception of fixed factors. Your development and growth in the five remaining areas will continue throughout your life. Knowing that you have this control should give you a great deal of confidence to learn new things in college and in life. To continue our trip metaphor, you are in the driver's seat.

Identity	As individuals mature in a discipline, they take on the shared identity of the professional community while elevating their own uniqueness. For a learner to perform well, he or she must have a strong identity as a member of a learning community. A student demonstrates identity as a learner when engaging in learning activities, such as attending classes and studying. A student who is majoring in psychology begins to demonstrate identity within that field by using the terminology of psychology.
Skills	Skills describe specific actions that are used by individuals, groups, or organizations in multiple types of performances. Within education, the focus is on those skills that are transferable across contexts and allow individuals to improve their mastery of subject matter. These are known as <i>learning skills</i> . Learners who perform well work to increase their mastery of learning skills.
Knowledge	Knowledge involves facts, information, concepts, theories, or principles acquired by a person or group through experience or education. You are learning about the Performance Model right now and are adding to your knowledge with every word you read.
Context	This component includes variables associated with the situation in which the individual or organization performs. Each time you perform as a learner, you do so within a specific context, which includes a number of variables. For example, your performance in this course has as its context the way you meet (in a classroom? online?), how often you meet as a class, the length of the term (a full semester? an intensive summer course?), and so on.
Personal Factors	This component includes variables associated with the personal situation of an individual. Your performance as a student depends a great deal upon your personal factors and your life situation. To use a simple example, how well are you able to study if you're tired because you worked late last night? Personal factors can present a significant challenge to performing well.
Fixed Factors	This component includes variables unique to an individual that cannot be altered. This is the only aspect of performance that cannot be altered and includes items such as the first language you learned, color-blindness, etc. While your performance as a learner is certainly affected by fixed factors. Assuming that your performance is constrained by these factors is a mistake.

Dissecting a Performance

In order to identify the different components of performance, we need to isolate a performance. Fortunately, we have Jennifer whose goal is to become fluent in Spanish and work as a journalist on a Spanish-language publication.

Let's examine her performance as a student striving to meet this goal...

Jennifer's Identity	Jenn has decided to become a reporter for the student newspaper so that she can begin to learn what journalists do on a day-to-day basis. She is also looking forward to the workshops journalists from local papers give for the college newspaper staff every month. When she has established a comfortable schedule, Jenn would like to volunteer at a local Spanish-language newspaper written by middle and high school students, <i>La Voz Latina</i> (The Latin Voice).
Jennifer's Learning Skills	Although Jennifer has studied Spanish for many years, she has not lived near any large community of Spanish speakers. Her perceptions of individual cultures come from reading and the few Spanish speaking friends she has, mainly from Mexico. Now that Jenn has joined the Spanish-language lunch group on campus, she can meet students from all over: Spain, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Argentina, and Puerto Rico. She has begun to observe and appreciate the cultural differences among these students, including the use of idioms, the sense of personal space, and general world views. Jenn notes down her perceptions once a week and checks them against the next week's interactions.
Jennifer's Knowledge	Jennifer now realizes that becoming a successful journalist means that she has a good deal to learn about the cultures, journalistic practices, history, and contemporary issues of the Spanish-speaking world. She is enrolled in a class on Current Issues in Latin America, and the instructor gives assignment on reading Latin American newspapers, either in Spanish or in English. Jenn is putting her new knowledge of current affairs to good use with her Spanish-language lunch group which is always happy to share opinions on these issues.
Jennifer's Context	When Jenn does her newspaper assignment for class, she also tries to analyze the differences in writing style and use of sources between an American and a Latin American newspaper. This is more challenging than she thought it would be, but it strengthens her plan to work on a Spanish-language newspaper here in town. Jenn is now more aware of the different contexts she has worked in as journalist, the school yearbook and the college newspaper. Working on a local paper seems to be the next step and then maybe writing articles in Spanish.
Jennifer's Personal Factors	Jenn has a good roommate, but she still finds it hard to study Spanish at home because their space is so small. She often goes to the library or the language lab. Although she worked and saved money over the summer, Jenn is considering getting a part-time job during the semester. She is debating whether a better budget or a job would be the smartest way to have a little extra money and still succeed at her academic goals.
Jennifer's Fixed Factors	As a native English speaker, Jenn will always have that as her language base. She may always have a bit of an American accent in Spanish. However, Jenn has a good ear for languages, and that has helped her Spanish pronunciation. She does not have a good sense of rhythm, though. She has realized she will probably never be a world-class Latin dancer though going to dances will be part of fitting into Latino culture.

This book is specifically designed to help you as you work to improve your performance as a student. It 1) provides information and **knowledge** you need in order to perform as a learner, 2) gives you a solid foundation for **identifying** yourself as a college student and learner, 3) includes activities and assignments focused upon improving your **learning skills**, 4) contains information about your new **context**, as a college student, and 5) introduces ways to help you deal with your **personal factors**.

Learning Skills

While all the components that make up your performance as a learner are important, working to improve your learning skills is especially critical as there is a direct correlation between your mastery of those skills and your success as a student. Remember when you learned how to ride a bike? Riding a bike is certainly a skill. So are juggling, texting, speaking a foreign language, and dancing the tango. But learning skills are different. They are the skills used in the process of learning, which aren't limited to a single situation or context, but apply across many different context. When you improve your learning skills, you increase your **ability** to learn. You have done more than learn; you have **grown**. A complete list of all Learning Skills directly follows this reading.



Jennifer Talks about a Few of Her Critical Learning Skills

Observing: This is probably the most important skill I can work on in order to meet my goal of becoming a journalist. I can see that it's also a really important skill for a successful student.

Inquiring: Another important skill for my goals. I'm not really shy, but I do need to learn how to ask the questions that matter in meaningful ways.

Collaborating: I'll admit that I'm not a really strong collaborator. I like to work alone. But I know that just doesn't cut it either for my role as a student OR my future role as a journalist. This one will be a bit of a struggle.

Levels of Performance for Self-Growers

Performance, as the adage goes, is a "journey not a destination." No matter where you are right now, you always have the ability to improve your performance. Your current location in this journey is your current level of performance. That you are committed to improving your ability to perform and learn is what defines a self-grower. The following table characterizes five different levels of performance across four different aspects or areas of a performance.

These areas encompass most aspects of life. The area of *Knowledge* deals with activities and processes such as processing information, understanding, applying knowledge, solving problems, and conducting research. The *Social Interactions* area has to do with communicating, relating with others, managing relationships, and leadership. The area of *Attitude* includes processes such as being open to new experiences, actively engaging in life, being organized, and cultivating personal values. The fourth area, that of *Abilities*, is most generally concerned with what you actually do with the knowledge and skills that you have.

You have already demonstrated your commitment to success by enrolling in college. An important next step in your journey of performance and growth is to assess your current level of performance. Though self-assessment is never a completely comfortable process, Sir Francis Bacon had a point when he said, "Knowledge is power." Having a clear idea of your current level of performance makes planing to improve your performance and go from where you are now to where you'd really like to be that much easier.

The following table is called a *rubric*. A rubric identifies characteristics of different levels of attainment using phrases to describe what each level looks like. This rubric is designed to help you determine your own level of performance as you strive to improve your ability to perform (i.e., become a self-grower).

Performance Levels for Self-Growers

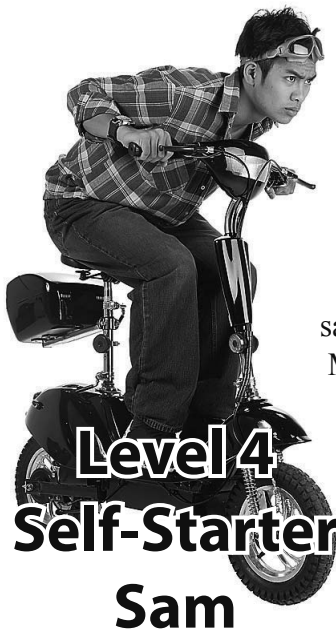
	Knowledge	Social Interactions	Attitude	Abilities
Level 5 <i>Star Performers</i>	Can construct and modify models; valued and respected by experts in the field	Create movements and organizations that often become self-perpetuating	Control their destiny; also can control their emotions in challenging situations	Have highly developed learning and research abilities that enable them to excel
Level 4 <i>Self-Starters</i>	Are able to add to the knowledge in their discipline	Use relationships effectively to attain success for themselves and others	Seek greater challenges and responsibilities to perform at a higher level; push the boundaries of their own performance	Able to cultivate new abilities in unfamiliar areas
Level 3 <i>Responsive Individuals</i>	Use their problem-solving, learning, and thinking skills to improve their performance and get higher-quality results	Are positive people whom others enjoy and want to have on their teams	React to challenges with improved performance rather than complaints; feeling good about their accomplishments	Are able to learn from how other people function in a particular area
Level 2 <i>Content Individuals</i>	Are satisfied with their modest levels of effort in gaining knowledge	Interact freely with family and friends but do not seek more diverse contacts and more challenging relationships	Feel like a cog in the machinery, doing little more than what is asked; feeling their contributions are not very significant	Have enough critical thinking and analytic abilities to perform some problem-solving
Level 1 <i>Static Individuals</i>	Try to minimize or avoid the effort needed to gain knowledge	Limit their social interactions to like-minded individuals who complain about what they are not getting out of life	Feel that whatever they do will have little impact, that most things are not worth the effort	Must have explicitly defined rules, procedures and policies; need to be prompted to finish something

I'm still only an undergraduate, but my decision to study pre-med is clearly the right choice. While I was doing research on community health clinics for an honors course, I got involved in organizing a local community health education initiative. I've the project apply for a grant, and it looks like the funding will come through! I've been asked to speak at a national conference on community health, and while I'm a bit nervous about addressing such a large group, the important thing is that the project is getting the attention it deserves and that I can help it continue to grow.



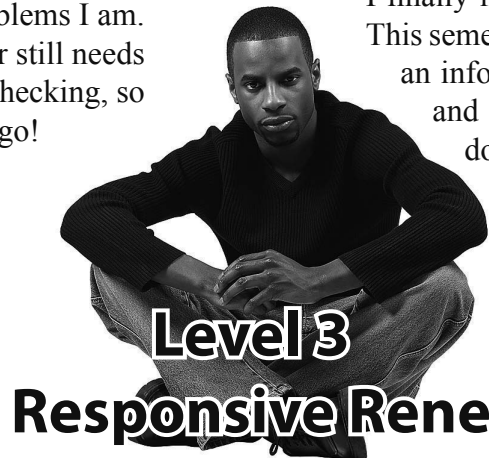
Level 5
Star Performer
Paula

I'm meeting with a couple of other international business majors about a paper we wrote that's been accepted for *The Journal of Global Business*. Paul, my mentor, has helped put me in touch with some other people who are working on some of the same business problems I am. My research paper still needs some reference checking, so I've got to go!



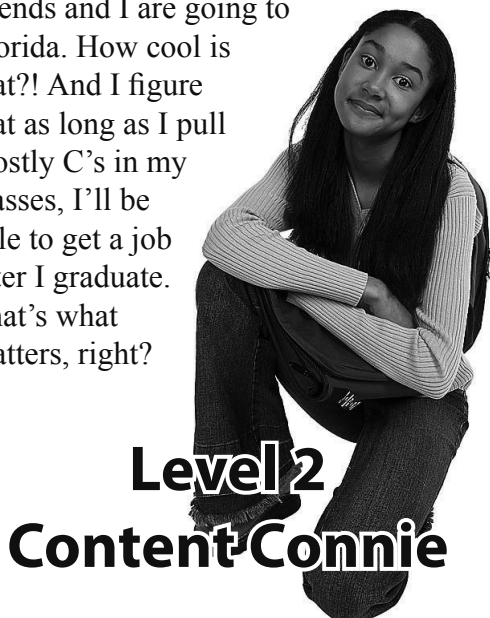
Level 4
Self-Starter
Sam

I finally made it to the Dean's List! This semester is a real challenge (I'm an information technology major, and my economics class just doesn't make a lot of sense to me), but I've started a couple of study groups. We all enjoy getting together and not just for the pizza; it's amazing how much we learn from each other.



Level 3
Responsive
Rene

I like my classes but really can't wait for Spring Break. Some friends and I are going to Florida. How cool is that?! And I figure that as long as I pull mostly C's in my classes, I'll be able to get a job after I graduate. That's what matters, right?



Level 2
Content
Connie

I have a great band, an OK part-time job, and tons of friends. Who needs more than that at 18? But my parents pushed the college thing, so I'm here. Yeah, I sort of like some of my classes when I show up. My parents are not thrilled with my grades this semester, but I'm just not that into it.



Level 1
Static
Steve

Jennifer Offers Some Self-Analysis on Her Level of Performance

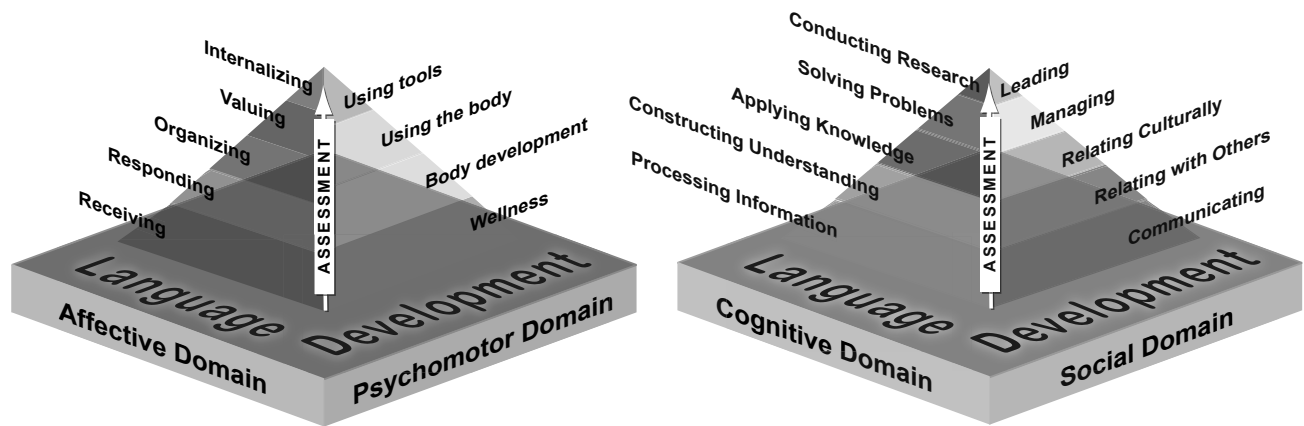
I'd really like to think of myself as a self-starter, but I'm not there yet. I start out strong, but sometimes I don't follow through. My aunt kept my interest in writing going, and having a few friends that spoke Spanish made me want to speak with them without sounding like a *gringa*. I think I can honestly say I'm a Level 3, though, a "responsive individual." I'm a decent problem-solver, and I'm usually positive about school and life. I was on different teams in high school, including the yearbook team, but I know college might be different. I usually like challenges to improve my performance; that's why I signed up for Spanish 3. I am trying to keep up with eating a healthy diet and exercising, but that's hard until I get into this new routine. The gym is so far away, unfortunately. I wish I could dance; I'd like to take the Latin dance class on Tuesday nights.

Goals for this Course

Our goal for each of you is to help you use the Performance Model as presented here to become better learners. Throughout the course, we will be presenting you with opportunities to improve your level of learning in each of the four areas from the Performance Levels for Self-Growers. You will come to a better understanding of your identity as a result of creating and adding to your Life Vision. As a result, you will become aware of the context of your learning as well as the influence your personal factors have on that learning. Each learning activity will serve to help you develop your learning skills, and through the readings, you will deepen your knowledge base.

The Classification of Learning Skills

for Educational Enrichment and Assessment



The Classification of Learning Skills for Educational Enrichment and Assessment (CLS) represents a 15-year research effort by a team of process educators who created this resource to assist with the holistic development of their students. Used by both faculty and students, the CLS is a valuable tool which helps to identify key processes and skills fundamental to learning. It also provides the framework for making quality assessments of performance and serves as a guide for improving assessment and self-assessment skills.

Faculty who teach using active learning formats will find this resource especially useful when measuring, assessing, and improving student performance. Students can use the CLS to identify the most important skills required to perform at the level of a skilled practitioner in various content areas.

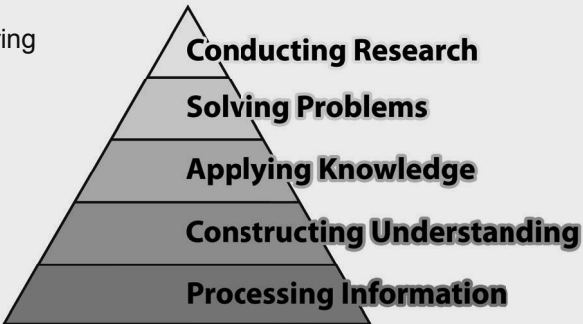
What is a Learning Skill?

Learning skills are discrete entities that are embedded in everyday behavior and operate in conjunction with specialized knowledge. They can be consciously improved and refined. Once they are, the rate and effectiveness of overall learning increases. They can be identified at an early stage of a learner's development. No matter what the person's age or experience, learning skills can be improved to higher levels of performance through self-assessment, self-discipline, or guidance by a mentor. This growth in learning skill development is usually triggered by a learning challenge of some kind and is facilitated by actions built on a shared language between mentor and mentee.

Development of the Classification

Initial work on The Classification of Learning Skills focused on the cognitive domain, looking primarily at critical thinking and problem solving skills. Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives served as a resource during the construction of the cognitive domain. Efforts to build the social domain coincided with research projects such as the SCANS Report (*Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills*), which pointed out the need to help students develop communication, teamwork, and management skills. Daniel Goleman's seminal work on emotional intelligence profoundly informed the work on the affective domain learning skills. The CLS was further expanded when levels for learner performance were identified and terms such as "enhanced learner" and "self-grower" were introduced.

Cognitive Domain

Processing Information	
<p>Collecting Data (from a disorganized source) Observing, Listening, Skimming, Memorizing, Recording Measuring</p> <p>Generating Data (to fill a void) Predicting, Estimating, Experimenting, Brainstorming</p> <p>Organizing Data (for future use) Filtering, Outlining, Categorizing, Systematizing</p> <p>Retrieving Data (from an organized source) Recognizing patterns, Searching, Recalling, Inventorying</p> <p>Validating Information (for value) Testing perceptions, Validating sources, Controlling errors, Identifying inconsistency, Ensuring sufficiency</p>	
Constructing Understanding	
<p>Analyzing (characterizing individual parts) Identifying similarities, Identifying differences, Identifying assumptions, Inquiring, Exploring context</p> <p>Synthesizing (creating from parts) Joining, Integrating, Summarizing, Contextualizing</p> <p>Reasoning (revealing meaning) Interpreting, Inferring, Deducing, Inducing, Abstracting</p> <p>Validating Understanding (for reliability) Ensuring compatibility, Thinking skeptically, Validating completeness, Bounding</p>	
Applying Knowledge	
<p>Performing with Knowledge (in real context) Clarifying expectations, Strategizing, Using prior knowledge, Transferring</p> <p>Modeling (in abstract context) Analogizing, Exemplifying, Simplifying, Generalizing, Quantifying, Diagramming</p> <p>Being Creative (in new contexts) Challenging assumptions, Envisioning, Linear thinking, Divergent thinking, Transforming images, Lateral thinking</p> <p>Validating Results (for appropriateness) Complying, Benchmarking, Validating</p>	
Solving Problems	
<p>Identifying the Problem (to establish focus) Recognizing the problem, Defining the problem, Identifying stakeholders, Identifying issues, Identifying constraints</p> <p>Structuring the Problem (to direct action) Categorizing issues, Establishing requirements, Subdividing, Selecting tools</p> <p>Creating Solutions (for quality results) Reusing solutions, Implementing, Choosing alternatives, Harmonizing solutions</p> <p>Improving Solutions (for greater impact) Generalizing solutions, Ensuring robustness, Analyzing risks, Ensuring value</p>	
Conducting Research	
<p>Formulating Research Questions (to guide inquiry) Locating relevant literature, Identifying missing knowledge, Stating research questions, Estimating research significance, Writing measurable outcomes</p> <p>Obtaining Evidence (to support research) Designing experiments, Selecting methods, Extracting results, Replicating results</p> <p>Discovering (to expand knowledge) Testing hypotheses, Reasoning with theory, Constructing theory, Creating tools</p> <p>Validating Scholarship (for meaningful contribution) Defending scholarship, Responding to review, Confirming prior work, Judging scholarship</p>	

Social Domain

Communicating
<p>Receiving a Message Attending, Reading body language, Responding, Checking perceptions</p> <p>Preparing a Message Defining purpose, Knowing the audience, Organizing a message, Selecting word usage, Formatting a message, Illustrating</p> <p>Delivering a Message Selecting a venue, Generating presence, Sharing knowledge, Persuading, Storytelling, Managing transitions</p>
Relating with Others
<p>Inviting Interaction Taking an interest in others, Initiating interaction, Hosting, Expressing positive nonverbal signals, Assisting others, Being non-judgmental</p> <p>Relating for Meaning Belonging, Befriending, Empathizing, Collaborating, Parenting, Mentoring</p> <p>Performing in a Team Goal setting, Achieving consensus, Planning, Cooperating, Compromising</p> <p>Performing in an Organization Accepting responsibility, Being assertive, Making proposals, Documenting, Influencing decisions</p>
Relating Culturally
<p>Accepting Constraints Obeying laws, Inhibiting impulses, Noticing social cues, Recognizing conventions</p> <p>Living in Society Sharing traditions, Supporting institutions, Valuing communities, Reacting to history, Being a citizen</p> <p>Demonstrating Cultural Competence Clarifying stereotypes, Appreciating cultural differences, Generalizing appropriately, Using culture-specific expertise</p>
Managing
<p>Managing People Building consensus, Motivating, Modeling performance, Assessing performance, Evaluating performance</p> <p>Building and Maintaining Teams Defining team roles, Setting rules, Delegating authority, Confronting poor performance, Recruiting, Mediating</p> <p>Managing Communication Connecting with stakeholders, Networking, Marketing, Sustaining change</p> <p>Managing Resources Negotiating, Politicking, Securing resources, Creating productive environments</p>
Leading
<p>Envisioning Projecting the future, Seeing implications, Balancing perspectives, Responding to change</p> <p>Building a Following Inspiring, Sharing a vision, Generating commitment, Maintaining integrity</p> <p>Maintaining Commitment Meeting individual needs, Taking meaningful stands, Thinking opportunistically, Being charismatic</p> <p>Empowering Giving credit, Encouraging ownership, Grooming subordinates, Being a servant leader</p>



Affective Domain

Receiving (Being Open to Experience)

Exploring Self

Observing self, Listening to self, Perceiving reactions, Body awareness, Identifying emotions

Exploring Surroundings

Being curious, Being open, Being positive, Being playful, Being active

Experiencing Emotions

Feeling loved, Grieving, Feeling joyful, Laughing, Responding to aesthetics, Feeling secure

Responding (Engaging in Life)

Emoting

Loving, Caring, Respecting, Giving, Comforting

Addressing Life's Changes

Coping, Persisting, Accepting help, Believing in oneself, Responding to failure, Appreciating evaluation

Leveraging Life's Successes

Responding to success, Being humble, Seeking assessment, Celebrating, Acknowledging others

Organizing (Managing Oneself)

Regulating Self

Responding to requests, Recognizing dissonance, Managing dissonance, Managing resources, Prioritizing, Being self-disciplined

Managing Performance

Being decisive, Committing to the future, Preparing, Rehearsing, Challenging standards, Being self-efficacious, Orchestrating emotions

Managing Emotions

Modulating emotions, Recognizing emotional contexts, Preparing for future emotions, Modeling emotions

Valuing/Cultivating Values

Valuing Self

Building identity, Evolving a personal philosophy, Trusting self, Caring for self, Reflecting

Valuing Natural Laws

Appreciating diversity, Valuing nature, Valuing family/significant others, Being spiritual

Refining Personal Values

Identifying values, Exploring beliefs, Clarifying one's value system, Validating values, Aligning with social values, Accepting ownership

Internalizing

Synergizing Feelings

Associating feelings, Interpreting feelings, Analyzing feelings, Predicting feelings, Objectifying emotions, Exploring emotions

Facilitating Personal Development

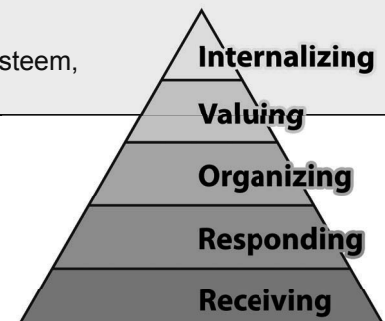
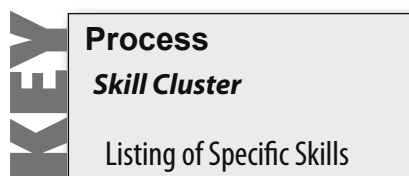
Recognizing personal potential, Seeking assessment, Seeking mentoring, Being patient

Challenging Self

Exploring potential, Expanding identity, Being courageous, Being proactive, Growing culturally, Being empathic

Committing Beyond Self

Committing to caring, Accepting outcomes, Acting on beliefs, Enhancing self-esteem, Maturing, Self-actualizing



Self-Growth Paper

by Cody Rivers

(used with permission)

Written at the Scholar's Institute at Grand Valley State University, 2011

The step that is needed to be taken in order to be truly successful, not only in school, but in life as a whole, is knowing how to learn and improve upon yourself. It is being able to take full control over your life and being able to form yourself into the person you want to be — setting your priorities where you want them to be, making decisions you want to make, and ultimately becoming the person you want to become. Over the course of the past week, I have come to understand this process which is known as being a self-grower. I have come to realize that I am the one in control of my own life. I am in control of what motivates me.

I am also ultimately in control of how I perform and how I respond and learn from each performance. But this step toward self-actualization did not happen all at once; it took a complete sense of being broken down and then being remolded to teach me to think this way.

The most important transformation that came from the self-growth process is related to where my sense of motivation comes from. In the beginning, the community as a whole was out for the approval of the faculty and facilitators. We weren't looking at what we wanted to get out of the program, nor were we looking at what we wanted to learn; instead, we were looking at what the faculty wanted out of us. We set our goals and expressed what we wanted to work on and develop, but we deviated from our goals in order to please the faculty.

From the start of our education, we are trained to work for "the grade." We are trained to work to achieve a certain level of performance which is determined by another individual — a teacher, coach, instructor, etc. — with our success or failure based on **their** set of standards. We took this programmed mindset and applied it the Scholars Institute curriculum. Unfortunately, we soon realized that this approach wouldn't work for us due to the fact that even with our best effort, we would still be unable to complete the tasks set before us. This resulted in an immediate sense of failure within us. We weren't going to be able to "pass," let alone ace, the Scholar's Institute as we were so obviously accustomed to. As a result, we put an enormous amount of stress on ourselves, converted to an unhealthy lifestyle to maintain a high level of performance, and eventually, to some extent, crashed.

At this point, we began to analyze the situation. We decided that the process was inadequate and what was being asked of us was ridiculous. We began to criticize the system because it completely destroyed our sense of the "Comfort Zone." For example, we were told we were able to pick and choose our activities, yet we were still being encouraged to do everything. This created an inner conflict of intrinsic achievement versus extrinsic achievement. What we slowly

began to realize is that we were the controllers of our own destiny. The expectations were not going to go away, but it was up to us to decide which of those expectations needed to be met in order to improve on what we wanted to improve upon.

Now, I understand that we are not meant to look to others to see what we need to do, but instead look to ourselves to see what we want to come away with from a situation. This new sense of motivation was the turning point for me. No longer did I need to do something for the sake of another person, but instead do it for the sake of self-improvement. This was really our first step to understanding ourselves and understanding how we need to take charge of our growth (self-growth).

This new sense of motivation led to the next important breakthrough: self-assessment. Before stepping into the realm of self-assessment, I need to first explain what we previously thought assessment meant. Throughout high school, we are taught to look for the bad in what we do and improve upon those things and leave the good as is. While this provides an easy sense of gratification if you got a good grade, the concept of growth through the use of assessment was missing. Assessment is not about what you do wrong, but what you can improve upon and how you can facilitate that improvement. We learned that it is not weakness we must analyze, but instead the product as a whole. By understanding our strengths, areas of improvement, and insights we can truly grow from the experience.

Now back to what it took to implement that self-assessment in ourselves. In the beginning of the Institute, we looked to the faculty to assess our work and tell us how we did. As I mentioned before, we were looking for their approval. But as we developed this new sense of motivation we needed to come to a new realization on how we were to assess the effort we were putting in. This came in the form of self-assessment. We learned that we cannot grow from what we produced unless we analyze the final product. Without truly understanding our strengths, areas of improvement, and the insights we gained from the process, there was no way for us to grow from said process.

The strengths show where we have improved from where we were before; the areas for improvement help show where we could work to improve the quality of work next time; and finally the insights are what help us understand how to apply what we have taken from the whole process and how we might apply it to a new situation. Through doing this we began to no longer need the approval of another; we could assess ourselves and grow from ourselves, not from the endorsement of another person. This became a liberating factor: We no longer needed another person in order to grow, but instead could independently monitor and facilitate our own growth.

Another aspect of self-improvement came through learning the value of collaboration. While we are now better self-growers, the growth we can attain through others is tremendous. Through cooperation, we develop a new perspective. Through using others as tools we can arrive at new approaches and solutions to problems that we would have never conceptualized alone. With cooperation in play we can arrive at solutions much quicker and more efficiently than ever before. One potential setback in team performance is not understanding how to make a team a

successful entity. The roles of the individuals are truly what make the team work. Everyone has their strengths and their areas for improvement. What playing each individual's roles does is keep the process moving in a positive direction. I have learned that without understanding and following this, the team is doomed to failure and frustration.

Another aspect to a successful team is the effective use of communication, both written and verbal. Without each individual having the ability to successfully convey their idea or opinion, the group, again, fails. This is because when working in a group, each individual's perspective is crucial to understanding and then solving the problem at hand. Without being able to effectively communicate that perspective the team falls apart. When a team truly collaborates, there is a transformation from a set of individuals to a single entity that works efficiently to solve a problem. This became very apparent through the use of the problem solving simulation known as the "Fish Bowl." This test of team problem solving allowed us to really examine the concept of collaboration and teamwork. What we found was that initially we functioned as independent entities, working through the problem in our heads and trying to come up with a solution to the problem independently. We found that when the synergy became noticeable, we began to become more effective workers and transform from this team of individuals into elements of a single team. We became more efficient and effective, and given more time, would have eventually been successful at the problem at hand.

The final aspect of self-growth I am going to touch on is the role of perspective. Not the perspective previously spoken about that is gathered from other individuals, but rather, the perspective that connects what we just learned with the application of that learning in a completely unrelated context. Having and experiencing this perspective is what makes being a self-grower worth it. I can now take something that I just learned and apply that same methodology to something completely unrelated, but get positive results due to knowing how the process generally works. While this was possibly one of the more difficult concepts to grasp, it is also one of the most rewarding and valuable tools I achieved through the process of becoming a self-grower. The realization that you can take any learned process and apply it to many other contexts successfully is empowering. It gives the sense of self-actualization that I can be successful at anything just by applying what I know to the problem and learning to grow from the process.

The process of becoming a self-grower is a long, painful process that brings about the most empowering sensation that one can experience. The liberation achieved by knowing that I can stand on my own two feet, independent of the rest of the world, and take my destiny into my own hands is an incredible feeling. I can now go into the world of the Honor's College and know I am prepared to take on anything it has to throw at me. And not only can I take it on, but I can use what I learn to apply that knowledge to every aspect of my everyday life. I can now make the connections between my school life and the rest of my life and continue pushing myself to be a better version of me without needing to wait and work for the approval and consent of another person. This process allows me to now not only improve myself, but to also gain a greater understanding about what makes me who I am today and where I will be going tomorrow.

Performance Analysis and Assessment

(based on the Performance Model)

Name _____ Date _____

Performance _____

Identity

Describe the Identity: _____

How will awareness of **identity** help to improve the performance? _____

Learning Skills

Describe the key Learning Skills: _____

How will improving these **skills** help to improve the performance? _____

Knowledge

Describe the Knowledge: _____

How will increasing the level of **knowledge** help to improve the performance? _____

Context

Describe the Context: _____

How will awareness of **context** help to improve the performance? _____

Personal Factors

Describe the existing Personal Factors: _____

How might the **personal factors** be addressed in order to help improve the performance? _____

Fixed Factors

Describe the Fixed Factors: _____

Can awareness of **fixed factors** help to improve the performance? How? _____

**IN MY CLASS**

Growing Your Performance

WHY

In nearly every life scenario, there are stars and those who just get by. Everyone has abundant opportunities to be the person that others view as a star performer. You become a star performer by learning how to learn, by reflecting upon and self-assessing performance, and finally by creating a mindset that says, “Yes, I can become the person I want to be!”

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This learning activity will teach you to:

1. Articulate the means by which you can advance each aspect of performance according to the Theory of Performance.
2. Learn to analyze the aspects of performance for the various roles in which you function, thus improving your ability to perform more successfully.
3. Effectively analyze a performance using the **Performance Analysis and Assessment worksheet**.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

If you successfully complete this activity, you will be able to:

Produce a strong performance analysis of a high-quality learner (in this case, an honor student)

- Accurately describe the depth and breadth of the honor student’s articulation of his performance
- Demonstrate accuracy in differentiating the components of this performance

MODEL

My Freshman Year: Memories of an Honor Student

PLAN

1. Form and work together in learning teams.
2. Share your discoveries from the ON MY OWN section of this experience. What were the two most important things you learned?
3. Read the model.
4. Fill out the **Performance Analysis worksheet** as a team, focusing on the Model.
5. Individually answer the Critical Thinking Questions.

RESOURCES

My Freshman Year: Memories of an Honor Student
Performance Analysis and Assessment worksheet

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe the aspects of the Theory of Performance to another student?
2. What are the elements found in the Performance Analysis worksheet?
3. What are some of the key characteristics of a high-quality learner (“honor student”)?
4. From your high school experiences, in which of the aspects of the Theory of Performance are you strongest or most prepared?

5. In which areas of your performance as a quality learner are you least prepared?
6. Why is the strength of your identity critical to your belief in your own success in college?
7. What strategy did you use to analyze the performance of the honor student in the Model?

My Freshman Year: Memories of an Honor Student

I'll be the first to admit that I was a big fish in a little pond in high school. My graduating class wasn't that big – there were only 175 of us. I graduated in the top ten; I was number six. Most of my friends were in the top ten as well, and we were all fairly typical honor students. When it came to where we all decided to go to college, I was the odd one out. Most of the rest went to either top-notch but small liberal arts schools (those who didn't want to get lost in the proverbial shuffle) or fairly local colleges (those who didn't want to have to transition too much in their lives as they tackled academic challenges).

I could have gone pretty much anywhere, I think, but I selected my university because it was the biggest one I could find: UT Austin. It is the largest public university in the world; and that was exactly what I wanted after being in a small pond for so long. I wanted to be another fish, swimming among so many others, truly challenging myself. I believed that I was a good student – straight As were rarely a problem – but my only measures were my peers (in a smallish school) and standardized tests. College would be my real test, and while I felt confident, I also wanted to truly know if I was good enough.

The year I graduated from high school, my father retired from the Army and couldn't take a civil service job for a year. That meant that the family budget was a bit tight during the time I was starting college. I had applied for and received a scholarship for my freshman year (renewable every year based on my grades) that paid for tuition and books. What I failed to take into account when applying for admission and planning was the cost of housing. By the time I really got things together with that application, the only rooms left were far too expensive. The only other possibility was to live off-campus in an inexpensive apartment. That was more than OK by me; it meant even more freedom. No worrying about a roommate, no having to cope with the noise of other people...no problem!

What I didn't really think through was that 1) I only had a bicycle, 2) I couldn't afford much in the way of furniture or niceties, and 3) I was lonely in a city where I knew NO ONE and lived alone off campus. While I managed to bike to classes even in horrible rain and do the best I could without much furniture, it was truly depressing to wake up some mornings and realize that no one knew me. No one around me cared enough to ask how I was doing, and if I got sick, other than calling home, I just had to take care of myself. That was a sobering realization and probably evened out the "freedom" and silence conducive to studying that living alone off-campus gave me.

But it wasn't all doom and gloom, not even much of it, actually. When I saw the course catalog, I nearly fainted with joy. I felt like a kid in a candy shop. There were so many amazing classes I could take! I registered for 19 hours; Calculus (4 hours), Chemistry (3 hours), Engineering Physics (3 hours + 1 hour lab), English (3 hours), and Latin (5 hours). My calculus class was mostly a waste; I learned early on that the "lectures" were just reviews of the homework, and the professor didn't even take attendance. I quit going more than once a week when I figured that out because I didn't need the reviews as long as I did all the homework and practice problems in the book. My chemistry class was dull but gave us a ton of homework, probably 1-1/2 hours per night, EVERY night. Engineering Physics was a great class, but the professor was very old fashioned. Any time we used a formula on a test, we had to also DERIVE that formula. This was great for learning but ended up being a killer, time-wise. That class also started at 7am which was really hard lots of mornings as I was up doing homework until after midnight. English class was awesome, and the books we read were great (lots of postmodern literary criticism – a whole new world for me), but it took at least an hour every day. The Latin class was by far my favorite, and I ended up making several friends in that course. But it was an absolute killer with homework. Not only did we meet every day, Monday through Friday for class, but we had at least an hour of homework every night. I

ended up meeting one of my new friends, Melinda, in the Student Union at least three times a week, and we'd drill each other on our Latin verbs and proofread each other's translations.

More times than I can count, I fell asleep at a reading table in the Math & Science library; thankfully, it was open until midnight. As you can imagine, I didn't have much time for a social life, but there were some fun things. The classics and theater society used to put on midnight dramas, and I went to several of these; I saw the *The Fall of the House of Usher*, by Edgar Allen Poe, and thinking about that still gives me chills. I also played intramural soccer though I couldn't always make the practices because of homework. Money was extremely tight, and one of my real treats was a fully-loaded baked potato at one of the restaurants at the student union each Friday. I also used to take my English books with me to a nearby neighborhood that had huge magnolia trees and a little grassy park. Sitting there in good weather while reading was an incredibly calming experience.

And through it all, I worked harder than I ever have in my life. It was nice to come home during Christmas break, and I spent spring break with a new friend and her family in Houston. It was always good to get back to school, and the amazing feeling of being challenged with things I never thought I'd be able to do and then DOING them was incredible. But it was a lot. Too much, in fact. I didn't get enough sleep and ended up only pulling a C in chemistry (there just weren't enough hours in the day to get all the homework done for all the classes) and a B in Engineering Physics (though I got an A+ in the lab).

I guess I learned something after this because the next semester, I only registered for 13 hours: Calculus II (3 hours), Technical Writing (3 hours), Latin (5 hours), Harp (2 hours). That qualified as full-time but barely. I realized that as smart as I thought I was, I had bitten off WAY more than I could chew, especially with the challenges of life – washing my clothes at a laundromat, only shopping for as much food as I could carry in my backpack and on my bike, then having my bicycle stolen and having to walk everywhere for a month, and so on. That semester was far better, and taking the harp course (learning to play a full-size concert harp) was one of the best things I've ever done. I was always musically inclined and had played piano ever since I was a young child. That plus being in band and symphony during high school were more a part of my identity than I had realized; I hadn't appreciated how much music de-stressed me and just sort of re-centered and refreshed me. Being able to set aside the Latin or Calculus homework and bike to the music department (even though it was a couple of miles away) and just practice harp for a hour was a big part of what kept me feeling good that second semester.

My scholarship was based on me being a physics major as well as my GPA, and I had come to realize that as much as I loved physics and the sciences, Latin and languages just sparked my passion like nothing I'd ever experienced before. I knew that if I followed my heart, I would be without a scholarship for at least the next year. That meant changing schools to somewhere far less expensive and possibly working part-time. As supportive as my parents were, there simply wasn't enough money to pay for my college after a year of paying my off-campus rent and utilities. And that's fair enough; they had three more kids at home to think about.

A year of the life and education I'd just experienced had taught me that I was capable of not only continuing with my education and actually excelling at it (if nothing else, I learned how to study very effectively!), but that I was capable of taking care of myself and making some tough choices. It might not be easy, but even when it's supposed to be easy, it isn't always. But after my freshman year at college, I knew that I could do what I had to do, earning the degree that I wanted, gaining the education that mattered most to me, and finding a way to pay for school and take care of myself. That's an invaluable lesson that this big fish would never have learned had she not taken a long and sometimes terrifying swim in the ocean.

Performance Analysis and Assessment

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How might the **personal factors** be addressed in order to help improve the performance? _____

Fixed Factors

Describe the Fixed Factors: _____

Can awareness of **fixed factors** help to improve the performance? How? _____



MY LEARNING & GROWTH

CHALLENGE

It is difficult and yet profoundly important to get to know yourself better. Right now, the part of that challenge you should focus on is completing an analysis of where you are today and then deciding where you want to be by the end of the course. This course will provide you with the means to start the life journey of self-growth, build a tool set for improving learning and self-development, and develop a clear vision of what you want to become.

TOOLS/WORKSHEETS

Performance Analysis and Assessment worksheet

Self-Growth Goals worksheet

My Life Vision worksheet

PREPARATION

With a **Performance Analysis and Assessment worksheet**, analyze your performance as a learner in high school (or whatever major learning experience preceded where you are now).

PROBLEMS TO SOLVE

After reviewing the Performance Levels for Self-Growers, the list of Learning Skills, and your current performance, select three areas in which you want to improve. Complete the **Self-Growth Goals worksheet** contained in this activity. You will revisit these goals throughout the course, periodically assessing your performance as you strive to meet the goals. This effort will become a critical part of your capstone effort for the course, a Self-Growth Paper.

MY LIFE VISION

Complete the following reading, “Who Am I,” and follow its instructions for the **My Life Vision worksheet** for this experience. This is part of your analysis of where you are now and marks the start of your new journey.

Who Am I?

Exploring the qualities and characteristics that make up who you are as a person is a valuable exercise. Each person has positive and negative qualities and characteristics. If you find that you have qualities that may hold you back from achieving your goals, you can make changes that will positively affect your future.

An important part of who we are is determined by the characteristics or qualities that we possess, qualities like humor, intelligence, strength, warmth, self-assurance, anxiety, shyness, etc. Many of these qualities are inherited from our parents, but some evolve out of our experiences and upbringing.

We also have both positive and negative characteristics—no one is perfect—and it is important to be aware of them both. If people focus too much on their negative characteristics and are not aware of their positive qualities, then they can begin to lose their self-esteem. Low self esteem can have negative effects, such as depression, drug and alcohol abuse, lack of motivation, poor grades in school, etc. On the other

You should start your **My Life Vision worksheet** for this experience by picking out some nouns or adjectives that describe your qualities or characteristics. For example, I might pick out these nouns or adjectives to describe some of my qualities: exaggerated, grumpy, funny, intuitive, worried, strong, caretaker. The adjectives or nouns should be both positive and negative. Then you will develop each of these adjectives by discussing how and why they describe you. For the adjectives or nouns that you are not so crazy about, you should write about why you think you have these qualities—what you think makes you the way that you are—and how these characteristic have affected your life up until this point. Then you will discuss how you might try to make changes in those parts of yourself.

Self-growers understand that reviewing performance as they strive for improvement is valuable. Recognizing our gains and growth as well as areas where we still need to work is important.

[illegible]

ACTIVITY END

Performance Analysis and Assessment

(based on the Performance Model)

Name _____ Date _____

Performance _____

Identity

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Learning Skills

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How might the **personal factors** be addressed in order to help improve the performance? _____

Fixed Factors

Describe the Fixed Factors: _____

Can awareness of **fixed factors** help to improve the performance? How? _____

Self-Growth Goals

Name _____ Date _____

1. _____

Action plan *(how I plan to work to meet this goal)*

Measure *(how I will know when I have met this goal)*

2. _____

Action plan *(how I plan to work to meet this goal)*

Measure *(how I will know when I have met this goal)*

3. _____

Action plan *(how I plan to work to meet this goal)*

Measure *(how I will know when I have met this goal)*

My Life Vision

(continued on the other side)

Name _____ Date _____

Topic Who Am I?

[illegible]