

# DEFINING GOALS

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## 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

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### 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.

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### 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.

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## 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

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### 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.”

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### 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.”

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## **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

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“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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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.					