

The Main Idea's PD Suggestions for *Designing and Teaching Learning Goals & Objectives*

I. Introduce Marzano's Learning Goals

Many teachers will feel they already know how to write objectives for their classes, so it is important to give teachers a fresh look at this issue by introducing a few aspects of goal setting that might be new to them.

The Research – To provide the rationale for thoughtful goal setting, either provide the teachers with the research on goal setting in my summary (pp.1-2), have them read the first chapter of the book, or look at the summary of the research in the tables on pp. 5, 10, and 11.

Important Aspects of Goals – Based on the research, teachers should understand the importance of creating specific goals, at the right level of difficulty, and which provide appropriate feedback to students. Introduce the concepts below, and depending on the experience your teachers have had writing goals, choose the appropriate exercises for them to do from that list (there are exercises in the book or use your own based on the excerpts in the summary). Note that by letting teachers choose the areas they need work on, this allows for ownership of the activities and differentiation based on teacher experience level:

Goals vs. Activities (chart on p.2 of the summary or Exercise 2.1 and p.21 of the book)

Declarative vs. Procedural Goals (excerpt on p.2 of the summary and Exercise 2.2 on p.22 of the book)

Translating Larger Knowledge Statements into Goals (chart on p.3 of the summary and Exercise 2.3 on p.23 of the book)

Designing Appropriate Assessment Tasks (excerpt on p.3 of the summary and Exercise 2.4 on p.24 of the book)

Designing Goals at Different Levels of Difficulty (Overview of the New Taxonomy on p.4 of the summary and Exercises 3.1 – 3.4 on pp.58-61 of the book)

Organizing Goals into a Rubric (see the Abbreviated Rubric and Sample Science Scale on p.6 in the summary and Exercises 4.1 – 4.3 on pp.75-78 of the book)

II. Diversifying the Types of Goals Teachers Use

While teachers may successfully complete the exercises above in a workshop, in their actual classrooms, they often rely on the same types of goals over and over. Individually, or in small groups of teachers who teach the same subject or grade, have teachers:

1. Self-Assess to Determine Which Types of Goals Teachers Use Most Often

Before this activity, make sure teachers understand the four levels of difficulty of goals as well as the 14 mental processes that make up these four levels. Show them the chart below, have them read Chapter 4, or have them read the summary of it.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY	MENTAL PROCESS
Level 4: Knowledge Utilization	Decision making, Problem solving, Experimenting, Investigating
Level 3: Analysis	Matching, Classifying, Analyzing Errors, Generating, Specifying
Level 2: Comprehension	Integrating, Symbolizing
Level 1: Retrieval	Recognizing, Recalling, Executing

Ask teachers to bring two weeks of lesson plans to this workshop. First, they should identify the goal or goals they taught each day (they may not have explicitly written these down previously). Then, have them use tally marks to indicate when they use a Recognizing goal, a Recalling goal, an Executing goal, etc. In small groups have them speak about what trends they notice in the goals they usually employ.

2. Diversify Learning Goals Using the 14 Different Mental Processes

Now, to help teachers diversify the types of goals they use in their classrooms, alone or in groups, have them take a general knowledge statement or standard, and write 14 more specific goals – one for each of the mental processes above. You can provide sample general statements such as:

Science: Understanding gravity

English: Writing effectively

Math: Rounding numbers

Social Studies: Knowing important leaders in history

For each of these statements, groups of teachers would write 14 goals:

Recognizing goal:

Executing goal:

Symbolizing goal:

Recalling goal:

Integrating goal:

Etc.:

To help with this, see the types of verbs used with each kind of goal on pp.124–126. Then, encourage teachers to use a wider range of goals, and in a future workshop ask them to bring in two weeks of lesson plans and again tally the types of goals they use to see the variety.

III. Planning Backwards from the Year's Goals to the First Unit's Goals

The goal here is for teachers to end with a year-long curriculum plan, an outline of the first group of units, and specifics about the first unit.

The Year-Long Plan

1. Once teachers know how to create effective learning goals, they can create a year-long plan which includes the goals for each unit. To start, show them a sample year's worth of goals organized into units (copy Table 5.1 on pp.80-81 or share the excerpt of a year plan on p.7 of the summary). Clarify that these are *target* goals for each unit, not a whole set of differentiated goals.

2. Then, to create their own year plans, it would be ideal to group teachers with others who teach the same grade and topic (i.e., all 8th grade math or all 4th grade teachers). If they create a *common* year plan, then they can plan together throughout the year, create common assessments, share student results, etc. If this does not work at your school, just pair up teachers to give each other feedback.

3. Start by having teachers map out about 4-5 larger topics (strands) and about 12 units that fit into those strands.

4. Then they can work together to come up with the target learning goals for just the first and second unit.

5. Finally, they should plan out unit 1 in more detail – a) create a diagnostic to preassess student knowledge in this area, b) create a rubric/scale for each goal (this means create simpler and more complex goals to differentiate), c) design the accompanying assessment tasks.

6. Teachers or groups can share these documents for feedback and revise if necessary.