TVM Lesson or Homework?*

*(Excerpted from Module 6, TVM in Practice - Topic 1, of the Distance and Blended Learning Basics for Minnesota Adult Education online course)

Before you go on to read and explore example TVM lessons in the next topic, we'd like to take a moment to briefly address a common question in MN ABE, which could simply be phrased, 'What is the difference between homework and distance learning?'

State statute 124D.518 says:

*'Contact hours' means the number of hours during which a student was engaged in learning activities provided by an approved adult education program. Contact hours **excludes homework** but **includes interactive distance learning**.*

Since neither 'homework' nor 'interactive distance learning' are clearly defined in the statute, let's take some time now to consider the implications of these terms for our instructional and TVM contexts.

Here's some guiding questions to ask yourself as you think about the TVM asynchronous work you are planning to assign to your learners. Hopefully, they will help you distinguish the terms and assess the work you are planning for your learners.

- Is your assignment merely the equivalent of sending the student to the library or recommending a book for them to buy?
- What value are you as the teacher adding to the student's learning experience with the asynchronous, independent work you are assigning them to do?
- How are you interacting with students around the lesson content?
- Does the lesson include a variety of tasks that allow the students to approach the skill or content in multiple ways?
- How do all components of your lesson work together, even if some are being delivered synchronously and some being delivered asynchronously?

In addition to these guiding questions, below on the next page is a simple table with some descriptors that may further assist you in not merely assigning homework, but designing and assigning strong, interactive, distance learning activities. Of course not every activity in each TVM lesson you assign needs to include all of these aspects, per se, but allow this to guide your thinking about your TVM lesson planning and creating.

Acceptable TVM lessons are not merely homework, review, practice-and-drill, or enrichment activities assigned in isolation and outside of a broader instructional context. There must be a strong element of *connection*, both between instructional and learning activities as well as between the teacher and learner.

A TVM lesson could include a complete sequence of instruction, practice, and assessment; or A TVM lesson might include only part of a sequence of instruction, practice, and assessment. This is acceptable as long as the learner participates in the rest of the sequence at another point, e.g., during a synchronous class or in an individual meeting with a teacher.

Teachers must review learners' work to verify completion to their satisfaction and provide feedback. This is the "verification" aspect of TVM!

Teacher feedback could be given in many possible ways: email, text message, a score or comments on a Google doc or in an online Learning Management System (LMS), written comments on a paper packet, in-person or phone conversation, etc.

TVM lesson / Interactive distance learning	Homework
- Clear teacher "presence" (i.e., teaching and instruction) in the asynchronous work - Models included in the instructional component of the lesson - Includes a brief summary or review of instruction and/or directions for accessing previous materials to help anchor the assignment - Curated resources to create coherent and sequenced activities students can complete independently and asynchronously - Lesson components clearly sequenced and connected to lesson objectives - Provides clear step-by-step directions for the students on how to complete and submit their work - Includes a variety of tasks that give students the opportunity to approach the skill/topic in multiple ways (e.g. project based learning) - Provides opportunities for the students to reflect on their learning (and directions for the students on how to reflect) - Clear process for checking in with students after completing the assignment (or at least an answer key for students to check their own work) - Includes a plan for students to receive timely feedback on their work - Integrates digital instruction and learning tools, and requires students to utilize and learn basic digital literacy skills	- No summary or review of instructional content provided - No or minimal modeling or examples provided - Just practice without connection to instruction, assessment or larger lesson/unit scope and sequence; disconnected tasks or worksheets - Many pages from a workbook/textbook handed to students without clear instructional support or opportunities to check in with the teacher - No directions for how to complete and submit the work - No opportunity for students to reflect on their learning - No plan or opportunity for feedback, follow-up, discussion, or revision of their work - Little or no variation in the types of activities students are assigned - No digital or online instruction and/or learning tools used; No digital literacy skills required to complete the activities