“Beyond the Basics”

The Learning Contract

A Learning Contract is a specific agreement between the student and teacher and/or parents that allows opportunities for various choices in exploring, learning, applying and completing a product within certain specifications. It is used to expand, enrich and extend the essential curriculum. The Learning Contract provides differentiated opportunities according to Learning Styles which help define interests and abilities.
Uses of Learning Contracts

“The goal of the contract is to provide students with a structure that will allow them to take responsibility for their own learning while giving them freedom to explore content and develop themselves……”

Jeremy Zhe
The Teaching Effectiveness Program
Academic Learning Services, 65 PLC,
University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon

- Vehicle for students to try a new way of learning
- Personalization of learning
- Technology can be incorporated into the learning
- Opportunities to approach student achievement gaps for individuals or small groups
- Helps students get involved with decision-making by designing and following a specific plan for learning
- Modified or adjusted to needs
- Teaching by student interest

“…it changes the student from being merely reactive…to being proactive in taking the initiative in proposing work to meet the requirements.”

James Atherton, DeMontfort University, 2003
## Learning Styles Chart to Identify Interests and Abilities

Howard Gardner, Harvard University, 1991  
Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: Theory of multiple intelligences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic</th>
<th>Logical/Mathematical</th>
<th>Spatial</th>
<th>Musical</th>
<th>Kinesthetic</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Intrapersonal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likes to read</td>
<td>Likes to explore patterns</td>
<td>Likes to draw</td>
<td>Likes Music</td>
<td>Likes to move around</td>
<td>Likes lots of friends</td>
<td>Likes to work alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plays Word Games</td>
<td>Uses reasoning and calculating to figure things out</td>
<td>Spends time solving puzzles</td>
<td>Sensitive to sounds in their environment</td>
<td>Communicates by using body language</td>
<td>Joins groups or clubs</td>
<td>Tends to shy away from others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is good at making up poetry or stories</td>
<td>Is good at problem-solving</td>
<td>Is good at hand-eye coordination and has a good sense of direction</td>
<td>Is good at rhythms and tones in music</td>
<td>Is good at physical activities like sports or dance</td>
<td>Is good at understanding people</td>
<td>Is good at following intuition and motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers, lawyers, journalists, teachers</td>
<td>Scientists, engineers, doctors, economists</td>
<td>Artists, engineers, architects</td>
<td>Singers, conductors, disc-jockeys, composers</td>
<td>Athletes, dancers, builders, surgeons</td>
<td>Sales, politicians, managers, social workers</td>
<td>Marine biologists, philosophers, psychologists, theologians, writers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes the computer</td>
<td>Likes to ask questions</td>
<td>Likes to design and create things</td>
<td>Likes to study with music in background</td>
<td>Likes acting and performing</td>
<td>Likes to work in large groups</td>
<td>Likes to pursue own interests and goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learns best by saying, seeing, and hearing</td>
<td>Learns best by categorizing, classifying, and investigating</td>
<td>Learns best by drawings, visual displays, photographs, video, multimedia</td>
<td>Learns best by using songs to memorize information</td>
<td>Learns best by hands-on activities, acting out, and role playing</td>
<td>Learns best by working with others, seminars, workshops</td>
<td>Learns best by books, diaries, creative materials, independent activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[http://www.tecweb.org/styles/gardner.html](http://www.tecweb.org/styles/gardner.html)  
What needs to go into a Learning Contract?

- What do you want to learn? .................................................. Information/Tasks
- How will you learn? .................................................. Process (Use the Learning Styles Chart)
- How much time will it take to complete the process? ......................... Timeline
- What will be the artifact to show evidence of the learning? ....................... Product
- Grouping of the Learning Contract? ............................ Individual, Small Group, Learning Center, Compacting, Class
- Assessment? ............................................................................................. Tool
- Person/s that will assess the Product? ............... Self, Group, Teacher, Committee

Components:
- Task
- Timeline
- Process
- Product
- Grouping
- Assessment Tool
- Person/s to Assess the Product
Example of a Learning Contract
Elementary

My Learning Adventure

Name: ________________________________ Date of Contract: ________________________________

Due Date/Timeline: ________________ Reason for the Choice: ________________________________

Topic or Question to be Answered: _______________________________________________________________________

Materials/Resources/Help Needed: _______________________________________________________________________

Product to Demonstrate Understanding and Application: ______________________________________________________

Grouping: ___________________________________________________________________________________________

Assessment Tool: ______________________________________________________________________________________

Evaluated by: ________________________________________________________________________________________

Here is what I know:

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

Student Signature ________________________________ Teacher Signature ________________________________

Parent(s) Signature ________________________________
Example of a Learning Contract
Secondary

Learning Contract

Name: ______________________________    Date of Contract: ____________________________

Due Date/Timeline: __________________ Reason for the Choice: _______________________

Content Area of Study: ______________________________________________________________

What question is to be answered?
___________________________________________________________________________________

Materials/Resources/Labs/Help Needed: _______________________________________________

Product to demonstrate understanding and application of the question answered:
____________________________________________________________________________________

Grouping: _________________________________________________________________________

Assessment Tool: ________________________________________________ __________________

Evaluated by: ______________________________________________________________________

Prior knowledge of the subject:

_________________________________   ________________________________

Student Signature    Teacher Signature
Links to Learning Contracts

http://faculty.tamu-commerce.edu/jthompson/Resources/LearningContracts.ppt

http://www.learningandteaching.info/teaching/learning_contracts.htm

http://www.centralischool.ca/~bestpractice/contract/index.html


Books and Resources

Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom (2001), published by Free Spirit Publishing. The book comes with a CD ROM of these and other forms that are customizable for classroom use.

Learning Contracts and Team Teaching in a University ESL Writing Class

David Schwarzer, Robert E. Kahn, and Kristi Smart
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The University of Texas at Austin (Texas, USA)