

TRANSFER GOALS



Definition

Transfer Goals highlight the effective uses of understanding, knowledge, and skill that we seek in the long run; i.e., what we want students to be able to do when they confront new challenges – both in and outside of school. There are a small number of overarching, long-term transfer goals in each subject area. For example, a long-term aim in mathematics is for students to be able to solve “real world” problems on their own. For example, a long-term transfer goal in history is for students to apply the lessons of history when considering contemporary issues.

In every case, the ability to transfer learning manifests itself in not just one setting but in varied situations. Transfer is about independent performance in context. You can only be said to have fully understood if you can apply your learning without someone telling you what to do and when to do it. In the real world, no teacher is there to direct and remind you about which lesson to plug in here or there. Transfer is about intelligently and effectively drawing from your repertoire, independently, to handle new contexts on your own. In the real world, no teacher is there to direct and remind you about which lesson to plug in here or there: transfer is about intelligently and effectively drawing from your repertoire, independently, to handle particular contexts on your own. The goal of transfer thus requires that an instructional plan (in Stage 3) help the student to become increasingly autonomous, and the assessments (in Stage 2) need to determine the degree of student autonomy.

Transfer goals have several distinguishing characteristics:

- They are long-term in nature; i.e., they develop and deepen over time.
- They are performance based; i.e., require application (not simply recall).
- The application occurs in new situations, not ones previously taught or encountered; i.e., the task cannot be accomplished as a result of rote learning.
- The transfer requires a thoughtful assessment of which prior learning applies here; i.e., some strategic thinking is required (not simply “plugging in” skill and facts).
- The learners must apply their learning autonomously on their own, without coaching or excessive hand-holding by a teacher).
- Transfer calls for the use of habits of mind; i.e., good judgment, self regulation, persistence along with academic understanding, knowledge and skill.

Long Term Transfer Goals

Students will be able to independently use their learning to:

Examples within Subject Areas

Economics

- make economically sound and ethical financial decisions.

History

- Use knowledge of patterns of history to better understand the present and prepare for the future.
- Critically appraise historical claims and analyze contemporary issues.
- Participate as an active and civil citizen in a democratic society.

Health and Physical Education

- Make healthful choices and decisions regarding diet, exercise, stress management, alcohol/drug use throughout one's life.
- Play a chosen game skillfully and with good sportsmanship.

Mathematics

- Make sense of never-before-seen, “messy” problems and persevere in solving them.
- Construct viable arguments involving mathematics and statistics and critique the reasoning of others.

Performing & Fine Arts

- Find at least one arts discipline in which they develop sufficient competence to continue active involvement in creating, performing, and responding to art as an adult.
- Respond by analyzing and interpreting the artistic communications of others.

Reading

- Read and respond to text in various genres (literature, non-fiction, technical) for various purposes (entertainment, to be informed, to perform a task).
- Comprehend text by inferring and tracing the main idea, interpreting (“between the lines”), critically appraising, and making personal connections.
- Enjoy reading as a chosen leisure time pursuit.

Science

- Evaluate scientific claims and analyze current issues involving science or technology.
- Conduct a sound investigation to answer an empirical question.

Long Term Transfer Goals

Students will be able to independently use their learning to:

World Language

- Effectively communicate with varied audiences and for varied purposes while displaying appropriate cultural understanding.

Writing

- Write in various genres for various audiences in order to explain (expository), entertain (narrative/poem), argue (persuasive), guide (technical), and challenge (satirical).
- Carefully draft, write, edit, and polish one's own and others' writing to make it publishable.

Examples beyond Subject Areas

Critical Thinking

- Think critically about information and claims encountered at school and beyond by seeking clarity, accuracy, sound evidence, good reasons, and fairness.

Communication

- Effectively communicate for different purposes and varied audiences using appropriate media.

Collaboration

- Work effectively with, and learn from, others in a variety of situations, in school and beyond.

Research

- Locate pertinent information from varied sources (print, on-line; primary, secondary).
- Critically evaluate sources and information (e.g., for accuracy, completeness, timeliness, lack of bias, properly referenced).

Special Education

Students will be able to independently use their learning to:

- Function in the community while respecting social/cultural norms.
- Advocate for their personal needs – academic, behavioral, emotional, and physical.

Taking Responsible Risks

- Try something new and different without a paralyzing fear of making mistakes.

Transfer Goals

examples from schools and districts

Science Transfer Goals

Students will be able to independently use their learning to:

- Apply knowledge of science and engineering to engage in public discussions on relevant issues in a changing world.
- Conduct investigations, individually and collaboratively, to answer questions.
- Evaluate scientific claims for validity.
- Think systemically.

Source: North Slope Borough School District, Barrow, Alaska (July 2012)

Visual Arts Transfer Goals

Students will be able to independently use their learning to:

- Create engaging and purposeful artistic expressions in forms that vary in terms of media and style.
- Communicate ideas, experiences, and stories through art.
- Respond to the artistic expression of others through global understanding, critical stance, personal connection, and interpretation.
- Respond to technical and conceptual challenges of his/her own.
- Develop an independent artistic vision.

Source: Sheridan School, Washington, DC (June 2011)

World Languages Transfer Goals

Students will be able to independently use their learning to:

- Communicate effectively in the target language(s) in realistic situations while displaying a sensitivity to culture and context.
- Emulate native speakers.
- Willingly taking risks with language, both within and outside of the classroom.

Source: The Dalton School, New York, NY (March 2012)

Special Education

Students will be able to independently use their learning to:

- Function in the community while respecting social/cultural norms.
- Advocate for their personal needs – academic, behavioral, emotional, and physical.
- Communicate effectively based on purpose, task, and audience using appropriate vocabulary.
- Explore and pursue viable options based on aspirations, interests, and experience.

Source: Prosper ISD, TX (April 2013)

Transfer Goals – Massachusetts

English/Language Arts Transfer Goals

Students will be able to independently use their learning to:

- Understand the power of words and images to transform lives and provide insight into the experiences of others and understanding of cultures and historical periods.
- Read and comprehend a range of increasingly complex texts and media written for various audiences and purposes.
- Generate open ended questions and seek answers through critical analysis of text, media, interviews, and/or observations.
- Communicate ideas effectively in writing to suit a particular audience and purpose.
- Communicate ideas effectively in discourse and oral presentations to suit various audiences and purposes.
- Expand their vocabulary and knowledge of English conventions in order to learn and convey precise understandings of concepts.
- Develop the habit of reading for enjoyment.

History/Social Science Transfer Goals

Students will be able to independently use their learning to:

- Understand how recurring patterns in history can inform judgments about current events and other issues.
- Analyze and resolve conflicts in order to work and live cooperatively with others.
- Understand how physical and human geography can inform responsible interactions with environment.
- Apply knowledge of political and social systems to participate actively as an informed citizen of a democracy.
- Critically appraise historical and contemporary claims/decisions.
- Apply concepts and systems of economics to participate productively in a global economy.

Mathematics Transfer Goals

Students will be able to independently use their learning to:

1. Interpret and persevere in solving complex mathematical problems using strategic thinking and expressing answers with a degree of precision appropriate for the problem context.
2. Express appropriate mathematical reasoning by constructing viable arguments, critiquing the reasoning of others, and attending to precision when making mathematical statements.
3. Apply mathematical knowledge to analyze and model mathematical relationships in the context of a situation in order to make decisions, draw conclusions, and solve problems.

Source: Massachusetts Department of Education, March 2012