

## OALCF Task Cover Sheet

**Task Title:** Reflecting on the Importance of Mentorship for Men

<b>Learner Name:</b>	
<b>Date Started:</b>	<b>Date Completed:</b>
<b>Successful Completion:</b> Yes ___ No ___	
<b>Goal Path:</b> Employment ___ Apprenticeship ___ Secondary School ___ Post Secondary ___ Independence ✓	
<b>Task Description:</b> Mentors can play an important role in a man's life, especially if they have gotten off track with their goals. This task requires a male learner to read about mentorship and then reflect on the article and answer discussion questions.	
<b>Competency:</b> A. Find and Use Information B. Communicate Ideas and Information  D. Use Digital Technology (optional)	<b>Task Group(s):</b> A1: Read continuous text B1: Interact with others B2: Write continuous text B4: Express oneself creatively (optional) n/a
<b>Level Indicators:</b> A1.2: Read texts to locate and connect ideas and information B1.2: Initiate and maintain interactions with one or more persons to discuss, explain, or exchange information and opinions B2.1: Write brief texts to convey simple ideas and factual information B2.2: Write texts to explain and describe information and ideas B4: n/a D.1: Perform simple digital tasks according to a set procedure (optional)	
<b>Performance Descriptors:</b> see chart on last page	
<b>Materials Required:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Article 'Every Man needs a Mentor'</li><li>• Access to the computer and internet if there is interest in reading the full article (optional)</li><li>• Reflective Questions</li><li>• Paper or computer if typing the answers</li><li>• Pen/pencil</li></ul>	

**Instructor Preparation:** Provide the learner with a copy of the article. If the learner is interested, set him/her up on a computer with internet to read the full article (this is optional). Once the learner has answered the reflective questions, this can be a class or individual discussion.

**Task Title:** Reflecting on the Importance of Mentorship for Men

Individuals, especially those who have gotten off track with goal setting, can benefit from a mentor.

**Task 1:** Read the article “Every Man Needs a Man Mentor”. This is an adapted version of a full article that can be read online at <http://artofmanliness.com/2009/02/15/mentors-for-men/>

**Task 2:** List any mentors you have had in your life.

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**Task 3:** Write a brief paragraph about someone who has had a profound influence in your life.

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**Task 4:** List the things you could share with someone if you were a mentor.

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**Task 5:** Participate in a group or one-on-one discussion about the importance of mentorship

## **Adapted Article: Every Man Needs a Man Mentor**

**by Brett & Kate McKay on February 15, 2009**

When I was 15, I met a man who would have a profound impact on my life. His name was Andrew Lester. I first encountered Mr. Lester at church. He was the fun old guy that everyone liked being around. Despite being in his 80s, he had this boyish, mischievous look to him. He also made wearing a Breath-right nasal strip look cool. He wore them all the time. Mr. Lester was an artist by trade. His mother was a Cheyenne Indian, so his art focused on Native American motifs. A tribe called him the White Buffalo, and he made a really beautiful painting representing the name bestowed on him. I have print of it hanging up in my office.

While Mr. Lester dabbled in painting, his real skill was in sculpting clay. He sculpted mammoth busts of great people from history like Martin Luther King Jr., Jim Thorpe, and Western movie star Tom Mixx. When he wasn't working in his studio, he volunteered in various community organizations aimed at helping underprivileged Native and African Americans. Mr. Lester was very active in the African-American community in Oklahoma and founded the Oklahoma African-American Museum Hall of Fame.

When I first saw Mr. Lester at church, I never thought he would become a mentor and good friend to me. But by chance, I was asked to regularly visit him and his wife to help them out around their home. Little did I know the impact this man would have on my passage into manhood.

A few weekends a month throughout high school, I would drive up to Mr. Lester's home in Guthrie to visit him. Our visits usually began with me doing some chore around the house or in his art studio. This often involved me pulling some weeds or moving the big clay busts around in his studio. He sometimes had me actually work on his busts. I remember doing some fine tuning to Tom Mixx's hat and nose with a chisel and some sandpaper.

After I finished my task, Mr. Lester and I would go to his living room or studio just to talk. He'd share with me stories from his life. I learned how as a teenager in the 1920's, Mr. Lester hitchhiked all the way from Cheyenne, OK to San Antonio, TX just to see if the Alamo would display a bust of Davy Crockett that he had sculpted. They agreed. The sculpture is still there today.

He shared with me his experience as an art teacher for troubled students in inner city Los Angeles during the 1960s. This was an intense time to be a white guy living in that part of LA. Racial tensions were high and boiled over in 1965 during the Watts Riot. But despite being a white guy from Oklahoma, Mr. Lester was able to make fast friends with the students in his class. And he quickly became involved with helping the African-American community in the city.

With each story, Mr. Lester would always impart a life lesson. He'd used the story about his trip to San Antonio to teach me about doing whatever it takes to accomplish a goal in life. His experience in Los Angeles conveyed to me the importance of tolerance, respect, and compassion for people who are different from you and that a real man will stand up for the oppressed and downtrodden.

Mr. Lester would always ask me about what was going on in my life. He'd listen intently and provide some counsel and words of encouragement or sometimes a verbal kick in the butt if I needed it. After each visit with him, I felt uplifted and edified.

But my friend and mentor became sick. He was diagnosed with cancer. Our visits became shorter. It was hard to see this man who was once filled with mischief and vitality become weak from the chemo. But Mr. Lester still shared stories and lessons, and he still gave me advice and counsel.

Mr. Lester died during my senior year of high school. I remember driving up to Cheyenne, OK, to see Mr. Lester return to his birthplace. His final resting ground was appropriate; Cheyenne's wide open skies and desert landscape provided enough room for a spirit as big as Mr. Lester's to roam.

### **Why Men Need Man Mentors**

There are some lessons and bits of wisdom that only a man can impart to another man. Men and women are different. We view and interact with the world differently. So it makes sense for men to seek out other men for guidance on how to navigate life.

Unfortunately, it seems like a generation of men went without mentors growing up. We hear on the news about absent fathers and the effect it is having on young men today. Even when a man has a father he can look up to, it takes a village of man mentors to raise a child. Yet men find themselves more and more isolated, without the community ties and relationships that helped previous generations learn the art of manliness. Without good examples of men to emulate, young men often get a bit lost. Studies have shown that the lack of a male figure in a boy's life increases the likelihood that the lad will perform poorly in school or get involved in crime. And beyond the obvious consequences like crime and education, this void can affect a man in a myriad of subtle ways.

In addition to providing some guidance in navigating through life as a man, mentors can expand one's view of what it means to be a man. Every man has had different life experiences and been exposed to different philosophies and worldviews. They've been brought to their knees by different trials, been carried away in different joys, and have learned unique bits of wisdom. They can help you see things a different way, inspire you to dare greatly, comfort you when you grieve, and help you become a better man.

### **Be a Man Mentor**

Just as you need man mentors, so too do other men. No one needs guidance in the art of manliness more than boys and young men, who are trying to figure how to become worthy men. Every man should make mentoring a part of his life. Here are just a few ways to do that:

- **Become a Scout leader.** Boy Scout troops always need volunteers who are eager to make a difference in boys' lives.
- **Become a Big Brother.** A lot of young men out there are growing up without a positive father figure in their lives. Be the man these boys can turn to and emulate as they grow up.
- **Volunteer with your church's youth group.** Lucky is the young man can find a man who is both an older friend *and* a spiritual mentor.
- **Get to know your kids' friends.** I guess some kids try to hide from adults, but I always liked chatting it up with my friends' parents. Some of my friend's dads became my friends in their own right. Obviously, you don't want to be the dorky dad who's always hanging around, and you should know when to let your son and his friends alone. But if they're game, it's okay to hang out with them from time to time. Take your son and his friends fishing or hunting.

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Performance Descriptors		Needs Work	Completes task with support from practitioner	Completes task independently
A1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>follows the main events of descriptive, narrative and informational texts</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>obtains information from detailed reading</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>begins to identify sources and evaluate information</li> </ul>			
B1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows an awareness of factors that affect interactions, such as differences in opinions and ideas, and social, linguistic and cultural differences</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates some ability to use tone appropriately</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses strategies to maintain communication, such as encouraging responses from others and asking questions</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speaks or signs clearly in a focused and organized way</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rephrases to confirm or increase understanding</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses and interprets non-verbal cues (e.g. body language, facial expressions, gestures)</li> </ul>			
B2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>writes simple texts to request, remind or inform</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conveys simple ideas and factual information</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates a limited understanding of sequence</li> </ul>			
B2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>writes texts to explain and describe</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>connects ideas using paragraph structure</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses limited range of vocabulary and punctuation appropriate to the task</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>begins to select words and tone appropriate to the task</li> </ul>			
B4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>n/a</li> </ul>			
D1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>follows simple prompts</li> </ul>			

