

**The executive functions and universal design documents that I linked to during the session are included at the end of this document.**

# **Supporting Executive Function In and Out of the Classroom**

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**Nakita Maddox, Cornerstones Career Learning Center**

**January 8, 2025**

**Welcome!**  
**Scratch paper recommended**  
**Cameras: On or Off**  
**Questions/Comments: Out loud or in the chat box**  
**Session Is Not Recorded**  
**Slides will be posted on [SDALL.org](https://www.sdall.org)**

Based on resources used in the Landmark College course

“Academic Strategies and Executive Function Supports  
for Students with LD, ADHD, and Autism”

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See [sdall.org/25ws/](https://sdall.org/25ws/) for original documents

# Supporting Executive Function In and Out of the Classroom

**1**

**What executive function roadblocks might students run into in my program?**

**2**

**What techniques can I use to help students overcome these roadblocks?**

# Executive Function

Executive Function (EF) refers to a set of mental skills that enable planning, focus, memory, and task management.

Self-directed actions to affect the future

(Pursue future state vs current state)

# Who Benefits from Executive Function Support?

## Individuals with ADHD (ADD)

Russell Barkley suggests a more accurate name for ADHD is EFDD (executive function deficit disorder)

## And Those with:

Some traumatic brain injuries  
Autism Spectrum Disorders  
Depression  
Addiction  
OCD  
Schizophrenia  
(and more)

## Everyone, Sometimes

“EF is based on a limited resource pool that can be depleted....”

The pool is shared and nonspecific across various EF processes.” - Barkley

# EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

Brown's Model

1



Activation

2



Focus

3



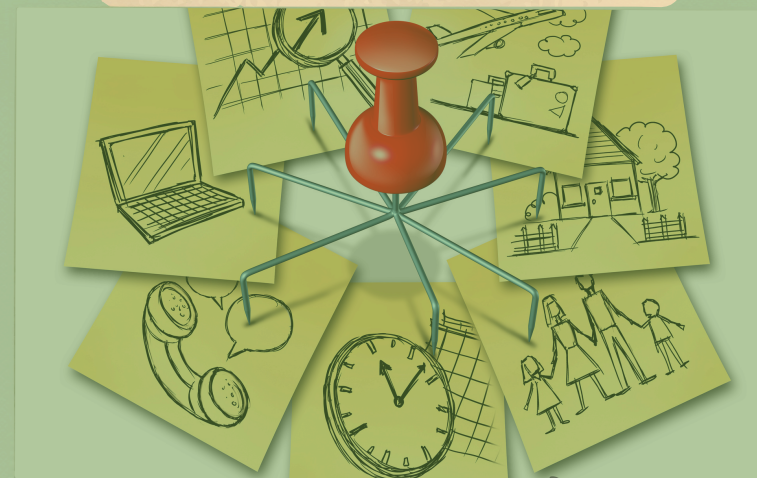
Effort

4



Emotion

5



Memory

6



Action

# Think Pair Share

## Prompt:

Discuss where might you see these struggles in your program. Think about your classroom, your enrollment process, and the “outside of class” tasks.



\*When I open the breakout rooms, click “join room” if prompted to do so. Your screen will be black to begin with - I will share my screen soon. Please turn on cameras if able. (Turn off if having internet issues.) If you have trouble in the breakout room, you can leave the breakout room.

## ACTIVATION

### WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Difficulty starting tasks

Struggles to identify, sequence, and internalize the steps needed to complete a task

Struggles with prioritizing and organizing

Feels “paralyzed” (want to start, but can’t - different from procrastination)

### ACADEMIC EXAMPLES

Disconnect between abilities in class vs independently

Misses Deadlines

Avoids starting large projects

feels overwhelmed or doesn’t know where to start.

Continues studying something they’ve mastered instead of moving onto testing.

**WHERE MIGHT STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH STARTING A TASK? ...**

## FOCUS

### STUDENTS MIGHT

Hyperfocus on the details, can’t see the big picture

focus only on the now - lack of forethought

Lack of sense of time

shift attention between multiple tasks

### ACADEMIC EXAMPLES

Disconnect between short-term timeline and long-term timeline.

Focused on a skill or topic that isn’t very relevant to their goal.

Have difficulty predicting how long a task will take.

Overwhelmed by trying to study everything all at once

**BRAINSTORM: WHERE MIGHT STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH FOCUS? ...**

## EFFORT

### WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Tires easily  
Sleep issues

Extra time to process

Struggles to sustain motivation

### ACADEMIC EXAMPLES

Is very motivated in the beginning, but becomes less motivated over time. (May stop and start over time.)

Struggles to finish tasks. -May ask to change classes frequently or may come and go from your program.

Miss appointments due to sleep issues.

May need extra time to complete a task.

**WHERE MIGHT STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH SUSTAINING MOTIVATION OR NEEDING EXTRA PROCESSING TIME? ...**

# EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

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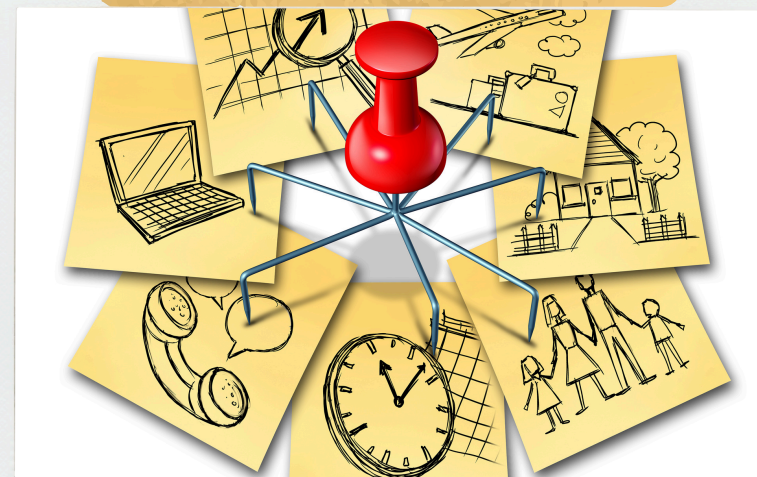
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## EMOTION

### STUDENTS MAY HAVE...

difficulty regulating mood and emotions

difficulty managing stress

difficulty letting go of negative thoughts, experiences

### ACADEMIC EXAMPLES

Stops out when stressed (such as after failing a test)

Uncomfortable during initial appointment

Express an initial strong emotion (Sometimes followed by a more “logic-based” reaction)

Avoids stress-inducing tasks (testing)

**BRAINSTORM: WHERE MIGHT STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH EMOTIONAL REGULATION?** ... ↗

## MEMORY

### STUDENTS MIGHT HAVE DIFFICULTY...

remembering sequence of steps

holding info in mind

recalling past events and experiences

with multi-step oral instructions

### ACADEMIC EXAMPLES

Forgets appointments

Not starting on an activity after you gave verbal directions.

Makes mistakes when copying or transferring information. / Asks for physical copies of material. (Struggles with online testing.)

Trouble remembering steps from one problem to another  
Run into the same roadblock multiple times

**WHERE MIGHT STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH MEMORY (WORKING MEMORY)** ... ↗

## ACTION

### STUDENTS MAY...

Struggle with regulation of motivation

Drop a project midstream

Act or react impulsively,

taking on too many tasks

Work at inconsistent pace = too slow at start, then rushing to finish

### ACADEMIC EXAMPLES

Changes study plan or focus frequently

Overwhelmed by trying to study everything at once

Joins and leaves program abruptly.

Very motivated in the beginning, but loses steam.

**WHERE MIGHT STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH ACTION?** ... ↗

# Supporting Executive Function In and Out of the Classroom

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What executive function roadblocks might my students run into in my program?

2

What techniques can I use to help students overcome these roadblocks?



**“The issue isn’t  
in knowing what  
to do - It’s in  
doing what you  
know.” (Barkley)**

## **You Can’t Train Away ADHD Executive Dysfunction**

But you can more consistently get things done by creating systems in your life that support these brain processes. Here, learn the secrets to more reliably turning intentions into actions.

 ADDitude / Jan 10, 2024

# Universal Design Techniques

[Universal Design: A set of teaching practices aimed at creating an accessible learning environment for all students.]

1



Advance Organizer

2



Clear Directions

3



Strategizers

4



Summarizers

5



Connectors

6



Multi-Modal Techniques

7



Routines

8



Flexible Assessment

# Think Pair Share

## Prompt:

Refer back to the challenges you identified earlier.  
How might you address these challenges?



## ADVANCE ORGANIZERS AND CLEAR DIRECTIONS

Specific, concrete steps taken to organize and motivate students in advance.

Provides students a “map” of the upcoming activity (a sense of direction)  
reference point to understand the lesson

### Should be

Concise  
Concrete  
Organized  
Visual / Written  
Motivating  
Accessible where the students need the info

### Should not

not relying on transient, auditory directions

Model planning, prioritizing, and goal setting

Long-term projects should be designed for clarity with steps, built-in checkpoints, deadlines, and clear description of how it will be evaluated.

## STRATEGIZERS & SUMMARIZERS

Students may lack self-awareness about how to be strategic in their approaches to studying/learning, i.e. they may be “actively inefficient”

Students benefit from the principle of “less is more:” from cementing connections and understand on a regular basis

Teacher continually elicits “big picture” responses from students

Activities that regularly allow students to reflect on what kinds of strategies are and are not working for them in being successful in a particular class.

Teachers help students to explicitly understand effective approaches

Activities that allow frequent opportunities for students to summarize, review, and synthesize class material

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# Supporting Executive Function In and Out of the Classroom

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# Where Can I Learn More About Executive Function?

[These slides will be added to the resources on the SDALL website]

Landmark College documents about EF and Universal Design:

[sdall.org/25ws/](http://sdall.org/25ws/)

For a scientific approach to EF:

Executive Functions: What They Are, How They Work, and Why They Evolved (book - Dr. Russel A. Barkley)

For info on ADHD in adults:

“How to Manage Executive Function and Working Memory Challenges: A Guide for Adults with ADHD” (video - Peg Dawson, Ed.D., NCSP)

<https://www.additudemag.com/webinar/executive-functioning-adults-adhd-strategies/>

Additude Magazine article mentioned in presentation:

You Can't Train Away ADHD Executive Dysfunction (article - Ari Tuckman, Psy.D., MBA)

[https://www.additudemag.com/adhd-executive-dysfunction-how-to-be-more-productive-consistent/?ecd=wnl\\_additude\\_241213\\_cons\\_adhd\\_best&goal=0\\_d9446392d6-5e72456443-324424642](https://www.additudemag.com/adhd-executive-dysfunction-how-to-be-more-productive-consistent/?ecd=wnl_additude_241213_cons_adhd_best&goal=0_d9446392d6-5e72456443-324424642)



# Questions?

**Nakita Maddox**

**[nakita.maddox@cornerstonescareer.com](mailto:nakita.maddox@cornerstonescareer.com)**



# ACTION

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# **ADVANCE ORGANIZER**

**WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU KNOW ABOUT THE GED OR LEARNING ENGLISH THAT A NEW STUDENT WOULDN'T KNOW.**

**GOAL OF ADVANCE ORGANIZERS ISN'T TO OVERLOAD STUDENTS WITH EVERYTHING WE KNOW. THE GOAL IS TO BE MINDFUL OF WHAT IS IN OUR SCHEMA THAT ISN'T IN THEIRS.**



# ADVANCE ORGANIZERS AND CLEAR DIRECTIONS

3:00 Math January 6, 2025



TEXT: 605-550-0768

### Nakita Maddox's Zoom Class Guide

**MUTE**  
Please mute yourself when you're not talking.

**CAMERA**  
I don't care if you have your camera on or off.

**CHAT BOX**  
Use the chat box to send me your answers. Change "to: Everyone" to "to: Nakita (teacher)"

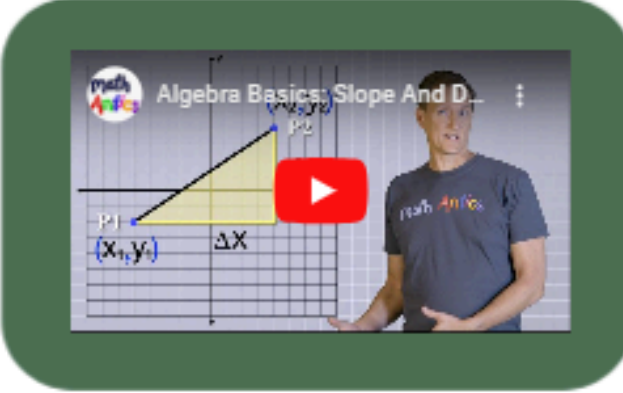
**CLUES**  
Not sure how to do a problem? Ask for a clue!

**LET ME KNOW IF...**

- We are going too fast
- You are confused
- You aren't able to talk or chat
- You have questions about final testing, etc.



January Packet page: Tour of Packet



January 2025				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		Office Closed		
		No Class - Office Closed		
Classes in session				
Classes in session				
No Class - Office Closed				
		Classes in session		

### 2025 Navigating the GED

Week of January 6

Evening Sessions:

- Summer session
- "Most Missed" - Math
- Summer session
- Preparing for College
- Summer session
- No Class

Afternoon Session:

- Summer session
- Geometry

Class January 6, 7  
No class January 1!

## 3:00 Math November 2024

Zoom Code: 857 [redacted]  
Class Resources: [redacted]  
Nakita Maddox - 605-550-0768 - nakita.maddox@cornerstonescareer.com

Reminder: No class on the 11th and 27th.

**Review:**

**PEMDAS**  
P parentheses  
E exponents  
MD multiply & divide  
AS add & subtract  
[from left to right]

**Solve for a Variable:**  
Goal: get the letter on one side of the equal sign by itself  
Inverse: do the opposite ((and do PEMDAS in reverse order)  
Balance: What you do to one side you have to do to the other

When a **point** is written as an **ordered pair** example: (3,5) or (4,-8) the **x** comes before the **y**.  
(Just like in the alphabet.)

In a table, the first column is the "x" and the second column is the "y"

**Distributive Property**  
multiply the number outside of the parentheses by each term inside the parentheses

**Solve Geometry Problems:**  
Look up the formula  
Plug in what you know  
Goal: get the letter on one side of the equal sign by itself

The **x** tells you how far to go **left or right**.  
The **y** tells you how far to go **up or down**.  
(positive = up or right)  
(negative = down or left)

**m** stands for **slope**. That is how steep a line is.  
**b** stands for **y-intercept**. That is where the line crosses the y axis.

ABCDEF G  
HIJKLMN  
OPQRST  
UVW(X,Y)Z

x	y

Navigating the GED Zoom ID: [redacted]

# ADVANCE ORGANIZERS AND CLEAR DIRECTIONS



## CORNERSTONES

CAREER LEARNING CENTER

GED Initial Appointment



610 W. 23rd St.  
Yankton, SD



Suite 1



follow the signs

### What to expect:

Appointments typically last around 30 mins.

Learn about our program and complete enrollment paperwork (optional).

You do not need to bring anything.



Need to reschedule? No problem!  
Reply to this message or call 605-668-1111

**EDUCATION PLAN APPOINTMENT**  
APPOINTMENT TIME: 15-20 MINUTES

At this appointment, we will discuss your TABE results and create a study plan. This includes signing up for Zoom classes.

Zoom Classes		
Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays		
<b>Early Morning</b>	Math 8:30-10:00 Mon/Tues/Wed Karen	
<b>Late Morning</b>	Reading 10:30-12:00 Mon/Tues/Wed Karen	Science 10:30-12:00 Mon/Tues/Wed Becky
<b>Afternoon</b>	Math 3:00-4:30 Mon/Tues/Wed Nakita	
<b>Evening</b>	Math 6:00-7:30 Mon/Tues/Wed Confort	Reading / Social Studies 6:00-7:30 Mon/Tues/Wed Jeremy

**Additional Study Options**

**Navigating the GED**  
Short Zoom lessons on a variety of topics to help you navigate the GED test  
Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays 5:00 - 6:00 pm  
and Tuesdays 1:00 - 2:00 pm

**GED Academy**  
Study outside of class with GED Academy's independent learning lessons.

# ADVANCE ORGANIZERS AND CLEAR DIRECTIONS

## A GED Ready Math test has been added to your GED.com account!

(Takes about 1 hour)

The GED Ready test predicts how you will score on the final test.

You can take this test from home on a computer or in our office. You have 60 days to complete this test.

### How to take a GED Ready test:

1. Log in at [www.ged.com](http://www.ged.com)
2. Click on the bell in top right corner.
3. Click on the message that says "You have a new GED Ready assignment."
4. Take the test.
5. Let me know when you are done.




### Scores:

Scores are usually available within an hour.  
Find your scores under the "My Scores" tab.



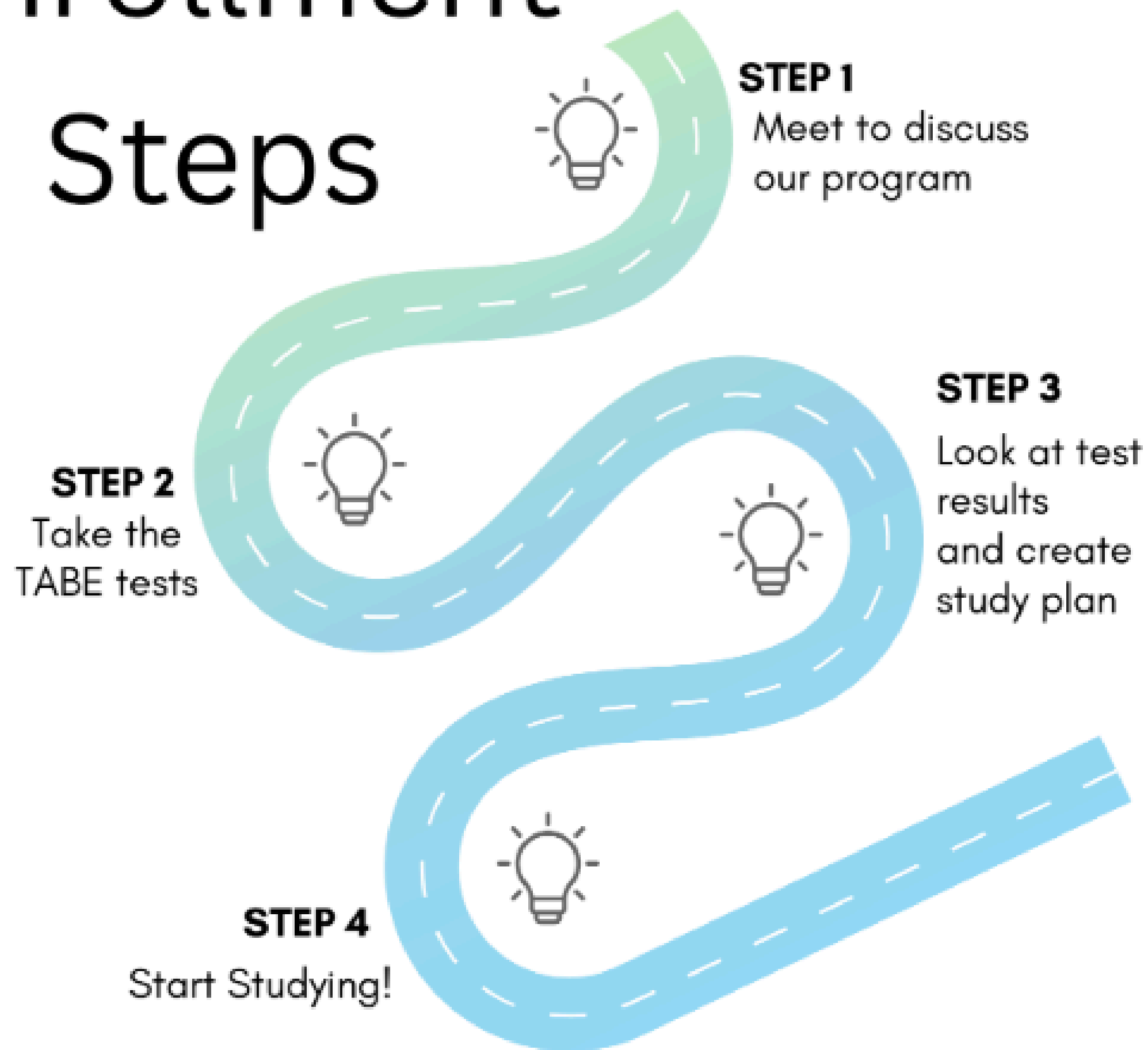
## Create your [www.ged.com](http://www.ged.com) account.

(Takes about 10 minutes)

1. Go to [www.ged.com](http://www.ged.com)
2. Click on  in the upper right corner
3. Follow the instructions to create an account
4. When asked if you are enrolled in GED classes, select the Cornerstones office nearest to you.
5. Send me a message when your are done.

You will use this account for taking GED Ready practice tests, registering for GED final tests, and checking your test scores.

# Enrollment Steps



\*After 40 hours of studying (or as determined by your teacher)  
you will take another test to see your progress.

## ABOUT THE TABE TEST

The TABE tests tells us what you need to study. They help us create your study plan.

**READING**  
2 HOURS 30  
MINUTES

**MATH**  
1 HOUR 30  
MINUTES

**LANGUAGE**  
1 HOUR 15 MINUTES

# STRATEGIZERS & SUMMARIZERS

Students may lack self-awareness about how to be strategic in their approaches to studying/learning, i.e. they may be “actively inefficient”

Students benefit from the principle of “less is more:” from cementing connections and understand on a regular basis

Teacher continually elicits “big picture” responses from students

Activities that regularly allow students to reflect on what kinds of strategies are and are not working for them in being successful in a particular class.

Activities that allow frequent opportunities for students to summarize, review, and synthesize class material

Teachers help students to explicitly understand effective approaches

# STRATEGIZERS & SUMMARIZERS



## You Scored "Yellow"

What this means:  
You are almost there! You should study a bit more before taking the final test.

Want to see what you missed?  
Click "My Scores" at [www.ged.cc](http://www.ged.cc) then click "score report."

What's next?  
Here's a 5 minute activity that you can do now to help you in future tests.  
(Click the link below.)

### TABE Test Scores

Reading	NRS Level	Math	NRS Level 2
Language	NRS Level		

Find your level(s) here:	What scoring in this level means:
NRS Level 1	Scoring in Level 1 means you will want to focus on this subject. You would benefit from taking a Zoom class in this subject area.
NRS Level 2	This is a very common score. This means you have some base knowledge, but will need to focus on this subject. You would benefit from taking a Zoom class in this subject area.
NRS Level 3	This score means you have a strong foundation, but need to work on some of the upper level skills in this subject. You would benefit from taking a Zoom class in this subject area.
NRS Levels 4, 5, and 6	Scoring 4, 5, or 6 means you are ready or very close to ready to take your final GED test in this area. You may need to brush up on some test-specific skills and then will take an official GED practice test in this subject area.

**Notes:**  
strongest area: geometry  
areas to work on: fractions and equations

Do you plan to finish your GED by the end of the year (December 2024)?

YES

NO

What do you want to do after you earn your GED?

College, Tech School,  
or Training Program

Keep doing what  
I'm doing

Apply for a new job  
or promotion

I'm not sure

Reply to this message, or use the link below to help you create a plan.

How well do you know the  
GED Formula Sheet?

What does the "r" in  
 $V = \pi r^2 h$  stand for?

A radical

B radius

C root

CORNERSTONES  
CAREER LEARNING CENTER

link below to learn about the GED formula sheet.

Just checking in.

How was your first week of class?!



# Where are you at?



**Tell me what you know about one of the boxes**

<p>PEMDAS P E MD AS → Exponents:</p>	<b>1</b>	<p>Distributive Property</p>	<b>2</b>
<p>Solve for a Variable:</p>	<b>3</b>	<p>Solve Geometry Problems:</p>	<b>4</b>
<p>Goal:</p>		<p>Look up:</p>	
<p>Inverse:</p>		<p>Plug in:</p>	
<p>Balance:</p>		<p>Goal:</p>	

**If you finish early (optional): Tell me about another box.**