

Goals and Practice Interview

Achieving Goals through Deliberate Practice

Why Interviews?

Because we are true partners in education and understand that students learn a lot at home and in school, this year our learners will be interviewing family members, community members, and/or representatives of organizations students feel connected to. People in these positions hold a wealth of information and insight that often goes untapped. Engaging in interviews like the ones linked throughout “Amplify Learner Voice through Culturally Responsive Assessment” enables learners, their teachers, and the school community to gather important information about students and their community. This information enriches conversations about learning and learners and enables educators to identify and build upon students’ strengths and respond to their needs and opportunities efficiently and with compassion.

Learners may be invited to interview key people around the following topics:

- Goal-setting
- Practicing toward a goal
- Reflection
- Using questions to continue learning
- Learning from mistakes
- What it means to be a good learner at home, school/work, or in your community

What is deliberate practice?

Deliberate practice is a big part of how you and others learn difficult things, but you have probably never heard of it. A person named Anders Ericsson developed the concept of deliberate practice while studying how people develop expertise. He proved that people become experts through deliberate effort and not through innate talent (Ericsson, 2008). That means that the people you see succeeding in school, music, sports, business, or any other area probably worked hard to get where they are. Anyone who accomplishes a challenging goal must think about their goal, practice and reflect on what they are doing well and what needs more work, and then practice some more until they are successful. Thanks to Ericsson, we now call practicing with your goal in mind deliberate practice.

You have benefitted from deliberate practice in your own life but might not realize it until you take the time to reflect. The interview below is meant to help you reflect on the importance of setting goals and practicing to achieve them so you use deliberate practice in your own life.

Interview Directions

- Design questions to better understand how someone has used goal-setting and practice to accomplish something challenging.
 - Use the example questions below as a guide, but feel free to adapt or even replace them.
- Use the questions to gather evidence from either:
 - Option 1: Have students interview a caregiver, family member, or mentor.
 - Option 2: Use the questions to interview students.
- Ask the questions and be prepared to take notes or ask permission to record the interview.
- When interviewing, use the following prompts when appropriate:
 - Tell me more....
 - Can you explain that another way?
 - Why do you feel that way?
 - It sounds like you were feeling...
 - Let me summarize what you said.
 - Did I understand correctly?
 - Did I leave anything out?

Option 1: Interview someone you admire, look up to, or have a quality connection with. Use or adapt the example interview questions below or write your own. The purpose of the interview is to find out how the person you are interviewing has experienced and benefitted from setting goals and practicing to accomplish them in their own life. Take quality notes so you can discuss your interview(s) in class.

Option 2: Interview students 1-1 or in small groups. You can use the questions below to guide your interview or create your own dispositional questions. The purpose of the interview is to find out when your students demonstrated the disposition in their own lives. Then, as a teacher, you will be able to help students make connections between setting goals and deliberate practice at home, in their community, and at school.

Use these prompts and questions to guide your interview:

- Share about a time in which you set a goal and practiced really hard to achieve it.
- What inspired you to set this goal and then work to accomplish it?
- Who supported you in reaching your goal?
- What does practicing towards a goal mean to you? Describe it.
- How did you practice? Describe what you did and how it felt.
- Was there anything or anyone that got in the way of achieving your goal?

Feel free to adapt the protocol to meet your needs.