



Goal-Directed Behavior

Choosing a Goal

Pre-Teaching/ Guiding Language:

Setting a goal can feel like an overwhelming task for many people. Perhaps this is because many of us were never explicitly taught how to choose a relevant goal or how to stay motivated to meet that goal. Setting goals are beneficial for a multitude of reasons, some of them being:

- Setting and sticking to goals improves our self-esteem.
- Setting goals increases both our awareness of our strengths as well as our weaknesses.
- Having clear goals provides clarity on our priorities.
- Setting goals helps us to visualize our end game.
- Setting and meeting goals helps us to have a sense of responsibility and ownership of our future.

Now that we understand why goals are important, how do we decide how to pick goals that are right for us? We want to make sure that we are working towards something that motivates us and that we want. If we do not really care about the result, then we will likely not be successful in meeting that goal. We want to make sure that our goals are clear and measurable, so we know if and when we need to adjust them. We also want to make sure we give ourselves a time frame. Some goals take longer than others, but each goal should have an end date in sight, knowing that we can adjust if necessary.

This strategy reinforces the skills taught in the high school student-directed strategy

How to Set a Goal.

Key Takeaways:

- Students will understand how to appropriately choose a goal.
- Students will recognize the importance of setting both long term goals as well as goals that are more easily attainable.

Duration + Materials:

- 20 minutes

Key Vocabulary:

- **Goals-** The object of a person's ambition or effort; an aim or desired result.
- **Prioritize-** Designate or treat something as more important than other things.
- **Clarify-** Make a statement or situation less confused and more clearly comprehensible.
- **Explicit-** Stated clearly and in detail, leaving no room for confusion or doubt.



Activity:

1. Teachers will use the pre-teaching language to introduce the idea of setting goals and why they are important.
2. Brainstorm with the student using the discussion questions to set two or three realistic, attainable goals.
 - a. These can be things like: apply to college, join a sports team, or play in the marching band.
 - b. They can also be as simple as make it to school on time every day, remember to bring my lunch, etc.
3. Once the goals are selected, decide whether these goals are short- or long-term goals.
4. Use the steps below to walk the student through how to tell if these goals are attainable.
 - a. Does the goal have a clear start and end date?
 - b. Is the goal measurable?
 - c. Is the goal relevant to your school or life purpose?

Discussion Questions:

1. What is something you wish to achieve this year?
2. What support do you think you will need to achieve this goal?
3. Who is responsible for making sure you meet this goal?
4. What is something you think you are good at?
5. What is something you think you need to improve upon?
6. If my goal seems like it becomes unattainable, how will I adjust it?

Reinforcement Activities:

1. Teachers can use goals throughout their everyday teaching and involve students in creating end dates for them. Examples might include deciding when work needs to be completed, when a project is due, or how to increase the class GPA.