Lesson 10

Plan & Set Goals

Now that the students have identified their strengths and needs, they are well on their way to self-regulated learning. The next step is to help them make a personalized action plan that will place them in the driver's seat of their own learning. This plan includes setting specific goals to connect their capabilities to what they want to achieve in a manageable and realistic way.

✓ TEACHER TAKEAWAYS

- ☐ Goals should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) (Doran, 1981).

- ☐ Goals should include a specific time frame (a week, a month, a marking period).

- ☐ Goals should include an objective method or measure to determine whether the goal was met at the end of the time frame.

- ☐ Goals should be a stretch but achievable. This is known as the zone of proximal development, or the "Goldilocks Principle." Are these goals achievable based on the student's strengths and needs? Are they too easy so the student won't grow? Are they too challenging and the student could easily be discouraged?

- ☐ Goals should reflect the student's intrinsic interests and should take into consideration academic, cognitive, and personal strengths and needs.

☐ Keep in mind that you want students to improve in all areas. Nurturing a strength could be as important as developing a weaker skill. Improving a social skill could be as important as improving a grade.

☐ Effective goal setting is dependent on self-awareness, planning, and flexible thinking. Goal setting might be harder for students with weaker executive functions (attention, working memory, or flexible thinking), but all students can be successful with support.

☐ Limit the number of goals. Too many goals can be unmanageable. The "Rule of Three" is a reliable benchmark. In some cases, one or two goals might be sufficient, especially for struggling learners or those with weaker executive functions

✔️ STUDENT TAKEAWAYS

☐ The best way to achieve what you want in school (and in life) is to have a manageable plan of action by setting goals for yourself. If you are intentional about what you want to achieve, you are far more likely to succeed.

☐ Your goals can extend beyond grades or making the sports team. Think more broadly about the person you want to be.

☐ Plans and goals aren't permanent. They depend on what is going on in your life at a specific point in time and what is important to you. Identify what is important now. You can adapt your plans later as necessary.

💡 MINDPRINT STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS

● Specific, Achievable Goals (*https://my.mindprintlearning.com/toolbox/ toolbox-demo/product/1987*) (S)

● Discover True Interests (*https://my.mindprintlearning.com/toolbox/ toolbox-demo/product/12530*) (S)

A CLOSER LOOK

- Articles on Interests & Passion; Mindprint Learning (*https://mindprintlearning.com/article/topics/academic-potential/interests-passion*)

- Student Interest Survey for Career Clusters; Advance CTE (*https://careertech.org/student-interest-survey*)

- SMART Goal Setting with Your Students; Edutopia (*www.edutopia.org/blog/smart-goal-setting-with-students-maurice-elias*)

LESSON ACTIVITIES

Direct Instruction

Teachers introduce the importance of goal setting.

Teacher Background

Students should have specific goals that reflect their Learner Profiles or student-prioritized cognitive skills. Unlike class goals such as getting an A or learning specific content, these goals should be about broader self-improvement and lifelong learning skills.

Teacher-led Discussion

Begin at the end—why are we doing this? Remind students that the ultimate objective is for them to take control of the learning process but that you will be there to support them along the way. Generate enthusiasm for the idea that they will be in control, not someone else telling them what they must do. Reinforce that the process is only successful if they take responsibility.

Show students the Self-Regulated Learning Overview (Figure 2). Take this opportunity to review the strong foundational skills they have been develop-ing on the inside of the circle: establishing growth mindset, understanding their intrinsic motivations, and identifying their areas of strength and need in academics, cognitive, and personal skills.

Review the Three-Step Process they will take to develop self-regulated learning.

Emphasize the importance of goals being specific to students' own unique combination of strengths, needs, and interests. Acknowledge that this can be challenging at first but that it will get easier over time.

Provide reassurance that goals can and most likely will evolve. This is a fluid process—adjustments are expected.

Student Activity

Goals We Can Measure: This is a warm-up exercise that provides practice turning non-measurable goals into measurable goals. (E, M)

Direct Instruction/Student Activity

Individual Goal Setting: This is the most detailed and time-consuming exercise in this guide. Allow for sufficient preparation and time. (E, M, H)

Direct Instruction/Student Activity

Individual Goal Setting (Alternative Version) (*https://mindprintlearning.com/ free-resources/mindprint-exclusives/*): You can download an Excel Goal Setting Spreadsheet as an alternative, self-guided approach to the three-step process. (M, H)

Coaching

Make Goals Visible: Place the goals in an accessible, visible spot—on your student binder or in a special folder, or hang them in the classroom. (E, M, H)

STUDENT ACTIVITY:
Goals We Can Measure

Before individual goal setting, have students think about how to write goals that can be measured. This can be done in small groups or as a class discussion. Begin with an example and then offer a series of goals that cannot be measured. Ask students to reword the goals to make them measurable:

PROMPTS	MAKE IT MEASURABLE	HOW I WILL MEASURE
I will do better in Math		
I will get organized		
I will work faster		

STUDENT ACTIVITY:
Individual Goal Setting

Name: _____

Keeping in mind my strengths and needs:

	MY STRONGEST SKILL	SKILLS I NEED HELP WITH…
Academic Skills		
Cognitive Skills		
Personal Skills		

What do I want to achieve in _____ over the next _____?
                                          (subject)   **(time period)**

Step 1: Brainstorm (At least _____ goals)

BRAINSTORM IDEAS	WHY IS THIS GOAL IMPORTANT TO ME?

Step 2: Are My Goals Realistic and Specific?

Look at your list and evaluate:

- Is the goal specific?

- Is the goal realistic?

- Can you accomplish the goal in the time frame?

- Is the goal written in the "positive"? (what you want to do, not what you don't want to do)

- Is the goal meaningful?

Rewrite your goals to make them positive, realistic, and specific in the given time frame. If there are goals that you can't make realistic or that really aren't important to you, you can leave them off the list.

REALISTIC AND SPECIFIC GOALS	TIME FRAME

Step 3: How will I decide if I achieved my goal? How will I measure if I am successful?

For each goal, decide on an objective measure.

REALISTIC & SPECIFIC GOALS	TIME FRAME	HOW WILL I MEASURE MY PERFORMANCE?

Step 4: Prioritize your goals.

Number your goals above in order of importance to you. Give a "1" to the goal you want to work on the most.

Step 5: My Goals!

Write your final goal(s) and how you will measure them below. Aim for three final goals.

MY GOALS	TIME FRAME TO COMPLETE	GOAL MEASURES