

# ***Goals and Motivation***

## **GOAL OF READING**

If the adult learner whom you tutor is sounding out letters instead of getting meaning from print, follow the steps below to help the learner understand that the goal of reading is to "gain meaning from the print." Draw from everyday experiences.

1. "Tell me everything you have read in the last week." (Try to draw from his/her everyday experiences to find times when s/he is reading, e.g. newspapers, road signs, cereal boxes, other product labels, or directions for preparing food.)
2. "Tell me things you have seen other people read. Why do you think they were reading them?"
3. "Let's list the reasons people read," (to learn, to follow directions, or entertainment, etc.) Include cereal boxes, cake mixes, etc. as examples people read.
4. "Let's look at some examples of what people read," (e.g. candy wrappers, telephone books, warranties, directions for preparing food, etc.) "Then let's talk about how we might read each one." (It is important to read all of some things very carefully, whereas we may read only parts of other things.)
5. "Let's rank and discuss the following in importance to reading: pronouncing every word correctly, reading aloud smoothly, reading fast, understanding what the print means." (Understanding what the print means is the most important point.)
6. "During the next week, jot down a list of what you read and why you read it, and we will talk about the list next week."

Source: Commonplace Newsletter

## **SETTING REALISTIC GOALS**

Getting your student to set realistic goals can sometimes present problems. Many times the student may think that he/she can learn to read in an unrealistic time frame. Working together the tutor and the student can establish realistic goals. The following are some tips in setting reasonable goals:

1. Determine the student's long term goals. Why does he/she want to learn to read and write? What does he/she want to do with the acquired literacy skills?
2. Relate all learning activities to the student's long term goals.
3. Set achievable objectives. (Today we will write a short language experience

story, memorize three new sight words, and study the "ch" consonant sound.)

4. Build success into every lesson, and during the last five minutes of each class, review what was accomplished.
5. Insure that the student understands what was accomplished during the class and agrees that progress was made toward his/her goal.
6. When objectives are not achieved, reduce them to make them achievable.
7. Determine a reasonable time table. (My student and I have agreed that he/she will know how to read and fill out this form after twelve class sessions.)

Source: Common Place Newsletter

### **WHAT A STUDENT NEEDS TO KNOW**

Although it usually takes students several years of twice weekly lessons to progress from zero reading level to 5th grade level, most do not continue for that length of time. Therefore, it is important for the tutor to make sure that the student possesses some very minimal skills within a short period of time.

Following are some of the most basic skills needed by every student.

1. A student should be able to write his name, address, phone number and names of all of his/her family members.
2. A student should be able to fill out a simple application form (5 to 6 questions).
3. A student should be able to look up a telephone number in the directory (when s/he knows how to spell the name).
4. A student should be able to address an envelope.
5. A student (with his tutor's help) should make a list of emergency numbers.
6. A student should be able to tell time.
7. A student should be able to make change.
8. A student should be able to read and spell (or abbreviate) the names of the months and the days of the week.

Most students will come into the program with some of these skills. It is important to teach these skills as early as possible. So, tutors, even if your student should quit, you'll have given him/her some basic skills that help in everyday life.

## GOAL SETTING

One of the most helpful things a tutor can do in working with a student is to help the student establish and work toward realistic goals. Be sure that the goals are the student's and not yours. You may feel it's important for the student to learn how to fill out job applications, but the student wants to get his/her driver's license. Take the cue from the student as to which goals she or he wants to work on first.

Keep in mind that new goals will often surface, and refinement of goals will be a continual process throughout tutoring. The following questions will help you zero in on the student's goals. Do not ask all of these questions but take the cue from the student as to which ones you should ask.

1. Why do you feel a need to learn to read/improve your reading at the present time?  
(Why now? Primary motivation.)
2. What is the first thing you would choose to learn to read? If you could learn to read today, what would be the first thing you would read?"
3. What things would you like to be able to read?
4. In what ways would learning to read help you to get a job/get a better job/improve your performance on the job?
5. Can you tell me of a particular situation in which you have been embarrassed or in trouble because of your reading problem?
6. What do you like to do in your spare time?
7. What do you do best? What special talents or abilities do you have?

If these questions fail to elicit the desired responses, be more specific as in the following suggestions: Do you feel the need to learn more about any of the following subjects?

Child care	Using the telephone
Job applications	Reading utility bills
Voting	Helping children with school work
Car maintenance	Getting a driver's license
Medical care/drugs and medications	

### *Ways to Set Up Goal-Setting Activities*

1. Pose the question. (samples: When you came into the program, what were you hoping to accomplish? Can you think of some times or places when you've been uncomfortable

because you couldn't read or write well? What do you think you need to learn in order to make you feel more confident and less dependent on other people?)

2. General conversation follows. (Sometimes students are so used to being told what they must learn, and what they must learn seems so abstract, that they may need to relate their education to their daily lives.)

3. General alternatives. (Tutors can make a list of what the students want to do and what they feel is important for them to be able to do, in order to give them a sense that there are several alternatives from which to choose.)

4. Weigh consequences. (Discussing consequences may counter the possibility of setting the student up for failure.)

5. Choose one to pursue. (By deciding on a goal, students should begin to realize that taking action requires commitment on their part.)

6. Identify strengths. (Before some students can deal with their limitations, they may need to be made aware of their strengths.)

7. Course of action. (Students and tutors need to clarify their expectations of one another. Students must realize that action is expected.)

Source: The Helping Hand: A Tutor's Handbook, Lewis & Clark Library System

## **SOME TIPS ON HOW TO TURN FAILURE TO SUCCESS**

FAILURE is not here to stay. It is a passing thing. It is a short setback in a good, long life. You will learn from it. You will grow. You will put it behind you and then you will be passing, not failing.

FAILURE is the wrong way to do something. So look at the bright side. Failure tells us how not to do something. That gives us a better chance to know how it should be done

LEARN from your failures. Learn from your success. Keep your mind active. Take in the lessons of life.

SUCCESS is hard work. But it's good work. Good, solid work will open the door of success for you. You will enjoy both the work and its results.

WINNING people have goals. Not fuzzy dreams. Clear sharp goals. You don't get somewhere unless you know where you are going. What do you want to do? Where do you want to go? How are you going to get there?

MAKE SURE your goal is a right one. Nothing that is wrong will ever turn out right. The sure way to success is the way of love. This means caring for others. This means giving to others

Source: "Think Like a Winner", Norman Vincent Peale.

## **SOMINEX VS GERITOL**

Are you and your student in the Doldrums? Are you floundering aimlessly, missing meetings, feeling sluggish and bored? Do you feel like you've both popped some Sominex before each lesson? Swallow some Geritol and try reviewing some of the reasons you got started in tutoring in the first place. Here are two creative ways to "get the magic back."

### *Draw a Descriptive Shield*

Use a large sheet of news print and magic markers and draw a "coat of arms" with six sections representing:

1. The student's greatest success to date.
2. Three things the student feels he/she does well.
3. The student's worst failure.
4. One thing the student would like to accomplish (success guaranteed) if he/she had one year to live.
5. A position on something from which the student would never budge.
6. One thing the student is striving for.

Present your coat of arms to each other. After the presentations, list barriers that keep your student from reading. Barriers might be missing meetings or not doing homework. The barriers are written on newsprint or on the blackboard. Then each barrier is discussed and the question is asked, "What can be done to overcome this?" Possible solutions are written next to each barrier.

### *Timeline*

A Timeline is drawn on the board or on news print. One end is labeled "Nonreader" and the other end "Reader." Name some of the steps you both identify as part of the process of learning to read. These steps are placed on the time line. Responses may include:

Making the commitment to meet with a tutor -- reading fifteen minutes a day -- learning to write your name -- learning to spell -- being able to read a book.

These can then be identified as short-term goals within the larger goal. Instead of seeing

learning to read as a distant almost impossible goal, new students see that reading can be broken down into manageable steps.

By working on one or the other of these exercises together, you and your student are likely to learn more about each other and what your motivators are.

Source: Literacy Link, Greater Indianapolis Literacy League

### **THIS IS A WINNER!**

Praise is a key tutor responsibility. Even routine work should be constantly acknowledged with a "good" or a nod of the head. Praise is a great way to raise self-esteem. Think about how you feel when someone praises you for a job well done.

Have you run out of things to say to praise your student? Here's a helpful list.

**SUPERB** *This is a winner!* **I like your style.** *I Like how you tackled this.*

**EXCELLENT WORK.** **Beautiful.** **Nice going.** You really out did yourself.

**YOU'RE REALLY MOVING. I appreciate your help.**  
**Great work**

**You're becoming an expert at this.** **I KNEW YOU**  
**COULD DO IT.**

**I like the way you are working.** **Terrific**  
**MARVELOUS.**

You're on the right track now. It looks like you've put a lot of work into this.

You've shown a lot of patience with this. **You make it look so easy.**

SOURCE: LITSTART, Robson, DeVergilio and DeButts

### **THE BASIC LAWS OF LEARNING**

#### *THE LAW OF DOING*

Students don't learn as the result of what teachers do, but as a result of what teachers get them to do. This basic principle is equally important for students and teachers to understand,. The student who expects to learn by simply sitting back and listening is likely to be disappointed. The teacher, on the other hand, who relies solely on the "I'll lecture, you listen" type of teaching is not likely to see much learning take place.

Why is this? Learning is change. Behavioral changes don't truly become a part of a person until s/he has reinforced them through use. For example, a student can memorize the operation of a piece of equipment or a new word for vocabulary. But s/he doesn't actually "learn" those things until s/he practices operating the equipment or using the new word. The student, in short, must be involved in the process of learning.

### *THE LAW OF EFFECT*

People tend to accept and repeat those responses which are pleasant and satisfying, and to avoid those which are annoying. If an adult enrolls in a course expecting to learn to read, and quickly finds that he is learning it and enjoying the learning process, s/he will tend to want to keep returning to class. "Nothing succeeds like success!"

Students should experience personal satisfaction from each learning activity and should achieve some success in each session.

### *THE LAW OF PRIMACY*

First impressions are the most lasting! This means that those first tutoring sessions are all-important. The tutor should arouse interest, provide subject matter which meets the student's needs and help him/her learn it correctly the first time.

### *THE LAW OF EXERCISE*

The more often an act is repeated, the more quickly a habit is established. Practice makes perfect - if the practice is the right kind. Practicing the wrong thing will become a habit, too, one which is hard to break.. The teacher should be sure that the student is performing an operation correctly.

Source: A Guide for Teachers and Teacher Trainers, R. L. Derbyshire reprinted from Common Place newsletter.

## **STUDENTS AND HOMEWORK**

*"My student doesn't do homework,"* is a sentence made by many tutors. In order to make substantial progress adult learners need to study outside of class.

*"Why doesn't my student do homework?"* Maybe the student is afraid of doing it wrong. Maybe the student doesn't know that the more s/he studies the better s/he will be able to read and write, maybe the student is not motivated, maybe it's another reason. In order to help your student, and in order to deal with your own frustrations, you need to discover the reasons the student's not practicing his/her literacy skills outside of class.

*"If I nag my student about homework, won't s/he stop coming to class?"* Probably yes, nagging and negative reminders about doing homework usually don't work. However, it is appropriate and necessary to be lovingly honest with your student about the following:

1. Practice makes perfect. The brain begins to build new connections when it is exposed to new information. To make the new connections solid the brain must have repeated exposure to the new information. The more frequent the exposures, the more solid the new connections.
2. Use it or lose it. The new connections in the brain will remain solid as long as the brain uses the information that is stored there. When the information is no longer used, the connection begins to deteriorate.
3. Facts are facts. Adults who study outside of class learn to read and write more quickly and easily than those who don't.

*"How do I get my student to do homework?"* You can only provide the tools your student needs and show him/her how to use them. The student needs your suggestions for interesting, varied, enjoyable ways to practice and s/he needs to read and write everyday even if only for a few minutes. Your student can complete specific exercises which have been assigned, reviews stories already read or read new stories.

Anything you and your student can create to assist with literacy is appropriate as long as you both know that the homework *isn't too difficult for the student to complete by him/herself*. The student might look for words s/he knows on television, in the newspaper and at the grocery store, or s/he might write sentences and paragraphs about what s/he believes, feels or knows.

*"What if my student still doesn't do homework?"* Continue to assign it anyway. Sometimes student who rarely study outside of tutoring will begin to do homework when it is consistently assigned at each session.

Your encouragement, praise and positive approach to studying can help your student think of homework as fun. Your experiences in tutoring should also be fun!

Source: Common Place Newsletter