

Printout of MindLadder® Advisor

Section B-5•



T-23: Planning

Goals provide objectives for the future. Planning is the ability to determine, organize and sequence the steps that are needed to reach a goal. Planning is the knowledge construction function whereby students link the present to the future.

Students who have established a goal (T-23) often act in hasty and ill-considered ways when they do not have a plan to achieve it. Planning is the function that is used identify, sequence and check the steps that enable an established goal or objective to be achieved. Outlines, timelines, task analyses, organizational charts, drawings, diagrams, maps and budgets are all tools that students can learn to use to create effective plans. An effective plan enables people to track progress, trouble-shoot difficulties and make adjustments and revisions that may be called for on the way. An effective plan allocates time and other resources in a manner that ensures that the goal will be reached before resources run out. A feasibility check of each part of a plan helps to identify known obstacles and prepare for worst-case scenarios. Plans may be written out and organized for easy access to information: Plans are there to be used!

To mediate this knowledge construction function facilitate your students' development of plans to achieve goals they have set (T-22). Help them analyze their objectives to identify the steps that are needed to reach them. Facilitate their discovery of brain storming and how it can be used to come up with ideas to overcome problems. Work with them to develop effective ways to graph and chart information and to prepare clear blueprints that explain what needs to be done by whom and when. Help students take control of this knowledge construction function by guiding them to the discovery that planning is a process they can engage in at will.

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Throughout your work, direct your students to make room for planning behavior across tasks and subject areas in the curriculum. Help them to establish goals and to organize and sequence steps to achieve them. You can say, "Leon that is a worthwhile goal. First, you have to plan how to achieve it. Let's think about what you will need to do." Use of questions such as "What will you do first?" and "What will you do next?" will help to create the awareness the students need to organize and order their steps. Continue to ask questions to help students establish reasons for what they do that make sense. Urge them to challenge and check their own plans. "Why would you start here rather than here?" or "Have you checked that you have all the resources you need to put your plan into action?" This type of questioning helps to keep students focused on what they are doing, and why, and will help them to establish good planning behavior.

Work with your students to identify and discuss examples of planning behavior. For example, budgets to plan expenditures, itineraries to plan expeditions and vacations, schedules to plan the school day, calendars to plan appointments, protocols to plan scientific data collection, blueprints to plan the construction of buildings or ships.