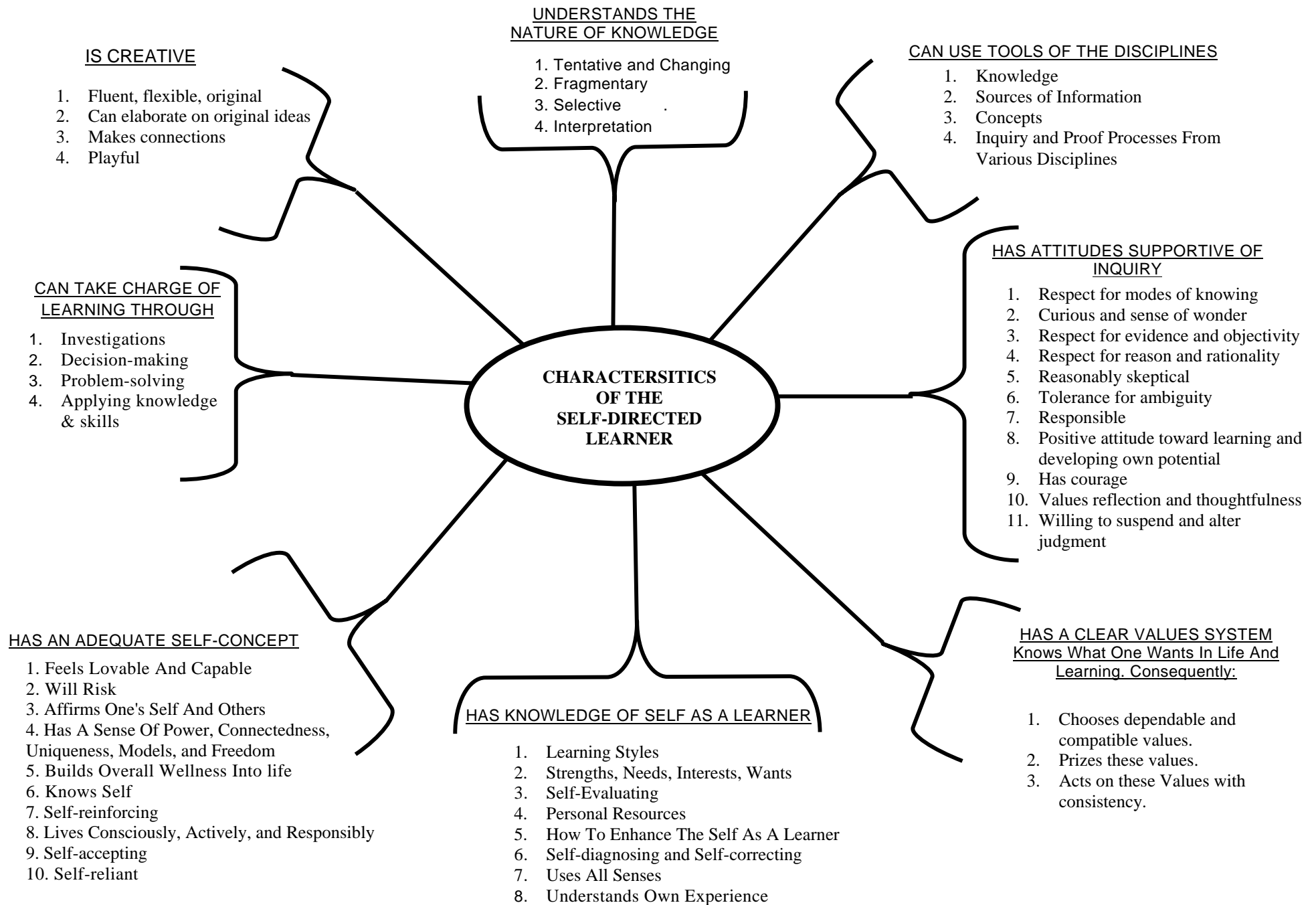


The Mission of the Oxford Academy and Central School District is to develop self directed learners who are able to make intelligent choices and contribute positively to society.



SELF-DIRECTED LEARNER

A SELF-DIRECTED LEARNER:

1. IS CREATIVE

By creative we mean the student can generate many ideas (fluency), produce a variety of ideas (flexibility), come up with original ideas (originality), elaborate upon his or her ideas, make connections in many and unusual ways, and can be playful with thoughts and ideas. There are more creative behaviors that we hope to nurture, but we have focused in on these six for the present.

2. UNDERSTANDS THE NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE

Many students see knowledge as black and white or right or wrong without ever perceiving that most significant problems defy clear right or wrong answers. Most of our knowledge is tentative and changing. We never know all that we want to know; therefore, our knowledge is fragmentary, selective, and highly subject to interpretation.

3. CAN USE THE TOOLS OF THE DISCIPLINES

There are many facts, concepts, generalizations or principles, and theories that students can learn from the disciplines. We have chosen to place the primary emphasis on the learning of concepts and the major modes of inquiry within each discipline. Although not diminishing the importance of other types of knowledge, we think that concepts and modes for inquiry have a higher degree of transferability and usefulness to the student

4. HAS ATTITUDES SUPPORTIVE OF INQUIRY

Without attitudes that serve learning and the learner, not much effective learning can take place. We want students to possess behaviors that evidence a respect for all modes of knowing, and we want them to couple their respect for opinions with their respect for evidence, objectivity, and the use of reason. All significant problems for inquiry require a tolerance for ambiguity and frustration. A learner who has responsible attitudes and a positive attitude toward learning will be much more likely to arrive at new knowledge and to realize his or her own potential.

5. HAS A CLEAR VALUES SYSTEM

We want to develop learners who have clear values regarding learning and who act consistently on these values.

6. KNOWLEDGE OF SELF AS A LEARNER

An effective learner will know his or her strengths and deficiencies, and will know how to handle himself or herself as a learner. When you know yourself as a learner you have insight into your best learning styles, interests, wants, and personal resources. You know how to capitalize on your strengths and remediate your deficiencies. In other words you are self-correcting and self-evaluating.

7. HAS AN ADEQUATE SELF CONCEPT

A learner can have everything going for him or her that has been stated thus far; but if he or she lacks self-esteem the chances of becoming a highly self-directed learner are seriously diminished. A learner with high self-esteem will have a deep sense of self-worth apart from his or her success in any particular learning experience. The student will feel fundamentally capable of confronting learning problems and life in general. A learner with self-esteem will affirm himself or herself and have a sense of power to accomplish worthwhile things. A learner with high self-esteem will feel connected to people, places, and things. This learner will have a sense of his or her own uniqueness, and will know how to learn from other people who can serve as models.

8. CAN TAKE CHARGE OF LEARNING

Alvin Toffler has written "Tomorrow's illiterate will not be the person who cannot read. Tomorrow's illiterate will be the person who has not learned how to learn." We would add that this person will also not know how to or have the will to take charge of his or her own learning. Taking charge means that the learner can take effective control of problem-solving, decision-making, efforts to inquire or investigate, and the application of his or her knowledge and skills.