



1 In pairs, discuss the questions.

- 1 Compare the colourful and black and white photos. What goals did the people have? Have they achieved them or failed?
- 2 How important do you think it is to set yourself goals for the future?
- 3 What are some of your educational and personal goals for this year?

2 Do you have plans to achieve the goals you mentioned in Exercise 1? What are you going to do and when?

3 Read the forum entries about failed goals. Match statements 1–4 with entries a–c. There is one extra statement.

The speaker ...

- 1 ☒ failed to achieve a goal because of a lack of preparation.
 - 2 ☐ wasn't sure which goal he/she wanted to achieve.
 - 3 ☐ did not do enough research to achieve a goal.
 - 4 ☐ chose a goal that was impossible to reach.
- 4 Work in pairs. Why did the people fail to achieve their goals? What didn't they do? What advice would you give them?**
- 5 Listen to an expert talking about setting goals. What is she talking about? Choose the correct answer.**
- a Where to get advice on what our goals should be.
 - b How important it is to have big ambitions.
 - ☒ c How to make our goals easier to achieve.
 - d What to do if we fail to achieve a goal.



Nick04

A I'm finishing my first year of English at uni soon and it definitely hasn't turned out as I'd hoped. When I was at school, I joined a student drama club. It was my passion to act and I dreamt of a career on the stage. But everyone told me it was too challenging and I should choose a more traditional job. So I thought I could study something to do with languages because I was pretty good at English and I thought maybe I could be a teacher. Both of my parents are teachers and they seem to enjoy their jobs. My favourite subject at school was History though, but I just didn't think there'd be many jobs available. So I went for English in the end. Most universities have English courses and I didn't think too much about what was on the course as long as I got a degree. But the course is boring, and I often skip classes. I may not come back next year ...



Charli3

B When my friend suggested we take part in the City half-marathon which takes place once a year, I thought it was a great idea. I have to admit I'm not that fit really – I don't do a lot of sport. But you see marathons on television with thousands taking part so I thought I could manage it. After all, I wasn't out there to break any records! Of course, I had these great plans to train regularly and I went running after school with my friend for a couple of evenings – but then school work got in the way so I didn't really do much. The result is that I did the half-marathon last Saturday – but my legs went to jelly after a couple of kilometres and I had to stop. It was a bit embarrassing – but I guess I'm just not built for running long distances. I shall stick to exercises at home in the future!



Buster56

C Just got back from my trip to Spain, France and Italy and I have to say it wasn't a success. I went with my Spanish friend and the idea was to travel by train and buses along the coast, stopping off at interesting places on the way. Sounds a cool idea, doesn't it? Well, we thought so. I cut down my spending a bit in the month before we left so I'd have enough money and we checked out the route which looked definitely doable. The problem was that the fares and accommodation were more than we had thought and I ran out of money pretty early on. It's a pity we didn't check how much these things cost and didn't plan a budget or how much time we needed to save enough money. We didn't enjoy ourselves nearly as much as we'd hoped to. I stayed in Barcelona at my friend's house for a week, but we were both disappointed.

- 6 Listen again. Complete the gaps with the words from the box. There are two extra words.

(deadlines easy how important possible ~~what~~ when)

LIFE SKILLS How to set SMART goals

S (SPECIFIC) Define exactly ¹ what you want to achieve.

M (MEASURABLE) Think about how and ² when you'll know that you've achieved your goal.

A (ACHIEVABLE) Set goals that are ³ possible to achieve.

R (RELEVANT) Choose a goal which matters and is ⁴ important to you.

T (TIME-BOUND) Set yourself ⁵ deadlines for achieving the goal.

- 7 Would you now give the same advice to the authors of the forum entries? Say why.

- 8 Match statements a–e with questions 1–5 from the SMART diagram.

- a I want to reach my goal by the end of the term when we have a big test.
- b I will do the following to help me achieve the goal:
 - record new words after each lesson in a notebook,
 - draw mind maps and pictures,
 - ask my friends to help me revise vocabulary before tests,
 - write an article in English for the school's website.
- c I will keep track of the marks I get in English tests to check if I get higher scores. I'd like to improve my average score by 10%.
- d I want to improve and expand my English vocabulary. I usually get lower marks in my English tests because I find it difficult to learn new words.
- e I want to pass my exams in English well. I also need English to chat with my friends online.

Make a SMART goal

Your goal: improve my English, learn new vocabulary

- S** **Specific** What do you exactly want to achieve? ¹ d
- M** **Measurable** How will you know when your goal is met? ² c
- A** **Achievable** What steps can you take to achieve your goal? ³ b
- R** **Relevant** Why is your goal important to you? ⁴ e
- T** **Time-bound** How long will it take you to reach your goal? ⁵ a

LIFE SKILLS Project

- Think of a goal related to education or your personal life.
- Follow the tips from this lesson about SMART goals and answer the questions in the SMART chart in Exercise 8.
- Present your SMART goal to the class in the next lesson.
- Discuss each other's goals. Do you think they are easy to achieve? Can you think of other steps to reach them?

Life skills 2 teacher's notes

Extra activity in class

After Exercise 4, put students in pairs and ask them to tell their partner about a goal they failed to achieve. Why do they think they failed? What didn't they do? What advice would their partner give them?

Next class

Students can create a SMART chart like the one in Exercise 8 to use in their presentations.

Answer key

Exercise 4

Possible answers:

- A not clear about which goal he/she wanted to achieve; didn't choose a goal he/she really wanted to achieve
- B didn't train hard enough; took it too lightly
- C didn't plan well enough

Audioscript

H = Host S = Sally

- H:** Today Sally, a life coach, is with us to talk about setting goals. Hi, Sally. It seems that achieving the goals we set ourselves can often be a problem?
- S:** Hi! Yes, that's true – we all make plans and then for some reason fail to stick to them. How many times have you said things like, 'I've got to learn a new language' or 'I need to get fitter. That's my New Year's resolution!' Think carefully – did you actually achieve those goals or not?
- H:** To be honest? Not really. So, why might that be?
- S:** Well, there are several reasons. Perhaps our goal is too big and impossible to reach, or maybe it's just too vague. Sometimes we start working towards it and then give up, demotivated by a lack of progress. What is important is that we think carefully about how we can achieve our ambitions. There is, however, one clever way of creating personal, educational or career goals that leads to success. You simply need to make sure your goals are SMART – S-M-A-R-T.
- H:** SMART? I haven't heard that acronym before. What does it mean?
- S:** You're right, it's an acronym – that is, the letters stand for different things that we should consider when setting goals.
- H:** That sounds interesting. Let's start with the letter S. What does it stand for?
- S:** OK, so 'S' stands for 'specific'. A goal should be clear and you need to know exactly what you want to accomplish. Think about this example: I want to get fitter. OK, but how much fitter, what exactly do you want to do, etc.? So maybe your goal should be 'I want to run my first three kilometres without walking!' Or perhaps: 'I want to take part in a school cycling competition'? It's also a good idea to break your bigger goals down into smaller, doable steps.
- H:** Steps like planning to go running or cycling twice a week?
- S:** Yes, for example. Then we've got M – 'M' stands for 'measurable'. It's important to keep track of your progress. You need to think about how and when you'll know you've achieved your goal. In our case, it's clear. You can just use a fitness tracker to check if you can run the three-kilometre distance.
- H:** OK. What about A?
- S:** Well, 'A' stands for 'achievable'. Your goal must be something which is possible to reach – you need to make sure you have the time and skills to achieve a goal. Can you train twice a week or go to the gym regularly? If your goal is 'I want to win a school running competition,' and you've only just started running – then maybe it's a non-starter! As a rule, I think we should choose challenging but realistic goals. In other words, it's not a good idea to set goals which are too easy or too difficult, because this can be demotivating.
- H:** I think you're absolutely right!
- S:** Ok, so next, we have an 'R' for 'relevant', important that is. Think how achieving this goal will help you, is it worth the time and the effort? Is it something that matters to you, and not just something that is suggested by other people?
- H:** I guess it's not a good idea to work towards a goal that you don't care about, right?
- S:** Exactly. And finally, we have a T.
- H:** Right – 'T' must have something to do with time?
- S:** Correct! 'T' is for 'time-bound'. We need to give ourselves a time limit for achieving this goal. Can you set deadlines so you can check your progress? Will you achieve it in a month, a year, by the end of the school semester? So, let's see – what are the things you'd like to achieve this year, Bob?
- H:** Well, I guess ...