

PART II

# ACQUIRING CORE SKILLS

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GOAL SETTING

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## PART II: ACQUIRING CORE SKILLS

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# IDENTIFYING GOALS

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## AGENDA

- Starter
- Why Goals?
- Can I Do It?
- Stepping-Stone Goals
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

### Objectives

Students will recognize the importance of having goals.

Students will recognize that there are realistic and unrealistic goals.

Students will identify goals as short term, medium range, and long term.

### Materials Needed

- A physical or online dictionary (Part I)
- One copy of the “My Goals” activity sheet for each student (Part I)
- One copy of the “On Your Way” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

### **Starter** (3 minutes)

Divide the class into four groups. Tell students that each group will make a certain noise. The members of the first group will rub their hands together. People in the second group will snap their fingers continuously. Students in the third group will hit their thighs with their hands. Members of the fourth group will stomp their feet. On the count of three, have students begin making the noises until you say stop.

After about 30 seconds, stop the game and ask what the purpose of that exercise was. Ask, “Did we accomplish anything during this activity? Did we have a goal?”

Students should respond negatively to these questions. Point out that they made an effort but didn’t accomplish anything. Explain to students that having a goal can help ensure that they accomplish what is important to them.

Tell students that in the next few lessons, they will be discussing goals and the ways in which goals can help them succeed in life.

### **Part I Why Goals?** (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify the importance of having goals.

#### **1. Students define “goal.”**

Ask students to suggest meanings for the word “goal.” Have a volunteer look up “goal” in the dictionary and read the definition to the class. Have the volunteer write the definition on the board. Have students offer their own definitions and elicit from them that a goal is something a person wants to accomplish.

#### **2. Students identify the purpose and importance of goals.**

Tell students that they are now going to repeat the activity in the starter, but this time with the goal of making the sound of a rainstorm. Remind each group of its assigned sound. Tell students that you will point to one group at a time. When you point to a group, that group is to begin making its noise and continue until you point to the next group. Explain that when you point to a group, students should join that group in making their sound. Tell students that when you point to their group a second time, they should return to making their original sound.

Point to each group in succession, so that the noise builds and sounds like a rainstorm. Then reverse the order, so it sounds as if the rain is slowing down.

Ask students what they accomplished this time. Lead students to recognize that having a goal helped them focus and make sense out of some seemingly disconnected activities. Explain to students that having goals for what they want to accomplish in life can help them stay on track and make sense of the many activities they undertake.

### **3. Students identify their own goals.**

Distribute the “My Goals” activity sheet to students. Ask students to brainstorm their goals on the activity sheet. Remind students that a goal is something a person wants to accomplish. Use prompts to stimulate students’ thinking.

### **4. Students share their goals.**

Ask every student to share at least one of their goals. Write the goals on the board.

Tell students that goals are indispensable for their success in life. Goals are a guide and a target to work toward. Goals help people to do their best and accomplish what they want.

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## **Part II Can I Do It? (10 minutes)**

Purpose: Students recognize that there are realistic and unrealistic goals.

### **1. Students recognize realistic and unrealistic goals.**

Tell students that it is important for their goals to be realistic. Explain to students that if a goal is not realistic, they could become discouraged, but that if it is too easy, they could become bored. Lead students to recognize that a goal should be both achievable and challenging.

### **2. Students classify their personal goals as realistic or unrealistic.**

Suggest goals such as the following to students, and ask them to categorize the goals as realistic or unrealistic:

- A 14-year-old girl, interested in science, sets a goal to become a veterinarian.
- A high school senior who hasn’t worked or saved any money wants to travel to Europe during the summer after graduating from high school.
- The school principal wants all graduating seniors to go to college.

Ask students why they classified the goals as they did. Direct students to the recognition that the time frame attached to a goal is important. Tell students that each of their long-term goals should always specify a time frame in which the goal will be achieved.

Have students share their personal goals and classify them as realistic or unrealistic. They should also ensure that their goals are achievable and challenging. Remind students to think carefully about the time frames they establish.

### Part III Stepping-Stone Goals (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify goals as short term, medium range, and long term.

#### 1. Students recognize that long-term goals can be broken down into short-term and medium-range goals.

On the board, write the following: “Eat a good meal. Concentrate on math homework. Pass tests. Graduate. Study for math tests. Pass classes.” Explain to students that the goal here is to graduate from high school. Challenge students to order the events so that this goal can be achieved. Ask students to suggest an order.

Summarize the process:

- You had to eat a good meal in order to concentrate on your homework and study for your tests effectively. These are examples of short-term goals.
- By studying effectively, you were able to pass your tests and therefore pass your classes. These are examples of medium-range goals.
- Achieving those short-term goals and medium-range goals allowed you to graduate. That is a long-term goal.

#### 2. Students examine stepping-stone goals.

Tell students that the things you have to do now or soon in order to accomplish your goals are stepping-stone goals.

Explain stepping-stone goals as the following:

- **Short-term goals** are objectives that you want to achieve in a short time frame—an hour from now, today, or as far as a month away. Short-term goals can also be things you have to do along the way to reach your medium-range or long-term goals.
- **Medium-range goals** are objectives that you want to achieve that will take more time, between a month or so and a year. Medium-range goals can be achieved on the way to reaching long-term goals.
- **Long-term goals** are objectives that you want to achieve in the future, whether you hope to accomplish them a few years from now or when you are much older.

Explain to students that stepping-stone goals help us to achieve realistic goals in realistic periods of time.

### 3. Students set stepping-stone goals for themselves.

Distribute the “On Your Way” activity sheet. Tell students to choose one of the long-term goals that they identified on the “My Goals” activity sheet and write it in the top box on the “On Your Way” activity sheet.

Allow students to choose a realistic goal for themselves. Circulate the room and ensure that students have chosen appropriate long-term goals. Say to students, “Backtrack, and decide what goal you need to accomplish just before you achieve your long-term goal. Put that in the second box from the top. Continue backtracking until you identify all of the short-term goals necessary to reach the long-term goal.”

Have students complete the activity sheet. Work with students to fill in the entire staircase so that it begins with a simple, easily attainable task.

### 4. Students add deadlines to their action plan.

Point out to students that what they have developed is only the start of an action plan. Most complete action plans include some kind of time line. Tell students that they are now going to revisit their stepping-stone goals and set deadlines. Remind students to be realistic and to work backward, using their time frames for their long-term goals.

Have students add deadlines to their stepping-stone goals. Then, review with students the following steps of an action plan:

- Determine your long-term goal.
- Establish stepping-stone goals (which include short-term and medium-range goals).
- Set deadlines for completing each goal.
- Complete each step on time.
- Continue until you attain your goal.

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### Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to define short-term goals, medium-range goals, and long-term goals. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Set positive and realistic goals.
- Realistic goals are ones that you can achieve. They should not be too easy or too hard.
- Stepping-stone goals help you to achieve long-term goals.

### Student Assessment

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1. Why is it important to set goals?
2. Explain the difference between a realistic and an unrealistic goal.
3. List a long-term goal different from the one you chose in class.
4. List four short-term and four medium-range goals that you need to achieve in order to meet your long-term goal.



## LESSON EXTENSIONS

### Using Quotations

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“The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.”

Explain that Thomas Edison worked on 3,000 different theories before finally inventing an efficient light bulb. Have students consider the role that failure plays in accomplishing goals. Discuss how failure can lead to discovery.

### Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

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Show students that making daily lists can help to remind them of tasks that they have to do that day. Have students make and keep daily lists. Have them demonstrate how they keep and use these lists. Be sure to explain that a system that works for one student may not work for another.

### Writing in Your Journal

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Have students write letters to themselves about where they want to be five years from now and what they would like to be doing then. Tell them to put their letters somewhere safe and to open them in five years.

Have students write down their goals and their plans to reach them. Discuss students' plans as a class.

### Using Technology

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Have students use the internet to research how politicians reach decisions in government.

Have students brainstorm the goals political figures must first identify before making such decisions.

### Homework

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Have students make a list of 10 things they like to do.

Explain that accomplishing goals sometimes requires doing things we don't enjoy. Discuss how connecting our goals to things we enjoy doing can make accomplishing them easier.

### Additional Resources

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Have students read excerpts from *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller. Remind students that Helen Keller, having never heard how people speak, wrote this book by dictation.

Have students discuss what they think of the book's language. Ask students if they find her message inspirational.

# MY GOALS

Career?

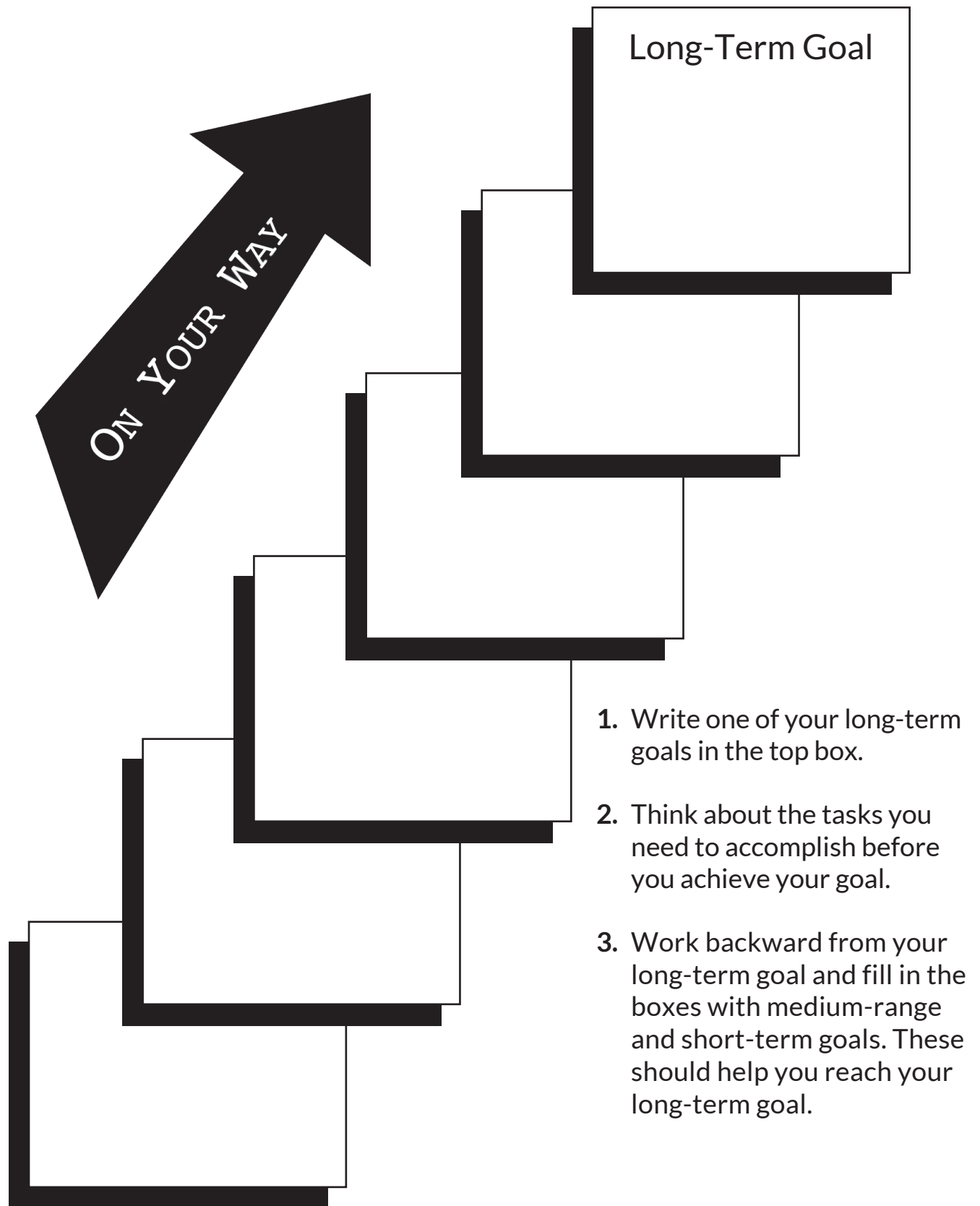
Education?

Leisure Time?

Family?

Home?

Possessions?



# SETTING PRIORITIES

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## AGENDA

- Starter
- What's First?
- Getting It Done
- Setting Priorities
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

### Objectives

Students will define “prioritize.”

Students will determine how to prioritize activities and will practice prioritizing their own activities.

Students will recognize and resolve conflicting goals.

### Materials Needed

- At least five soft foam balls or five balls of rolled-up socks (Starter)
- Completed “On Your Way” activity sheets from the previous lesson (Part III)

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### **Starter** (3 minutes)

Ask for a volunteer to join you at the front of the class. Tell the volunteer to stand about six feet away from you.

Take all five of the soft foam balls and toss them all at once to the volunteer. As you do this, say to the student, "Here, catch!"

Once you and the volunteer have picked up all the balls, tell the volunteer to catch again and toss each ball to the student, one at a time.

Explain to the class that it is easier to do things one at a time, rather than all at once. Tell them, "Picture all the things you want to do today. If you tried to do them all at once, you would be lucky to get any of them done."

Explain that today's lesson will focus on prioritizing their tasks and goals, which will allow students to get them all done, one at a time.

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### **Part I** What's First? (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students define "prioritize."

#### **1. Students discuss what to prioritize.**

Ask students, "What does it mean to prioritize something?" Lead students to recognize that "prioritize" means to place a group of items in order from most important to least important.

Ask students to list people, places, or things that are important to them. Write responses on the board. When there are 10 items listed, ask students to number them from one (the most important) to 10 (the least important). Ask volunteers to share their rankings. Point out that people have different priorities.

Ask students why they might need to prioritize items. Explain that people often prioritize tasks they must do so that they know which things to focus on.

#### **2. Students recognize that to prioritize, they must identify the tasks they need to accomplish.**

Point out that students need to know their tasks in order to establish an order of priority. Tell them that as simple as that sounds, people often waste time just trying to remember the things they need to do when they have a lot to get done. Ask students to suggest possible solutions to this. Lead students to recognize that a written list of tasks is a useful tool for prioritizing activities.

Ask students to name some of the tasks that they might put on a written list to prioritize. Write student responses on the board. (Students might respond: chores, jobs at work, homework assignments, and personal goals.)

### **3. Students learn that there are different ways to prioritize.**

Ask students, “Which would you rather eat: a bowl of ice cream, a head of lettuce, or a banana?”

Have students vote. Write the number of votes for each item on the board. Then, elicit students’ responses for why they chose one item over another. Point out that people have different ways to prioritize. Ask students to identify the different ways the list could be arranged. (Students might respond: by what you like to eat, by what is least fattening, by which might be the most nutritious.)

Explain that the process of prioritizing is similar to what they just did. Point out that the different ways to prioritize a list produce different results.

Ask students to identify the criteria they could use to prioritize the different items on their lists of tasks to accomplish. (Students might respond: chronological order, importance, what they need to do in order to achieve a goal.)

### **4. Students learn that determining priorities involves considering consequences.**

Point out to students that prioritizing is a decision making process: they are deciding which task to do first or spend the most time on. Remind students of the importance of considering consequences in the decision making process. Refer students to the options on the previous page and have them list the consequences of choosing one food item over the other.

Tell students that once they have determined what the likely consequences are, they must decide which of the consequences is most important to them.

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## **Part II    Getting It Done (15 minutes)**

Purpose: Students learn to prioritize activities.

### **1. Students discuss multiple priorities.**

Explain to students that it is necessary in many cases to prioritize tasks based on more than one criterion. Ask students to suggest examples of times when they might need to take into consideration more than one criterion. Write student responses on the board. (Students might respond: when more than one task is a step toward your goals, when you are asked to do something by someone you respect, when you have promised to do something.)

Ask students to recall some of the different ways these items can be prioritized.

Explain to students that time is almost always an element in prioritizing. Some activities, such as chores or homework, may be limited to one day. Other activities, such as long-term career goals, can take place over several years.

### **2. Students learn how to prioritize their tasks.**

Explain to students that they are now going to prioritize their tasks. Say, “Let’s imagine you have three things you have to do: go to a party, do your homework, and do some chores around the house.”

Ask students to suggest ways that they would prioritize the tasks. List their responses on the board.

When students disagree about the way the list should be prioritized, have them defend their reasoning. Encourage students to explain the consequences of choosing to do one task over another.

During the discussion, make the important point that doing homework is a stepping-stone goal to most long-term goals. For this reason, one important consequence of not doing their homework is that their action plan for achieving their long-term goals will be set back. Remind students of the importance of keeping their long-term goals in sight.

Lead students to the following prioritization:

1. Homework should be first, as it relates to their long-term goals.
2. Household chores are next. If students don’t do their chores, they may lose the privilege of going to the party.
3. Going to the party is last. Socializing and being with friends is important but should not distract students from other goals and responsibilities.

Tell students that if they made homework their first priority, they stayed focused on their long-term goals. Point out that they also saw that taking care of family responsibilities made it possible to have fun and go to the party.

### **3. Students recognize that their goals can sometimes conflict.**

Ask students what they would do if they only had one hour to finish their homework and do household chores, but each of these tasks would take an hour to complete.

Explain to students that when they have several tasks and not all of them can be completed, they have conflicting goals.

Ask students to suggest the major reasons for running into conflicting goals. Elicit from students that the most common source of conflict is time limitations.

### **4. Students identify ways to deal with conflicting goals.**



Ask students to offer possible solutions to the conflicting goals of doing homework, going to the party, and doing the chores. (Students might respond: go late to the party or don't go at all, don't do the homework, don't do the household chores.)

Have students discuss the consequences of each option. Tell students that when they change priorities, they have to look at the consequences. It is important that they do not make a change that seems positive in the short term but has a negative impact on their long-term goals.

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### Part III Setting Priorities (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students practice prioritizing their own activities.

#### 1. Students make their own to-do lists.

Tell students that they are now going to practice prioritizing their short-term goals. Have students refer to their "On Your Way" activity sheets from the previous lesson and any planners they may have. Have them create a list of the tasks they need to accomplish this week. Remind students to include any regularly scheduled activities (such as homework or extracurricular activities).

#### 2. Students prioritize their lists.

Give students about five minutes to number their lists in order of priority. Encourage students to discuss any conflicts with you or with each other. Remind them to always consider the consequences of their decisions.

#### 3. Students discuss the prioritizing process.

Ask students to explain the process they went through to prioritize their activities. Ask them to share any conflicts that seemed particularly difficult to resolve and explain what they considered when prioritizing. Encourage students to discuss consequences.

Explain to students that there are two steps to dealing with conflicting goals. First, they must recognize that a conflict exists. Second, they must create a plan to deal with the situation and then act on it. Point out that they shouldn't make the mistake of hoping that a conflict will simply go away, because it won't.

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### Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to define "prioritizing." Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- “Prioritizing” means ordering items from the most important to the least important so that goals can be accomplished.
- The criteria for prioritizing can differ depending on circumstances and needs.
- It is important to consider consequences when prioritizing activities.
- When goals conflict, it is important to consider alternatives that might resolve the problem.

### Student Assessment

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1. How does setting priorities help people accomplish their goals?
2. List all of the things that you need to do this week. Prioritize the list.
3. What criteria did you use to prioritize your list?

## LESSON EXTENSIONS

### Using Quotations

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“One today is worth two tomorrows.”

Ask students to think of other proverbs that are similar to this (e.g., “never put off until tomorrow what you can do today,” “a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,” “a stitch in time saves nine”). Ask students why they think there are so many variations on this sentiment.

### Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

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Explain to students that all news stories must answer these questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? Have students make a list of seven things they must do today by answering these questions.

Discuss how answering these six questions will help students to stay focused and finish tasks completely.

### Writing in Your Journal

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Have students list things they must accomplish tomorrow in the order they should be done.

Have students revisit this page the following evening, when they make another list for the next day and analyze whether their intended list was accomplished. If not, why?

### Using Technology

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Have students name inventions that help people finish work more quickly. To prompt students, compare the oven and the microwave, or a manual and electric pencil sharpener.

Have students draw a picture depicting life before the inventions and life after the inventions. Have students rank the inventions based on their impact on everyday life (e.g., the car had more of an impact than the iPod).

## Homework

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Have students interview a family member to find out how they prioritize tasks.

Ask students to explain how their family members prioritize tasks. Discuss the various ways that people determine priorities (e.g., time, ease, importance, values).

## Additional Resources

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Have students read Aesop's "The Tortoise and the Hare."

Have students discuss the message of this fable and the priorities of both the tortoise and the hare.

# DEVELOPING A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

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## AGENDA

- Starter
- Positive's a Plus!
- Let's Be Positive
- See It, Think It
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

## Objectives

Students will define "positive attitude."

Students will identify principles of positive thinking and behavior.

Students will practice developing a positive attitude.

## Materials Needed

- Art materials for each group of four students, including poster paper, old newspapers, old magazines, markers, crayons, scissors, and glue (Part I)
- One copy of the "Visualization Techniques" activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- One copy of the "Affirmation Statement Techniques" activity sheet for each student (Part II)

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**Starter (3 minutes)**

Tell the class to imagine two runners, both of equal ability. As they get ready to begin a race, one is thinking, “I’ll never win. I feel so sluggish. I can’t believe I’m even in this race. This girl next to me looks so much faster; I bet she’s going to run right past me.” The other runner is thinking, “I feel great—light and fast! This is going to be the best race I’ve ever run. I’m strong, and I’ve been practicing for weeks. I can’t wait to get started.”

Ask students which runner will perform better. Have them defend their answers. Elicit from students other examples of how attitude can affect performance. Lead students to see the connection between attitude and performance.

Tell students that today they are going to learn about the power of positive thinking and how having a positive attitude can help them achieve their goals.

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**Part I Positive’s a Plus! (20 minutes)**

Purpose: Students define “positive attitude.”

**1. Students define “attitude.”**

Ask students to suggest definitions for the word “attitude.”

Lead students to understand that “attitude” refers to their outlook on life—a way of thinking about themselves, others, and the world.

**2. Students discuss positive attitude.**

Divide students into groups of four. Instruct the groups to answer the following questions:

- Describe a positive attitude.
- How do you create a positive attitude?
- How does it feel to have a positive attitude?

Allow the groups about five minutes to discuss their responses.

**3. Students create visual representations of positive attitude.**

After five minutes have passed, have groups use the art materials to create visual representations of positive attitude. Encourage students to try to represent their answers to the above questions.

Allow students about 10 minutes to create their posters.

#### 4. Students learn how a positive attitude can help them achieve their goals.

Have groups share their posters. After the discussion is completed, elicit from students these points to add to the class definition of “positive attitude”:

- Having a positive attitude means being strong and motivated.
- It means focusing on strengths and confidently moving forward.

Refer to the starter and ask students to suggest reasons why having a positive attitude might lead to goal achievement. Write student responses on the board. Direct students to understand that thinking positively affects our behavior—when we have a positive attitude, we act in a way that reflects that attitude. Lead students to recognize that people who have a positive attitude “bounce back” more quickly from setbacks.

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## Part II Let’s Be Positive (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students learn principles of positive thinking and behavior.

### 1. Students recognize how positive behavior can benefit them.

Explain to students that when people behave positively, their brains create chemicals called endorphins, which enhance performance. Endorphins can increase physical energy, increase mental alertness, reduce anxiety, and improve problem solving skills.

### 2. Students learn how to develop positive behavior.

Ask students to predict how they might develop positive behavior. Write responses on the board.

Offer these steps:

- Positive behavior can be developed by forming positive habits.
- Think of yourself as successful and have positive expectations for everything you do.
- Remind yourself of your past successes.
- Never dwell on past failures, but learn from and avoid repeating them.
- Surround yourself with positive people and ideas.
- Keep trying until you achieve the results you want. You only fail when you quit trying.

Ask students to share examples of experiences in which having a positive expectation produced positive results. Then, ask them to share times when they experienced negative results because of negative expectations.

Students may want to discuss times when they had negative expectations (such as a time when they thought they would do poorly on a test) and were pleasantly surprised. Suggest to students that they should consider how well they might have done if they had a positive attitude.

### **3. Students understand the technique of visualization.**

Explain to students that there are many techniques that promote a positive attitude. One of these techniques is called visualization.

Ask students if they know what visualization is. Ask them to suggest meanings of the word “visualization” based on their knowledge of the root word and the suffixes.

After students have offered definitions, explain that visualization is the technique of purposefully creating a mental picture of a successful performance. Visualization improves performance because the positive picture stimulates the brain to trigger corresponding positive responses that support the mental image.

Continue by explaining that this is the technique used by many athletes to enhance their abilities on the field or court, by entertainers to ensure their best performances, and by successful professionals to achieve their goals.

Distribute the “Visualization Techniques” activity sheet to each student and discuss each step.

Tell students that they will have an opportunity to practice visualizing after they learn another technique.

### **4. Students understand the technique of affirmation.**

Ask students if they have ever heard of the technique of affirmation, which is another way of creating a positive attitude. Ask students to suggest meanings of the word “affirmation” based on their knowledge of the root word and the suffix.

Point out to students that visualization is creating a “mental movie” in which they are the stars. Affirmations are like mental commercials that encourage them to buy into positive images of themselves. Affirmative statements are positive self-reminders that help us strengthen our efforts and achieve our goals.

Distribute the “Affirmation Statement Techniques” activity sheet to each student and discuss each step.

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## **Part III See It, Think It (10 minutes)**

Purpose: Students practice developing a positive attitude.



### **1. Students brainstorm areas of their lives in which having a positive attitude could help them.**

Tell students that they are now going to consider the areas of their lives in which having a positive attitude might help them. Have students brainstorm situations or activities that might benefit from their having a more positive attitude or using the techniques discussed. Write student responses on the board.

### **2. Students consider situations in their own lives in which attitude plays a role.**

Have students think of a current, specific situation in their own lives in which they might have a negative attitude. If students cannot think of anything current, have them consider something that might happen in the future, such as a major test, presentation, or job interview.

Tell students to write about the situation at the top of a piece of paper. Allow them about two minutes to describe their current attitude toward the situation. Then, have students describe the positive attitude they would like to have. Give students about eight minutes to answer the following questions:

- How could visualization help you? Describe a visualization that might be useful.
- What affirmations might be useful?
- How might your behavior change as a result of changing your attitude?

Tell students to keep what they wrote so they can reflect on it when their attitude might be keeping them from their goals.

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### Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Close this session by asking students to define “visualization” and “affirmation.” Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- A positive attitude can lead to positive behavior.
- Positive expectations, behaviors, and habits bring positive results.
- Visualization and affirmation are techniques that you can use to promote a positive attitude and help you achieve your goals.

### Student Assessment

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1. Describe someone with a negative attitude and someone with a positive attitude (no names are necessary). Which one do you think will be more successful in life? Why?
2. List three benefits of demonstrating a positive attitude.
3. List three things someone can do to work toward having a positive attitude.

## LESSON EXTENSIONS

### Using Quotations

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“The greater part of our happiness or misery depends on our disposition and not on our circumstances.”

Discuss this quote with students. Have students reflect on a recent experience in which thinking about the meaning of this quote would have helped them. Have students discuss how this quote may be helpful to them in the future.

### Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

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Have each student write their name on a sheet of paper. Instruct students to exchange papers. Ask them to write one positive comment about the student listed on each paper they receive. Continue this process until each student has commented on every other student’s paper.

Once students have finished, collect and edit the lists. Then, give them back to their owners. Have students write about their reactions to their lists.

### Writing in Your Journal

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Have students revisit the list they wrote during Lesson 2’s journal-writing extension.

Ask, “Were you able to accomplish everything on your list? How do you feel about it?” Have them make another list for tomorrow.

### Using Technology

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Have students share their feelings about friends who consistently post negative status messages on social networking sites. Explain that negative attitudes can be infectious.

Have students search the internet for different ways to develop a positive attitude. Have them share their findings with the rest of the class.

## Homework

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Have students interview a business owner about their business, how they got into it, what it takes to run this kind of business, and what they like about it. They should also ask how having a positive attitude helps the owner with their business's challenges.

Have students present their findings to the class.

## Additional Resources

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Have students read the positive affirmations at <https://7mindsets.com/affirmations-for-students/>. Ask them to choose an affirmation from the list and use it every day for one week. At the end of the week, discuss with your students how using positive affirmations made them feel.

# VISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES

1. Relax. Close your eyes, breathe deeply, and clear your mind.
2. Mentally paint a picture or make a video in your mind that shows you succeeding at a goal. For example, if your goal is to give a great speech in front of a large audience, see yourself doing just that—poised, speaking clearly, and impressing the audience.
3. Make your mental image detailed and visualize success. Do not allow negative visions such as fear, failure, or nervousness to enter the picture. See yourself as already successfully achieving your goal.
4. Add specific words, actions, and your senses to your visualization. Practice what you want to do or say in your visualization. Mentally rehearsing strengthens your real performance.
5. Keep your visualization in your mind. Be ready to recall it whenever you choose. Repeat your visualization as often as you can before the actual event.

# AFFIRMATION STATEMENT TECHNIQUES

1. Make the statements personal. Use your name, “I,” or “you.”
2. Keep the statements short. You want to remember them. Long statements are harder to remember.
3. Use positive language. If you want to control your nervousness, say, “I am calm and confident. I am well prepared for this test.” Don’t say, “I will not be nervous about my math test.”
4. State your affirmations as facts, as if they are happening, even if you have not achieved them yet. For example, say, “I will graduate from high school with a 3.2 GPA.”
5. Repeat your affirmations at least once a day. Repetition stimulates your brain to help you reach your goals.
6. In your mind, say your affirmations often. Also, write down your affirmations and place them where you can see them often. Just like advertisements on television or the internet, the more you see or hear an affirmation, the more you believe it.

Here are some examples of affirmations:

- I have the talent to be cast as the lead in the play.
- I will be offered this job because I am prepared for the interview.
- My brother and I will get along well for the rest of the summer.

# ACCESSING RESOURCES

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## AGENDA

- Starter
- Help!
- Inside or Outside?
- Accessing Resources
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

### Objectives

Students will analyze the need for help with achieving their goals.

Students will identify resources in their community and ways to access available resources.

### Materials Needed

- 15 paper plates (Part I)
- Internet access (Part III)

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**Starter (3 minutes)**

Say to students:

Imagine that you have finally asked someone you really like for a date, and they say yes. The date is Friday, and you can't wait. You have tickets to the best concert of the year, and you just bought a great new shirt. On Friday, you get ready, but as you're tying your favorite pair of shoes, the shoelace breaks. So you call your date and say, "I'm sorry, but I've run into a problem. My shoelace is broken. I don't have a spare one, so we'll have to cancel tonight."

Ask students if this makes sense.

When students say that it doesn't, lead them to understand that neither does giving up on any goal or plan just because they've hit an obstacle. Explain that when they are working toward their goals, there are many resources they can access to help them succeed.

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**Part I Help! (10 minutes)**

Purpose: Students learn that they may need help with achieving their goals.

**1. Students participate in an activity.**

Prior to class, arrange the desks so that there is an open space in the center of the classroom. Place 15 paper plates in a straight line across the floor, leaving about a foot of space between each plate.

Divide the class into two teams—team A and team B. Have each team line up at opposite ends of the line of paper plates. Explain to students that the goal is to have the teams switch positions by stepping only on the paper plates. Students who step off the plates must move to the back of their line and begin again.

Allow team A to move across the paper plates. Tell the second student on team A to begin moving across the line when the first student steps on the fifth plate. Tell the third student on team A to begin moving across the line when the second student steps on the fifth plate, and so on. Once team A has moved to the other side, have team B repeat the same process.

Ask students if it was easy or difficult to accomplish the goal. Ask students to explain their answers. (Students might respond: there was nothing to stop each person, it was a simple task.)

**2. Students repeat the activity.**



Tell students that they are going to repeat the activity. Tell them that the rules and the goal are the same, but you have added an obstacle. Explain that this time the first student on each team will begin at the same time. As teams attempt to switch positions, remind students that they are not competing with the other team and that those students waiting in line can make suggestions.

### **3. Students discuss the activity.**

Ask students to explain if it was easier or more difficult to accomplish the goal the second time. Ask them to tell how they solved the problem or how they think they might solve it if given another chance. (Students might respond: one person can squat down while the other steps over them, students can slide on the plates by supporting each other's balance until they have switched places.)

Ask students if the teams could have switched positions without communicating with each other. Ask students to suggest how this activity might relate to the concept of goal achievement. Elicit from students that at times, it may seem as though others are working against them when they are trying to reach a goal. Tell students that, especially at those times, they should ask for help and work with others to discover ways to ensure that their goals are accomplished.

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## **Part II   Inside or Outside? (15 minutes)**

Purpose: Students analyze the need for help with achieving their goals.

### **1. Students recognize the need for outside help.**

Say to the class, "If I were to choose one of you and give you one minute to rearrange all of the furniture in the principal's office, how would you do it?"

Discuss the situation with students. Remind them to use the steps of the decision making process: gather information, weigh options, make a choice, and take action.

Ask, "What information do you need to gather in order to solve the problem of rearranging all of the furniture in the principal's office?" (Students might respond: what furniture there is to move, the weight of each piece, the location of electrical outlets.)

### **2. Students identify the need for outside resources.**

Say to students, "As you gather information on the problem, does it lead you to the conclusion that you are going to need outside resources to complete the task in the one-minute time period?"

Ask students to suggest some of the resources that they could use to help rearrange the furniture. Encourage them to be as inventive as possible. (Students might respond: classmates, a custodian, equipment.) Explain to students that asking for help instead of giving up will reflect positively on them because it proves that they have perseverance. It shows that their goals are important to them. It also proves that they are aware of their own limitations but will not allow those limitations to stop them.

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### **Part III    Accessing Resources** *(20 minutes)*

Purpose: Students recognize how to access the resources in their community.

#### **1. Students recognize that they can find resources to help them achieve their goals.**

Tell students that they are going to discuss hypothetical situations in which a friend is having personal troubles. Have students brainstorm some fictional problems (e.g., the friend has a substance abuse problem, family difficulties, needs tutoring, etc.). Write the problems on the board.

Ask, “What can you do to help your friend?” Ask students to brainstorm places they would go to find help for the various problems that they identified. (Students might respond: school counselor, teacher, parents, drug hotline, youth center.)

#### **2. Students recognize that there are many resources available to assist them.**

Divide students into groups and instruct them to find as many resources online as possible that might help their friend in the situations they brainstormed.

When students have finished, allow each group to share its findings. Write responses on the board. Discuss how students can use the internet to locate resources for themselves.

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### Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students to list one goal they have and one corresponding resource from today's lesson that might help them achieve that goal. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- There will be times on your path to achieving your goals that will require you to ask for help.
- When you encounter obstacles, access resources rather than giving up on your goals.
- Your community has many resources to help you achieve your goals.

### Student Assessment

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1. Describe a situation in which you needed someone else's help. How did you go about getting that help?
2. List three situations in which outside resources would be helpful.
3. Describe one of your goals. List three resources that you can use to help you achieve this goal.

## LESSON EXTENSIONS

### Using Quotations

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"If you want to succeed, ask three old people for advice."

Write the words "teacher," "doctor," "psychologist," "social worker," "librarian," "adult relative," "sibling," "dentist," and "clergy" on the board. Have students brainstorm the problems these people might be able to help them with.

### Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

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Remind students that a library has more than just books. Ask a librarian to show the resources a library offers, from computers to reference materials. Librarians themselves are also a great resource. Have students discuss how they can use the library as a resource when trying to achieve a goal.

### Writing in Your Journal

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Have students revisit their lists from the previous journal-writing extension. Ask, "Were you able to accomplish everything on your list? How do you feel about it?" Have them make another list for tomorrow.

### Using Technology

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Introduce students to [www.refdesk.com](http://www.refdesk.com), which links users to over 1,000 other sites. Invite students to access a newspaper through the site.

Have students search the internet for resources that can help them achieve their goals. Have them share their findings with the class.

## Homework

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Ask students what they would do if they had a toothache, needed to find a dentist, and needed to get to the dentist's office on their own after school.

Have students write all the steps needed to successfully complete this assignment, including ways to find a dentist, get to the office, pay the dentist, and get home. They should also list who will help them with each step.

## Additional Resources

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Have students visit Khan Academy at [www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org). Khan Academy is a website containing a wide variety of free classes across a diverse number of categories.

Have students search Khan Academy for information. Ask them to identify how this site, and other sites like it, can help them achieve their academic goals.

# LEARNING TO BE ASSERTIVE

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## AGENDA

- Starter
- Passive? Aggressive? Assertive?
- Action Reaction
- Developing Assertive Behavior
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

## Objectives

Students will define passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior.

Students will practice using assertive behavior and will learn to recognize passive and aggressive behavior.

Students will practice techniques to improve their assertiveness.

## Materials Needed

- Three dictionaries (Part I)
- Copies of the “Passive, Aggressive, and Assertive Behaviors: The Scenarios” activity sheet cut into sections (Circle one behavior type in each section. Each group should have one scenario.) (Part II)
- One copy of the “Developing Assertiveness Skills: Personal Characteristics” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

- One copy of the “Developing Assertiveness Skills: Action Plan” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

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**Starter (3 minutes)**

Tell students to take out a piece of paper and a pen. Tell them that they are to answer yes or no to the following questions:

- Does everyone have the right to earn respect and to retain dignity in all situations?
- Should people be able to say yes or no like they mean it?
- Should everyone be able to express opinions?
- Should people be able to ask for what they want?

Explain to students that the answer to all of these questions is yes; they have these rights, and so do other people. Tell students that this lesson will help them learn how to exercise these rights in a way that is respectful of others.

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**Part I Passive? Aggressive? Assertive? (10 minutes)**

Purpose: Students define passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior.

**1. Students discuss passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior.**

Before the session begins, create three columns on the board. Title each column “passive,” “aggressive,” or “assertive.”

Divide the class into three groups. Call students’ attention to the column headings and ask, “Have you ever heard the words on the board before?” Assign one word to each group. Explain that each group is responsible for brainstorming and writing a definition of its assigned word.

**2. Student groups define passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior.**

After the groups have written their definitions, distribute dictionaries to each group. Have each group find the dictionary definition of its assigned word and write it beneath its own definition.

Ask each group to present its definitions to the class. Ask students to comment on the differences between the group definitions and the dictionary definitions. Review the following with the class:

- Passive people seem to lack confidence and may seem ineffective.
- Aggressive people often seem to be offensive and have a strong need to dominate. Often, aggressive people seem to be annoying, pushy, or brash.
- Assertive people seem to be positive, confident, and fair when dealing with people.



Ask students to describe how an aggressive person and a passive person might act. Establish that aggressive behavior can include such behavior as using a hostile tone of voice, invading other people's personal space, and using inappropriate physical contact. Passive behavior can include using a low tone of voice, avoiding eye contact, and having a slouched posture.

Ask students to consider how they usually react when someone uses these behaviors around them or toward them. Students should respond that both passive behaviors and aggressive behaviors often lead to negative reactions.

### **3. Students create a class definition of assertive behavior.**

After each group has presented its work, develop a class definition of assertive behavior.

Elicit from students that assertive behavior encourages equality and healthy relationships among people. Assertive people stand up for their rights, express themselves honestly and courteously, and respect the rights of others.

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## **Part II   Action Reaction (25 minutes)**

Purpose: Students practice using assertive behavior and learn to recognize passive and aggressive behavior.

### **1. Students role-play passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior.**

Have ready the "Passive, Aggressive, and Assertive Behaviors: The Scenarios" activity sheet, which should be cut into sections and filled out so that there is one scenario and one behavior for each group. Be sure to vary the behaviors so that each type is presented approximately the same number of times.

Divide the class into groups of three or four. Tell students the following:

- Each group will receive a scenario.
- Each group will role-play passive, aggressive, or assertive behaviors. One student will serve as a narrator, and the other two or three students will act out the situation.
- As the scenarios are presented, the other groups will identify what type of behavior was demonstrated.

Distribute the scenarios and allow students five minutes to prepare. Then, call on groups to present their scenarios.

### **2. Students analyze the role plays.**

After each scenario, ask, “Can you identify the kind of behavior just demonstrated? What leads you to that conclusion?”

Discuss the performers’ nonverbal and verbal communication, their use of statements that focus on what they think and feel, and whether they calmly asked questions and acted courteously.

### **3. Students evaluate the effectiveness of each type of behavior.**

When all of the scenarios have been performed, ask, “In the scenarios, which kind of behavior did you think was most effective? When did people seem best able to achieve their goals?”

Lead students to recognize that assertive behavior is usually the most effective, but allow observations that sometimes there might be situations in which aggressive or passive behavior is needed or acceptable (e.g., a parent may need to be aggressive when a child is in danger). Passive behavior may be appropriate when one person in a conflict situation is out of control.

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## **Part III    Developing Assertive Behavior (15 minutes)**

Purpose: Students practice techniques to improve their assertiveness.

### **1. Students create a class mission statement regarding assertiveness.**

Explain to students that a mission statement describes a philosophy and a course of action to reach a goal. The class will now create a mission statement that will guide them toward the goal of assertive behavior.

Elicit from the class a philosophy on assertive behavior. If necessary, offer students this prompt: “We believe that assertive behavior is essential to achieving success.”

You may wish to suggest that students add statements such as the following: “As assertive people, we are confident. We express our needs and opinions comfortably. We are sensitive to the feelings and needs of others. We have the right to be listened to and taken seriously, and we recognize that right for others.”

### **2. Students list their strengths and weaknesses.**

Tell students that they will need to practice assertive behavior. Distribute the “Developing Assertiveness Skills: Personal Characteristics” activity sheet.

Ask students to recall the earlier discussion about the characteristics that passive, aggressive, and assertive people display. Then, ask students to consider their own behavior patterns. Have students list on the activity sheet the strengths and weaknesses they possess that relate to assertive behavior. Remind students to think of their behavior in light of the class discussion and role plays.

### 3. Students identify a weakness to improve.

Ask students to select one of the weaknesses they've written on the activity sheet that they would like to improve (e.g., lack of initiative, shyness).

Explain that being assertive requires self-confidence. Remind students that confidence is built largely through their efforts to focus on their strengths. Explain that the more they build their confidence by continuing to identify and improve upon their weaknesses, the easier it will be for them to assert themselves.

### 4. Students develop an action plan to improve their assertiveness.

Distribute a copy of the "Developing Assertiveness Skills: Action Plan" activity sheet to each student.

Have students complete the action plan. Review the steps of an action plan that were taught in lesson 1:

- Determine your long-term goal.
- Establish stepping-stone goals.
- Set deadlines for completing each goal.
- Complete each step on time.
- Continue until you attain your goal.

Tell students that they will evaluate and record their progress daily, so they should write the action plan in a format that is easy to read and consider.

Give students time in class for a week or two to develop the habit of evaluating their action plans and progress. Explain that as they develop self-confidence, they should continue to practice assertive behavior. Tell them to be more open, to express their ideas, and to show acceptance of others. Encourage students to act in a confident way. Remind them that being assertive becomes easier the more they practice such behavior. Explain that people will respect them more when they act assertively.

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### Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students to name the characteristics of assertive behavior. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Assertive people are positive, confident, and fair in dealing with others.
- Be assertive by using statements that show you are responsible, by remaining calm and asking questions, and by respecting others.
- Assertive behavior is usually the most effective way to achieve goals.
- Practice assertive behavior, and you will become more self-confident and respected.

## Student Assessment

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1. Create three scenarios—one that illustrates passive behavior, one that illustrates aggressive behavior, and one that illustrates assertive behavior.
2. List the advantages and disadvantages of passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior.
3. List three things you can do to become more assertive.

## LESSON EXTENSIONS

### Using Quotations

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“Manners are a sensitive awareness of the feelings of others.”

Have students brainstorm rules of etiquette and compare their rules to an actual etiquette book. Discuss rules that still seem important and others that seem outdated. Discuss how manners and respect are important to assertive behavior.

### Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

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Have students write, using carefully selected words, a 10-second speech about an issue that concerns them. Students should try to assertively and clearly make their points within this time limit.

Have students share their speeches. Invite other students to judge the speeches.

### Writing in Your Journal

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Have students imagine the complaints they'd hear if inanimate objects could talk. For example, have them imagine a pencil complaining, “Oh, stop biting my eraser!”

Have students write their own imaginary conversations between two assertive inanimate objects.

### Using Technology

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Have students visit [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and view a presidential debate. Tell them to note the manner in which the candidates make their points.

As a class, discuss how each candidate demonstrates assertive behavior during the debate.

## Homework

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Have students choose a news story, event, or idea that is likely to have opposing points of view.

Have students write a short essay in favor of the issue and then write another short essay against it.

Have them make sure that they assertively back up both points of view with facts, quotes, and substance.

## Additional Resources

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Have students read selections from *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth* by Mahatma Gandhi.

Have students research Gandhi's life. Have them report their findings to the class and identify how Gandhi exhibited assertive behavior.

# PASSIVE, AGGRESSIVE, AND ASSERTIVE BEHAVIORS: THE SCENARIOS

**Instructions to the teacher: Reproduce this activity sheet as needed. Circle one of the behaviors listed beneath each scenario; vary the behaviors you circle so that each one is equally represented. Cut out each scenario and its list of behaviors. Distribute one to each group.**

You borrowed your cousin's favorite shirt and accidentally spilled something on it. You've apologized, and your cousin has forgiven you. Now, you want to borrow your cousin's new shoes, which will look great with what you're wearing tonight. What will you do?

Portray the behavior circled below:

**AGGRESSIVE   PASSIVE   ASSERTIVE**

You find out that someone you thought was a friend has been spreading rumors about you. You see the friend walking down the street toward you. What do you do?

Portray the behavior circled below:

**AGGRESSIVE   PASSIVE   ASSERTIVE**

Your best friend needs to pass math. You are in the same class. Tomorrow is a very important test, and your friend has not studied. She wants to cheat off of you. What do you do?

Portray the behavior circled below:

**AGGRESSIVE   PASSIVE   ASSERTIVE**

You work at a pet shop after school and on Saturdays. Your boss has noticed that money has been missing from the cash register. He has accused you. Tell him that you are not the person who has been taking money.

Portray the behavior circled below:

**AGGRESSIVE   PASSIVE   ASSERTIVE**

# PASSIVE, AGGRESSIVE, AND ASSERTIVE BEHAVIORS: THE SCENARIOS

(CONTINUED)

Your parents have established a curfew for you on weekends. As a high school student, you feel that the time they have set is unreasonable. Ask them to change the curfew.

Portray the behavior circled below:

**AGGRESSIVE   PASSIVE   ASSERTIVE**

A student with a reputation for being irrational and violent has taken your backpack. You ask him to return it.

Portray the behavior circled below:

**AGGRESSIVE   PASSIVE   ASSERTIVE**

Your neighbor's dog is in your yard or in front of your door almost every day making a mess and barking. Tell your neighbor to control her dog.

Portray the behavior circled below:

**AGGRESSIVE   PASSIVE   ASSERTIVE**

You have loaned money to a close friend. It has been over three weeks, and he still has not paid you back. You need the money to go out this weekend. Ask for the money.

Portray the behavior circled below:

**AGGRESSIVE   PASSIVE   ASSERTIVE**



# DEVELOPING ASSERTIVENESS SKILLS

## PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES

# DEVELOPING ASSERTIVENESS SKILLS

## ACTION PLAN

Goals: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Personal Action Plan to Achieve Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

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Time Frame for Action Plan: \_\_\_\_\_

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