

Goal Setting & Reflection

The ultimate purpose for studying another language is to be able to communicate with others using that language. Many of us know someone who has studied French, Spanish, or German, but can no longer use the language. This isn't helpful.

By setting goals for your language learning, you will be setting yourself up for developing real-world abilities to actually use the language you are studying. Setting goals allows you to identify what you can already do with the language and celebrate past success. Goals can also help you maintain motivation to continue language study and achieve your long-term goals.

When setting your short-term and long-term goals, think through why you are studying language. What are you hoping to be able to do with the language? Answers to this question could be a good start to setting your long-term goals. Then, break the long-term goal into smaller steps or short-term goals.

Be sure to make your goals realistic and achievable. For example, don't expect to speak a language fluently in a year. Goals should also be something that you can measure. In other words, you should be able to know when you achieve them.

Consider setting SMARTER goals:

- S:** specific
- M:** measurable
- A:** attainable
- R:** realistic
- T:** timely
- E:** evaluative
- R:** reflective

At the Beginning of Each Lesson or Unit

At the beginning of each lesson in your class, think about:

- What you are learning.
- Why you are learning it.
- How will you learn it.
- How you can demonstrate your learning.
- How you can use what you've learned outside of the classroom.
- What you will learn next.

Answers to these questions will help you set goals for the things you are learning in class and apply them to target language situations that may happen in or outside of class.

The following is an example of short-term, measurable goals. Emma is studying Spanish and has just started her LinguaFolio Online profile. She is considering what short- and long-term goals she would like to set. Emma considers:

- What she wants to be able to do using Spanish.
- How long it will take her to achieve what she wants to do using Spanish.
- How she will know when she has reached her goal.
- Once she reaches the goal, what her next steps will be for setting another.

Emma decides that she wants to use her Spanish at an upcoming international sports competition that her town will be hosting. Since Emma is new to studying Spanish, she picks modest goals. Emma wants to be able to:

- Introduce herself to others.
- Ask questions about others and answer questions about herself.
- Share her likes and dislikes with others.
- Make plans for attending specific events happening at the competition.
- Follow directions to locate specific events and attractions.

Emma gives herself two weeks to practice these skills both in and out of the classroom. She will know if she successfully achieves these goals by being able to make friends using her Spanish and make plans to meet them at specific locations without needing to rely on her English skills.

Setting Aside Time for Self-Evaluation and Reflection

Setting aside time for self-evaluation and reflecting on your learning and the goals you have set for yourself is important to helping you meet your short- and long-term goals.

The Can-Do Section of LinguaFolio Online can help you reflect on your language learning. Review the Can-Do Statements and decide whether you would like to accomplish the statement (set status as “this is a goal”), if you can accomplish the statement with some help (set status as “I can do with help”), or if you can already complete the statement (set the status as “I can do this”). If you believe that you can do one of the statements listed or if you are unsure of how well you can engage in the statements, be sure to upload evidence that will showcase your ability to do that task successfully or to get feedback.