

Goal Setting Formative Questionnaire

Technical Report

Overview

What This Questionnaire Measures

In the context of education, goal setting often refers to identifying specific academic objectives, but a wider definition encompasses specific short- or long-term life or career objectives (Gaumer Erickson & Noonan, 2017). Research conducted by Locke and Latham (2002) found that individuals perform better when they have goals that “direct attention and effort toward goal-relevant activities” and away from actions that don’t relate to the goal. In short, goal setting can be defined as focusing on your own improvement by identifying goals that are meaningful and based on data (Gaumer Erickson & Noonan, 2016).

The Goal Setting Formative Questionnaire is designed to measure a student’s proficiency in the three essential components of goal setting, which are:

Set a goal that is:

1. Meaningful to you.
2. Focused on your own personal improvement; don’t compare yourself to others.
3. Based on data, including prior experiences; interests and skills; and feedback from family members, teachers, peers, or another trusted person.

How This Questionnaire Is Accessed

Teachers can launch questionnaires and view both individual and aggregate student results by visiting <https://www.cccstudent.org/>, creating an account, and following the instructions provided on the website. This website is free and available to all educators. Once students have completed the questionnaires, teachers can see graphed results for individual students as well as in aggregate. Teachers can also download a raw data file in Microsoft Excel.

The questionnaire can be cited as:

Gaumer Erickson, A. S. & Noonan, P. M. (2018). Goal Setting Formative Questionnaire. In *The skills that matter: Teaching interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies in any classroom* (p. 179). Corwin.

This technical report can be cited as:

Gaumer Erickson, A. S., Soukup, J. H., Noonan, P. M., & McGurn, L. (2022). *Goal Setting Formative Questionnaire technical report*. College & Career Competency Framework. <https://www.cccframework.org/>

How This Questionnaire Is Completed

Teachers make the questionnaire available to students by providing the URL to the survey (<https://www.cccstudent.org/>) and a survey code (specific code for each launched survey); both the URL and survey code are provided on the website when a survey is launched. Students enter the survey code and a student number assigned by the teacher. Students complete the questionnaire by self-rating items on a 5-point Likert-type scale. This scale ranges from 1 (*not very like me*) to 5 (*very like me*). The results are automatically graphed for students and available to them once they complete the questionnaire. This enables them to immediately reflect on results.

The items on the questionnaire are written at a sixth-grade reading level, per the Flesch-Kincaid¹ readability score. Accommodations should be provided when appropriate and can include reading the items aloud, explaining the items, and having a scribe fill in the response option.

How to Use the Results

Goal Setting Formative Questionnaire results can be used by both teachers and students. To ease interpretation, results are displayed on a 100-point scale. These scores can be interpreted similar to grades (e.g., 70–79 is a C). Results by essential component support reflection on relative strengths and areas for improvement.

Students can use the questionnaire results to gain an understanding of the various elements that are necessary for them to successfully achieve their goals. They can use their individual results to address areas of the goal setting process in which they, according to their own reporting, are not performing as well.

Teachers can enhance their instructional practices by determining which areas of their students' goal setting abilities to target. After combining this targeted instruction with guided and independent practice, teachers can continually re-administer the Goal Setting Formative Questionnaire and alter their instruction accordingly. This allows teachers to engage in a process of data-driven decision making in order to increase their students' fundamental ability to set and achieve goals that are meaningful to the students, focused on personal improvement rather than comparison to others, and based on reasonable expectations and insightful feedback. Numerous resources for teaching goal setting are available at <https://www.cccframework.org/resources>.

Technical Information

The Goal Setting Formative Questionnaire was initially developed in 2015 by Research Collaboration (<https://www.researchcollaboration.org/>). An extensive review of related research resulted in the identification of three components that are essential for successful goal setting. Following this literature review, it was determined that effective goals are meaningful to the individual, focused on personal improvement as opposed to outperforming others, and, to be achievable and adaptable, based on reliable information including past experience and/or feedback from others.

The questionnaire was tested for reliability using Cronbach's coefficient alpha² with 3,486 students in fourth grade through post-high school. Of the 3,486 students, 1,678 (48%) were female, 1,545 (44%) were male, and 263 (8%) did not report gender. The dataset includes 235 students in fourth grade, 313 in fifth grade, 215 in sixth grade, 525 in seventh grade, 335 in eighth grade, 467 in ninth grade, 153 in 10th grade, 227 in 11th grade, 432 in 12th grade, and 584 post-high school.

Overall, the Goal Setting Questionnaire was found to be highly reliable (19 items; $\alpha = .919$). The Meaningful subscale consisted of 6 items ($\alpha = .811$), the Personal Improvement subscale consisted of six items ($\alpha = .802$),

¹ Kincaid, J. P., Fishburne, R. P., Rogers, R. L., & Chissom, B. S. (1975). *Derivation of new readability formulas (automated readability index, fog count, and Flesch reading ease formula) for Navy enlisted personnel* (Research Branch Report No. 8–75). Naval Air Station Memphis.

² Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika*, 16(3), 297–334. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02310555>; Cronbach, L. J. (1988). Internal consistency of tests: Analyses old and new. *Psychometrika*, 53(1), 63–70. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02294194>

and the Data-Based subscale consisted of seven items ($\alpha = .815$). When converted to a 100-point scale, the bottom quartile ranged from 22 to 71, and the top quartile ranged from 88 to 100. The questions that make up each component are listed below.

Meaningful

1. I set short-term goals for myself (like finishing all my homework or exercising for an hour).
2. I set long-term goals for myself such as earning a college degree or entering a career.
3. I set goals to achieve what I think is important.
4. I imagine what life will be like when I reach my goal.
5. My goals are meaningful to me.
6. My goals are based on my own interests and plans for the future.

Personal Improvement

7. I set goals to help me improve myself.
8. I set goals to help me be more successful in school.
9. I set goals to help me do my personal best.
10. When I want to learn something, I make small goals to track my progress.
11. I focus on my own improvement instead of worrying about whether other people are doing better than me.
12. Even if I lose a competition, I'm pleased if I have improved.

Data-Based

13. Based on everything I know about myself, I believe I can achieve my goals.
14. When I set goals, I think about barriers that might get in my way.
15. When I'm struggling, I set goals to help me improve.
16. I set goals that are challenging but achievable.
17. I set short-term goals to help me achieve my long-term goals.
18. When setting a goal, I think about my past successes and failures.
19. When I set a goal, I am confident that I can meet it.

Goal Setting Formative Questionnaire

Please **CHECK ONE** response that best describes you. Be honest, since the information will be used to help you in school and also help you become more prepared for college and careers. There are no right or wrong answers!

Student ID _____

Date _____

	Not very like me → Very like me 1 2 3 4 5				
	1. I set short-term goals for myself (like finishing all my homework or exercising for an hour).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I set long-term goals for myself such as earning a college degree or entering a career.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I set goals to achieve what I think is important.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I imagine what life will be like when I reach my goal.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. My goals are meaningful to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. My goals are based on my own interests and plans for the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I set goals to help me improve myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I set goals to help me be more successful in school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I set goals to help me do my personal best.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. When I want to learn something, I make small goals to track my progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I focus on my own improvement instead of worrying about whether other people are doing better than me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Even if I lose a competition, I'm pleased if I have improved.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Based on everything I know about myself, I believe I can achieve my goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. When I set goals, I think about barriers that might get in my way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. When I'm struggling, I set goals to help me improve.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. I set goals that are challenging but achievable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I set short-term goals to help me achieve my long-term goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. When setting a goal, I think about my past successes and failures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. When I set a goal, I am confident that I can meet it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>