



Include Student in the Learning Process

Recent research allows for examination of the brain as it learns, which has led to suggestions of best practices for increasing the interest and motivation of students at all ages and stages of their academic career.

Classroom Climate

The Motivated Brain provides insight into the learning-driven brain and outlines best practices for educators to increase interest and motivation. A few ideas are outlined below.

1. Provide opportunities for students to play and socialize (work together) within a safe and secure climate and environment
2. Discuss relevant real-world projects and problems that demand imagination, creativity, problem-solving, and communication skills
3. Integrate age-appropriate, current technology
4. Create classroom expectations with student input
5. Follow a visible agenda
6. Incorporate movement as much as possible
7. Use engaging “hooks” to capture student attention before beginning a new lesson



Interest Inventories

My birthday is on: _____

My favorite candy is: _____

My after-school commitments are: (ex. Drama, work, sports, activities, hobbies)

Fall: _____

Winter: _____

Spring: _____

Please answer each question with 2-3 sentences.

1. I learn best when I . . .

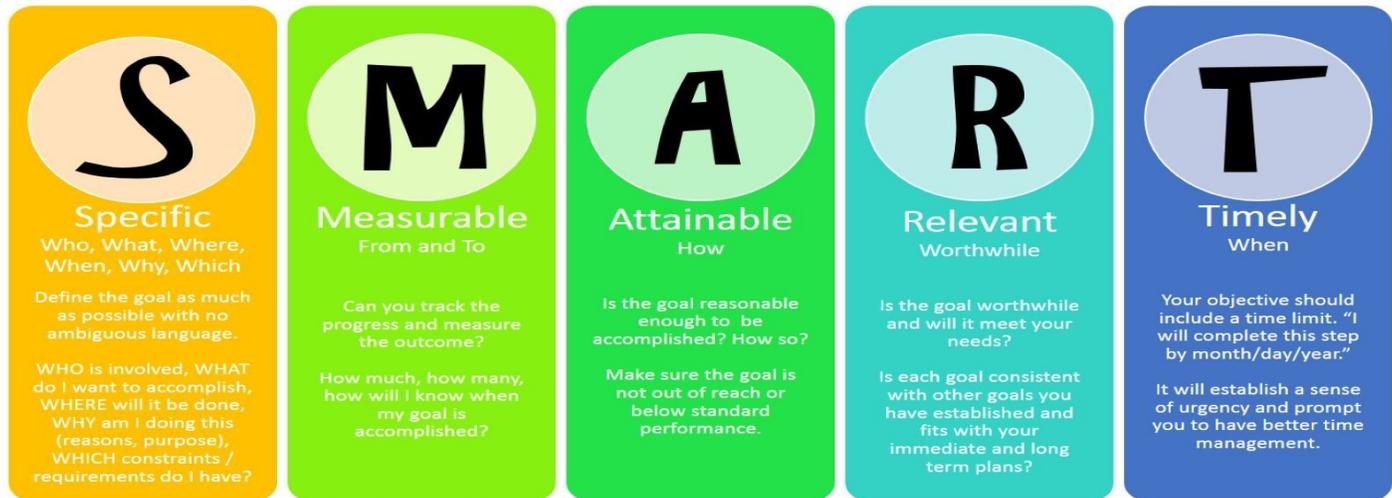
2. I don't find it as easy to learn when...

Even with an appropriately motivating classroom environment, educators should incorporate students' interests into instruction in order to increase participation. [Interest Inventories](#) are a straightforward way to garner information from students about their lives. While interest inventories can contain a variety of different question types, especially depending on the age group of the students, there are several key components that should always be incorporated:

- Birth Name / Preferred Name
- Strategies for perseverance
- Helpful qualities of previous teachers
- Learning style
- Interests / Aspirations



Goal Setting



Direct instruction in [brain plasticity](#), [growth mindset](#), and goal setting can help students to understand how their brains continue to develop and why creating reasonable goals is a helpful strategy for achieving learning aspirations. Students need to know that a growth mindset and the ability to persevere when faced with setbacks are skills that can be developed with practice. They need to create goals, monitor, and adjust those goals as necessary with guidance from educators. [SMART goals](#) provide students with a template to create specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely goals.

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HOW DOES THIS CONNECT TO INCLUDE STUDENT IN THE LEARNING PROCESS?

When educators include students' preferences, interests, and opinions in the classroom environment and class content, students are more likely to engage with the educator and the material. By incorporating these student-driven components, educators are including the student in the learning process, which is an important avenue for students to take more ownership in their academic success.