



Brain Talk Goal Bank



Brain Talk

Brain Talk is a metacognitive curriculum designed to teach the concepts needed to think about self-regulation and goal-directed action. The following goal bank is intended to be a menu of possible goals. Therapists and instructors should choose goals that are most relevant to their student's developmental capacities and learning program. Additionally, educators and therapists may wish to adjust the language of specific goals and/or insert prompting levels to most accurately reflect their student's needs.

Alternately, student mastery of curricular concepts can be assessed using the Brain Talk Vocabulary and the following rubric:

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|--|--|--|---|--|
| 1. Does not demonstrate comprehension of the concept as a metacognitive tool | 2. Demonstrates emerging comprehension of the concept, but does not demonstrate effective use of the concept as a metacognitive tool | 3. Demonstrates comprehension of the concept, and emerging use of the concept as a metacognitive tool when provided with outside support | 4. Demonstrates comprehension of the concept, and effective use of the concept as a metacognitive tool when provided with outside support | 5. Demonstrates comprehension of the concept, and independent and effective use of the concept as a metacognitive tool |
|--|--|--|---|--|

(Brain Talk Vocabulary materials are found in the Curriculum Support Materials unit).

Note about **Benchmark Goals**: When Benchmark Goals are provided, they are not provided in a strict developmental hierarchy. While many students may find it easier to identify and analyze emotions, thoughts, experiences, behaviors, etc. in characters and peers than in themselves, other students may find self-analysis easier. Therapists should determine which benchmarks are most appropriate for their client's unique profile based upon his/her perspective taking capacities, verbal communication skills, and cognitive abilities.



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Unit 1 Goals

1. When provided with a direct/indirect/non-verbal prompt STUDENT will demonstrate improved self-awareness by accurately identifying his/her thought(s), emotion(s), and action(s) in a given situation in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.

BENCHMARKS:

- STUDENT will accurately identify the thought(s), emotion(s), and action(s) of a character in a book or video during a target situation in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will accurately identify the thought(s), emotion(s), and action(s) of a peer during a target situation in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will accurately identify his/her thought(s), emotion(s), and action(s) during a target situation in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.

2. When provided with a target emotion (e.g., happy, mad, sad, scared, excited), STUDENT will identify at least three situations in which they would feel a gentle version of that emotion and at least three situations in which they would feel a strong version of that emotion for a minimum of five provided emotions.

3. When provided with a target emotion (e.g., mad), STUDENT will exhibit an expanded emotional vocabulary by identifying and/or expressing at least one word signifying a gentle version of the target emotion (e.g., miffed) and at least one word signifying a strong version of the target emotion (e.g., furious) for a minimum of five provided emotions.



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Unit 2 Goals

1. When provided with a direct/indirect/non-verbal prompt STUDENT will demonstrate improved metacognitive awareness by identifying people, places, experiences, and things that he/she *seeks* and what he/she does in response to the *seek impulse* in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.

BENCHMARKS:

- STUDENT will identify people, places, experiences, and things that a character from a book or video *seeks* and what he/she does in response to the *seek impulse* in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify people, places, experiences, and things that a friend/peer/family member *seeks* and what he/she does in response to the *seek impulse* in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify people, places, experiences, and things that he/she *seeks* and what he/she does in response to the *seek impulse* in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.

2. When provided with a direct/indirect/non-verbal prompt STUDENT will demonstrate improved metacognitive awareness by identifying people, places, experiences, and things that he/she *avoids* and what he/she does in response to the *avoid impulse* in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.

BENCHMARKS:

- STUDENT will identify people, places, experiences, and things that a character from a book or video *avoids* and what he/she does in response to the *avoid impulse* in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify people, places, experiences, and things that a friend/peer/family member *avoids* and what he/she does in response to the *avoid impulse* in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify people, places, experiences, and things that he/she *avoids* and what he/she does in response to the *avoid impulse* in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.



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Unit 3 Goals

1. When provided with a direct/indirect/non-verbal prompt STUDENT will demonstrate improved awareness of triggers for dysregulation by identifying people, places, experiences, and/or things that trigger a *Myg Moment* (i.e., avoid impulse) in him/herself in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.

BENCHMARKS:

- STUDENT will identify *Myg Moment triggers* for a character from a book or video in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify *Myg Moment triggers* for a peer/friend/family member in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify *Myg Moment triggers* for him/herself in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.

2. When provided with a direct/indirect/non-verbal prompt STUDENT will demonstrate improved awareness of how he/she responds to dysregulation triggers by identifying and describing his/her fight, flight, and/or freeze reaction behaviors in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.

BENCHMARKS:

- STUDENT will identify and describe the fight, flight, and/or freeze reaction(s) of a character from a book or video in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify and describe the fight, flight, and/or freeze reaction(s) of a peer/friend/family member in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify and describe his/her own fight, flight, and/or freeze reaction(s) in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.



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Unit 4 Goals

1. When provided with a direct/indirect/non-verbal prompt STUDENT will demonstrate improved awareness of triggers for dysregulation by identifying people, places, experiences, and/or things that trigger a *Buster Bam* (i.e., seek impulse) in him/herself in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.

BENCHMARKS:

- STUDENT will identify *Buster Bam triggers* for a character from a book or video in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify *Buster Bam triggers* for a peer/friend/family member in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify *Buster Bam triggers* for him/herself in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.

2. When provided with a direct/indirect/non-verbal prompt STUDENT will demonstrate improved awareness of how he/she responds to dysregulation triggers by identifying and describing his/her *grab & gulp* reaction behaviors in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.

BENCHMARKS:

- STUDENT will identify and describe the *grab & gulp* reaction(s) of a character from a book or video in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify and describe the *grab & gulp* reaction(s) of a peer/friend/family member in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
- STUDENT will identify and describe his/her own *grab & gulp* reaction(s) in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.



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Unit 5 Goals

1. STUDENT will demonstrate improved self-awareness by independently identifying ten or more skills or activities that his/her brain manages automatically (i.e., on autopilot) and ten or more skills or activities that involve active cortical (i.e., *thinking brain*) engagement.
2. STUDENT will demonstrate improved metacognitive awareness for emotional-regulation by describing at least five situations that typically cause over-activation of his/her limbic system (i.e., non-life threatening *Myg Moments* or non-essential *Buster Bams*) and how he/she typically acts in each of three consecutive sessions.
3. STUDENT will demonstrate improved ability to regulate his/her limbic impulses by identifying at least three personal examples of taming tools for each of the *taming tool* categories (i.e., mindfulness, physical exercise, positive social interactions, and practicing gratitude) and describing how/when these taming tools can support regulation.

BENCHMARKS:

- STUDENT will identify at least three personal examples of mindfulness and describe how/when these tools can support self-regulation.
- STUDENT will identify at least three personal examples of physical exercise and describe how/when these tools can support self-regulation.
- STUDENT will identify at least three personal examples of positive social interactions and describe how/when these tools can support self-regulation.
- STUDENT will identify at least three personal examples of gratitude practice and describe how/when these tools can support self-regulation.



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Unit 6 Goals

1. STUDENT will demonstrate improved emotional self-awareness by accurately identifying the feeling(s) generated during a target situation and how strong or gentle the feeling(s) were at the time of the experience in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
2. STUDENT will demonstrate improved ability to neutrally recall and describe past experiences by accurately describing the *P.A.S.T. facts* (i.e., people, actions, space, and time) of a target situation in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
3. STUDENT will demonstrate improved awareness of emotional triggers by determining *P.A.S.T. patterns* from multiple personal experiences that resulted in a dysregulated state (i.e., consistencies in people, actions, space, and/or time) in order to identify common triggers for personal dysregulation in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
4. STUDENT will demonstrate improved social perspective taking skills by accurately describing a character's/peer's/other's *P.A.S.T. facts* (i.e., people, actions, space, and time) *and feelings* of a target situation in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
5. STUDENT will demonstrate improved interactive perspective taking skills by accurately describing his/her personal *P.A.S.T. facts* (i.e., people, actions, space, and time) *and feelings*, as well as the *P.A.S.T. facts and feelings* of a peer involved in a socially challenging situation in 80% of opportunities (eight out of ten).



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Unit 7 Goals

1. STUDENT will demonstrate improved foresight and planning by identifying an appropriate *ultimate reward* (i.e., goal) for a target situation in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
2. STUDENT will demonstrate improved impulse inhibition by identifying and ignoring an *immediate reward* (i.e., instantaneous benefit that may not align with one's goal) that presents itself in the process of XX accomplishing a target goal in 80% of opportunities (eight out of ten).
3. STUDENT will demonstrate improved cognitive flexibility by determining two or more possible outcomes for a target situation faced by himself/herself, a peer, or a character in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
4. STUDENT will demonstrate improved cognitive flexibility by determining two or more possible ways to accomplish a goal or solve a problem faced by himself/herself, a peer, or a character in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
5. STUDENT will demonstrate improved ability to infer present expectations (e.g., how to act, what to say, what to expect next, etc.) based upon past experiences by describing how a novel situation/experience/activity is similar to and different from past personal experience(s) in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
6. STUDENT will demonstrate improved foresight and planning by identifying at least one possible obstacle that may be faced in the process of accomplishing a target goal and how he/she plans to overcome it in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
7. STUDENT will demonstrate improved foresight and impulse inhibition by identifying/predicting at least one possible distractor (i.e., internal and/or external) that may be faced in the process of accomplishing a target goal and how he/she plans to overcome it in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.



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Unit 8 Goals

1. STUDENT will demonstrate improved situational awareness by independently identifying ten or more situations that require quick reactions and ten or more situations that require thoughtful responses.
2. STUDENT will demonstrate improved planning and abstract language skills by accurately using the following states of being verbs: *know*, *remember*, *want*, *plan* to verbalize his/her mental time travel thought process related to a target goal/situation in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
3. STUDENT will demonstrate improved cognitive flexibility and foresight by predicting two or more possible consequences for a particular choice or behavior in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
4. STUDENT will demonstrate improved foresight and prioritization by determining which decision, from a pool of two or more options, has the most positive consequence(s) and best aligns with his/her *ultimate reward* in 80% of opportunities (four out of five) in each of three consecutive sessions.
5. STUDENT will demonstrate improved reflective review capacities by identifying and describing at least ten instances in which he/she made a plan and followed through to reach an *ultimate reward*.