



Are you...

- a teenager who did remote learning in the spring, and you have no desire to continue it in the fall?
- curious about homeschooling, but you have zero interest in doing “school at home”?
- already homeschooling but feeling ready to take more control over the process?

If you're a teenager who craves meaning, engagement, and ownership over your education, then Self-Directed Learning 101 is for you.

Status: Full with waitlist

From July 31 – August 10th we received 44 applications for 25 spots. The microschool is now full with a waitlist, and applications are closed.

Want to know if Self-Directed Learning 101 is offered again? Just drop your email in the box below.

Join author, adventurer, and coach Blake Boles for a 12-week journey in which you'll develop the tools, habits, and attitude necessary to become an effective self-directed learner.

We'll address meaning and purpose, productivity and work habits, support and socialization. You'll learn how to set clear goals—and how to discard goals that no longer serve you. You'll experiment with reaching out to strangers, making requests, and delegating tasks. You'll tackle your perfectionism and procrastination, and



Sept 15 – Dec 10, 2020



5-10 total hours / week

you'll gain detailed guidance on how self-directed learning leads to a full range of college and career options.

Most importantly, you'll learn all this *actively*, with lots of *doing* and *discussing*, not just sitting and listening.

The microschool will take place both synchronously (Zoom calls) and asynchronously (doing reading, research, and practical challenges on your own schedule), with timing optimized for teens in the Americas and Europe.

Any teenager may apply to join the microschool, but those with lots of free time and few conflicting commitments (i.e. parent- or school-assigned work) will benefit most.



100% online



Teenager-friendly schedule



15-25 teenagers



\$1800
(fee reductions available)



About the Director

Blake Boles literally wrote **the book** about self-directed learning. He brings over a decade of experience as an international adventure **leader** and one-on-one **coach** for self-directed teens, as well as the collective wisdom of the 70+ people he's interviewed on his **podcast**.

But forget the résumé. What matters most to Blake is helping young people grow into their most effective and joyfully self-directed selves. That's why he's running this microschool.

(Oh, and you won't just be hearing from Blake—he's bringing in lots of interesting guests, too!)

How it Works

Self-Directed Learning 101 is a lot like a college course.

It runs from September 15th to December 10th, with a one-week break at the end of October.

There are two 90-minute group video calls each week: **Tuesdays and Thursdays starting at 10am PT / 1pm ET**. These calls are the “meat and potatoes” of the course—or “tofu and quinoa”, if you prefer—which means you should plan on attending and participating. But just like college, it's fundamentally up to you. If you're not feeling it one week, you're entitled to skip. If you miss a call, you can watch the recording later.

Wednesdays are for self-paced work. Each Tuesday you'll receive an assignment that will require roughly two hours to complete. It's up to you to do this before the Thursday call, either on your own or as part of a student-led **coworking session**—which is essentially a chance to hang out with other microschool students while you all work on the same thing. (These sessions will be organized by *you*, the students, which means the times will vary.)

Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays are “off,” although there will be optional coursework for those who want to dive deeper into the week's topic. These are also great days to work on passion projects that have been inspired by this microschool—and to hang out informally with other students.

In summary, the total time investment per week is 5-10 hours:

- 1.5 hour group call on Tuesday
- 2 hours of self-paced work, done anytime between the Tuesday and Thursday group calls
- 1.5 hour group call on Thursday
- up to 5 hours of self-paced “dive deeper” work (optional)

Each week we'll tackle one big theme related to becoming an effective self-directed learner. You may browse an outline of the weeks and their content below. Some of bullet-pointed content may be altered in response to student needs, capabilities, and desires, but the overall weekly themes won't change.

This microschool will not be boring. The Tuesday group calls will include a variety of stories, games, guest speakers, demonstrations, practical challenges, discussions in breakout rooms... and yes, a good amount of enthusiastic lecturing by Blake, too. The Thursday calls will include a

generous amount of time for connecting with other students. And the mid-week assignments will be far more interesting, hands-on, and surprising than anything you'd expect from conventional school.

So while this microschool is a lot like a college class, it's still designed to appeal to teenagers. Hence, cat gifs.



Before Self-Directed Learning 101



After Self-Directed Learning 101

Week-by-Week Overview

(Click for description. Written with an appropriate dose of Blake Boles sarcasm.)

^ **Week 1: What is Self-Directed Learning, and Why Should You Care?**

- a quick tour of the wide world of self-directed approaches & spaces for teens
- to be structured or not to be structured... that is *not* the question
- the attitude of self-direction
- what's your version of success?
- the future of work

September 15 & 17

^ **Week 2: #Goals**

- how to never accomplish anything whatsoever
- a brainstorming sprint
- dream mapping

September 22 & 24

^ **Week 3: How to Learn Things**

- let's play tag... on Wikipedia
- What Would Sherlock Holmes Do... if he had Google?
- how to fine-tune your BS detector
- the lost art of conversation
- the forgotten ways of the Dewey Decimal System
- how to email a total stranger

September 29 & October 1

^ **Week 4: Productivity for Self-Directed Learners**

- the infinite value and wisdom of fully consenting to your own goals
- no, you can't multitask
- distraction is your enemy and here are tools for killing it

- urgent/important
- the power of working alone, together
- perfectionism is fear masked as strength
- how to deal with procrastination, round one

October 6 & 8

^ **Week 5: Foundations of Health and Happiness**

- that one time I took teenagers to New Zealand to learn how to be happy
- nutrition, sleep, exercise, and other non-negotiables
- the double-edged sword we call Instagram
- what's the opposite of depression?
- say hello to your T'naci monster

October 13 & 15

^ **Week 6: College, Career, and Other Paths to Adulthood**

- “so Blake, how exactly does all this self-directed learning lead me to an economically secure adulthood in which I am not a bum like you?”
- passion, skills, market, and Ikigai
- the case for not always following your passions
- how to get into pretty much any college
- the wide world of respectable alternatives to college
- highly effective yet seldom-utilized tactics for landing a dream job
- gap years and gap lives

October 20 & 22

^ **[break]**

- there is a one-week break between weeks 6 and 7—happy halloween!

^ **Week 7: #Friends**

- why High School Musical is a lie
- how to make friends when school doesn't automatically provide them
- how to talk to a human you find somewhat attractive
- how to see rejection as recreation

November 3 & 5

^ **Week 8: Advanced Productivity**

- self-directed learning is kind of like self-employment (and your business is constantly on the verge of failing)
- how to deal with procrastination, round two
- the wonders of loss aversion & social accountability
- how to finish something you've started (for the right reasons)
- how to abandon something you've started (for the right reasons)

November 10 & 12

^ **Week 9: It's Time for You to Get Help**

- how to not do everything yourself
- adventures in outsourcing and delegating
- accountabilibuddies

November 17 & 19

^ **Week 10: Creation > Consumption**

- how to make your learning useful to other people
- a few excellent reasons to become a snob
- documentation for college & résumés

November 24 & 27 (second meeting is rescheduled for Friday to avoid Thanksgiving)

^ **Week 11: Wild-Card / Flex-Week**

- this week is reserved for extra topics in which students show interest

December 1 & 3

^ **Week 12: Wrap-Up**

- recapping our journey together
- the issuing of silly rewards
- intentions and appreciations
- goodbyes... *for now*

December 8 & 10

Teen FAQ

^ **What can I expect to take away from this experience?**

You'll walk away from this microschool with a healthy dose of inspiration (to do cool things with your life), clarity (regarding your goals, values, habits, and blind spots), motivation (to make things happen instead of waiting around), specific strategies (for being focused and productive, preparing for college and career, etc.), and—hopefully—a handful of new friends.

Like all things in life, you get what you put in. None of this will happen automatically, nor will it happen by just listening to me (Blake) talking each week. Most of these benefits will come from you participating, contributing, putting time into the assignments, and connecting with other students.

^ **How do I know if I'm ready for this?**

Here's a quick quiz to determine whether you're ready for this microschool:

- Are you prepared to reliably show up to group calls and coworking sessions, on-time, without someone having to remind you?
- Can you operate a computer, do basic internet research, and use Google Docs and Zoom?
- Can you read and write English with basic proficiency?
- Can you stay focused during a 90-minute call without needing to regularly check your phone or otherwise distract yourself?
- Are you ready to interact with a diverse group of teenagers who you've never met before?
- Can you be tolerant and respectful of those who are different from you?
- Are you personally motivated to attend this microschool (instead of just doing it because a parent wants you to)?

If you can answer "yes" to all these questions, then you're ready for Self-Directed Learning 101.

^ **Do I need to be a legal homeschooler to participate?**

While being a legal homeschooler will probably offer you the most freedom and flexibility to take advantage of this microschool, there are no enrollment restrictions based on educational/school status. Anyone may apply.

^ **I'm coming from a conventional school background. What should I expect?**

If you're coming from a standard public or private school background, prepare to have your mind blown! This microschool will show you how much is possible for you to learn and accomplish without school, starting right now, as a teenager.

^ **I'm coming from a homeschooling background that's mostly parent-directed. What should I expect?**

Self-Directed 101 is the perfect bridge for established homeschoolers who are ready to take more authorship and control over their educations. You'll gain experience with defining your own values and goals, taking responsibility for your actions, and getting things done without relying on a parent or teacher to "motivate" you.

^ **I'm coming from a homeschooling background that's already self-directed. What should I expect?**

If you consider yourself an unschooler (or otherwise highly self-directed) this microschool is a chance for you to hit “refresh,” revisit the basics, and gain new inspiration for your continued self-directed learning. While some of the content will feel like “review” for you, you may also find yourself pleasantly surprised. In the 12+ years I’ve been working with teen unschoolers, I’ve noticed that many haven’t encountered much of the material that I’m presenting in this microschool. As a more experienced self-directed learner (regardless of your age), you may also enjoy being a sort of “advanced student” in this microschool: someone who can help and inspire others who are struggling along the way.

^ **How do the coworking sessions work?**

Each week, between the Tuesday and Thursday group calls, I will encourage students to host coworking sessions, which are essentially online study groups. These sessions can happen over Zoom, Google Hangouts, Facetime, Discord, or another platform of your choosing. Because we’ll have students in different time zones—and people’s schedules will change each week—these sessions may happen at unpredictable times.

If a session isn’t happening at the time you want—organize one yourself! If you don’t like how another student is running their session—organize one yourself! As a student in this microschool, it’s important that you feel empowered to host your own coworking session. It’s not technically difficult, but it does require a certain willingness to put yourself out there, take charge, and be vulnerable.

^ **How do the group calls work?**

The Tuesday & Thursday group calls happen over **Zoom**: the free, easy, and secure videochat platform with which you’re probably already familiar. All you need is a strong internet connection, a quiet background, and earbuds or headphones. Keep yourself muted in the group calls unless you have something to say.

It’s important to keep your video on during the group calls! This will help everyone to feel like we have an active community instead of a bunch of ghosts or people who aren’t paying attention. If you have a really good reason to keep your video off, you can let me (Blake) know in advance. Otherwise, plan on keeping it on and showing everyone your adorable face.

^ **I'm not sure about hanging out with people who are much younger/older than me. Will I get the chance to spend time with people around my own age?**

Self-Directed Learning 101 is open to a wide range of ages (13-17, with slight flexibility in both directions) because, in my experience, young people in this age range experience similar challenges when it comes to motivation, goal-setting, procrastination, etc.

It’s also helpful for more experienced self-directed learners to share their perspectives with less experienced ones—and experience doesn’t always match age. Age-mixing and cross-pollination are powerful tools that we’ll utilize in this microschool. That’s why the Tuesday and Thursday group calls are all-ages.

That being said, I do understand the desire to socialize with people who are close to your age / maturity / developmental stage. That’s why the coworking sessions are completely self-organized: it allows you to work alongside others of a similar age, if you prefer.

When I organize small-group breakout rooms during the Tuesday/Thursday calls, I may also occasionally organize them by age.

^ **I'm still unsure whether Self-Directed Learning 101 is right for me. How can I figure this out?**

Hesitation is normal! This is a sizeable investment of time and money, and you want to make the right decision. Here are a few ways you can figure it out:

- Open the **application** and fill out the Teen Section. How does it feel to answer those questions?
- Explore Blake’s books, videos, articles, and other published works on this website. Does he feel like someone you want to work with & learn from for 12 weeks?
- Join an online meet & greet / question & answer session with Blake in August. Details at the bottom of this page.

Parent FAQ

^ **How do I know if this microschool is right for my teen?**

There are lots of potential answers to this question, and you know your kid better than I do. But here’s my answer:

- When your teen reads this webpage, do they get excited? Is their interest piqued? Are they willing—perhaps even enthused—to fill out the application? If so, this microschool might be right for them.
- Alternatively, do you feel like you need to twist your teen’s arm to get them to read this webpage? After they do so—if they do so—is the response more a less a “meh?” In that case, Self-Directed Learning 101 probably isn’t for them... at least right now.

^ **What's the application and enrollment process?**

The **online application** is open from July 31-August 10. All applications received during this period will receive equal consideration, so there's no rush. On August 11th, the first round of invitations will go out via email; you'll have one week to secure your space by paying the full tuition. If we have insufficient space, your teen may receive a waitlist notice. Waitlisted applicants will find out around August 19th if there is space available.

^ **How do fee reductions work?**

A limited number of partial fee reductions are available for applicants who could otherwise not participate due to financial reasons. The total quantity and size of fee reductions is dependent on the number of applicants for this microschool—if we have a full house, then we'll have more money available for reductions! (These reductions are coming straight out of the microschool's budget.)

Fee reductions are entirely blind to circumstance: you are not asked to disclose your financial situation, demographic information, or any potential hardships on the application—nor should you share this information with Blake via personal communication. You are only asked “what is the minimum fee reduction necessary for your teen to attend?”

The first round of fee reductions will be offered to those who apply by August 10th. The first round may also be the last round—so if you need a reduction, be sure to apply ASAP.

^ **Do you offer a sibling discount?**

Yes. If two or more siblings enroll concurrently, the tuition for each is reduced to \$1600.

^ **What is the payment and refund policy?**

The full tuition (minus applicable discounts and fee reductions) is due within a week of receiving an offer of enrollment (or September 1st, whichever comes first), payable via credit card or bank transfer. Families facing extraordinary circumstances may request a customized payment plan.

Much like a standard college course, Self-Directed Learning 101 cannot easily replace students after the microschool has commenced. We also understand that if a student participates in the first week and doesn't feel like it's a good fit, there should be a way to recoup some of your investment. Keeping these two factors in mind, the Self-Directed Learning 101 Refund Policy follows:

- Any payments prior to September 1 are entitled to a 90% refund.
- Between September 1-21, should your teen withdraw, you are entitled to a 50% refund.
- After September 21, please consider yourself fully committed; no refunds will be issued.

Blake reserves the right to dismiss any student who violates basic norms of respect and civility. (Parents will always be consulted prior to dismissal.) In the case of dismissal, the same refund policy will be enforced.

^ **Will you just be **talking** about self-directed learning—or will my teen also be **doing** it?**

The weekly assignments—the ones that require roughly two hours between the Tuesday and Thursday calls—are where the rubber hits the road in terms of self-directed learning. Your teen will be regularly challenged to apply the week's principles to their lives in highly practical ways. They'll also be encouraged (but not required) to work on larger personal projects outside of the normal microschool hours.

^ **How can I learn more about your approach to working with teens?**

The best way is to browse my **books and articles**, especially Chapter 3 of my **new book**. I also suggest exploring my free online course, **The Way of Adventure**, and listening to this **interview** from 2016 (starts around minute 14).

^ **What have parents and teens previously said about working with Blake?**

Browse testimonials here:

- **Indie Guidance Counselor**, Blake's one-on-one coaching service for teens
- **Unschool Adventures**, Blake's adventure travel company for teens
- **Blake's public speaking** for parents and teens
- **Outschool**, where Blake recently led a teen workshop

^ **How will I know what's happening in the microschool?**

While this microschool is only for teens—sorry parents, you can't join the group calls!—you *will* receive a weekly email that summarizes what's been happening in the microschool and what's coming next. You can watch all of the recorded Zoom meetings. You may also email Blake anytime.

^ **Can my 12-year-old apply?**

Mature 12-year-olds who already spend time lots of time hanging out with older teens are welcome to apply.

^ The dates or timing don't work for us. Will you run this again in the future?

That's very possible. Make sure to get on the email list (see bottom) to be the first to find out.

Want to join a future microschool?

Drop your email in the box below to find out if & when Self-Directed Learning 101 is offered again.

JOIN MY NEWSLETTER

I send one thoughtfully crafted email newsletter each month, filled with interesting links and updates about my projects.

Browse the [archives](#) to see what to expect, or jump right in:

Email *

LET'S CONNECT

Who are you?

[Take my 3-question survey](#)

Email me:

yourstruly@blakeboles.com

Follow me on [Facebook](#)

WHERE I AM NOW



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