

## Setting Goals

### The **BIG** Idea

- Why is it important to set goals and how can I do it effectively?

### AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up: Habits of Highly Effective People (5 minutes)
- II. Goals That Work (10 minutes)
- III. Beginning with the End in Mind (15 minutes)
- IV. What's Your Goal? (10 minutes)
- V. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

### MATERIALS

#### **PORTFOLIO PAGES:**

- Portfolio pages 1–4, Eighth Grade Goals

#### **STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:**

- Student Handbook page 11, The Two Big Questions of Life
- Student Handbook page 12, Beginning with the End in Mind

- Copies of academic resource list (See **Preparation**)

### OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Identify three characteristics of goals that increase the chance they'll be achieved.
- Reflect on their current study habits and choose one study habit to improve.

## OVERVIEW .....

This lesson advises that setting goals helps us move toward the lives we want. Students review tips for successful goal setting, then use a study skills checklist to make sure that they are practicing good study skills. At the conclusion of this lesson, students set goals to improve one study habit.

## PREPARATION .....

- List the day's **BIG IDEA** and activities on the board.
- The following handouts need to be made into overhead transparencies or copied onto chart paper:
  - **Student Handbook page 11, The Two Big Questions of Life**
  - **Student Handbook page 12, Beginning with the End in Mind**
  - **Portfolio pages 1–4, Eighth Grade Goals**
- In advance of teaching this lesson, you should research what resources are available in your host school and community for students who may need additional academic support. The school counselor might have suggestions. You should get school administration approval on any outside resources that you would like to include. Create a list of resources to distribute to students and review during the discussion of study skills and setting goals.
- In this lesson, students will choose a study habit they want to improve. For the next month, you will need to check in with the students once every two weeks during the **Warm Up**. Students will fill out the reflection on **Portfolio pages 1–4, Eighth Grade Goals Reflection**, for the appropriate check-in date. After this first month, students should have monthly check-in dates on their study habits.
- Record the goal-setting check-in dates on your calendar as a reminder to revisit goals with your students.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION .....

This is the first in a series of four lessons devoted to setting goals and making decisions. By the end of the third lesson, students should be able to choose ninth grade courses with more confidence.

## IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS .....

### **DO NOW:**

If you prefer, you may choose to use **Student Handbook page 11, Two Big Questions of Life** as a DO NOW. Give the students five minutes to answer the column that is labeled “My Life.” Once the students have completed their work, begin with the discussion written in the **Warm Up**.

For the **Warm Up**, if you think your students will guess the “**Mystery People**” (Martin Luther King Jr. and Oprah) too easily or have trouble identifying with them, you may choose to select two different people known for their humanitarian efforts as well as financial success. The website below includes possible candidates.

- **Academy of Achievement:** [www.achievement.org](http://www.achievement.org)

In the **Warm Up**, one facilitator chose to show a YouTube video called “Famous Failures” instead of having the students guess a second mystery person.

If time permits, during the **Wrap Up**, you may choose to have students create their own successful goals quote. They should be in line with the quote, “Begin with the end in mind.” A few volunteers can then share their quotes with the class.

To help students remember their goals from week to week, you can provide take home reminders for students to display their goals.

## ACTIVITY STEPS

### I. Warm Up: Habits of Highly Effective People (5 minutes)

1. [Let students know that over the course of the next three weeks, you're going to show them some goal-setting and decision-making strategies that will help them select their classes for next year—with purpose and without panic.]
2. [Announce that in preparation for thinking about their future lives, you'd like the students to think about the lives of a couple of famous people. You'll announce the accomplishments of two famous people. Students should raise their hands when they think they know who you're talking about. (See **Implementation Options** for suggestions.)]

#### Mystery Person #1:

- Graduated from high school at age 15
- Served as president of senior class while studying to be a minister
- Led a bus boycott that lasted for 382 days—when it was over, blacks and whites could ride on the bus as equals
- From 1957 to 1968, traveled more than six million miles and spoke 2,500 times against social injustice
- Got 250,000 people to march to Washington, D.C. and told them “I have a dream” (**Martin Luther King Jr.**)

#### Mystery Person #2:

- Started in radio and TV news while still a teenager
- Had their own TV talk show
- Has their own TV network
- Gives financial support to organizations that support women, children, and families
- In January 2007, opened a school for girls in South Africa
- Founded a magazine famous for solid self-help advice  
(**Oprah Winfrey**)

3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** It's pretty awesome to think about what these people have accomplished in their lifetimes. If we could learn their secrets to success, it would be great.

In Oprah’s case, we have a clue. Her website and magazine include all kinds of tips for improving your life. According to Oprah’s experts, you can figure out what you want to do in life by answering two questions similar to these.

[With a flourish, reveal **Student Handbook page 11, The Two Big Questions of Life** on the overhead. Ask a volunteer to read each question aloud.]

4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Your own personal answers to these questions can guide you to the things you want to do in life. [Pair students up.] Take two minutes to discuss these with your partner.

[Let students know who will go first, and let them know that they will each have one minute to speak. Give the signal to begin. After a minute, call time and give the second person a minute to talk.]

## II. Goals That Work (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Let’s take the example of an athlete. What are his or her goals when he begins a sports season? (*to be a valuable member of the team, to improve previous performance, to win the championship*)

What does she have to do at the beginning of the season if she wants to succeed? (*get in shape, train, practice skills*) These are the steps she will need to take to reach her goals.

In order to succeed, you need goals that work. How do you create them? Successful goals have three things in common.

2. [Using chart paper, an overhead projector, or the board, introduce and discuss the following three characteristics.

**Specific** (detailed, not general, or vague)

- Be specific so you can tell if you’ve done it or not: “I’ll get a C or better” rather than “I’ll improve.”

**Measurable** (includes some quantity or element that can be measured)

- Example: “I’ll get a B or better on the next math test.”

**Timed** (establishes a time frame for accomplishing the goal)

- Give yourself a deadline, and make it close enough so that you’re inspired to get going.

5. [Explain that students can use this criteria to create and evaluate their education and career goals.]

[Write the following goals on the board or overhead:

JESSICA: I want to buy an MP3 player.

TONY: I want to play on my school's basketball team.

EDGAR: I don't want to fail the eighth grade.]

[Write the three examples below on chart paper or an overhead transparency. As a class, go over Jessica's goal. Then divide the students into pairs and have each pair fill in the blanks for Tony and Edgar's goals. Then have the pairs share their results with the class.

JESSICA – Go to \_\_\_\_\_ to check prices. I will save \_\_\_\_\_ a week from my babysitting money, and I will buy the MP3 player in \_\_\_\_\_.

TONY – I will practice my \_\_\_\_\_ skills every \_\_\_\_\_. I will try out for the school team in \_\_\_\_\_(date).

EDGAR – I will bring my \_\_\_\_\_ grade up to a \_\_\_\_\_ by the next report card. To do that, I will \_\_\_\_\_.]

### III. Begin with the End in Mind (15 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Another expert in setting goals, the author of a book called "Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens," Sean Covey, says that in order to be successful, you have to "begin with the end in mind." What does he mean by this? [Give students a chance to respond.]
2. [Direct students to **Student Handbook page 12, Beginning with the End in Mind.** Read the first three examples out loud, and then give the students a few minutes to complete the remaining questions on their own.]

### IV. What's Your Goal? (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Whatever your career aspiration is, all of you should have the same goal right now — graduating high school with the skills you'll need to be successful. In order to meet this goal, let's take a look at **Portfolio pages 1–4, Eighth**

**Grade Goals.** This is a list of study habits of good students. The more of these habits you make part of your life, the better you'll do in school. Guaranteed. In a few minutes, you're going to take an honest look at how you approach your schoolwork.

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Write today's date in the first box at the top left of the page, labeled "**Today's Date.**" [Demonstrate using a transparency of **Portfolio pages 1–4, Eighth Grade Goals** and the overhead projector.]

3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Then read each study habit, and put a check in the box that best describes your behavior.

N for never

S for sometimes

A for always

[Model this on the overhead projector.]

Remember, you're rating your performance right now, not what you think you should do or what you hope to do in the future. [Give students a couple of minutes to complete this task.]

4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Next, I'd like you to choose one study habit that you'd like to improve. This will be your goal for next month. Circle that goal in the column under today's date. [Demonstrate.]
5. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** For this first month, we are going to check in every two weeks. After this month, we'll check in once a month for the rest of the school year. Let's write the first check-in date in the second column. [Specify a class meeting date that's two weeks away. Then record the second check-in date on the overhead. This should be a month away. Instruct students to record these dates on their **Eighth Grade Goals** chart.]
6. Where else could we record these check-in dates to make sure we don't miss any of them? [Allow students to respond.] How many of you use a planner to record your homework and assignments? [Show of hands.] Many adults use planners or calendars to keep track of their appointments and tasks. [Instruct students to take out their planner/agenda. Then instruct the students to record the first two check-in dates in their planner or agenda. Record these dates in your own planner/agenda as well.]

7. [Refer students to the follow-up questions on **Portfolio pages 1–4, Eighth Grade Goals Reflection** and give them a few minutes to complete it.]
8. [Ask the students if any of them identified after-school tutoring (or whatever your school provides) as one of the things that might help them to meet their goal. Distribute the academic resource list (see **Preparation**) and encourage students to seek additional help if they need it.]

#### **IV. Wrap Up (5 minutes)**

1. [Congratulate the students on all their hard work. Tell them they have already come a long way in a very short time. Thinking about how to make choices today that will help them achieve their goals further down the road is a crucial part of being successful.]
2. [Tell them that next week they'll learn a decision-making strategy that will help them to make good choices—in school and out.]

## **The Two Big Questions of Life**

**What experiences do you want to have during your lifetime?**

**What kind of impact do you want to have on the world?**

Adapted from Oprah.com, Life Coach Martha Beck

## Beginning with the End in Mind

1. If I wanted to make the high school basketball team, I might play on the middle school team and shoot hoops on the weekends.

2. If I wanted to buy a new PlayStation®, I might save my money by not buying candy after school.

3. If I wanted to become a pilot, I might call up flying schools to find out about licensing and minimum age requirements.

4. If I wanted to compete on American Idol, I might...

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5. If I wanted to go to college, I might...

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6. If I wanted to get a better grade in math, I might...

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7. If I wanted to \_\_\_\_\_, I might...

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Grade 8, Setting Goals 1: Setting Goals Portfolio, Eighth Grade Goals

This is a checklist of good study habits. The more “always” answers you have, the better you’ll do in school.



## EIGHTH GRADE GOALS

Every month, you will pick **one** habit that you want to improve. For the first month we will be checking in every two weeks. For the rest of the year we will be checking in once a month. If you have a “no,” your goal is to make it a “sometimes.” If you have a “sometimes,” your goal is to make it an “always.” Once you’ve reached one goal, you can move on to another. By the end of the year, you’ll be a super student (if you’re not already)!

**N= No S= Sometimes A= Always**

STUDY HABITS	Today's Date		Check-In Date 1		Check-In Date 2		Check-In Date 3		Check-In Date 4		Check-In Date 5	
	N	S	A	N	S	A	N	S	A	N	S	A
1. Do I attend school every day?												
2. Do I arrive at school on time?												
3. Do I come to class prepared?												
4. Do I write down homework assignments in the same place, every day?												
5. Do I stick with a class assignment or task until it is done?												
6. Do I ask a teacher or another student for help when I don't understand something?												
7. Do I take part in class discussions or activities?												
8. Do I complete all class assignments and projects?												
9. Do I complete all homework assignments and projects?												
10. Do I always check to see if I have all of my materials before I leave school?												
11. Do I look at my notes every day in order to review what I have learned?												
12. Do I have a time and place when I study for each subject?												
13. Do I know where to go for extra help?												
14. Do I get the extra help I need?												

This is a checklist of good study habits. The more “always” answers you have, the better you’ll do in school.



## EIGHTH GRADE GOALS

Every month, you will pick one habit that you want to improve by the next check-in date.

**N= No S= Sometimes A= Always**

STUDY HABITS	Check-In Date 6		Check-In Date 7		Check-In Date 8		Check-In Date 9		Check-In Date 10		Check-In Date 11	
	N	S	A	N	S	A	N	S	A	N	S	A
1. Do I attend school every day?												
2. Do I arrive at school on time?												
3. Do I come to class prepared?												
4. Do I write down homework assignments in the same place, every day?												
5. Do I stick with a class assignment or task until it is done?												
6. Do I ask a teacher or another student for help when I don't understand something?												
7. Do I take part in class discussions or activities?												
8. Do I complete all class assignments and projects?												
9. Do I complete all homework assignments and projects?												
10. Do I always check to see if I have all of my materials before I leave school?												
11. Do I look at my notes every day in order to review what I have learned?												
12. Do I have a time and place when I study for each subject?												
13. Do I know where to go for extra help?												
14. Do I get the extra help I need?												

## Goal Setter Follow-Up Questions

1. What study skill did you pick to work on?

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2. What difficulties do you imagine you might have improving this study skill? (For example, forgetting to bring home your homework or getting distracted by your friend in math class.)

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3. Who or what do you think can help you meet your goal of improving this study skill?

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**Check-In Date 1**

1. Did you succeed in reaching your goal? If yes, explain how you accomplished your goal. If you have not reached your goal yet, explain what challenges you faced.

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2. If you reached your goal, select a new study habit to work on this upcoming week and record it in the space below.

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3. If you did not reach your goal, explain how you are going to overcome the challenges you faced this past week.

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**Check-In Date 2**

1. Did you succeed in reaching your goal? If yes, explain how you accomplished your goal. If you have not reached your goal yet, explain what challenges you faced.

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2. If you reached your goal, select a new study habit to work on this upcoming week and record it in the space below.

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3. If you did not reach your goal, explain how you are going to overcome the challenges you faced this past week.

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