

LONG-TERM AND SHORT TERM GOOOOAAAALLLS! (GOAL SETTING)

This activity will help students acquire competencies in the following areas:

- Self-Knowledge Applications

The student will:

- Create long- and short-term goals

General Approach

The general approach is that children will set their goals for the upcoming grading period. They will also set goals for the entire class that will cover the course of a school year.

Materials:

Colorful shapes or cut-outs. May want to use one shape/color for short term goals, another shape/color for long-term goals

Bulletin board paper with a football field pattern drawn on the paper

Cutouts of ginger-bread people - 1 larger cutout and 1 smaller cutout per student

Tape/ glue

****To make this an activity that really lasts, consider using a felt football field and felt shapes, or laminate the football field and the students' shapes, so that the tape does not rip the paper.****

Activity Steps:

1. Ask the children to define what a goal is. Then ask if they know the difference between a short-term goal and a long-term goal.
 - a. *What is a goal? Can anyone give me a definition?*
 - b. *There are two types of goals: long-term and short-term. What is the difference?*
 - c. *Today we are going to set both long-term goals and short-term goals.*
 - d. *Think about what you want to accomplish this grading period. Are there some areas you want to improve? Are their areas you are doing well or want to continue? is there anything new you want to try or achieve?*
2. Give students a moment to ponder their goals.
3. Instruct students to write 3 goals they would like to accomplish this grading period.
4. Walk around and look at their goals.
5. Invite students to share a goal. Ask the class to identify if it is a long-term or short-term goal. Try to guide students so that their long-term goals are accomplishable by the end of the semester or year. (example: make good grades, become a crossing guard, etc.)
6. Pass out the long-term/short-term goal papers
7. After the students proofread their goals, have them choose two goals – 1 long term and 1 short term – and have them write these goals on the papers you provide (short-term goal on the short-term shape/color, long-term goal on the long-term shape/color)
8. Invite students up to the front to place their goals in the correct positions on the football field (short-term = 10-20 yard line or so; long-term = almost a touch down!). Attach the shapes with a circle of tape on the back
9. Next, pass out the gingerbread cut-outs and ask students to color the shapes so that they represent themselves.

10. Have students come to the front of the room and place their “people” on the football field, starting in the endzone.
11. Instruct students that at the very beginning of each classroom guidance lesson, you will ask them to come to the board and move their “people” towards their goals. (The larger person moves towards the long-term goal, the smaller person moves towards the short term goal). Stress the importance of honesty, and share how sometimes we have setbacks that prevent us from reaching our goal and that that is ok. The important thing is to learn from our setbacks and to continue to work towards our goals.
12. At the beginning of each guidance lesson, have a few students share about their experiences working towards the goal that week. Celebrate students who reach their goal, but also celebrate those students who recognize their setbacks and identify new ways to accomplish their goals.
13. As students reach their short-term goals, ask them to identify a new short term-goal to work towards. They can then re-place their “smaller” people in the endzone and their goals on the appropriate yard line. Same with the long-term goals.
14. Consistency is key with this activity – make sure it is built in to each guidance lesson you do, and refer to it often. The activity works even better when teachers buy-in and take ownership – that way, the students can interact with the goal board daily.
15. OPTIONAL: Ask the students and teacher to come up with a "challenge" or long-term goal for the class to strive for during the year (e.g. at least half of the class on honor roll). Have students write it on a sentence strip in crayon or marker. Place the sentence strip at the end of the football field. Make a large cutout that symbolizes the classroom. Throughout the year, have the students and teacher move the large cutout towards the goal. Encourage the teacher to design some incentive for the class to celebrate the class reaching its goal.

NOTE: It’s important to remind students that they are not in competition with one another, and they are each other’s support systems. Each student will progress toward their goals at their own pace, and no student has the right to judge another student’s goals or progress toward reaching those goals.

This activity is designed to help students understand the importance of perseverance in meeting their goals. By teaching students that it often takes time for them to reach their goals, we have the opportunity to teach them not to give up and not to get frustrated if their progress is sometimes slow. (Remember the tortoise and the hare? Slow and steady wins the race!) Additionally, over the long-term, students learn that set-backs are just temporary; sometimes we learn from the setbacks and make even better progress working toward the goals.

Prior to the lesson, meet with the teacher to identify a location in the room or hallway where the large “football field” can be displayed. Ask teachers to continue reinforcing this activity by helping students identify when they have made progress toward reaching their goals, and encouraging them to move their “gingerbread” person on the field.