

Noah's Great Expedition: Charting a Course with Habits and Goals

A Charlotte Mason-inspired lesson on building character and achieving long-term goals through the power of good habits.

Materials Needed

- A "living book" featuring a character who shows perseverance and strong character (e.g., a biography of an explorer like Ernest Shackleton, a historical figure like George Washington, or a fictional story like *The Swiss Family Robinson*).
 - A special blank notebook or journal, to be called the "Book of Mottos & Goals."
 - Drawing and writing supplies (pencils, colored pencils, markers).
 - Optional: A small plant or seed to observe.
 - Outdoor space for a short nature walk.
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Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you (Noah) will be able to:

- Explain in your own words how small, daily habits help you reach big, long-term goals.
 - Choose one positive character or academic habit to focus on.
 - Create a personal motto that inspires you to practice your chosen habit.
 - Map out the small steps needed to work towards one personal goal.
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Lesson Plan

Part 1: Introduction - The Explorer's Secret (10 minutes)

Hook:

Let's start with a question. Think about a great explorer who crossed a huge ocean or climbed a giant mountain. Do you think they did it all in one day? Of course not! They did it one step, one paddle, or one mile at a time. Their success wasn't magic; it was the result of small, consistent actions every single day. These actions are called **habits**. Today, we are going to become explorers of our own future, and we'll discover how to use the secret power of habits to chart a course to any goal we want to achieve.

Stating Objectives:

"By the end of our expedition today, Noah, you will have your own personal motto to guide you, and you'll have drawn your very first map to help you on your journey toward a goal you choose. You'll understand that you are the captain of your own ship!"

Part 2: Body - Reading, Relating, and Responding (35 minutes)

I DO: The Story of a Habit (15 minutes)

First, I will read a short chapter or story from our living book. I'll pick a part where the main character faces a big challenge and has to use a good habit—like diligence, attention to detail, or courage—to get through it.

Educator's Talking Points:

- "As I read, listen for the small things the character does every day. What are their routines? What choices do they make when things get tough?"
- *(After reading)* "Wow. The character only succeeded because they had the habit of [e.g., checking their supplies carefully every morning]. They didn't just decide to be careful once; it was a habit they practiced. This small habit saved them from a big disaster. I am now going to 'narrate' this back. In my own words, the story was about a person who learned that paying attention to small details every day was the most important skill for a long journey. Their habit of diligence was their superpower."

WE DO: Discovering Our Own Habits (10 minutes)

Now, let's talk about this together. This is where we connect the story to your own life. It's time to think about what habits we want to build.

Guiding Questions:

- "Tell me the story back in your own words. What was the most important part to you?" (This is **Oral Narration**, a key Charlotte Mason practice).
- "What habit did the character show? Was it patience, bravery, orderliness, or something else?"
- "Let's brainstorm some 'superpower' habits. What's a character habit you admire, like kindness or honesty? What's an academic habit that would be helpful, like giving your full attention to a math problem or keeping your workspace tidy?"
- "From our list, let's choose just ONE habit you'd like to work on. For example, maybe it's the habit of 'Attention'—giving your whole mind to whatever you are doing at the moment."
- "Now, let's create a short, powerful sentence to remind you of this habit. This will be your motto! If our habit is 'Attention,' our motto could be 'One thing at a time' or 'My mind is here.' What feels right to you?"

YOU DO: Creating Your Motto and Goal Map (10 minutes)

This is your turn to be the captain and map-maker! You'll start the first page in your special "Book of Mottos & Goals."

Instructions for Noah:

1. **Create your Motto Page:** Open to the first page of your journal. Write your new motto in big, creative letters. Decorate the page with drawings that represent the motto and the habit. This book will become a collection of your personal wisdom!
2. **Create your Goal Map:** On the next page, write down one goal you have. It can be academic (like mastering multiplication tables) or a character goal (like being a more helpful brother). Now, draw a simple map with a starting point ("Here") and a destination ("Goal"). Along the path, draw

3-4 small stepping stones. On each stone, write one tiny, easy action you can take to practice your habit and move toward your goal.

- **Example:** If the goal is 'Master Multiplication' and the habit is 'Attention,' the steps could be: 1. Practice flashcards for 5 minutes without any distractions. 2. Do one math worksheet with my full focus. 3. Teach a times table to someone else.

Success Criteria: A great Motto Page will have your motto written clearly and a drawing that helps you remember it. A successful Goal Map will have a clear goal and at least three small, simple, and achievable steps written on it.

Part 3: Extension Activity - Nature Study (15 minutes)

Let's head outside for a short walk. We're going on a hunt for evidence of slow, steady growth. Try to find a big, strong tree. Now look at the ground for a tiny sapling or a new plant just starting out. Or we can look at our small indoor plant.

Discussion Points during the walk:

- "How does this tiny plant become a huge tree? Does it happen overnight?"
 - "It grows a tiny bit every single day, with sun and water. It's practicing the 'habit' of growing. Our goals and good habits are just like that. We practice them a little every day, and over time, we become strong and achieve amazing things."
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Part 4: Conclusion - The Captain's Log (5 minutes)

Recap and Reflection:

Let's review our expedition. You did an amazing job today!

- **Formative Assessment:** "Noah, can you tell me in one sentence the 'secret' to reaching a big goal?" (Expected answer: Doing small things consistently/practicing good habits).
- **Share-out:** Share your Motto Page and your Goal Map with me. Explain why you chose that motto and what your first step on the map will be.

Reinforce Takeaway:

"Remember that big achievements are just the result of small habits practiced over and over again. Just like that tree outside, your character and skills will grow stronger every day that you practice your habits. You have your map and your motto. You are ready for the journey!"

Assessment

- **Formative (During Lesson):** Observe Noah's participation in the discussion and the quality of his oral narration. Check for understanding through guiding questions.
 - **Summative (End of Lesson):** The completed Motto Page and Goal Map serve as the primary assessment. Evaluate them based on thoughtfulness, clarity, and completion according to the
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success criteria. The ability to explain the connection between habits and goals during the final recap demonstrates mastery of the core concept.

Differentiation & Adaptability

- **For Scaffolding/Support:** If writing is a challenge, Noah can dictate his narration, motto, and goals while the educator writes them down. He can then do the drawing. Provide sentence starters for the motto ("My power is...") or help him brainstorm the small steps for his map.
- **For Extension/Challenge:** Noah could write a short story about a character who uses his new motto to solve a problem. He could research the person from the living book and create a timeline of their accomplishments, noting the habits they likely used. He could also create a second Goal Map for a different, more complex goal.
- **For a Classroom/Group Setting:** The "We Do" portion can be a think-pair-share activity. The "You Do" is individual work. The "Conclusion" can involve a gallery walk where students see each other's Motto Pages. The nature study can be adapted to observe a class plant or pictures/videos of nature.