

INTRODUCTION  
For PARENTS

## The Joy of Goals and Order

This unit is a “full and firmly packed” three-and-a-half weeks. It is also an interesting unit because it is easy to see your success. Once children begin to notice how good it feels to keep things in order and to set and meet goals, they simply beam with the joy! As with so many of the units, the objective is also the motivation. In other words, when the kids begin to feel the very joy we are trying to teach them, that taste of joy motivates them to continue in the behavior that produced the joy!

### Concept

In some ways, this is the “foundation joy” because once children (or people of any age) learn the fulfilling principle of goal setting, they can have virtually anything else (including other joys) by working for them through the goal-setting method.

Many parents feel that the joy of goal striving is particularly fun to teach. It is remarkable how quickly three- and four-year-olds pick up the concept of setting goals and working to achieve them. And it is especially rewarding to see their joy when they have met a goal.

It is important to remember that we are doing more than teaching children to set and meet goals. We are teaching them the joy of setting and meeting goals. There is a real difference! Through reinforcing and magnifying the feeling of accomplishment in a child, we can help him make the connection between an accomplishment and the sense of fulfillment he feels from it. Feeling this joy will help a child to become more confident and more oriented to real achievement as his life progresses.

Children can feel each phase of the joy. The danger is that some parents, wanting high achievers, push their children to meet their (the parents’) goals and end up with rebellion and negative views on accomplishment; or in other cases with children who are high achievers for the wrong reasons. Instead, the goal here is to put children in situations where children feel for themselves the joy of setting and reaching simple goals which motivates them internally and maximizes their chances to be effective goal-setters for the rest of their lives.

The corresponding chapter in the book, *Teaching Your Children Joy*, elaborates further the importance of this joy and gives several illustrations as well as “in-the-home” techniques for parents. Read it in your Parent Group Meeting before you begin these lesson plans. Talk with your

children about an appropriate goal they would want to work on at Joy School for these Lessons.

Concerning the “other half” of this unit: It would be safe to say that all parents of three-and four-year-olds wish that their children were better at neatness and order and the inclination to put things away.

Tidiness is not only desirable from the parent’s standpoint, it is important and reassuring to the child. A child whose room, clothes, and toys are neat and in place gains a kind of security and calmness. We do realize that some children are more naturally “orderly” than others but this is a good exercise for everyone (dare we say, including parents?).

Particularly during the “order” part of this unit, remember that children’s behavior is strongly influenced by that of peers (for good or for bad). The rotating, home-to-home nature of Joy School allows us to use the “at home” child’s room as a good example and a peer influence for each of the other kids.

It is always good to bear in mind that all lesson plans are written with more detail than you may be able to use. If some of the suggested stories are not easily available to you, don’t hesitate to use substitutes from the “alternatives” section. And never hesitate to work your own good ideas in whenever and wherever they fit.

## Tips and Reminders

1. Read the corresponding chapter of the book, *Teaching Your Children Joy*, so you will be well acquainted with the concept you are teaching. The book is always readily available on line at [www.eyresfreebooks.com](http://www.eyresfreebooks.com)
2. It is important that the goals children set are simple and “doable” enough that each child is capable of reaching his or her goal, and it is equally important that the goals are things each child truly desires and wants to reach. Don’t force a goal on a child just because a teacher or parent thinks he should have it. If a child needs to improve in a certain way, you might suggest it to him and tell him how achieving that goal could make him happy, but don’t force him to make that improvement his “Joy School Goal.”
3. A couple of very general guidelines: Most children are not able to tie a shoe before age four, or to zip their coat before age three. Many cannot print their name legibly before age four

or five. Before a chosen goal is written in ink on the goal chart, you should be quite sure it is a reachable goal . . . and also that it isn't something the child already knows how to do and that will not be any challenge to him.

4. All three teachers for Lessons 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6 need to communicate with each other and be sure they use the same method for teaching how to tie a bow, how to make the letters, how to teach skipping, or whatever goals they are helping with.
5. All teachers need to agree on what constitutes the achievement of each goal. For instance: How many times should a child zip his coat before he has reached his goal? (Just once may even be by accident.) How many times to tie a shoe or to write a name, etc.? Make sure all teachers agree.
6. When a child reaches his goal, he should get to stick a gold star on his filled-in circle and everyone should clap for him. As the teacher, be excited and happy with him. Tell him you are proud of him. Then he should take his goal chart home to share.
7. **All families in your group should create a Gunny Bag this month.** Gunny Bag can be any sack, bag, or container that can be carried and filled with toys. **Gunny Bag should be a happy friend who helps us keep our houses in order.** Consider decorating your "Gunny Bag" with a friendly character face. If each of you will get a Gunny Bag and start using it right away (before Lesson 5.4) it will facilitate a better learning experience at Joy School (and it will keep your house clean!). ***Be sure to introduce Gunny Bag as a fun friend who will help keep your house in order and not someone to be feared. Be sure to create a face that is happy and not scary!***
6. If possible, all individual families should also hold weekly "Sunday Sessions" where family members set goals for the week ahead. See the index of *Teaching Your Children Joy* or *Teaching Your Children Responsibility* for details. This is the "family focal point" of this joy and will hopefully become a permanent pattern in your families as well as increasing the children's comprehension of this unit.
7. It would be good to get as many as you can of the books listed on the Book List and have them available during free play time for the children to look at.

## Lesson Overviews

The “Getting Reacquainted” lesson on the first day you resume Joy School after your holiday break will get things back on course and prepare the children for the unit on Order and Goal Striving. This is a worldwide program so if you have not had a break in your part of the world, you could consider saving this lesson for a time that better fits the need for a review. .

Preschool children have not only a great capacity for setting and achieving goals, they have a natural tenacity and get such a particular and singular thrill out of actually meeting their own goals.

Therefore, the **first three lesson plans** are devoted almost entirely to helping children grasp the concept of goals and feel the pride of working toward a personally set objective.

Then the **last three lesson plans** tie into the concept of goals, integrate it with ideas about decisions and priorities that come in next month’s lessons . . . and carry it forward to tie to order and neatness (subtly connecting a “thing-order” with “thought-order”).

REMEMBER that, perhaps more than in any other lesson unit, what you do with your children at home (Sunday sessions, family goals, etc.) will determine how successful you are in teaching the joy of goals (and in feeling that joy yourselves).

### **Lesson 5.01: Getting Reacquainted**

If you have had a break this is a day to help the children get back into good habits at Joy School, and it is a really fun lesson. There is a review of some of the favorite songs and favorite activities from Units 1-4. You may want to hold this lesson on a day where it will not interfere with the overall Joy School schedule. **SHARING TIME**

### **Lesson 5.1: What is a Goal**

The children will be introduced to the word and idea behind “Goals” (although most kids will at first think the word is “Gold”). They will learn about some examples of goals, so they can discuss with their family a potential goal for their Joy School Goal Chart.

### **Lesson 5.2: The Joy of Goal Striving**

The children should come ready with a goal that they have discussed with their parents as an appropriate and reachable goal. They will fill in their goal charts and also learn about the enjoyment of hard work towards a goal.

### **Lesson 5.3: Practice and Patience**

They will continue to work on goals, and learning that all goals take practice and patience. They will also learn about working together to accomplish big goals. They go on an imaginary “Bear Hunt”.

#### **Lesson 5.4: The Joy of Order**

This lesson introduces the benefits of keeping things and working on tasks in order. Gunny Bag is also introduced. Gunny Bag is another “favorite” of Joy School.

#### **Lesson 5.5: Everyday Order**

This lesson shows how even the day-to-day small things are made easier and more enjoyable when order is kept. Goals are worked on and Gunny Bag appears again.

#### **Lesson 5.6: The Joy of Achievement**

This lesson sums up the unit and also teaches about long term goals (occupational goals, family goals, etc.) and the importance of realizing that even though they may not be able to do something well now, the time will come when they will.

## By the End of This Unit...

By the end of Unit 5, most children will be able to discuss the concept of goals, even if they cannot succinctly define the word. They should be able to give examples of goals and show enthusiasm in setting goals for themselves. They should also be able to signify the difference between order and messiness, and also begin to recognize how some tasks and goals must be done in a certain order.

## Book List

5.2	<i>The Little Engine That Could</i>	Watty Piper	Classic book about the train engine who keeps with its goal of climbing the hill.
5.3	<i>Whistle for Willie</i>	Ezra Jack Keats	Little Peter learns to whistle for his dog.
5.3	<i>Last One In is a Rotten Egg</i>	Leonard Kessler	A little boy learns to swim so he can have fun with his friends.
5.4	<i>All By Myself</i>	Aliki	Look at all the fun things independent children can do by themselves!
5.4	<i>All By Myself</i>	Mercer Mayer	Little Critter enjoys the freedom that comes from learning to do things for himself.

5.6	<i>Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel</i>	Virginia Lee Burton	Mike and his shovel make a big goal.
	<i>The Carrot Seed</i>	Ruth Krauss	A little boy doesn't give up and finally grows a carrot.
	<i>Leo the Late Bloomer</i>		Leo's parents are worried because he is not learning and doing things as soon as others are. But everyone is different, and when he is ready, he catches up quickly.
	<i>How to Catch a Star</i>	Oliver Jeffers	Sometimes our "impossible" goals can be reached in unusual ways.
	<i>Salt in His Shoes</i>	Deloris and Roslyn Jordan	The well-illustrated story of basketball player Michael Jordan, and how an unusual trick helped him reach his goal, told by his mother and sister.
	<i>Matthew's Dream</i>	Leo Lionni	A mouse's visit to a museum helps him find a new way to reach his goals.
	<i>A Chair for My Mother</i>	Vera B. Williams	After their home is destroyed by a fire, Rosa and her family save their coins to buy a really comfortable chair for all to enjoy.
	<i>I'm Going To Be a Fire Fighter, I'm Going To Be a Policeman, or I'm Going to be a Vet</i>	Edith Kunhardt Davis	These stories follow different children as they learn from their fathers - a policeman, a fireman, and a vet - just what these careers involve.
	<i>Albie the Lifeguard</i>	Louise Kraus	Albie gains the courage to go the distance at the town pool one summer.
	<i>A Pocket for Cordoroy</i>	Don Freeman	A teddy bear longs to have a pocket and searches for the perfect one.