

### What Is My Child Learning?

#### Unit Themes

Your child is learning how to set and work toward a goal. Fourth graders practice goal-setting and planning as a class. First, they select a goal that is specific, challenging, and doable. For example, they may set a goal to organize some part of the classroom and keep it tidy for two weeks. Next, fourth graders make a plan that includes actions they'll take, any materials they'll need, and what they'll do if they need help. Students learn how to adjust their plan as needed, and they reflect on their experience so they can do even better the next time they set a goal.

#### Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- **Have greater self-reliance**
- **Build stronger relationships**
- **Develop increased empathy**
- **Be better problem-solvers**



### Practice at Home

#### What to Look For

**Notice and praise your child when they set a short-term goal for themselves that's challenging but doable—it's not too easy or too hard for your child to accomplish within a few weeks, and they have the materials they need to do it. You can say, **Setting a goal is a great way to stay focused and achieve something that's important to you.****

#### Try This!

**Discuss:** Ask your child questions about their class goal, **What is your goal? How will your class know when they've reached it?** Help your child see that setting a goal can help them go beyond just thinking about something and motivate them to make a plan for it. You can offer examples of goals you've set, such as learning to make a new recipe or saving money for something special.

**Practice:** Help your child practice identifying and overcoming roadblocks—a thing that gets in the way of achieving something they want. For example, if your child's frustrated while playing a video game, help them think about the problem by asking questions such as, **What's your goal? What's the roadblock? What are the things you could change?**

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Your child is learning about the importance of managing strong emotions. Fourth graders will discuss the different ways strong emotions can influence their thoughts and actions. Toward the end of this unit, they practice rethinking situations so they can feel calm and think more clearly. Rethinking means to think about something in a different way and see new aspects of it.

#### Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- Develop stronger coping skills
- Be better problem-solvers
- Make more positive choices
- Build stronger relationships



### Practice at Home

#### What to Look For

**Notice and praise your child when** they're able to change how they feel about a challenging situation by thinking about it in a new way. You may hear them name something they learned from the experience or a way they changed their perspective. They may say, "I'm upset I didn't do well, but now I know what to practice." or "I thought about it more and I'm okay with it." You can say, **I hear you rethinking what happened. Good job seeing things in a different way.**

#### Try This!

**Discuss:** Take turns describing a time when rethinking helped you feel better about a situation. How were you feeling and what did you say to yourself to feel better about it? You can say something like, **I felt upset when my favorite mug broke, but I realized I have other mugs and maybe it's time for a new favorite.**

**Practice:** Notice when your child encounters a disappointing or challenging situation during their day. Ask them how they can rethink the situation to feel better. You can ask, **What happened? Has this ever happened to anyone else? or What's something good that happened?**



**What Is My Child Learning?**

**Unit Themes**

Your child is learning how to better understand a point of view different from their own. Point of view is how someone thinks or feels about something. In this unit, fourth graders practice asking questions to understand the reasons behind someone’s point of view. For example, if one person loves being around dogs and another doesn’t, they might ask each other, “What is your experience with dogs? Why do you feel that way?” When children try to understand other points of view, it helps them work, play, and get along with others.

**Why is it important?**

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- **Build stronger relationships**
- **Resolve conflicts more effectively**
- **Exhibit positive behaviors**
- **Develop increased empathy**



**Practice at Home**

**What to Look For**

**Notice and praise your child when you see them trying to learn more about a point of view that’s different from their own.** You may hear your child ask questions such as “Why do you think that?” or “What’s your experience?” to better understand someone’s way of thinking. You can say something like, **I heard you ask your sister why she doesn’t like watching scary movies the way you do. Good job trying to understand her point of view.**

**Try This!**

**Discuss:** Describe how your experiences have affected a point of view. For example, **I’m always amazed at people who are comfortable in loud, crowded places. But my experience is living in a small, quiet town. I’m not used to crowds.**

**Practice:** Help your child practice learning about another point of view. Take turns answering questions such as these. Give reasons for your thinking.

- If you could invite anyone in the world to have dinner with you, who would you invite?
- Would you rather go to space or to the bottom of the ocean?
- If you could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what rule would you make?

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### Unit Themes

Your child is learning to use a multistep process to solve common interpersonal problems—disagreements between two or more people, such as what to do at recess or how to work together in class. Fourth graders practice each part of the STEP process by thinking about the point of view of everyone involved. They learn it's important for each person to feel calm before trying to solve a problem. They also learn to speak up for what they want, listen to what the other person wants, and consider the pros and cons of different solutions to pick one that works for everyone.

### Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- Have better mental health
- Make more positive choices
- Be more connected and compassionate



## Practice at Home

### What to Look For

**Notice and praise your child when** they describe an interpersonal problem without blaming anyone. You may hear them say something like, “I really wanted Alana to do crafts with me. But she doesn’t like art projects as much as I do. I guess I can understand why she wanted us to watch a movie instead.” You can say, **That’s great that you can think about it from her point of view.**

### Try This!

**Discuss:** Ask, **How do you know if you’ve found a good solution to a problem with a friend?** Take turns responding. You may hear your child talk about solutions that take both people’s points of view into consideration and that are safe, respectful, and work for everyone.

**Practice:** Help your child practice thinking about pros and cons of different possible solutions to disagreements or problems. Ask, **If you choose that solution, what could go well for you? What could go wrong? How would it work out for your friend?**