

MY TURN?

TOPIC AREA: Communication, Goal Setting, Problem Solving, Working Together

CONCEPT: When you get right down to it, goal setting is really a problem solving activity. You want to get something that you don't have. This could be something material such as a car or it may be more behavioral such as losing weight. The "what" will vary from person to person and for that matter even from year to year as we age and our lives keep changing. However, your goals may change but the process for reaching them remain the same. You need to have a plan. You can't expect to move towards your goal unless you create a list of steps that will allow you to move in the appropriate direction. This aspect of goal setting involves problem solving. It is the creation of a workable plan that stops many of our young people from reaching their goals. Instead of coming to fruition their goals simply remain dreams or wishes. By creating a plan and then communicating the plan to others, your students will have a much more realistic chance of achieving their goals.

METHOD: Classroom activity

TIME ESTIMATE: 10 minutes plus discussion time

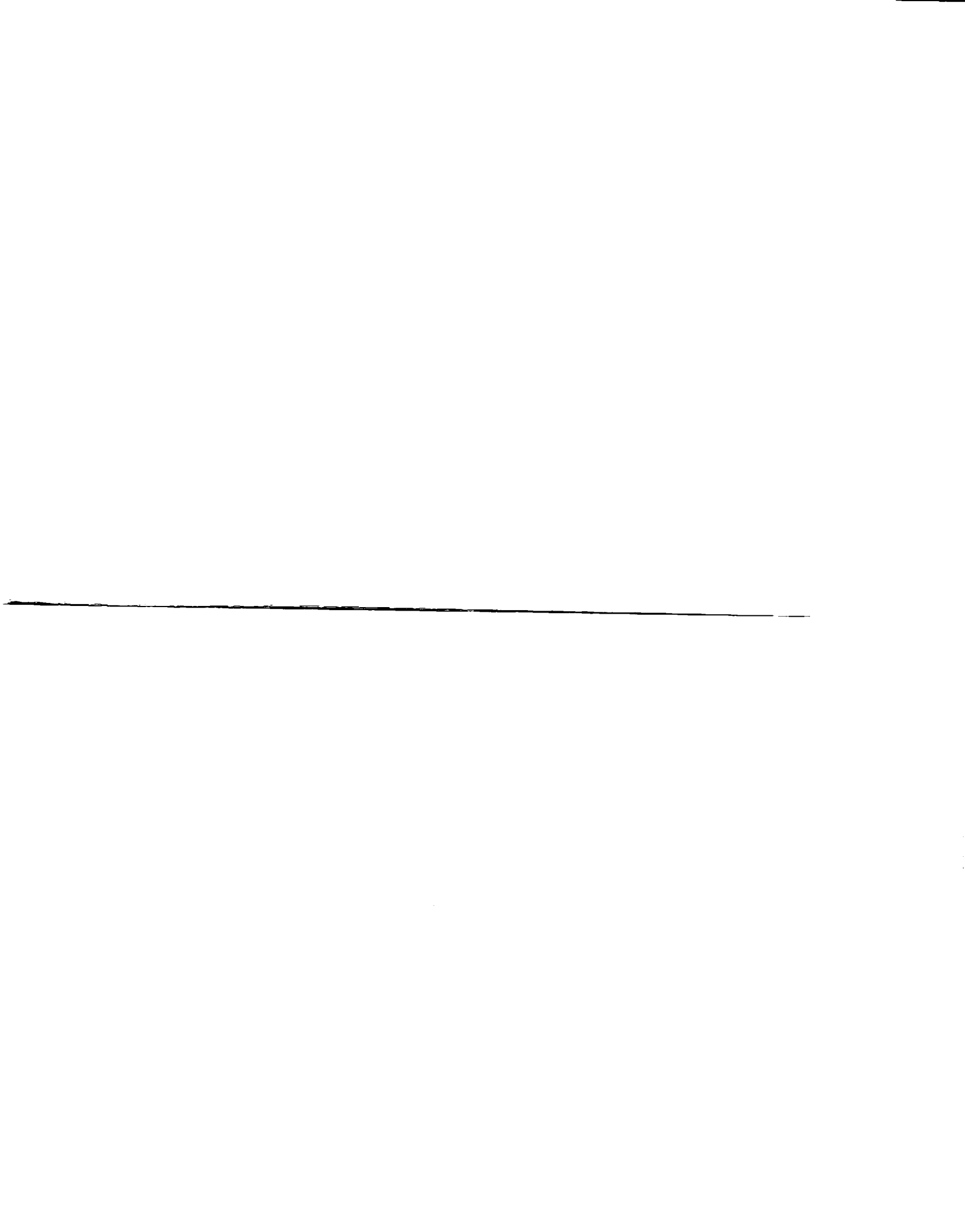
MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Each participant must be sitting in a chair or at a desk
- A watch with a second hand

ACTIVITY: Divide into groups of ten to fifteen. Form a circle with each member of the group sitting in a chair. Have everyone close their eyes and keep them closed while you explain the activity. Tell them that their challenge is to count to the number (15 or 20). They will do this as a group. Each person will stand up (rising at least six inches off their chair) and call out a number. The numbers must be called out in consecutive order. The group may not pre-arrange who is going to say which numbers. There is no talking other than the calling out of numbers allowed. The choice of who is going to call out the next number must be completely at random. If you see anyone pointing or talking, then call them on it and have the group start again. Caution them that they may not go around the circle in order. Each time any two people begin to stand at the same time or say a number at the same time, the entire group must begin all over again. They can't repeat the same order of people when starting over. Every person in the group must say at least one number.

If you have only one group, then you be the judge. If you have two or more groups, you will need to rotate the position of judge among the participants. Be very strict about the rules. They will probably have to start over again a number of times before they finally meet the challenge. After about ten tries, tell them that they have only two more chances to complete the challenge. If by some miracle they complete this challenge on the first try, tell them that you want them to do it again without using the same order, but try to get it done in a shorter period of time.

Now explain that in the second round you are going to let them discuss strategies before they try it again.



They still can't go around the circle go in order. Give them about ninety seconds to discuss strategy. After they have decided upon a strategy, time how long it takes them to complete the challenge. If they want to try two different strategies to see which one is faster, let them.

Now in round three they are going to use the simplest strategy. They will just go around the circle and have each person count off. They still must rise slightly from their chair when they say their number. Time them a couple of times to see if they can break their own record.

DISCUSSION IDEAS:

"What" Questions

- How many tries did it take us to get it right in the first round?
- Did the same people always try to go early in the challenge?
- What was your strategy as to when you would stand up during the first round of the challenge?
- What was our final record time?
- What could we do different to make our time even faster?

"So What" Questions

- What made round one so difficult?
- What made round two easier?
- Why was round three the fastest round?
- What can we learn about communication from this activity?
- What can we learn about the importance of having a plan from this activity?

- Which type of plan usually works better a complicated one or an easy to understand one? Why?
- How does working together help when trying to solve a problem?
- Why do you need a plan to reach your goals?

"Now What" Questions

- How can working together help us solve a problem?
- How does having a plan help you reach your goals?
- How can you use communication to help reach your goals?

