

## Self-Directed Learning

**Description** Self-directed learning is a general term for an approach rather than a specific medium or method. The teacher encourages students to become actively involved in the activities which are structured by the students in their own way. In this kind of learning, the responsibility for learning is shifted from the teachers to the students.

**Example** Many activities mentioned in this chapter such as project, problem-based learning and peer tutoring are good examples that capture the essence of self-directed learning. A learning contract is commonly used as a tool to assist students in planning for their learning goals and learning actions.

### *Learning Contract*

Each student writes an agreement with the teacher or supervisor that details what is to be learned, the resources and strategies available to assist in learning it, what will be produced as evidence of the learning having occurred and how that product will be assessed. It also specifies a commencement and completion date for the activity. The contract provides a focus for learning activities that are largely self-directed.

**How Active?** A self-directed learning approach shifts the responsibility for learning from the teachers to the students. In doing projects, solving problems in PBL, etc., students learn to work independently and devise their learning plans for themselves. Likewise, to complete a learning contract, students examine their expectations and capabilities, shape their own opinions and ideas, make their own decisions, choose their own activities, and generally take more responsibility for themselves. More than that, they actively find information themselves to construct the meanings.

**How Related to Real Life?** All kinds of self-learning activities like the learning contract help students to set their goals based on their needs, interest and abilities, and that makes learning more relevant to themselves.

**What Learning Outcomes?** Self-directed learning is effective in developing lifelong learning abilities as it allows students to explain and design their action plan, learn what and how to learn and lead themselves towards the goals. Students achieve the agreed learning outcomes through studying and thinking independently. At the same time, they learn to regulate their learning habits for higher achievements, and that develops them to be lifelong learners and self-evaluators.