

About This Unit

Children who use a growth mindset—the belief that they can improve with practice and effort—do better in school, handle school transitions better, and are less likely to show aggression than children who believe that their abilities and personalities are fixed.^{1,2} Setting goals and making plans to improve based on a growth mindset are associated with increases in self-efficacy,^{3,4} positive personal relationships,^{5,6} increased empathy,⁵ and prosocial behavior.^{4,7,8} This unit teaches the importance of making mistakes while learning, the brain science behind learning, growth mindset strategies, and a goal-setting process that can be applied to group or personal goals. Refer to the Second Step Elementary digital program Review of Research for additional information.

Progression of Skills and Knowledge Across the Grades

From Kindergarten through Grade 2, Unit 1 lessons are designed to help students develop the skills needed to pay attention and avoid distractions. Students are also introduced to growth mindset language as a useful tool for encouraging themselves and others. Lessons highlight the importance of practice and effort—and the value of making mistakes—when it comes to learning something new.

Grade 3 introduces the brain science behind learning, practice, and planning. With this foundation, Grades 4 and 5 shift to focus on the goal-setting process. Students first work to develop a class goal and plan in Grade 4. In Grade 5, they set personal goals and create plans to achieve them. Growth mindset language and strategies for getting better at something are reinforced throughout Grades 3, 4, and 5 as students follow through on reaching their goals.

Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naming or showing behaviors that help them pay attention (e.g., turning toward the speaker, listening, watching, staying quiet) • Suggesting kind words to encourage themselves when they make a mistake • Suggesting kind words to encourage others when they make a mistake • Naming “practice” and “keep trying” as ways to get better at something
Grade 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to pay attention while learning something new (e.g., turning toward the speaker, watching and listening carefully, not talking) • Behaving in ways help them manage distractions (e.g., changing places, taking deep breaths, reminding themselves to pay attention) • Practicing and trying again in order to improve a new skill • Using helpful thoughts to encourage themselves when they make a mistake
Grade 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the benefit of making mistakes • Identifying strategies to use after making a mistake • Identifying helpful and unhelpful thoughts in a given context • Replacing unhelpful thoughts with helpful thoughts

Progression of Skills and Knowledge Across the Grades, continued

Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naming a repeated action they can do to practice a skill • Identifying who they can learn from or other ways they can try to learn a skill • Explaining what happens in their brain when they practice a skill
Grade 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting a group goal that is specific, challenging, and doable • Making a plan to reach a group goal • Evaluating progress toward reaching a group goal • Identifying roadblocks that may be getting in the way of achieving a group goal • Making changes to overcome roadblocks • Responding to reflection questions
Grade 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting a personal goal that meets the given criteria • Making a plan to reach a goal • Evaluating progress towards reaching a goal and identifying roadblocks that may be getting in the way • Making changes to overcome roadblocks • Responding to reflection questions

Grade 5 Lessons at a Glance

The Unit 1 lessons in Grade 5 are designed to teach students a step-by-step process they can use to set and work toward their personal goals.

Throughout the unit, there will be many opportunities to help students build a sense of pride, confidence, and a healthy self-esteem related to their ability to set and work toward goals. There will also be opportunities for students to learn more about each other and what they want to get better at, as well as build empathy for one another when their goal-setting experiences are different. The Prep & Extend documents give specific examples of these moments in the lessons.

The unit ends with Lesson 5, a performance task, where students demonstrate the skills and knowledge they learned throughout this unit. They use the goal-setting process they learned to set and work towards a 10-minute-goal of their choosing. A performance task rubric is included as part of the lesson to help you determine if the class is meeting the goals of the unit. To learn more about the benefits of performance tasks and how to use them in Second Step programs, refer to **What Are Performance Tasks?** on [SecondStep.org](https://www.SecondStep.org).

By teaching students all components of each weekly lesson, in this order, they will acquire the knowledge and skills needed to meet the goals of this unit.

Grade 5 Lessons at a Glance, continued

	Title	Objective	Key Concepts & Skills	Vocabulary	Resources
Lesson 1	The Right Goal for Me	Students will be able to identify a personal goal and explain why it is right for them.	<p>Students will practice setting personal goals that are right for them.</p> <p>A goal that is right for someone is specific, challenging, doable, and motivating for them.</p> <p>A goal might be right for one person, but not right for another person.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prep & Extend • Lesson Plan • Presentation • Handout
Lesson 2	My Plan	Students will be able to make an effective plan to reach a personal goal, including a way to track their progress.	<p>Students will practice making a plan that includes the actions they'll take, materials they'll need, and what they can do if they need help.</p> <p>It's helpful to track your progress and check in with someone else to keep yourself on-track.</p>	Progress marker (n.) a sign that you're getting closer to achieving your goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prep & Extend • Lesson Plan • Presentation • 2 Handouts
Lesson 3	Changing My Plan	Students will be able to evaluate their progress towards a personal goal so they can adjust their plan if needed.	<p>Students will practice checking progress to identify roadblocks and decide if they're on track or off track.</p> <p>Making changes to a goal or plan can get you back on track.</p>	Roadblock (n.) something that gets in the way of achieving your goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prep & Extend • Lesson Plan • Presentation • Handout
Lesson 4	Time to Reflect	Students will be able to reflect on their experience working towards a personal goal and say what they would do next time.	<p>Students will practice responding to reflection questions to identify what worked, what didn't work, and what they would do next.</p> <p>Reflecting on a goal-setting process can improve how you set and work toward goals in the future.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prep & Extend • Lesson Plan • Presentation • Handout
Lesson 5		Students will be able to apply the goal-setting process to a personal goal and reflect on how it went.	<p>The goal-setting process can help you work toward any type of goal you want to achieve.</p> <p>Students will practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting a personal goal • Making a plan to reach it • Following the plan and stopping to check progress • Reflecting on the process. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prep & Extend • Lesson Plan • Presentation • Handout

References

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