

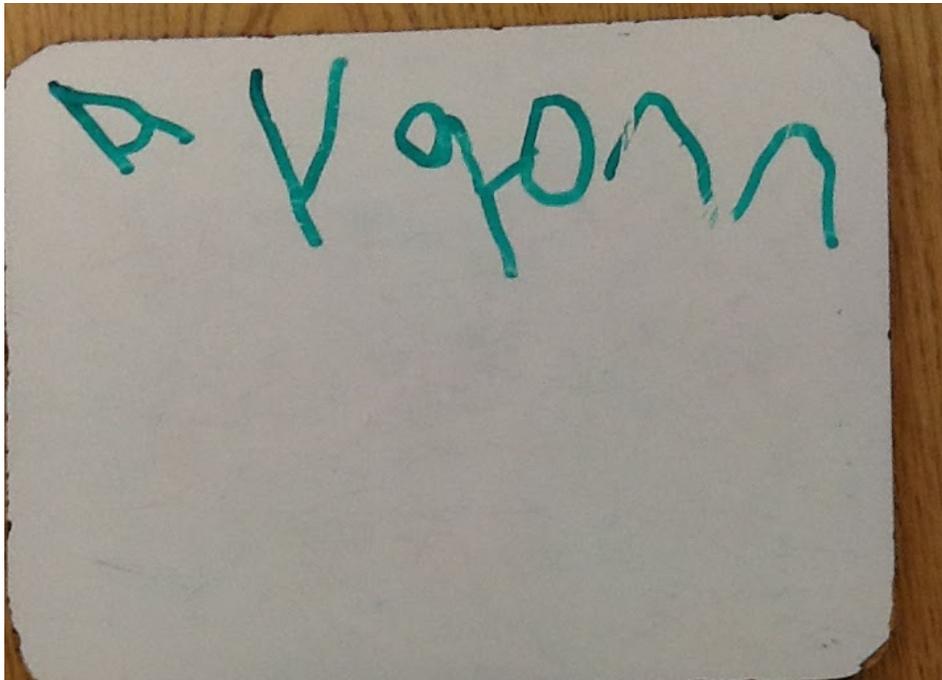
# It Looks Like This In Pictures: Goal Setting & Self Assessment With Young Learners

Setting goals for learning is the first step in metacognition -thinking about one's own thinking. Teachers set goals for their students, seek to help students build this critical skill themselves, and design instruction that scaffolds their ability to plan, execute and reflect on their work. They facilitate as students become adept at taking ownership of their learning by teaching the basics of setting goals and helping students repeat the process as goals are met. Finally, Teachers encourage students to recognize the value of their learning process and encourage them to take pride in and ownership of the work they do. These photos demonstrate one method for teaching early childhood students to choose, set, articulate and evaluate their own goals.

*According to of Component 3d of the the CPS Framework For Teaching (FFT), in a Distinguished teacher's classroom:  
Students can explain, and there is some evidence that they have contributed to, the criteria by which their work will be assessed...  
and  
Students self-assess and monitor their progress.*

So how can we help the youngest learners to set goals and reflect on their own learning? Follow these steps to get started!

1. Create a set of goals based on standards. In the beginning, choose goals that are easily understood and visual. I started with name writing because not only is it easily measured, it's a goal Pre K teachers commonly have for their students, but also one which children can become deeply invested in meeting. Because preschoolers are interested in the next grade, I also name "Kindergarten" as the pinnacle of goal mastery to get kids excited about meeting goals.

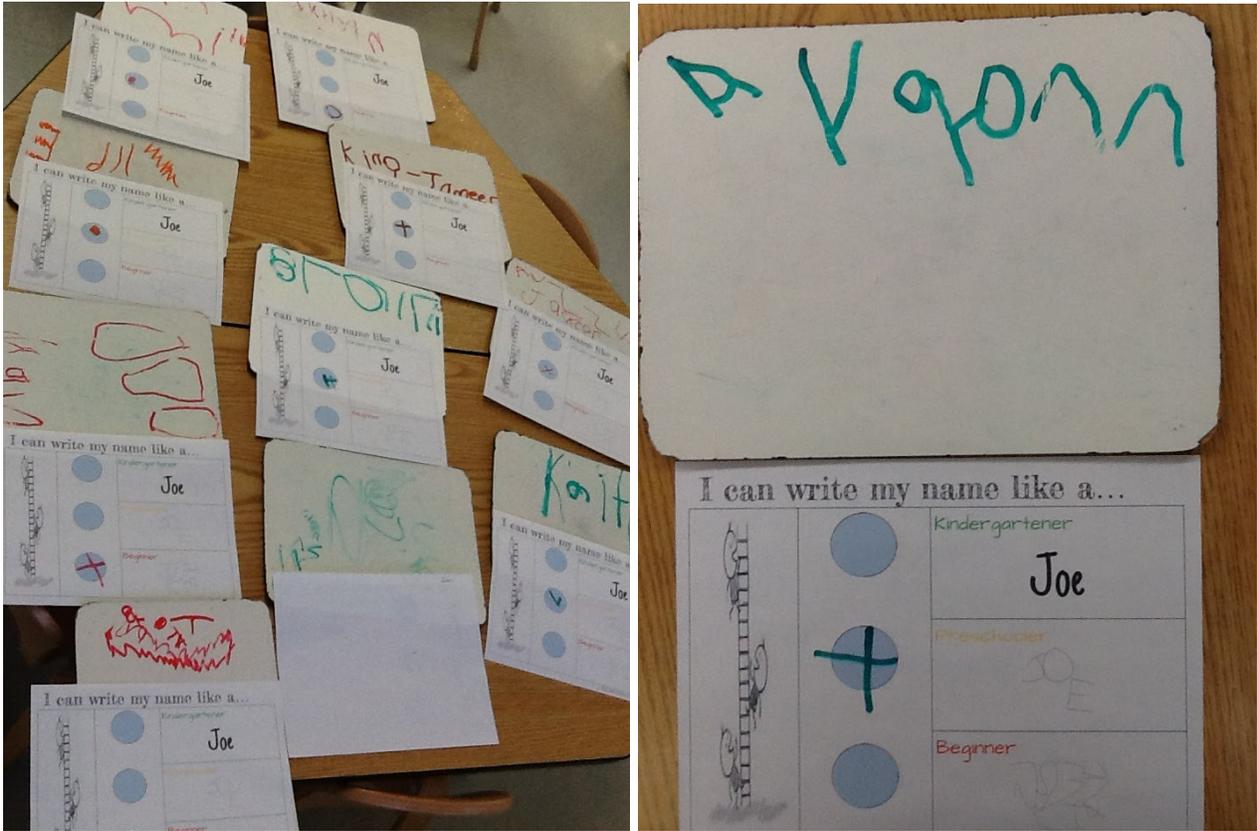


**Goal: Name writing**

**Levels: Beginner (lowest) Preschooler (middle) Kindergartener (highest)**



4. Offer opportunities for students to reflect on the goal regularly, and encourage them to consult the rubric when working on a related task. This will require a lot of coaching for the smallest students. Be prepared to explain the concept many times, and keep the rubric consistent or similar until they understand what self-assessment means.



### Students Self-assessment Of Their Name Writing

5. Teach students to make genuine comparisons to the samples or pictures on the rubrics and to be honest with themselves about their levels of mastery. Reinforce that it's okay to begin at the lowest levels and that hard work will help them move toward mastery.

Conference with them several times for each skill or standard to be sure they are thinking about their learning as they work, they understand the process of self-assessment and they are beginning to rate themselves with accuracy. For skills like name writing, conference the entire year.



Next steps? Choose a skill and dive in! Use the accompanying template as a starter, then tweak it to make it your own! As students get comfortable with the process, incorporate less tangible SEL goals like sharing and taking turns. When they get really good, encourage them to notice their strengths or needs then set their own!

### Self-Assessment Conference

