POSSIBLE SELVES

Nurturing Student Motivation
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LESSON 1: WHY STUDY POSSIBLE SELVES?
What does it mean?
Possible selves are ideas about what you might become in the future.
“Next year, I hope to be in school, legally at home, and stop using cocaine.

I expect to be using drugs and alcohol, be involved in crime, start fencing again, and be at home.

I’m fearful I might start using morphine or heroin, doing worse crimes like armed robbery, and living on the streets.”

“When I grow up, I want to be a judge.

First, I’ll need to become a good lawyer, so I have to study hard now and finish high school with good grades.

Then, I’ll be able to go to college and, later, to a good law school.”

Jamaal, 14-year-old participant in the “I Have a Dream Program” (Reported on the Today Show, November 14, 1990.)
COMPARE AND CONTRAST THE TWO LETTERS

- How are the writers’ visions of the future alike?
- How are they different?
- How do their goals differ?
POSSIBLE SELVES GOAL FOLDERS

You need:

- File Folder
- “The Possible Selves Goal Folder” template
- The “Action Plan” template
- “Possible Selves Tree” template
- “Questionnaire Highlights” template
My role as your mentor:

- To believe in you
- To support you
- To help you identify your goals and be your “Dream Catcher.”
WHAT IS A DREAM CATCHER?
As legend has it, long ago, a young Native American maiden was taught to weave a web, much like a spider does. Afterward, she wove a web into the form of a “dream catcher.” This dream catcher, when hung in her lodge, would catch all her dreams, good and bad. The bad dreams would be caught in the webbing, where they would be burned off by the morning light. The good dreams would also be caught, but they would find their way to the center of the web and filter down into feathers attached to the web. There they would be held only to return another night and be dreamed again. As these good dreams were repeated over and over, they became real.
Hope + Effort + Dream Catcher
= Success!
The Unit Organizer

POSSIBLE SELVES

- Thinking about what I could become in the future
- Working to reach goals (Lesson 7 & beyond)
- Planning steps to reach goals (Lesson 8)
- Reflecting on goals (Lesson 6)
- Sketching me & my possible selves (Lesson 4)
- Thinking about hopes, expectations, & fears (Lesson 3)
- Discovering strengths & interests (Lesson 2)

A college of strengths & interests
A Possible Self Questionnaire
A Possible Self Tree
Goals to strengthen my tree
A plan for reaching my goals
- Mission statement
- Goal college
- Priority letter
- New Action Plan
“Hold fast to dreams for if dreams die, life is but a broken-winged bird that cannot fly.” (from “Dreams”, by Langston Hughes)
Lesson 2: Discovering Strengths and Interests

- Purpose:
  - to discover your strengths and interests
  - To create a collage of your strengths and interest and what you want to be like in the future
EXAMPLE STUDENT COLLAGES
EXAMPLE STUDENT COLLAGES
EXAMPLE STUDENT COLLAGES

The Possible Selves Goal Folder of: [Student Name]

A picture of my strengths, interests, and a possible career: Good Doctor

Good Doctor

Stacy's

[Image of Stacy's snack bag]
A picture of my strengths, interests, and a possible career:

**Strengths**

**Interests**

**Possible Career**

- Travel
Roger: Tamara, what do you want to be when you’re an adult?

Tamara: A social worker.

Roger: Why?

Tamara: I just want to help families stay together and solve their problems. I’ve always been the one to hold our family together when my mom and dad are struggling. I’m good at it.
Roger: How do you plan to do this?

Tamara: Well, I have to learn how to work with people who don’t always want help. I also need to become a leader who can get people to communicate.

Roger: What else?

Tamara: I have to go to college and get a degree, so I have to study hard now and finish high school with good grades. Then, I will go to college and earn a degree in social work.
LESSON 3: THINKING ABOUT HOPES, EXPECTATIONS, AND FEARS

Key Terms:
- Hope
- Expectation
- Fear
- Learner
- Person
- Worker
Something you would like very much to happen; a wish or a dream. You are no sure it will happen.

Examples:
- You might hope to graduate from college.
- You might hope to be elected as a senator from your state.
- You might hope to win a gold medal at the state track meet.
- You might hope to win the lottery.
- You might hope to live at the beach.
- You might hope to get a scholarship to attend college.
- You might hope to go to the senior prom.
EXPECTATION

Something you would like to happen and are fairly sure will happen.

Examples:
✓ You might expect to graduate from high school.
✓ You might expect to get a “B” in English.
✓ You might expect to get a job mowing lawns.
✓ You might expect to continue to live in your home state.
✓ You might expect to make the basketball team.
✓ You might expect to have a lot of friends.
✓ You might expect to pass all of your classes.
FEAR

Something that scares or worries you about the future; something you wish to avoid.

Examples:
- You might fear that you will flunk out of school.
- You might fear that you will get injured playing football.
- You might fear that you won’t make the NFL.
- You might fear that you will fail all your classes.
- You might fear that you won’t have any friends.
- You might fear that you won’t get a good job.
- You might fear that people will make fun of you.
- You might fear that you won’t have a place to live.
- You might fear that you won’t have enough money to live on your own.
INDIVIDUAL STRENGTH

This refers to something you are very good at doing and enjoy doing. Individual strengths can be academic skills, physical skills, or artistic skills. In short, they can be anything you do well!

Example dreams related to individual strengths:
- Playing basketball in college
- Becoming a teacher
- Having my own computer company

Example Expectations:
- To make the high-school basketball team
- To enroll in all college preparatory classes
- To work during the summer for a local computer company

Example Fears:
- Injuring myself
- Losing my voice (and not being able to sing)
This refers to your lifetime role as a person who learns. It includes what you are doing now and what you will accomplish in school, college, and other settings to get ready for a career and then continue learning.

Example Learner Dreams:
- Graduating from college
- Getting a 3.4 grade-point average in high school

Example Expectations:
- Graduating from high school
- Earning a 2.5 grade-point average in high school

Example Fears:
- Dropping out of school
- Getting suspended
- Getting sick
This refers to your lifetime role as a person who works and earns a living. It includes what you do now as a worker (for example, when you do chores, work at a summer job) and what you will do for your possible career.

Example Dreams:
- Becoming an architect
- Having my own architectural business

Example Expectations:
- Becoming a good draftsperson
- Working for an architect

Example Fears:
- Being on welfare
- Not being able to get a good job so I can live independently
This refers to your lifetime role as a person who has relationships with him/herself and others. It includes what you do now and what you will do in the future to keep yourself healthy and fit, as well as everything you are doing and will do to have good relationships with family members, friends, and members of the community.

Example Dreams:
- Owning my own home
- Having a family
- Having loving relationships with my family

Example Expectations:
- Having an apartment
- Exercising a couple of times a week
- Having a few close friends

Example Fears:
- Living with my parents
- Becoming ill
- No close friends
POSSIBLE SELVES QUESTIONNAIRE
SECTION 1: INDIVIDUAL STRENGTH

1. What one thing are you really good at doing?
   _______________________________________________________
   Use words or phrases that describe you in this area.
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________

2. What are some of the things you hope to achieve in this area?
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
SECTION 1: INDIVIDUAL STRENGTH (CONTINUED)

3. What are some of the things you expect in this area?

_______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________

4. What are some of your fears about yourself in this area?

_______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________
SECTION 2: LEARNER

1. Use words or phrases to describe yourself as a learner.
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________

2. What are some of the things you hope to achieve as a learner?
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
3. What are some of the things you expect to achieve as a learner?
_______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________

4. What are some of your fears about yourself as a learner?
_______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________

SECTION 2: LEARNER (CONTINUED)
1. Use words or phrases to describe yourself as a person.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2. What are some of the things you hope to achieve as a person?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
3. What are some of the things you expect to achieve as a person?

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4. What are some of your fears related to yourself as a person?

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SECTION 4: WORKER

1. Use words or phrases to describe yourself as a worker. (If you have a job outside your home, describe what you’re like while you do that job. If you don’t have a job outside your home, think about work you do for your parents or around the house, and describe how you do those jobs.)

____________________________________________
____________________________________________
____________________________________________

2. What are some of the things you hope to achieve as a worker?

____________________________________________
____________________________________________
____________________________________________
____________________________________________
3. What are some of the things you **expect** to achieve as a worker?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

4. What are some of your **fears** about yourself as a worker?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
Lesson 4: Sketching Me and My Possible Selves

- Compile HIGHLIGHTS from Questionnaires
- Create Possible Selves Tree
STUDENT EXAMPLE OF POSSIBLE SELVES TREE
STUDENT EXAMPLE OF POSSIBLE SELVES TREE

- Goals
  - Help others
  - Be kind
  - Be a good friend

- Habits
  - Positive
  - Healthy diet
  - Exercise

- Strengths
  - Leadership
  - Communication
  - Respect

- Challenges
  - Difficulties
  - Struggles

- Values
  - Honesty
  - Integrity
  - Love

- Relationships
  - Family
  - Friends

- Future
  - Goals
  - Aspirations

- Reflections
  - Growth
  - Learning

- Mindset
  - Positive
  - Resilient
  - Growth mindset

- Coping Strategies
  - Deep breathing
  - Meditation
  - Physical activity

- Resources
  - Support network
  - Professional help

- Accomplishments
  - Achievements
  - Milestones

- Personal Enrichment
  - Hobbies
  - Interests
  - Personal growth
Lesson 5: Reflecting on My Goals

Purpose:
- to evaluate your current strengths and needs
- to identify long- and short-term goals that will strengthen your current selves and enable them to create their hoped-for possible selves
- To prioritize the goals you identify

Complete: “Thinking About Possible Selves”
A clear statement of what you want to achieve and are working toward, and when you expect to achieve it.

Examples:
- My goal is to go to college.
- My goal is to make all A’s.
- My goal is to improve my relationship with my parents.
Purpose: Develop ACTION PLAN for reaching your GOALS.

Setting Goals

1.

2.

3.
My Action Plan

The Hope
My hope is to become a certified diesel technician

The Goal
I will graduate from Gates Technology School by May 2004.

The Tasks

Step 1
Determine what I need to do to get into tech school- H.S. diploma??

Step 2
Determine what course I Put together a graduation plan.

Step 3
Pass all my classes with a GPA of 2.75 Attend class regularly.

Step 4
Set up tutoring with After School Program for math and English.

Step 5
Improve my basic algebra skills with a Strategic Tutor.
Improve my textbook reading skills with a Strategic Tutor.
A GOAL IS A DREAM WITH A DEADLINE.
Activity: PREDICTION LETTER

Write a letter to your “future self.” After reflecting on your goals, write a letter to yourself to be opened 10 years from now. Where do you see yourself in 10 years. What do you think you will have accomplished? Seal your letter in an envelope, and keep it for 10 years before opening. Alternatively, you could write a blog and set the “post” date to 10 years from now so that it will be delivered to you via email on that date in 10 years.