

PART II

ACQUIRING CORE SKILLS

GOAL SETTING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART II: ACQUIRING CORE SKILLS

Goal Setting

1. Defining Goals 3
2. Stepping Stone Goals 16
3. Taking Action 25
4. Persevering 33

DEFINING GOALS



AGENDA

- SESSION 1
 - Starter
 - Noise or Not?
 - Features
- SESSION 2
 - Review
 - More Features
 - Goaltenders
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will recognize the importance of having goals.

Students will recognize that meaningful goals need to be personal and realistic.

Students will recognize that goals have consequences and must have deadlines.

Students will list goals and use specific criteria to evaluate them.

Materials Needed

- Session 2: One copy of the “Valid Goals” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

SESSION 1

Starter (5 minutes)

Ask students to describe what they would do if they wanted to get a certain grade in one of their classes. For example, ask:

- What would you do if you wanted to get by with a C in your English class? (Students should respond: rarely do homework, don't study for tests.)
- What would you do if you wanted to get an A? (Students should respond: study hard, do homework, etc.)

List responses on the board. Spend a few minutes making observations about similarities and differences between the lists.

Point out that in each case, students mentioned performing specific actions in order to reach a specific goal. Also point out that in each case, the result, or consequence of the action was different, but it was not an accident or a surprise.

Tell students that in this lesson, they're going to talk about the meaning and importance of goals, and how to take specific actions to reach a goal.

Part I Noise or Not? (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize the importance of having goals.

1. Students prepare for the activity.

Explain that the class is going to conduct an experiment. Divide the class into four groups, and have members of each group sit together. Then, read the following directions while demonstrating each one:

- Members of group 1 will make sounds by stomping their feet on the floor, one foot after the other.
- Members of group 2 will make sounds by continuously snapping their fingers.
- Members of group 3 will slap their hands against their thighs.
- Members of group 4 will rub the palms of their hands together.
- At the count of three, all four groups will begin making their sounds and continue until I say stop.

2. Students create sounds.

Give students about 30 seconds to make their sounds. Try not to show any reaction to what is happening. If the sounds begin to fade or stop, however, tell students to keep going. When time is up, call for students to stop.

3. Students reflect on their experience.

Engage students in a discussion about what they have just done by asking:

- What was the purpose of this activity? (to make different sounds)
- What do you think we accomplished during this activity? (Some students may respond that one thing they accomplished was to make a lot of noise. If some argue that they made music, point out that music is usually made from a pattern or rhythm of sounds, and encourage students to analyze whether their sounds could really be called music.)

Say, “You followed my directions very well. But in doing so, we accomplished absolutely nothing because we didn’t have a meaningful goal in mind when we started. Let’s see what happens if we use the noises to create the sound of a rainstorm.”

4. Students repeat the activity, this time with a goal in mind.

Explain that to make the sound of a rainstorm, students will make the same sounds, but in a different manner. Tell them that this time you will act as the conductor. You will make one of the sounds, and then point to a group. That group should repeat the sound, and continue making it until you give them a new sound. Remind students to watch your directions carefully, and then silently do the following:

- Rub the palms of your hands together and point to group 1. Repeat these actions for group 2, then group 3, and finally group 4.
- Snap your fingers and point only to group 1. The other groups should continue rubbing their hands together.
- While snapping your fingers, point to group 2, then group 3, and finally group 4. (Everyone should now be snapping their fingers, which should sound like raindrops hitting the ground.)
- Slap your hands against your thighs and point to each group in turn.
- Stomp your feet and point to each group in turn. (It should now sound like a full rainstorm.)
- Reverse the order of the actions (slap thighs, snap, rub palms) so that it sounds as if the storm is stopping.

5. Students compare and contrast the activities.

Call on volunteers to describe the difference between the two versions of the activity they just performed. Guide students to understand that the second time, the group had a definite purpose or goal in mind and made sounds in a specific order at a specific time in order to accomplish that goal.

Explain that goals are important because they provide a reason for doing things. Meaningful goals give focus and direction to people's lives. They help people achieve their objectives and allow them to realize their dreams.

Part II Features (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students learn that meaningful goals need to be personal and realistic.

1. Students define "goal."

Ask volunteers to explain what the word "goal" means to them. Write their ideas on the board. Have a volunteer look up the word in a dictionary and read the word's definitions and synonyms out loud.

Through discussion, guide students to create their own definition and focus on synonyms that are meaningful to them. (Students should respond that a goal is something that they want to accomplish by a certain time. Synonyms might be "target," "purpose," and "objective.") Write the results on the board, and suggest that students make a note of them. Make a note of the results yourself for use during the next class period.

2. Students recognize that goals are personal.

Ask students to recall their discussion about dreams earlier in the course. If students are keeping their work in folders, have them find the "Cloud Nine" activity sheet from Lesson 4 of Getting Started, in which they drew pictures that represent their dreams. Prompt them to recall what they drew and why.

Remind students that everyone in the class has dreams, and that these dreams are as different from one another as the people who have them. Tell students that just like their dreams, their goals are personal. Only they can decide what their goals should be, only they can work for their goals, and only they can change their goals.

Write the word "goals" on the board and draw a circle around it. Then, draw four horizontal lines radiating from the circle (two lines on the left side and two on the right) to make a semantic map. On the top left line, write the phrase "are personal."

3. Students identify realistic and unrealistic goals.

On the lower left line of the semantic map, write the phrase "are realistic." Ask students what they think this means. (Students should mention that realistic goals are practical or have a good chance of being achieved.)

Ask students what they think an unrealistic goal might be. (Students should mention that an unrealistic goal is not practical or does not have a good chance of being achieved.) Then, invite volunteers to give some examples of unrealistic goals or expectations. Prompt their thinking by giving a few examples of your own:

- I'm going to become an Olympic athlete by the end of the month.
- I want to buy a sports car, but I haven't saved money for it.

As students respond, ask them to explain why these examples are unrealistic. Have them suggest changes that would make these goals more realistic. Model this by adjusting your own examples:

- I'm going to become an Olympic athlete within the next 10 years.
- Buying a sports car is not a realistic goal until I have saved thousands of dollars. I will set up a savings account at my bank tomorrow so I can eventually buy the car.

Help students focus on changing unrealistic goals in order to match a reasonable time frame. Say, "Setting your sights high is not the same as being unrealistic. For example, is it unrealistic for a 14-year-old who likes math to want to become an engineer after she has graduated from college? No! Being unrealistic means that the goal is not in line with your personal values, strengths, interests, or time frame."

Draw attention back to the semantic map on the board, and point out the two remaining empty lines on the right side of the map. Explain that in the next class period, students will discuss two more aspects of meaningful goals: consequences and deadlines.

SESSION 2

Part I Review (5 minutes)

On the board, recreate the semantic map that you used in the last session to record the different aspects of goals. For this class period, write the word “goals” and draw a circle around it. Then, draw four lines radiating from the circle.

Ask students to recall what they learned about goals in the last class period. Challenge volunteers to come to the board one at a time, and write words that describe the different aspects of a meaningful goal. As they do, call on other students to tell more about each aspect listed. Students should be able to fill in two lines with the phrases “are personal” and “are realistic.”

Remind students that today they will be exploring two additional aspects of meaningful goals—consequences and deadlines. Fill in the two right-hand lines on the semantic map with the phrases “have consequences” and “have deadlines.”

Part II More Features (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize that goals have consequences, and must have deadlines in order to be useful.

1. Students recognize the connection between goals and consequences.

Ask students to answer the following questions:

- Is getting all Bs or As on your report card this grading period a goal?
- Is missing class every day a goal?
- Is talking to everyone by yelling at them a goal?

Affirm that the answer to each of these questions could be yes. Point out that these examples could be goals, but that they have very different consequences. Ask students to describe what would happen if a person received all Bs and As, missed class every day, or yelled at everyone all the time.

After discussing the consequences of each example, ask students to evaluate whether the goal produced positive or negative results.

Point out that when setting goals, it is important to consider their consequences. Explain that setting positive goals will yield positive results and that setting negative goals will yield negative results.

2. Students focus on the importance of deadlines.

Draw attention to the line on the semantic map labeled “have deadlines.” Then, ask questions such as the following to begin a discussion about deadlines and how they motivate people:

- If your room must be cleaned before you may watch TV tomorrow, when will you do it? (I will do it tonight, or before or after school tomorrow.)
- What determines when you will clean your room? (It’s determined by the time or deadline by which it needs to be cleaned.)
- Does the deadline motivate or prompt you to get the job done?
- What would happen if you didn’t have a deadline?

3. Students recognize that deadlines must be realistic.

Ask students if they can recall the definition of the word “goal” that they developed during the last class period. Write the definition on the board, and circle or add a reference to time frames. For example, if your definition was, “A goal is something you want to accomplish by a certain time,” circle the words “by a certain time.” If your definition did not mention time frames, add a reference to them now.

Emphasize the fact that deadlines help motivate people to get things done. Acknowledge the fact that sometimes it’s easy to lose sight of a goal if it doesn’t have a deadline. Say, “If a goal is important, set a deadline for accomplishing it. Later, we’re going to learn how some goals need to be broken down into different parts, each with its own deadline.”

Part III Goaltenders (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students list goals and use specific criteria to evaluate their meaningfulness.

1. Students list their goals.

Distribute copies of the “Valid Goals” activity sheet. Explain that students should think about three things they want to accomplish in the next week. Offer ideas such as the following:

- Think about goals you may have in your classes—assignments that need to be completed or tests that are coming up.
- Think about goals you may have at home—projects you are working on or chores for which you are responsible.
- Think about goals that you may have with friends—existing relationships that need to be worked on or new ones that you would like to start.

2. Students evaluate their goals.

When students have finished listing three of their goals, have them review each one and measure it against the following criteria:

- Is this a personal goal? Does it mean something to you? Is it something you want to accomplish?
- Is this goal realistic? Is it in line with your values, strengths, and expectations?
- Are the consequences of this goal positive? Will it result in something that you want to accomplish?
- Does this goal have a deadline? Can it realistically be accomplished in the time you have set?

Tell students to write yes or no in response to each question in the center columns of the activity sheet.

3. Students revise their goals to make them meaningful.

Tell students that if they have answered no to any questions about a goal, they should fill in the right column of the activity sheet. Either they can explain that the goal is unimportant or unrealistic and that it will be abandoned, or they can adjust it to meet the criteria of a meaningful goal.

Circulate among students as they work, answering questions or offering suggestions and encouragement as needed. Be careful not to make judgments about the goals that students list.

Conclusion (3 minutes)

Ask students to name the distinguishing aspects of a meaningful goal. Ask them to explain the impact that setting goals will have on the realization of their dreams. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Meaningful goals are personal and realistic; they should reflect your values, strengths, and interests.
- Positive goals will have positive consequences.
- Set deadlines to motivate you to achieve your goals and realize your dreams.

Student Assessment

SESSION 1

1. Why are some goals important?
2. Give one example of a realistic goal and one example of an unrealistic goal.

SESSION 2

1. Define “personal goal.”
2. Give an example of a meaningful goal. What makes this goal meaningful?
3. Why are deadlines an essential part of the goal-setting process?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“The tragedy of life doesn’t lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach.”

Discuss this quote. Have students explain why they agree or disagree. As a class, brainstorm ways in which having goals can lead to a more fulfilling life.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students create totem poles that show their goals. Have them glue a cardboard base to an empty paper towel tube. To tell the story of their goals, they can glue on small pictures and objects, snippets of news articles, etc.

Have students explain the significance of their totems in small groups.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about a goal they had when they were younger. Did they achieve it? Why or why not?

Have students share their writing with a partner. If they didn’t achieve their goal, is it still worth pursuing? How could they redefine the goal to make it achievable?

Using Technology

Have students use the internet to locate news articles in which individuals, sports teams, political groups, or countries announce their goals.

Have students assess these goals in small groups to see if they’re realistic, have positive consequences, and include deadlines. Have students create charts to show their work.

Homework

Have students write a letter to someone they look up to requesting advice on how to accomplish goals. Discuss the letters in class, and have students mail them.

Additional Resources

Share two success stories from Glenn Van Ekeren's *Speaker's Sourcebook II*: "Master of Music Trivia," which is about Casey Kasem's rise to fame as the host of *American Top 40*, and "The Cookie Kid," which is about Markita Andrews, seller of 30,000 boxes of Girl Scout Cookies.

Have students identify each person's goal and how they achieved it.

VALID GOALS

List three goals in the left column. Evaluate them, one by one, by answering yes or no to each question. If the answer “no” ever occurs, revise the goal to make it valid.

 Goals	<i>Is it personal?</i>	<i>Is it realistic?</i>	<i>Are the consequences positive?</i>	<i>Does it have a deadline?</i>	 Revised Goals
1.					
2.					
3.					

STEPPING STONE GOALS



AGENDA

- Starter
- Step This Way
- Break It Down
- On Your Way
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will recognize that a long-term goal can be broken into a series of steps, or smaller goals.

Students will identify short-term and medium-range goals and become aware of their importance to achieving long-term goals.

Students will set stepping-stone goals for themselves.

Materials Needed

- One copy of the “Step This Way” activity sheet for each group of three to four students. (Before class, cut each activity sheet into one set of six squares. You will need one set for each group of students.) (Part I)
- Two copies of the “On Your Way” activity sheet for each student. (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever taken a bus somewhere. Then say, “Imagine that you are on a bus and the bus driver announces, ‘Ladies and gentlemen, I don’t know exactly where I’m going, but I’ll drive around for a while. If I come close to where you want to get off, just let me know.’” After students have reacted, ask:

- Would you want to be on this bus?
- What do you think of this bus driver?

Say, “Today, we’re going to talk about how important it is to make a plan that will help you get to where you want to go.”

Part I Step This Way (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize that a long-term goal can be broken down into a series of steps, or smaller goals.

1. Students prepare for the activity.

Divide the class into groups of three or four students. Give each group one set of squares from the “Step This Way” activity sheet. Jumble the order of the squares before giving each group its set. Explain that each group has a set of puzzle pieces and that students are to do the following:

- Arrange the squares in an order that will enable them to achieve a final goal.
- Experiment with different arrangements before making their decision.
- Number the squares in order from one to six, with six being the long-term goal.

2. Students determine steps in a sequence.

Circulate among students as they work. If students are having difficulty sequencing their squares, suggest that they start at the end by numbering and identifying the long-term goal first (e.g., “be chosen for the basketball team”).

After students have finished working, invite members of each group to share their results with the class. Through discussion, guide students to settle on this sequence of events:

1. Decide that you want to be on the basketball team.
2. Start practicing, and find out when tryouts are.
3. Find someone who can help you improve the skills you're having trouble with.
4. Eat well and make sure to get a lot of rest the week before tryouts.
5. Try out for the basketball team.
6. Be chosen for the basketball team.

3. Students reflect on the activity.

Model an evaluation of this long-term goal by verbally reinforcing the criteria that students have previously used. Ask them to identify each criterion you use. You might say the following:

- If I really liked playing basketball, I would want to be on the team (personal).
- This goal is something I could work for and achieve in the future (realistic).
- I would enjoy being on the basketball team and being involved in other activities (consequences).
- I could prepare for it over the next year (time frame/deadline).

Point out that all long-term goals can be broken into smaller steps, and that each of these is another goal in itself. Explain that long-term goals can sometimes seem impossible to achieve because they are far in the future, but making a plan to achieve a dream can help it come true.

Part II Break It Down (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify short-term and medium-range goals and become aware of their importance to achieving long-term goals.

1. Students evaluate another long-term goal.

On the board, draw five large boxes in a row, connected with arrows from left to right. In the last box on the right, write, "Buy a new phone."

Ask students to evaluate this goal and decide whether it is valid. If necessary, prompt students to add a deadline or time frame (e.g., by summer). Then, above the box, label it as a long-term goal.

2. Students make a plan to achieve the goal.

Invite the class to brainstorm a plan of action for achieving this goal. Guide students to formulate a series of steps and write them in the boxes you have drawn on the board. Encourage them to erase and rearrange the order of steps as their plan evolves. If needed, add another box or two. However, through questions and comments, help students to keep their plan brief and practical. The final plan may resemble the following:

- Discuss with parents.
- Shop for models and prices.
- Choose the one I want.
- Earn and save the money.

3. Students identify short-term and medium-range goals.

Point out that students have just created an action plan by setting stepping-stone goals. Explain that there are three different kinds of stepping-stone goals:

- Short-term goals, which are steps that you want to take in a short time frame (e.g., today, tomorrow, or within the next week)
- Medium-range goals, which are steps that will take a little more time (e.g., a week, a month, or more)
- Long-term goals, which are what you hope to accomplish in the future (e.g., buying a new phone or making the basketball team next year)

Ask students to identify which steps in their plan on the board are short-term goals, and label those boxes. Then, do the same for medium-range goals.

Tell students that whenever they feel like giving up on a long-term goal, they should make a plan with stepping-stone goals. The plan will give them direction. It will help them find a way to do whatever they wish to do. Remind students that if they need information in order to build a plan, all they need to do is ask questions.

Part III On Your Way (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students set stepping-stone goals for themselves in order to begin working on a long-term goal.

1. Students prepare for the activity.

Distribute one copy of the “On Your Way” activity sheet to each student. Give students time to read over the directions. Then, answer any questions they might have. Tell students that they may not need to use all six boxes in the chart; they should use as many as their goal requires.

To prompt students to think about their goals, suggest that they look in their folders and find the “Cloud Nine” activity sheet from Lesson 4 of *Getting Started*, which illustrates one of their dreams. They should also review the “Valid Goals” activity sheet, which they completed in the last class period. You might also suggest that they think about things they would like to accomplish in the future at home, at school, in sports, over the summer, in high school, or when they are adults.

2. Students work independently to establish and evaluate their goals.

Before students begin working, remind them to evaluate their goals and make sure they are valid. As students work, circulate through the classroom and ensure that students have set appropriate goals. Watch for goals that are unrealistic or impossible for students to achieve. By asking questions or offering comments, help students modify or change such goals.

If time permits, invite students to share their goals and the steps they set for achieving them. Then, distribute the remaining copies of the “On Your Way” activity sheet, and suggest that students keep these copies in their folders to fill out the next time they want to establish a new goal.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to explain the concept of stepping-stone goals. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Every long-term goal, even one that seems impossible at first, is made up of smaller goals that can be achieved one at a time.
- Create stepping-stone plans to achieve long-term goals and dreams.

Student Assessment

1. Define “short-term goal.” Give an example.
2. Define “medium-range goal.” Give an example.
3. Define “long-term goal.” Give an example.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

Have students investigate items of interest in Guinness World Records and suggest what the “first step” toward beating these records might be. As a class, discuss how such large goals may seem frightening, but are manageable when broken down into smaller steps.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have groups of students work to create poems or songs about the importance of one or more stepping-stone goals and the long-term goals to which the stepping-stone goals might ultimately lead.

Have students perform their poems/songs for the class.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students keep a diary of achievements and setbacks as they work toward a desired goal.

Have each student compare notes with a partner.

Using Technology

Search the internet to find stories about other students’ projects.

Have students select one project and identify its short-term, medium-range, and long-term goals.

Homework

Have each student create a collage that illustrates the stepping-stone goals that got a well-known person to where that person is today.

Additional Resources

Show the film *The Miracle Worker*, which portrays the story of Helen Keller and her teacher, Anne Sullivan.

Have small groups of students create organizers showing the stepping-stone goals that took Helen Keller from single-word recognition to college graduation and beyond.

STEP THIS WAY

Decide that you
want to be on
the basketball team.

Eat well and make
sure to get plenty
of rest the week
before tryouts.

Find someone who
can help you
improve the skills in
which you're having
trouble.

Be chosen for the
basketball team.

Start practicing,
and find out when
tryouts are.

Try out for the
basketball team.



ON YOUR WAY

Long-Term Goal

1. Write one of your long-term goals in the top box.
2. Think about the steps you need to take before you can achieve this goal. List the steps on the back of this activity sheet; then number them in the order in which they should be done.
3. Fill in the boxes with the stepping-stone goals that will help you reach your goal.

TAKING ACTION



AGENDA

- Starter
- No Follow-Through
- The 15-Letter Pitfall
- How Do I Rate?
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will define “procrastination.”

Students will recognize that taking action is a necessary step toward achieving a goal.

Students will identify personal obstacles to taking action, and then plan to act on an immediate goal.

Materials Needed

- Drawing paper, pencils, and colored pencils or markers for each student (Part I)
- A dictionary (Part II)
- One copy of the “A Self-Survey” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Begin class with a word problem: “If three birds are sitting on a tree branch and two decide to fly away, how many birds are left sitting on the branch?”

Give students time to respond. Then, explain that there are three birds left. Two have decided to do something, but until they actually fly away, nothing has happened. They are still sitting on the branch.

Say, “In today’s class, we’re going to see why setting goals and making plans are only half the job, and how procrastination can affect you.”

Part I No Follow-Through (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students express their understanding of the concept of procrastination and recognize that taking action is a necessary step in achieving a goal.

1. Students prepare for the activity.

Explain that students are going to create comic strips. First, they will work together for about five minutes to generate ideas. Then, they will work individually or with a partner to create their strips.

Decide whether you will have students work together as a class or in smaller groups for the first part of this activity.

2. Students brainstorm ideas for their comics.

Challenge students to think of examples of procrastination that could be illustrated as a comic strip. Tell them that the title of their comics will be “No Follow-Through.”

To prompt ideas, suggest that students think of some consequences of not following through on a plan of action. You might start the brainstorming yourself by giving examples such as the following:

- A comic about the three birds sitting in a tree could be illustrated in two frames. The first frame might show three birds sitting on a branch. One bird says, “I’ve got to get going now.” Another bird says, “Me too.” A clock on the tree reads 1:00. The next frame might show the same three birds in exactly the same place, but the clock now reads 3:00.
- You might draw a one-frame comic with a picture of a face covered by hair. The person says, “I planned to get my hair cut a few weeks ago.”
- You might draw a one-frame comic that shows a couch potato in front of a TV saying, “I really want to get an A on the project that’s due tomorrow.”

3. Students draw their comic strips.

Circulate among students as they work, and encourage students who seem to be having difficulty to work in groups. A student who likes to draw or who draws well, for example, could team up with someone who is better at generating ideas or writing captions.

As students finish, invite them to display their comics around the classroom.

Part II The 15-Letter Pitfall (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students develop a definition of “procrastination.”

1. Students define “procrastination.”

Write the verb “procrastinate” on the board. Prompt students as a group to discuss and formulate a definition of the word. Have volunteers write ideas on the board, and then summarize the ideas as a definition.

At the same time, have a volunteer look up the word in the dictionary and read the definition aloud to the class. (Merriam-Webster defines “procrastinate” as “to put off intentionally the doing of something that should be done.”) Challenge students to consider the dictionary definition in light of their own definition and to make adjustments as they see fit.

2. Students focus on the meaning of “procrastination.”

Challenge students to think of synonyms for procrastinate. Encourage them to spin off ideas in order to generate a long list of words. Your list might include “delay,” “postpone,” “put off,” “defer,” “stall,” “hold off,” “shelve,” “suspend,” “hang back,” “wait,” or “avoid.”

Help students make observations about the list by asking what all of these words seem to have in common. (They all refer to avoiding action.)

Draw attention to the board as you point out that procrastinate is a verb. Then, ask:

- What is a verb? (Students should say that a verb is an action word.)
- What verb is illustrated by all of your comics? (Students should say that they illustrate the verb “procrastinate.”)
- How do these comics illustrate the meaning of this verb? Choose one to talk about.
- Do you think that procrastinating helps us achieve our goals? Explain your answer.

Erase the letter “e” at the end of procrastinate and add the suffix “-ion.” Ask students to pronounce the word and define it. (Students should say that it means “the act of procrastinating.”) Say, “Procrastination is a 15-letter pitfall. It keeps people from achieving their goals.”

3. Students reflect on taking action.

Direct students' attention to the list of synonyms on the board. Challenge students to create a list of antonyms for "procrastinate." Your list might include "act," "do," "go," "move," "work," "play," "function," "operate," "produce," "use," "follow through," "pursue," "carry out," or "achieve."

Point out that the act of setting goals is only the beginning—one has to do something about them. Say, "You can make the best action plan in the world. You can set the most realistic goals with the most realistic deadlines and look success right in the face. But if you do nothing—if you don't follow through—you won't accomplish anything."

Part III How Do I Rate? (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify personal obstacles to taking action, and then plan to act on an immediate goal.

1. Students assess their ability to follow through on their goals.

Tell students that they are going to fill out a questionnaire that will help them see how well they follow through on their goals. As you distribute copies of the "A Self-Survey" activity sheet, assure students that their answers will be confidential and that you will not be asking anyone to share information from this activity sheet with the class.

Remind students to keep these activity sheets in their folders. Suggest that when they are feeling discouraged about their goals, they should take another look at this survey.

2. Students reassess their goals and plan to act.

Ask students to take out their copies of the "Valid Goals" activity sheet, which they completed in Lesson 1 of this module. Have them review the list of things they wanted to accomplish that week.

Ask for a show of hands from students who accomplished all three goals listed on their activity sheets. Suggest that students take the time to either pat themselves on the back for a job well done or select one goal to work on now. Tell them to write down something they will do by the end of the day to accomplish this goal.

If time permits, encourage students to talk about difficulties they have with setting goals or following through on plans. Guide the discussion so that students will focus on advising and consulting with other students rather than looking to you for answers.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to define "procrastination." Ask them to explain how procrastination can affect their goals. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Setting appropriate goals is not enough. You must follow through by taking action.
- Procrastination is a 15-letter pitfall—it can keep you from achieving your goals.

Student Assessment

1. Give an example of a time when you procrastinated. What were the consequences?
2. What are some things you do to procrastinate?
3. Why is it important to take action?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Discipline is remembering what you want.”

Have students offer examples of how remembering their goals might prompt them to avoid procrastination.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students work in small groups to create acrostics of the word “procrastination.” Each group should write a strategy for avoiding procrastination for each letter of the word (e.g., “P” is for “put your goals first”).

Have each group share its acrostic with the class.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students choose one question from the “A Self-Survey” activity sheet that they answered yes to and describe one incident in which their lack of follow-through was a problem. Have them devise a plan for handling the situation differently next time.

Invite volunteers to share their writing in order to get feedback/support from the class.

Math Connection

Have students track for one week how much time they spend procrastinating. Have them create charts or graphs listing their tasks and showing their level of procrastination.

As a class, discuss how the amount of time one spends procrastinating is directly related to the amount of stress one feels when forced to finish a task with a quickly approaching deadline.

Homework

Have students write a one-page article about an accomplishment they or someone else made in school or in their community. Students may want to include quotes, photos, or drawings about the accomplishment.

Have students share their articles as oral reports or include them in a class newspaper.

Additional Resources

Have students read “The Circuit,” a short story by Francisco Jimenez. The narrator of the story, a sixth-grade migrant worker, finds that his dreams for the future are compromised by the cycle of the harvest.

Have the class discuss the narrator’s goals and the obstacles he faces in reaching them.

A SELF-SURVEY

When you say "I will," but then you don't, is it because...	No		Yes	
	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
1. you're afraid that you won't be good enough?				
2. a family member will put you down?				
3. you just wanted to please someone else?				
4. friends will think you've become weird?				
5. you've said "I will" to too many things already?				
6. you have trouble saying no to some people?				
7. you're not sure you can?				
8. you wanted to, but nobody else did?				
9. you didn't want to do it in the first place?				
10. you just blew it off?				

If you answered yes to five or more questions, chances are you're too hard on yourself! Ease up and stop worrying so much about what others think. Your opinion counts, too! Have a little more confidence in yourself.

If you answered no to more than five questions, keep going for it! You might want to check that your competitive side doesn't get the best of you.

PERSEVERING



AGENDA

- Starter
- The Maze
- The Magic Word
- Make a New Plan, Stan
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will recognize that they do not need to abandon a goal when they meet obstacles or difficulties.

Students will define “perseverance” and discuss its importance.

Students will revise stepping-stone goals in order to overcome an obstacle and achieve a goal.

Materials Needed

- One copy of “The Maze” activity sheet (Part I)
- A roll of masking tape with which to duplicate the maze on your classroom floor (Part I)

Starter (3 minutes)

Give students an example or two of fictional characters who exemplify perseverance. Choose characters from books, movies, or television who would currently be well known by your students. Call on students to tell what they know about the characters before making your point. Elicit responses that indicate the obstacles that the characters overcame.

Explain that in today's class, students will learn that they don't have to give up on something that is important to them just because they have run into an obstacle. They can find ways around it in order to keep striving for their goal.

Part I The Maze (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize that they do not need to abandon a goal when they meet obstacles or difficulties.

1. Set up the activity.

Before class today, recreate "The Maze" activity sheet on the floor of your classroom with masking tape. The maze should be large enough for students to walk through. On a sheet of paper, write the word "Start" and draw an arrow in colored marker. Then, tape the paper to the floor at the entrance to the maze. On another sheet of paper, write the word "End," and tape this to the floor at the exit from the maze.

2. Students work their way through the maze.

Call on volunteers to find their way through the maze. Allow students to work at it, one at a time. Make comments only to keep order or to move the process along. Encourage as many students as possible to participate, although most will figure out the correct path after a few volunteers have worked through it.

As students work, observe how they react when they meet a dead end in the maze. (Do they quit or do they back up and keep trying?) Also observe how other students react when this happens. (Do they offer encouragement or help?)

3. Students make observations about the activity.

Prompt students to make observations about this activity by asking questions and making comments based on your own observations. You might ask:

- Why was this activity hard to do at first?
- Why did it become easier for you later?
- Was it possible for all of the students to successfully reach the end?
- How did you react when you met a dead end? What choices did you have?
- How did the rest of the class react?
- Did having some encouragement motivate you to keep going?

Be sure that students have verbalized that it was possible for everyone to work through the maze and that the students who didn't give up were successful.

Part II The Magic Word (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students define “perseverance” and discuss its importance.

1. Students define “perseverance.”

Write the verb “persevere” on the board. Prompt students to discuss and formulate a definition of “persevere.” Have volunteers write ideas and definitions on the board.

At the same time, ask a student to look up the word in the dictionary and read the definitions aloud to the class. (Merriam-Webster defines “persevere” as “to persist in a state, enterprise, or undertaking in spite of counterinfluences, opposition, or discouragement.”) Challenge students to consider the dictionary definition in light of their own definition and to make adjustments as they see fit.

Ask students if they think that perseverance would help them achieve their goals. Call on individuals to explain their answers.

2. Students reflect on the obstacles they may face as they strive to achieve a goal.

Point out that no one can accurately predict the future, so it's hard to know exactly what might happen when we make an action plan to achieve a long-term goal. Explain that when students meet an obstacle, their first reaction should not be to give up; it should be to persevere—to keep trying.

Invite students to brainstorm factors that could become difficulties or obstacles to achieving a long-term goal. Prompt students by mentioning obstacles such as the following:

- Time: One stepping-stone goal may take more time than you thought, or there may be other steps you need to take that you didn't know about at first.
- Expenses: Something may cost more than you anticipated, or you may need things that you didn't even know about at first.
- Interest: You may lose interest for a while, or you may choose to do something else temporarily.
- Illness: You may get sick, or you may have to postpone everything for a while because of a health problem.
- Distractions: You may have friends who distract you from your goals.
- Other changes: Your family may move, you may change schools, or individuals who are important to your plan may end their involvement for some reason.

Through discussion, elicit from students the idea that they can overcome these obstacles by revising their stepping-stone goals or by making a new action plan. Remind students that if they persevere, they will overcome obstacles and they will succeed.

Part III Make a New Plan, Stan (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students revise stepping-stone goals in order to overcome an obstacle and achieve a goal.

1. Students set stepping-stone goals.

Divide the class into groups of four or five students. Assign a long-term goal to each group, and have them make a plan for achieving it. Choose goals such as the following:

- Make a varsity sports team in your sophomore year of high school.
- Get the lead part in the school play this spring.
- Sing and play in a rock band someday.
- Go to college.

Give students about five minutes to work out an action plan for achieving their goal.

2. Students revise their plans.

After students have completed their plans, explain that they have run into an obstacle. Suggest the following obstacles to overcome:

- You make the varsity team, but break your ankle the summer before your sophomore year in high school.
- You win the lead part in the play, but you get laryngitis.
- You are in a band whose members can't play their instruments very well.
- You go to college, but must earn more money for tuition.

Encourage students to make new action plans based on the difficulties they have encountered. Give them another five minutes to work out their new plans.

When students have finished, invite volunteers from each group to share their new action plans with the class. Encourage other students to offer additional suggestions for overcoming the obstacles presented to each group.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to explain how they can ensure that their goals are realistic. Ask students to define “persevere.” Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- To overcome obstacles on the road to achieving a long-term goal, revise your action plan.
- Successful people don't give up—they persevere.

Student Assessment

1. Explain why perseverance is vital for achieving your goals.
2. Describe a situation in your life in which you faced an obstacle and overcame it.
3. Think of an obstacle that could come between you and your long-term goal.
Write down ways that you can overcome or avoid this obstacle; then, revise your plan in a way that lets you still achieve your long-term goal.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Success is failure with the dirt brushed off.”

Have students create posters or collages to illustrate this idea.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students create a class scrapbook of photos and stories about how they met goals and overcame obstacles.

Allow students to sign the book out to share with friends and family members.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students make a list of the goals they achieved in the past week and how it felt to make those goals happen.

Have students share their writing with a partner.

Using Technology

Have students use the internet to collect information about people from various fields who struggled and eventually achieved their goals.

Have students assume the role of a TV news anchor reporting on their subject’s failures (or have them write a news blurb to that effect). Have students guess who is being discussed and what they accomplished later in life.

Homework

Read Langston Hughes's poem "Mother to Son" aloud. In it, a mother tells her son that "life for me ain't been no crystal stair," advising him to keep on trying even when life gets hard. Have students devise interview questions for their parents/guardians about obstacles they've overcome.

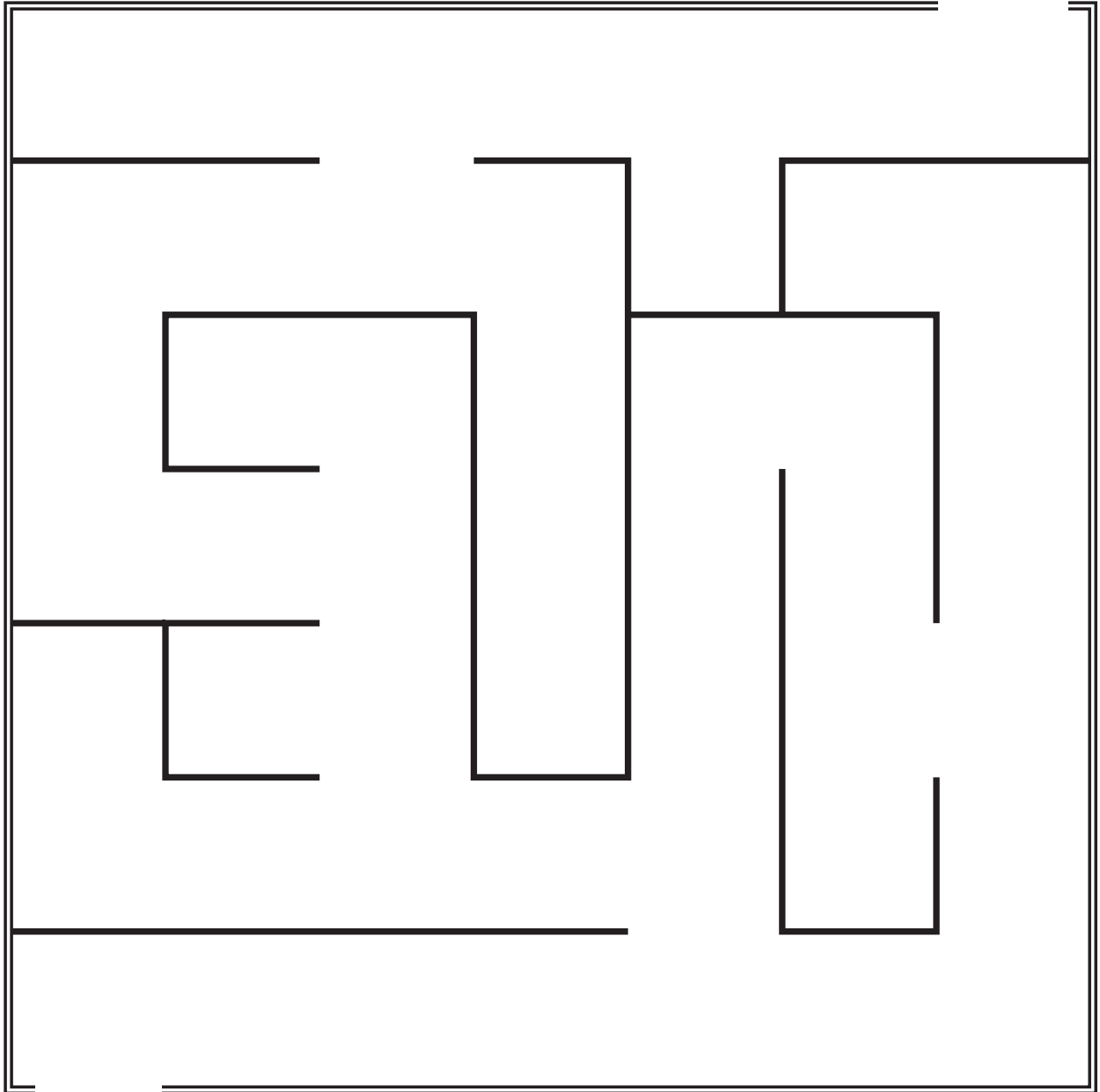
Have students conduct the interviews. After completing the interviews, have students write speeches or letters to the class sharing the advice they've been given.

Additional Resources

Have students read "The Hard Way" activity sheet.

Have students role-play an interview with Moochie Norris.

THE MAZE



THE HARD WAY

Melting snow is dripping onto the basketball court from a hole in the roof. Empty wooden seats outnumber fans in the upper deck. The hip-hop dancing of nerd entertainer Myron Noodleman gets bigger cheers than the two teams on the basketball court. Welcome to a cold January night in Indiana, as the Fort Wayne Fury battle the Rockford (Ill.) Lightning. Welcome to the NBA's minor league, the Continental Basketball Association.

The Fury's Moochie Norris, a CBA star with NBA dreams, is at the free-throw line. With just seconds left in the tie game, the 6-foot-1 point guard has got one shot at winning. But the ball hits inside the rim and bounces out. Close, but not close enough. It's the same with 25-year-old Norris—too good for the minors, not good enough for the big time. “But if I give up on my dream,” he says, “there’s no use in me playing at all.”

The nine-team CBA has 90 players like Norris, all hungry for the phone call that went to players like John Starks, Mario Elie and Chris Childs: “We want you to come play in the NBA.”

Norris, as the CBA's hottest player, is agonizingly close to achieving the NBA goal that his father instilled in him at the age of 6. After climbing out of his rough Washington, D.C., neighborhood, he bounced around to a few colleges, playing well enough to be drafted by the Milwaukee Bucks as the 33rd pick overall in the 1996 NBA Draft. “I was speechless,” Norris says. But just before the season started, they cut him.

Then the CBA called, a league he'd never heard of before. “I saw it as a second chance to prove myself. It's not the

NBA, but it's professional basketball,” he says. The CBA's week-to-week contracts, however, average \$1,700 and travel is sometimes done by bus. The average NBA weekly paycheck is slightly more, \$140,000, with plenty of private luxury jets to go around. “Friends and coaches from my neighborhood were like, ‘You’re gonna make it to the NBA. Just work hard. Don’t ever stop,’” Norris says.

Norris played for the CBA's Florida Beachdogs, then the Fury, usually in front of a few thousand fans and two or three NBA scouts. In the past two years, he even played in pro leagues in France and Chile during the CBA off-season. “Every time I take the court, I want to try to get better,” he says.

Fort Wayne Fury coach Keith Smart thinks Norris' work ethic will pay off. “It's a matter of some NBA team saying, ‘We’re gonna give him a shot,’” Smart says. “Because he can outplay a lot of the backup players that are there.”

That's all Norris wants. “I don't expect to get called up to the NBA and be a star,” he says. “If I could just get there, the rest will handle itself.”

One week after the Rockford game, the Seattle SuperSonics give him The Call. He tries out and barely makes their roster. In the NBA's opening weekend on an electric February night before a sellout crowd of 17,000, Norris comes off the bench in the fourth quarter, Sonics down by 10. He coolly launches four straight three-pointers. Each shot goes in. “I just needed a chance,” he says. “My dream came true.” Welcome to the NBA.

—by Chris Tauber

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