

# SETTING TUTORING GOALS



## **Why is goal setting important?**

Goal setting is very important in all aspects of life, especially education. Setting a goal creates motivation to achieve that goal, allows for efforts to be focused and timely, provides a way to check progress, and makes people more successful overall.

## **Setting goals**

Take some time in your first session to outline what your student wants to achieve. Examine their long-term goals. These are the goals that will not be accomplished within a few weeks or even months. For example, they want to be accepted to a top University, they want to enter the medical field, or they want to be a more successful student all around.

**TO DO:** Work together to define this goal and create a statement that begins with “By (date), I will...” This long-term goal will become your Overarching Tutoring Goal.

Next, create your student’s short-term goals. These are the goals that can be accomplished within a relatively short time and which will move your student towards their long-term goals. For example, they want to learn to multiply, they want to learn about cellular mitosis, they want to ace their SATs, or they want to raise their grade to an A. These goals will require hard work to achieve, but for every short-term goal that you and your student are able to check off your list, your student takes one more step towards their long-term goal. Use the X-Skills workbook to outline these short-term goals and the plan to reach them.

**TO DO:** Create statements that begin with “By (date), I will...” for at least 3 short-term goals.

**REVIEW:** Review your short-term goals with your student weekly, determine what progress you’ve made, check off those that your student has accomplished and if needed create new ones to take the place of those that have been checked off.

## **Setting timelines**

It is very important that all goals have a timeline date set. Setting realistic timelines will help your student to think about what it will take to achieve their goals, to prioritize their goals and tasks, and to push themselves towards successfully completing their goals. If you are not going to complete the goal by the timeline date that you set together, that’s ok. Perhaps you were not realistic in setting your timeline and you can reflect on what took longer than expected or perhaps you need to schedule some extra tutoring sessions to catch up. Review your goals and see if you need to adjust your goal timelines.

## **Using goals to plan sessions**

The goals that you have created with your student will help to design your tutoring plan and that tutoring plan will be used to plan your lessons. Follow the XTUTOR Session Roadmap when planning your sessions and use the Session Planner to help organize your plans.

**X-Skills:** Set the stage for an effective session by reviewing your student’s X-Skills workbook and helping them fill out new tasks, goals, or projects. Ensure your student is using X-skills correctly by checking the checklist at the back of the workbook. Make note of anything you were unable to check off and discuss it with your student.

**Tap:** Tap into your student's interests and get them excited about what you are about to work on. Start with a relevant video clip, song, game, or story. Review what they already know and open them up to learning more

**Understand:** The heart of the lesson, the main activity. Model any new concepts and have your student try it a few times themselves with your help, then let them try it on their own. Help them understand the topic you are working on and check their understanding often by asking them questions, watching their body language, and using the checking for understanding strategies outlined in the assessment resource. Note where they are struggling and help them work it out.

**Try:** Review the key points of what you did in that lesson. Have your student try a few more problems on their own, complete a small quiz, or demonstrate what they learned in another way. Include any difficulties in your next session plan.

**Other Work:** Help with any homework they have. Take notes about where they are having trouble and work it into your lesson and future lessons.

**Report:** Give the parents a quick rundown of the session as you pack up and head out. Remind them that the session report will be sent to them soon. Confirm next session date and time. Before you drive away or while you are on public transit on the way home, log into Big Apple mobile and complete and submit your session report.

As you fill out your session planner, remember to answer these questions.

1. What learning do I plan to help my student achieve? What are our learning goals?
2. What assessments are the teachers/local school using? How do I make sure my student is ready to take those?
3. How will I prove that the learning has taken place? What assessments will I use? Are they fair and valuable assessments?
4. Plan the learning. What teaching and learning experiences will prepare my student to engage with, develop, and demonstrate the learning we want to achieve?

This approach is known as **Backwards Design**. Developed by Grant Wiggins and Jay Mcighe and outlined in their education planning approach, *Understanding by Design*, Backwards Design is considered to be the educational standard of creating and delivering lessons and assessments in Canada, the UK, and the USA. When planning sessions and assessments with the end learning in mind, tutors and teachers can ensure that we are educating our students with their learning goals, rather than tests, as our focus. This prevents what is known as, "teaching to the test," or teaching only what will be tested, and provides our students with a more well-rounded and all-encompassing education.