GOAL WRITING TUTORIAL: K-12

The following is one method for writing measurable goals and instructional objectives.

Goals and objectives in a student's IEP focus on the skills and behaviors the student needs to learn in order to be involved and progress in the general curriculum.

Goals are broad statements which describe what a student can reasonably be expected to accomplish within a twelve month period of time in a special education program.

Each goal includes these components (present level may be implied):
• Direction of change
• Skill/behavior to be changed
• Expected annual ending level of performance

Direction of change	Skill or behavior	Present level (use baseline information)	Expected level of achievement	Resources To accomplished goal
The student will: increase decrease maintain	academic skill behavior	FROM: _____	TO: _____	Using _____
EXAMPLES:				
The student will decrease	talking out behavior	FROM: 5 times per hour	TO: talking out one time per hour	using Boys Town Model role play
The student will increase	written language skills	FROM: writing only phrases	TO: writing a complete simple sentence, with initial capitalization and ending punctuation	using direction instruction
The student will maintain	attention span		AT the current level of all 5's on his/her daily point chart	using strategies for concentration

Objectives are measurable*, intermediate steps leading to the attainment of the goal. They describe the student's behaviors. Objectives must include criteria for attainment and there must be at least two objectives per goal.

Objectives contain the following components:
• conditions for evaluation
• skill/behavior to be performed
• criteria and procedures for attainment

Conditions for evaluation	Skill/behavior to be performed	Evaluation Criteria, procedures
Circumstances under which behavior is to be performed: • environment • specialized instructional materials/equipment • assistance	• observable • verifiable	What will be used to measure performance? • method • instrument • course of action
EXAMPLES:		
When in a group setting:	the student will verbally participate in conversation.	in 9 out of 10 trials, as measured by daily chart.
After reading a story of his own choosing:	the student will give an oral book report.	summarizing the content of the story, with accuracy measured by teacher checklist.
When given fifteen 3-digit addition problems and no calculator:	the student will compute them.	with no more than 3 errors, in 2 out of 3 trials.

* See C.F.R. § 300.347(a)(2) and Appendix A at 64 Fed. Regs. 12471 (March 12, 1999).

Annual goals are expectations based on assessed special education needs. Annual goals are reasonably achievable within one calendar year.

Goals have five components. The five are:

1. direction of change;
2. deficit or excess;
3. present level of performance;
4. the expected annual ending level of performance; and
5. resources needed to accomplish the expected level of performance.

1. *Direction of change* can be stated as:
- increase (reading comprehension, math computation, written expression, speech fluency, etc.)
- decrease (math errors, temper tantrums, verbal aggression, etc.)
- maintain (motor control, a skill learned, etc.)

2. *Deficit or excess* could be stated as:

Areas of deficit behavior:	Areas of excess behavior:
reading comprehension	physical aggressiveness
math computation	head banging
gross motor control	touching, pushing or hitting other children
expressive language	blurting out
independent self care	getting up, falling out of the chair
	activity level

3. *Present level of performance* (from _____) is a description of what the child now does in the area of deficit or excess and can be stated as:
1. *reading at the primer level*
2. *naming numbers to 20*
3. *walking with aid of crutches*
4. *speaking in one word responses*
5. *inability to grip small objects*

4. *Expected annual ending level of performance* (to _____) and can be stated as:
1. reading a first grade passage
2. naming numbers to 100
3. walking without aid of crutches
4. speaking in complete simple sentences
5. being able to grip 5 small objects

5. The resources needed to accomplish the expected level of performance can be stated as:
B. speech therapy
C. one-to-one instruction
D. computer assisted instruction
E. small group instruction
F. consultation to regular education teacher
G. parent training
H. assistive device

The five components are reflected in the following examples of annual goals:

direction	deficit/excess
Susan will increase/	reading readiness/

from present level	to ending level
from pre-primer	to primer level

Resource
using individual and small group instruction

direction	deficit/excess
Susan will increase/	math computation skills/

from present level	to ending level
from recognition of numbers one through 9/	to write/say correct answer to single digit subtraction problems

Resource
using cooperative group instruction

direction	deficit/excess
Susan will increase/	toileting independence/

From present level	to ending level
from no toileting skills/	to ability to toilet independently

Resource
using the Arzin and Fox toileting training program

direction	deficit/excess
Susan will decrease/	self stimulation behavior/

From present level	to ending level
50% of school time spent in self-stimulation	25% of time spent in self-stimulation

Resource
of using positive reinforcement of interfering behaviors

direction	behavior
Susan will increase/	rope jumping skills/

from present level	to ending level
from inability to jump rope/	to completing a sequence of 10 rope jumps

direction
Joe will decrease/

behavior
shouting out/

from present level
from 5 or more times a class period/

to ending level
to 0 times a class period

SHORT-TERM INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES TUTORIAL

Short-term instructional objectives, including attainment criteria for each objective, provide a basis for determining the student's progress. The outcome must be student-based, which means the learning is measured by observable behavioral changes of educational skills over a period of time.

Objectives are degrees of educational skills that must be learned in order to attain the goal. There are usually four components to an objective:

- performance of a specific behavior;
- conditions or circumstances under which the behavior is performed;
- criteria for attainment or level of performance;
- evaluation procedures.

The first component is the specific behavior (what the child is to do):
- unties and ties shoes
- says numbers to 20
- identifies vowel sounds
- orders letters of the alphabet
- washes dishes
- walks 20 feet
- charts own progress
- completes a job application
- accepts not doing perfectly

The second component is the condition or the circumstance surrounding the performance:
- given 50 addition facts
- without the aid of cane or crutches
- using a standard typewriter
- given 10 color cards
- given standard household cleaning tools

The third component is criteria for attainment or the standard for performance:
- at 90% accuracy
- 0 times a day
- 2 times a class period
- 8/10 responses
- with no pauses or redundancies
- for at least 5 minutes

The fourth component is the evaluation procedure:
- as measured on end of unit tests/quizzes
- as charted by teacher
- as recorded by teacher
- as charted by student support assistant (paraprofessional)
- as measured by permanent products
- as measured by checklist

Four elements or components must be included in short-term instructional objectives. The following examples reflect these four components:

<u>conditions</u>
Given a list of ten words and a list of meanings selected from science units/

<u>specific behavior</u>
James will match the word to its meaning/

<u>criteria</u>
with 90% accuracy/

<u>evaluation procedure</u>
as measured on end of unit tests.

<u>conditions</u>
Given 5 word problems during each daily math class/

<u>specific behavior</u>
Susan will select one correct answer of four options/

<u>criteria</u>
with 80% accuracy/

<u>evaluation procedure</u>
as charted by the teacher.

<u>conditions</u>
Given a written language passage at the 4.0 grade level/

<u>specific behavior</u>
James will write the correct answer to 10 literal questions/

<u>criteria</u>
with 80% accuracy/

<u>evaluation procedure</u>
as recorded by the teacher.

THE STRANGER TEST & THE DEAD MAN'S TEST

THE STRANGER TEST

The Stranger Test refers to goals and objectives for students that are described in a fashion that a person unfamiliar with the student could read the description and understand it. Because various persons involved in the implementation of a student's educational plan may interpret a construct such as "hostility" differently, it is necessary to describe student behavior in terms that would pass the Stranger Test. For example, if a student's goal was to decrease "hostility," a stranger might interpret it as hits, kicks, bites others while the student's team may have meant verbal threats or profanity directed toward peers. On the other hand, the stranger might interpret "hostility" as any instance of hitting, whether or not it was provoked, while the teacher might have meant only unprovoked hits. If the teacher had defined "hostility" for the stranger as "each instance of an unprovoked hit," where "unprovoked" means that it was not in retaliation for a physical or verbal attack from a peer, both the stranger and the teacher would be likely to obtain the same results, since they would both be looking for the same thing.

THE DEAD MAN'S TEST

The question posed by the dead man's test is this: Can a dead man do it? If the answer is yes, it doesn't pass the dead man's test and it isn't a fair pair; if the answer is no, you have a fair pair. For example, suppose that you wanted a fair pair target behavior for "swears at peers." Let's say that you came up with the target behavior "does not swear at peers." Does this pass the dead man's test? No. A dead man could refrain from swearing at peers. What would be better? How about "speaks to peers without swearing"? This passes the dead man's test because a dead man does not have the power to speak.