

Ages 14-19



THE LEARNING CHALLENGE

GripTape

The Learning Challenge invites young people ages 14 through 19 to tap into their interests and supports them in pursuit of a self-identified learning topic that is meaningful to them and their growth.

Scan QR code with your phone's camera to access this content online.



OVERVIEW

The Learning Challenge was designed to give young people access to rich learning opportunities, putting them in the driver's seat. Through the Challenge, young people define what they want to learn and how, and what success is to them, which ignites their passion for learning and reinforces their capacity and desire to enact their agency in intentional ways. Over the course of 10 weeks, GripTape supports young people in pursuit of a learning endeavor driven by their interests, by providing them with full decision-making authority, financial resources, and an adult Champion to encourage them along the way. When young people engage in this empowering program, they experience lasting shifts in their mindsets, skills, and behaviors, which, in turn, further equip them to enact their agency now and in the future.



Over 3,200 young people across 48 states and two territories have completed the Learning Challenge. GripTape offers the Learning Challenge opportunity directly to young people and also supports schools, districts, and organizations that wish to adopt or adapt the program for their communities, through one-on-one coaching and consulting, professional development, and resource toolkits.

[▶ Learning Challenge Overview](#)

[📄 Learning Challenge Overview](#)

What Makes this Model Innovative?



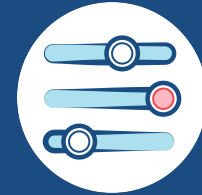
Active Self-Direction

During the Learning Challenge, young people grapple directly with learning topics they're passionate about, have 100% decision-making authority, and leverage adult support and financial resources as needed to enable them to pursue their learning journey.



Relevance

Challenges tap into young peoples' self-identified interests and goals and provide them with the opportunity to explore what they are curious about in authentic contexts, such as medical conferences, community organizing, entrepreneurship, recording studios, and more.



Customization

The Learning Challenge is entirely customized and designed by each learner. This allows them to define the focus and sequence of their experience around their interests, goals, identity, prior knowledge, way of learning, and life experiences.

DESIGN

Goals

The Learning Challenge is designed to help young people build the mindsets, skills, and behaviors necessary to make intentional choices about and take an active role in the course of their own learning. [GripTape Agency Framework](#)

Shift in Mindset

Young people's confidence and desire to drive their learning increases, and are sustained and deepened over time.

Increase in Skills

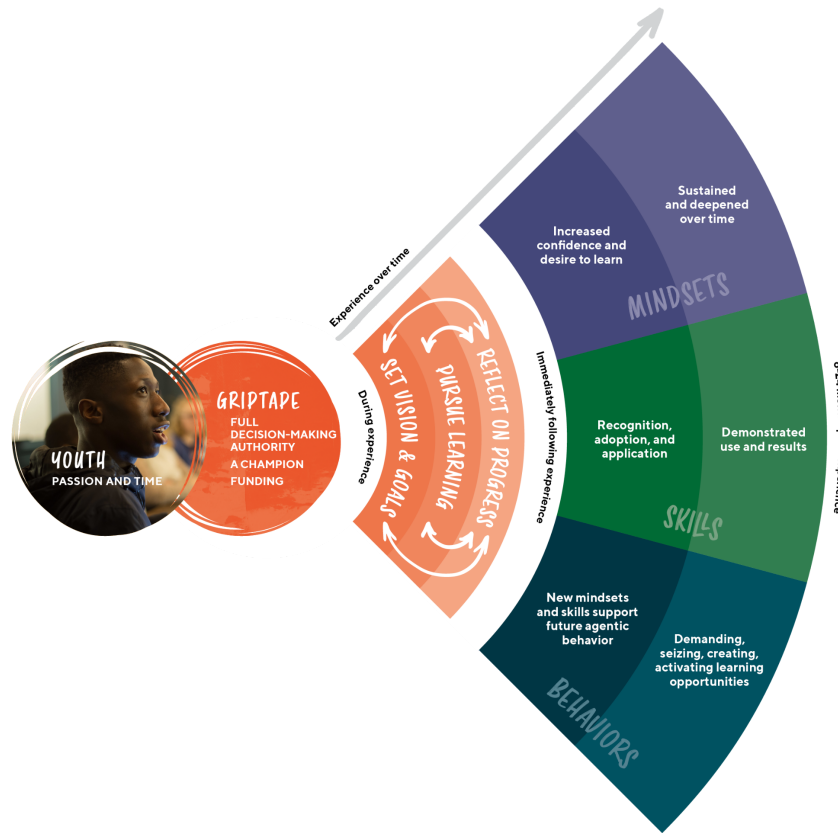
Young people develop, apply, and expand skills in a variety of contexts, which lead to positive changes in how they approach learning and yield positive results over time.

Change in Behaviors

Young people use their new mindsets and skills to support future agentic behavior, including demanding, seizing, creating, and activating learning opportunities for themselves and other youth.

Experience

During the Learning Challenge, young people engage in a dynamic cycle of setting a vision and goals, pursuing learning, and reflecting on progress—key processes involved in enacting one’s agency.



Set Vision & Goals

- Challengers set a self-defined vision and personally meaningful learning goals, which can be revisited and revised as they see fit. Champions help Challengers think without providing them advice, guidance, or direction. This helps ensure that young people take full ownership over their vision, goals, and plans, ultimately empowering them as agentic learners.

Pursue Learning

- Challengers actively pursue learning, using their reflections, insights, and goals to guide them. Challengers also tap into the opportunities, resources, and relationships available to them to drive their own learning.

Reflect on Progress

- Challengers have regular check-in calls with a Champion to reflect on their progress, successes, and roadblocks, as well as next steps. During check-ins, Champions focus on asking questions for self-reflection and do not provide advice or direction. Challengers use their reflections to make decisions, correct course, and persevere.

Supporting Structures

The Learning Challenge gives young people access to rich learning opportunities that put them in the driver's seat. There are a variety of supporting structures—across areas like adult roles, scheduling, budgeting, and more—that will help make implementing this model a success.



SCHOOL COMMUNITY & CULTURE

The Learning Challenge must be supported by a culture where learners are trusted to make decisions, define success, try things out, make revisions to their goals, and even fail.

Supported freedom to learn is essential for young people to build and enact their agency in meaningful ways. In order to truly equip young people with 100% decision-making authority, schools—or other organizations implementing Learning Challenges—must work toward establishing a culture where adults and peers respect the decisions learners make while self-directing their learning. This includes trusting young people to make decisions around the goals, design, implementation, next steps, and evaluation of their own learning without adult judgment, guardrails, and accountability for “failure.”



ADULT ROLES, HIRING, & LEARNING

A supportive adult who genuinely takes interest in what young people are learning and encourages them along the way is integral to the Learning Challenge.

All Challengers are paired with a caring adult who is genuinely interested in what they are learning; GripTape calls them *Champions*. Unlike other caring adults in a learner's life (e.g., a coach, teacher, family member), Champions do not have their own agendas; rather, they focus on supporting learners throughout their learning journey.

Champions *must* be able to support Challenger's learning without judging, directing, or “getting in the way.” The model requires that adults take a “light-touch,” yet supportive, approach to working with Challengers, acting as someone who expresses deep interest in their learning, serves as a cheerleader, and actively helps the youth think, primarily through reflection. Champions must be ready and willing to commit to giving young people the supported freedom to learn, succeed, and even fail. [📄 Champion Model Overview](#)



Ample time must be carved out for learners to set goals, pursue learning, and reflect along the way.

Scheduling and use of time are important considerations for school leaders when looking to implement the GripTape Learning Challenge. The Challenge requires that young people have ample self-directed time and space to pursue their learning outside of school walls, which must be reflected in and

SCHEDULE & USE OF TIME

accommodated for in Challengers' schedules. Additionally, schedules must accommodate check-ins between Champions and Challengers where young people can reflect on what's working, what's not, and possible next steps.

While the amount of time can vary from context to context, GripTape suggests ensuring that Challengers have 10–14 weeks to pursue their goals and 5–6 meetings with their Champions during that time. On average, Challengers spend a total of 4–5 hours with their Champions virtually, oftentimes outside of school walls.

The budget must include financial support for Challengers so they can pursue their learning endeavors.



BUDGET & OPERATIONS

Funding is an essential input of GripTape's Learning Challenge, as it allows young people to control financial resources and experiences in the pursuit of their learning endeavors. Learners should have full decision-making authority over how to use these funds to meet their learning goals and are free to use them in a variety of ways, including for transportation, tools, supplies, subscriptions, location/space rentals, software, and more.

When directly running Learning Challenges, GripTape provides grants up to \$500 to Challengers in alignment with their vision and goals and encourages others implementing the model to provide a similar amount. GripTape data shows that the amount of the average grant request over time has been \$472. Young people are using this funding to access enabling resources and services to support their learning goals.

GripTape suggests establishing strong, continuous learning and improvement systems.



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Learning and iteration are key facets of GripTape's model. Those implementing the model should set goals, collect data, and measure the impact of active self-direction and agency development in young people during and after the Learning Challenge (e.g., 12–24 months after the Challenge) in order to gather and build from insights in important ways. Doing so will help identify opportunities to improve implementation, operations, design, and more, in service of offering meaningful, agentic learning opportunities to young people. [📄 Rapid Learning Cycles Overview](#)

Various data collection methods can be used to understand and measure the impact of the Learning Challenge on young people. These methods include:

- Conducting 360-interviews with young people and an adult that they have identified 6–24 months after the Challenge.

-
- A survey administered at both the beginning and end of the Learning Challenge, as well as 6–24 months afterward.

IMPLEMENTATION

Supports Offered

[GripTape](#) offers the following supports to help you implement their model. Please note that these resources and services may be purchased separately or in combination to meet your organization's needs.

Direct Service to Youth

Free



Young people ages 14 through 19 may apply directly to become a GripTape Challenger. Read the Learning Challenge Application Guidelines for eligibility and application requirements.

[Learn More](#)

Training & Consulting

Cost Associated



Schools and systems can receive training and consulting services in order to implement the Learning Challenge in their community. This entails:

- Full implementation support for those who want to implement GripTape with little to no modification.
- Access to detailed resources and manuals to implement the Learning Challenge.
- Access to learning tools and surveys.
- Training for Champions (e.g., Zoom training sessions).
- Follow-up coaching and support from GripTape.

[Get in Touch](#)

Design Partnership

Cost Associated



A custom partnership might be a good option for schools or systems that love the Learning Challenge's philosophy and ethos, but want to build their own learner experience or model based on this philosophy. This could entail:

- Coaching and support from GripTape.
- Access to detailed resources and manuals to inform learning experiences or model design.
- Access to learning tools and surveys.
- Training for Champions (e.g., Zoom training sessions).

[Get in Touch](#)

Hybrid Outsourcing Implementation

Cost Associated



A hybrid approach might be a good option for schools or systems that have identified Champions and Challengers but are interested in GripTape running the operations. This could entail:

- GripTape running operations for applications, training sessions for Champions, programmatic implementation, data collection, etc.

[Get in Touch](#)

Reach

3,200+

Young People

48

States

2

Territories

Impact

GripTape has identified enduring impacts of the Learning Challenge on youth, observing that Challengers experience powerful, lasting shifts in their mindsets, skills, and behaviors months and years after the GripTape experience. [📄 GripTape Outcomes Learning Report](#) [📄 GripTape Longitudinal Report](#)

- After completing the Learning Challenge, young people consistently report that the experience had a positive impact on their confidence, their approach to learning, their understanding of what they need to be successful, their desire to learn, and more.
- Young people who participated in GripTape are engaging in new ways of thinking and expressions of agency with regard to the types of learning opportunities they want and will create for themselves.
 - In particular, young people are seizing opportunities previously ignored, creating new learning opportunities, demanding opportunities to shape their learning, and activating learning with others to pursue authentic learning experiences.
- Young people note increases in both their competence and use of skills that underpin agency, including self-regulation of learning opportunities, being prepared and staying organized, time management, and communication skills.



Contact

Mark Murphy

Chief Executive Officer

mark@griptape.org

RESOURCES



[What is the GripTape Learning Challenge?](#)

A short video outlining the GripTape Learning Challenge.



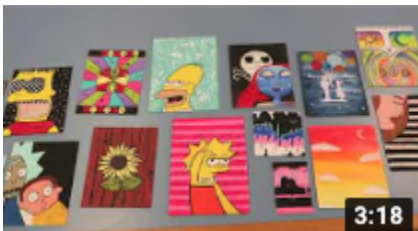
[Age Ain't Nothing but a Number](#)

Former Challenger Alphaina Kamara describes her GripTape experience and why more young people need opportunities to ignite their learning passions.



[GripTape Alum Kimani Talks About His Learning Challenge](#)

Alum Kimani reflects on his GripTape Learning Challenge.



[Meet Lilly, Kain, and Brooke](#)

Lilly, Kain, and Brook talk about their learning challenges and takeaways.



[Day in the Life, GripTape Challenger Mica Hart](#)

Mica shares the ups and downs she has encountered on her quilting journey.



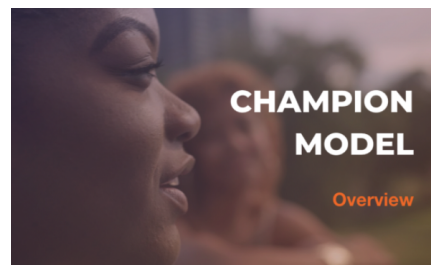
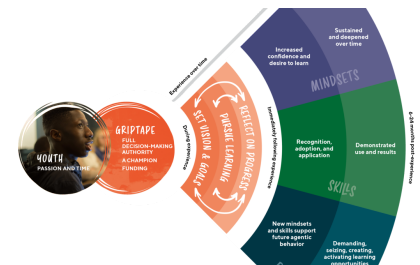
[GripTaped Podcast](#)

This podcast explores how young people have made their aspirations a reality through their GripTape experience.



[LEARNING CHALLENGE](#)

Overview



[CHAMPION MODEL](#)

Overview

[Learning Challenge Overview](#)

This resource presents the Learning Challenge, its core components, its impact, lessons learned, and more.



[Operations Overview](#)

This resource is a guide for seamless, efficient operations, offering tips, information about platforms used, and lessons learned from the GripTape team.

[GripTape Framework in Pursuit of Agency](#)

This resource outlines GripTape's agency framework and the essential conditions needed for young people to drive their own learning.



[Rapid Learning Cycles](#)

This resource outlines GripTape's approach to user-centered design and methodology to efficiently and successfully scale their impact.

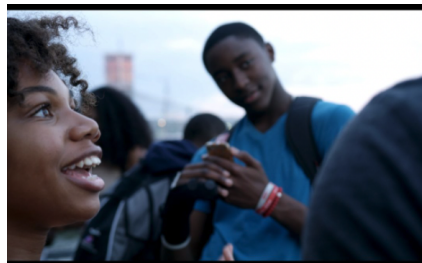
[Champion Model Overview](#)

This resource describes the three important roles Champions play to support Challengers as well as lessons learned.



[Setting Up a Youth Leadership Board](#)

This resource shares the structures and practices GripTape has implemented to set up and operate a Youth Leadership Board.



[Learning Challenge Recruitment Toolkit](#)

This recruitment toolkit provides an overview of the GripTape Learning Challenge, Challenger testimonials, application tips, and more.



[Outcomes Learning Report](#)

This report extends GripTape's early findings, providing nuance about the lasting outcomes of the GripTape Experience on young people.



[Longitudinal Report](#)

This report shares more about the lasting impact taking on Learning Challenge makes for youth.