



Take the Lead

Lesson 11: Go For The Gold!

Grade level: 6-8

Learning objectives:

Young people will learn:

- the importance of goal setting
- how to break down goals into smaller tasks

Codes for TEKS:

Language Arts
Fine Arts

Codes for 40

Developmental Assets:

Creative activities
Planning and decision making
Interpersonal skills

National Education

Standards:

Language Arts
Fine Arts

Life Skills Model:

Goal setting
Problem solving
Decision making
Wise use of resources
Social skills

Time required:

60 minutes

Equipment/Materials:

Large, lightweight ball (beach ball, etc.) or large balloon
Newsprint
Markers
Colored dot stickers
Hat or box
Pieces of paper
Pencils
Art paper (12 x 18 inches or larger)
Scissors
Glue/tape
Old magazines, books, etc., that can be cut up
Computers with Internet access and printers (optional)

Handouts/Support materials:

The LEADER Method of Goal Setting

Most of us serve our ideals with fits and starts. The person who makes a success of living is the one who sees his goal steadily and aims for it unswervingly.

– Cecil B. DeMille

You, too, can determine what you want. You can decide on your major objectives, targets, aims, and destination.

– W. Clement Stone

Are any of you involved in athletics? What about music such as band, orchestra, piano lessons, etc.?

Allow young people to respond.

Did you just wake up one day and say, “Today I am going to be a gifted athlete or musician,” and then go out and play a game or an instrument like a pro the very first time you tried?

Allow young people to respond.

Of course not! No one is that talented. We all wish we were, but we are not. Instead, how did you learn to play a sport or musical instrument?

Allow young people to respond. Possible answers: trying many different sports or instruments until you find something you like, going along with parents who want you to play a specific sport or instrument because they did, just knowing that you want to learn to play a specific sport or instrument and then practicing/taking lessons/playing on a team.

Do any of you watch the Olympics when they are on television? What do all of those athletes have in common?

Allow young people to respond. Write their ideas on newsprint or chalkboard. Possible answers: determination, focus, desire, commitment, strength, goals, support from others, etc. Explain that all of these characteristics are needed to accomplish goals.

What is the ultimate goal for each Olympic athlete?

Allow young people to respond. Answer: To win a gold medal.

Does every Olympic athlete win a gold medal?

Allow young people to respond.

Actually, there are many more Olympians who do not win medals than those who do. Does that make them losers?

Allow participants to respond.

No! Their ultimate goal may have been to win an Olympic medal, but many of them have achieved a huge goal just by being selected to compete in the Olympics.

Do our goals have to be as lofty as winning Olympic gold?

Allow participants to respond.

No, our goals can range from very simple to very difficult. What is the best way for an individual or a team to set goals?

Allow participants to respond.

The best way is to take baby steps. That is, set small goals that can be easily accomplished. As the individual or team accomplishes these easy goals, they build confidence and can begin setting more difficult goals to try for.

Can a group or team turn a failed goal into a success?

Allow young people to respond.

Yes! Sometimes it is through failure that we learn the most. When we fail we can refocus on the goal and identify other strategies that will lead to success.

All goals, whether they will take a short time or a long time to achieve, should have these attributes:

- **Be realistic.** Goals should be based on your abilities and circumstances.
- **Be possible.** There shouldn't be any obstacles you can't overcome if you try.
- **Be flexible.** Anticipate bumps in the road and be ready to work around them.

- **Be measurable.** Have a target in mind so you know when you have reached your goal.
- **Be under your control.** Set your own goals based on your values, interests and desires. Be sure you can control the outcome of your efforts.

Activity 1: Moon Ball

Objective: The group will set and accomplish a goal.

Instructions:

Today I have a challenge for you. We are going to play a form of volleyball, except this time you are all on one team and there is no net. We call this game Moon Ball. The object of Moon Ball is for your team to arrange themselves in an open area in any way you wish. You will hit the Moon Ball back and forth within your team without letting it hit the ground. No team member may hit the ball two times in a row. Only single hits are allowed. Everyone will keep count of the number of hits by counting aloud together. I'll give you a few practices to get the hang of it. So figure out where each of you will stand to start.

Allow participants a little time to determine where each will stand in the designated area. Allow plenty of space. The object is to get the team to realize that the closer members are, the more successful they should be. It doesn't always work, but most groups are successful if they do not spread out too much. Give the ball to a team member who will begin by hitting it into the air.

After the team has tried this a few times and had a little success, lead them in the following discussion to set a team goal.

Now that you've got a feel for the game, let's set a goal. What was the greatest number of hits you got when you were practicing? Do you think you can do better than that? (Most groups will say yes!) Okay, let's set a goal that you all agree on and see if you can reach it.

After the team sets a realistic goal, start the activity again to see if they can reach their goal. If the team easily reaches the goal, encourage them to continue until there is a miss. You can then have them set a higher goal and try again. If the team has difficulty, interrupt the exercise and lead them in a brief discussion.

What are some problems the team is having? What can you do to adjust and fix the problems?

Examples might be:

- We are spread out too much and need to get closer together.
- We need to call it when we are going to hit the ball so two people don't go for the ball at the same time.
- We need to hit the ball under-handed and up, not over-handed and down, to keep the ball up in the air.

Allow the team to make adjustments and try again. You can repeat the step above to allow the team to either make adjustments OR re-evaluate their goal. Is it really realistic? Should they lower the goal and see if they can meet it?

Discussion questions:

- Did the first goal you set meet the five attributes we talked about earlier: realistic, possible, flexible, measurable, under the team's control?
- What challenges did you face with this activity?
- How did you adapt and overcome those challenges? If the team was unable to overcome the challenges, what else could have been done to make it work?
- Did any leaders emerge in this activity? Who?
- Did the leader(s) do a good job of motivating and encouraging the team? If not, what could they have done better?
- How does this game of Moon Ball relate to goal setting in the real world?

Possible answers: sometimes we have to refocus our goal if it is too high or out of reach, sometimes we have to change strategies to reach the goal, different people may take the lead on different parts of the project to reach the overall goal, etc.

Activity 2: The LEADER Method of Goal Setting

Objective:

Using an acronym for the word "leader," young people will develop skills in setting and achieving goals.

Preparation:

Write each of these project descriptions on a piece of paper. Fold the papers and place them in a hat or box.

- Establishing a peer tutoring program
- Establishing a peer mediation program
- Developing a teen hotline to help young people with problems/questions

- Developing a new student welcome committee
- Developing a program/activity to promote health and fitness for teens
- Creating a skate park (or other recreational area/activity)
- Establishing a youth center/teen lounge/rec center where teens can hang out in a safe place
- Developing a service project to support young people displaced by a fire, flood or other natural disasters
- Establishing a mentor program for younger people
- Developing a marketing tool about youth activity resources and programs
- Conducting an open house for the after-school program
- Conducting a health fair for teens
- Conducting a family day for the after-school program
- Conducting a literacy event
- Planning an event to raise money for a worthy cause

Instructions:

We've talked about the five attributes of goal setting and now we need to look at how great leaders work with a team to set and achieve goals. Who can tell me what an acronym is?

Allow young people to respond.

An acronym is a word formed from the initial letters of a name or word. An example would be TEAM—Together Everyone Achieves More. Can anyone think of another acronym that we might all be familiar with?

Today we have a new acronym to learn for the word LEADER. Let's look at each letter of the word and how it relates to goal setting. Can you think what each letter of the word leader might stand for in this acronym?

Allow young people to discuss before providing the correct answers.

L represents **list all the items** you would like to see accomplished.

E represents **edit the list** so that it includes only those goals that are reasonable and concrete.

A represents **add the action steps** that are necessary to make each goal a reality.

D represents **decide upon an order** for the goals and action steps.

E represents **execute your plan**, tackling one goal at a time, one step at a time.

R represents **review the results** after each goal is accomplished.

That's quite a few steps, but all are important in goal setting. If we start with executing the plan without having gone through the four steps that come before it, then we'll eventually have to start over and make sure we create a plan that will work. Let's divide into smaller groups so you can practice this process.

Divide the group into smaller teams. Give each person a copy of the handout *The LEADER Method of Goal Setting*. Give the following instructions.

Each team will choose two projects from the hat and then decide which of the projects to work on. Go through the first four steps of the worksheet—L, E, A and D—and plan your strategy for accomplishing the project. The projects you will be working on are things that are important to people your age and you could really make a difference. We'll start with 30 minutes to work on the handout and if teams need more time, we'll adjust. If any group would prefer to use newsprint and markers to work through this activity, you may come and get what you need.

Have teams draw two projects from a hat (or box) and then gather in their groups to work. After teams have completed the project, ask them to share their project plans with the rest of the group. As the teams make their presentations, list the names of projects on newsprint or a chalkboard. Give each person one colored dot sticker for voting.

Thanks to each group for the time you put into planning the goals for your projects and identifying the details that are needed to reach those goals.

Now I would like you to think about what each group presented and then vote for the project you believe was the best planned and most detailed, and that you would like to tackle as a whole group. Vote by putting your sticker beside the project you choose.

Note: Actually completing a project may not be an option, but voting is still a fun activity because it recognizes the team that did the best job. If the project is something that the group could actually carry out, then time will be needed for the whole group to fine tune the project plans and divide up responsibilities. Use page 4 of *The LEADER Method of Goal Setting* handout to describe how the group carries out the project and to evaluate it.

Activity 3: Long-term Goal Collage

Objective:

Participants will identify a personal long-term goal and develop a collage that symbolizes the steps they will need to take to achieve the goal. This activity may take two class periods—one to create the collages and one to present them to the class.

Instructions:

We're going to think about how we go about setting personal goals. Everyone get in a circle (seated in chairs or on the floor is fine). I want each of you to think for just a minute about a long-term goal you have for yourself—one that is at least 5 to 10 years in the future. This could be some item you want to acquire, something you want to learn, or something you want to be. After you have had a minute to think, we'll share that information with the group.

Allow participants to share their long-term goals with the group.

There are some things you will have to do to accomplish your goals, right? Think about what the smaller goals or steps are that will help you reach your long-term goal. Accomplishing those steps will be a process that could take quite a long time, but at the end of the process your long-term goal will be in sight.

You'll have a chance to use your creativity to illustrate the steps you will take to reach your long-term goal. I would like each of you to make a collage that illustrates that process. You'll each get a piece of art paper and there are plenty of supplies you can use. (If computers/printers are available, tell participants they may print pictures or information for their collages.) You have complete creative freedom to design your collage in any way you wish. Have fun with this project and be ready to share your long-term goal collage with the group when everyone has completed the project.

Allow 30 to 60 minutes for this activity, more time if needed. Don't block their creativity if they are enjoying the exercise.

Discussion questions:

I would like each of you to share your collage with the group and explain the steps you will take to reach your long-term goal.

Allow participants to make their presentations.

All of you did a great job and I want to encourage you to take your collage home

and share your goal with your parents. Did you know that research has shown that if we can see reminders of our goals we are more likely to accomplish them? Keep this collage in a place where you will see it often. As you accomplish a step toward your goal, check it off on your collage. It will be a visual reminder to help you succeed!

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Use this worksheet to plan the goals for your project and the steps you need to take to achieve those goals. Complete only the first four steps!

What is your team's project? _____



List all the goals you would like to accomplish with this project.



Edit the list of goals from the first step (L) so that it includes only those goals that are reasonable and concrete. Add more paper if needed!

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Goal 3:

Goal 4:

Goal 5:

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dd the action steps that are necessary to make each goal a reality. What are the details?

Action for Goal 1:

Action for Goal 2:

Action for Goal 3:

Action for Goal 4:

Action for Goal 5:

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the order in which the goals and the action steps for each goal should be done.
List each action step from the previous section (A) in the order they should be done.

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Congratulations! You have completed the activity! The last two steps of the LEADER Method of Goal Setting are actually putting the plan into action and evaluating the plan!



xecute your plan, tackling one goal at a time, one step at a time.



eview the results after each goal is accomplished.