

Goal Setting with English Language Learners

Learner goals are so important to the work we do. They provide guidance to create relevant lessons that will help an individual succeed. Goal setting may be difficult when a learner's goals are broad or vague. By helping a learner articulate their desires and set concrete goals you will help them to progress and continue to stay motivated.

This may mean breaking a large, long-term goal down into manageable pieces. For example, if the goal is for the learner to feel more confident and be able to e-mail her child's teacher, how can you break that down the skills necessary to complete the task? Your list may include computer skills such as typing and e-mail basics such as opening an e-mail account, composing e-mail and formatting, saving a draft, sending, etc. Your learner may also need to practice writing skills such as school-related vocabulary, sentence structure, spelling, etc. Breaking a large goal down into smaller steps will help a learner not to feel overwhelmed so that they can see success in the short term.

Getting Started: If you are wondering where to get started, it may help to ask questions related to the four skills of language.

Speaking/Listening: Where does the learner currently speak English? Where would the learner like to be able to speak English? Which places in the community are easy for the learner to communicate? Which are difficult? Is the learner able to speak English on the phone? When is it difficult? Are there sounds that are difficult for the learner to pronounce that are a barrier to communication?

Reading/Writing: What types of materials or what places in the community does the learner need to be able to read or write in English? What areas of reading are difficult for the learner – sounding out words (phonics), vocabulary, reading aloud, understanding texts? What areas of writing are difficult for the learner – punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, grammar, paragraph formation, or spelling?

Additional goals: Learners may have other goals that are related to community involvement or future plans. Find out if the learner interested in learning more about community resources, the library, social services, etc? What are the learner's job-related goals? Would the learner like to continue their education in the form of a GED or other classes? Do they have computer related goals? What types of tasks does the learner need to complete related to their families' needs?

Goal setting handouts available: Please see tutor training folder or contact the ELL coordinator.

- My English Goals – What I want to do with English (included in this document)
- Portfolios
- Mapping
- KWL Chart (What I Know, Want to Know and What I Learned)

Why set goals? These tangible goals not only help give the tutor direction and are a format for the learner to succeed, but they also help us here at the literacy council to be able to provide evidence of work completed so that we can continue to support tutors and learners around the county.

My English Goals
What I want to do with English.

Think about the topics that are important in your life. What do you want to be able to do with your English skills? Write your goals on the chart.

Life Skill Topic	Speaking and Listening	Reading and Writing
1. Employment		
2. Health		
3. Education or training		
4. Family and children		
5. Housing		
6. Telephone		
7. Transportation		

8. Community Life and Services		
9. Shopping, Banking		
10. Media, TV, Radio, Newspapers		
11. Technology, computers		
12. Other:		

HOMEWORK: Choose 2-3 of the goals that are the most important to you. Use your work above to complete the sentences.

I want to improve my _____ in order _____.

I want to improve my _____ in order to _____.

I want to improve my _____ in order to _____.