

The Checkpoint

From: Goal Tracker Detectives: Naming My Learning Moves

Amara had exactly six weeks before the regional cross-country meet, and she had a plan. Every morning before school, she would run the same 5-kilometre loop around Cedar Ridge as fast as she could, timing herself with her dad's old stopwatch. Her goal was simple: get faster every single week. If she just pushed harder each time, she reasoned, her times would keep dropping until the meet.

For the first two weeks, the plan seemed to be working. Her times dropped from twenty-eight minutes to twenty-six, and then to twenty-four. She felt proud crossing her own imaginary finish line every morning, checking the stopwatch, and writing the number in a little notebook she kept on her dresser.

Then something changed. In week three, her time crept up to twenty-five minutes. She told herself it was just an off day and pushed even harder the next morning - sprinting the first kilometre instead of pacing herself. Her time that day was worse: twenty-six minutes, and her legs felt like lead by the final stretch. The same thing happened the day after that, and the day after that. By the end of week three, she was slower than she'd been in week one, and her knees had started to ache.

Amara almost quit right there. It would have been easy to decide she just wasn't a fast runner, or that the whole plan had been pointless from the start. Instead, she did something different. She sat down with her notebook and actually looked at the numbers instead of just adding to them. She noticed a pattern: her times had gotten worse exactly when she'd started sprinting the first kilometre every day. She was tiring herself out too early, and her body never fully recovered between runs.

That was her checkpoint moment. She wasn't just running anymore - she was checking in on how the running was actually going, and being honest with herself about what the numbers were telling her.

So Amara adapted her plan. Instead of running all-out every single morning, she built in two easier recovery days each week, running at a relaxed pace on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On the other days, she paced herself evenly across the whole loop instead of sprinting the start. She kept writing her times in the notebook, but now she also wrote one sentence each day about how her body felt.

Her times didn't drop right away. In fact, the first week of her new plan, she was still slower than her personal best. But by week five, something shifted. Her recovery days meant her legs weren't constantly exhausted, and her even pacing meant she had energy left for the final kilometre instead of running out of steam. She set a new personal best in week five, and beat it again in week six - three days before the meet.

At the regional meet, Amara didn't win. But she ran her best time of the whole season, and she crossed the finish line still standing tall instead of collapsing from exhaustion like she had in week three. Afterward, her coach asked her what had made the biggest difference over the six weeks. Amara thought about it for a second.

"I stopped just running," she said, "and started actually monitoring how the running was going. Once I noticed my plan wasn't working, I had to adapt it - even though that felt scary, like I was giving up on my original plan. But changing my strategy partway through wasn't giving up. It was the smartest thing I did all season."

WORDS TO KNOW

- Monitor - to check in on how something is going while it's happening, not just at the end.
- Adapt - to change your plan or approach because your first one isn't working the way you hoped.
- Strategy - a plan or approach you choose to solve a problem or complete a task.
- Checkpoint - a planned pause to check how things are going before continuing.
- Progress - how far along you are toward finishing or understanding something.

Goal Tracker - My Learning Moves

From: Goal Tracker Detectives: Naming My Learning Moves

Name: _____ Date: _____

Goal Tracker: My Learning Moves

Use this tracker while you work on today's task. Fill it in as you go - don't wait until the end.

CHUNK 1

My plan: What are you going to try first?

CHECKPOINT - STOP AND CHECK IN!

How well is my plan working? Circle a number.

1 - not working at all 2 - kind of working 3 - working well 4 - working great, I can explain why

If you circled 1 or 2 - what is ONE thing you could change?

CHUNK 2

What did you actually do? (Did you keep your plan, or change it? Be specific.)

Did you adapt your strategy, like Amara did? If yes, what did you change and why?

WRAP-UP THINKING

Name ONE learning move you used today (checking in, changing your plan, asking for help, rereading, etc.):

How did that move help you?

Exit Ticket

From: Goal Tracker Detectives: Naming My Learning Moves

Name: _____ Date: _____

🕒 Exit Ticket - Self-Directed Learning

1. Name one learning move you used today. What did you do, specifically?

2. Rate how well you monitored your progress today. Circle one.

1 - I need more practice with this 2 - I am starting to get this 3 - I can do this 4 - I can do this
and explain it to someone else

3. Describe one moment where you adapted your strategy because your first plan wasn't working.

4. Self-Directed Learning reflection: Where else - in another subject or outside school - could you use "monitor and adapt" as a move? Be specific.

My Regulation Toolkit

From: Goal Tracker Detectives: Naming My Learning Moves

Name: _____

Date: _____

Keep adding to this page every time you learn a new move that helps you monitor your progress or adapt your strategy.

MOVE I LEARNED	WHAT IT MEANS TO ME	WHEN I'LL USE IT AGAIN
Today's move:		

Today's specific move (from this lesson):

One sentence - when will I use this again?