



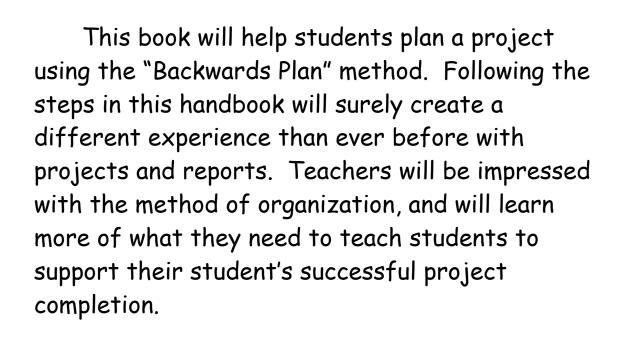
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Pre-planning can reduce stress and improve performance on projects and reports. Knowing the "What," "When" and "How" of a project will make it easier to complete. A month seems like a long time to complete a project, until other activities interfere. "Backwards Planning" helps keep students focused and prevents falling into the trap of the last minute eleventh-hour project stress.

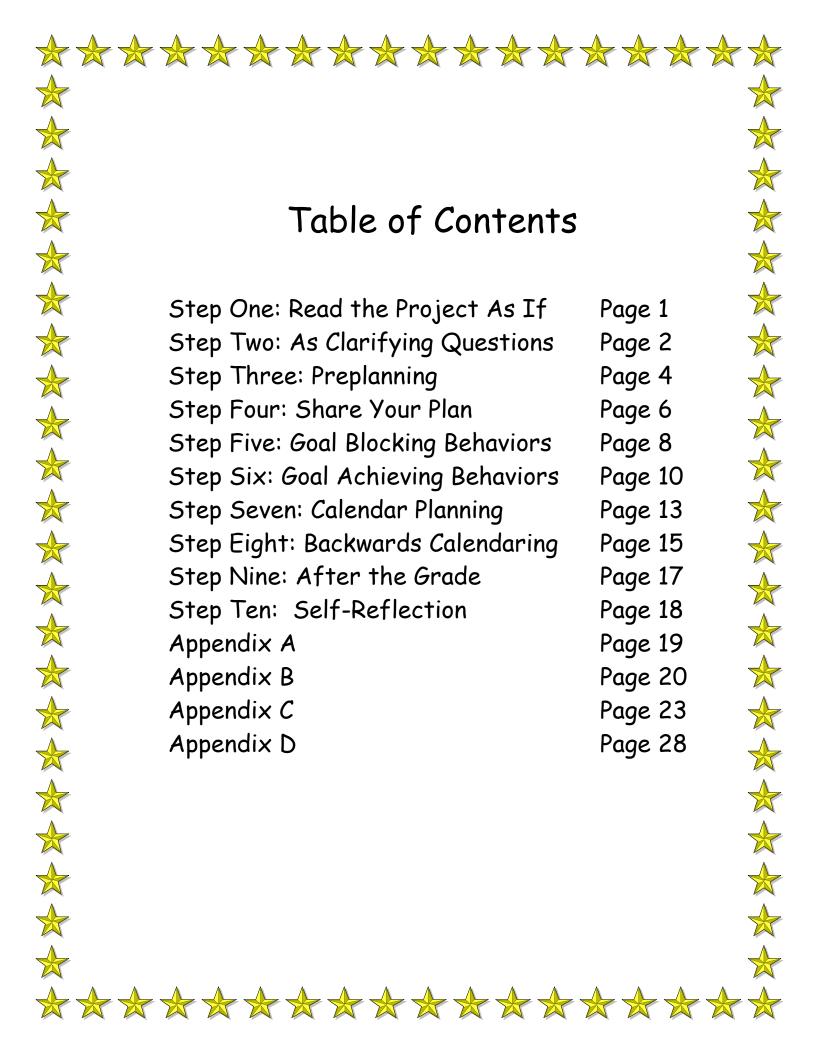
Many teachers create projects assuming that students have certain knowledge and skills. Many times they are incorrect. Either the teacher in previous grades was unable to teach the needed skills that they taught in the past, or possibly the students were ill the day the skill was taught. When the assignment is made, the teacher will make assumptions and will not know the students lack the skills needed to complete it, unless a brave student will share that these needed skills have never been taught or need re-teaching.



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Note to Students:

I look forward to hearing about your successful accomplishments. Be sure to email me when you get your report back with the best grade you have ever had. Are you ready? The hardest part is the planning, and I will guide you through the steps. Taking the few minutes to plan this project will make the process a breeze.





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Read the Project "As If"

Teachers may be working under the assumption that you have been taught all the skills you need to do the project. Be sure you know exactly what you are expected to do to complete the assignment. Many students turn in projects on time, but they have done the wrong assignment. This is due to not fully understanding the directions. Ask questions about the parts of the assignment that are not clear. Read the directions very carefully. Reading them aloud, slowly, and "as if" you were going to complete the assignment right away. This strategy will help determine if there are activities you do not have the skills to complete successfully. You may find you need to read the directions aloud several times, and highlight key words.



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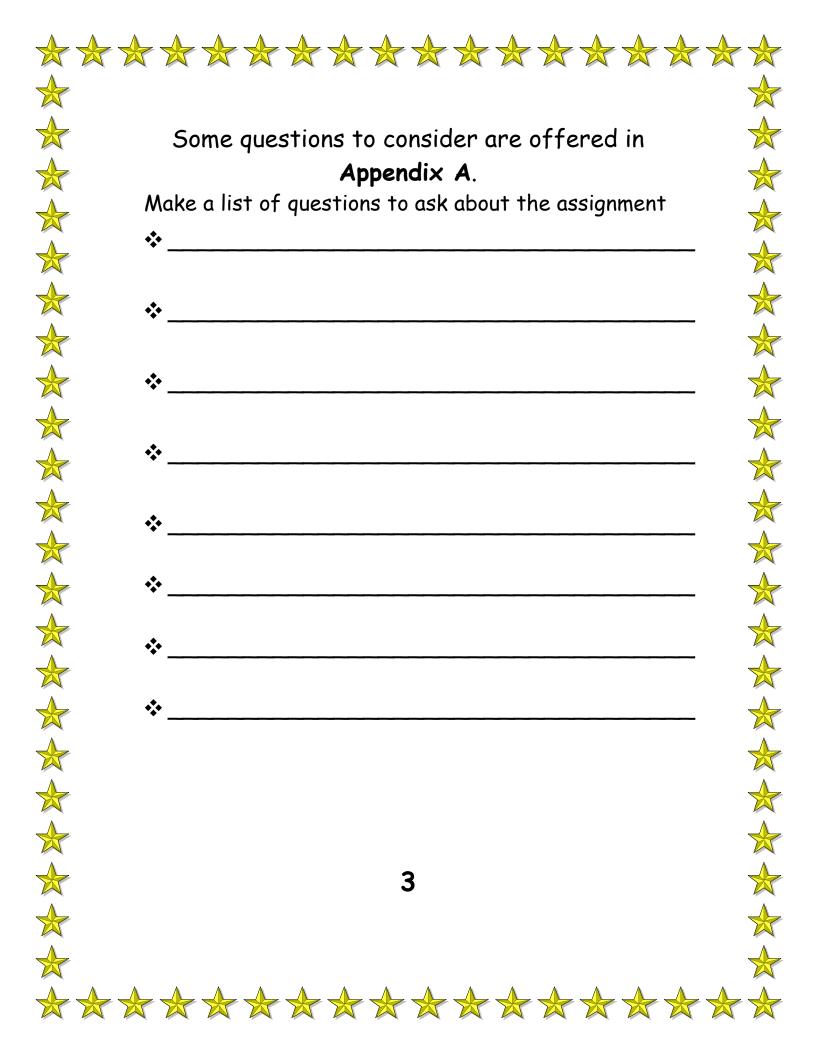
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Ask Clarifying Questions

Create questions that come to mind as you read the project.

Be Aware!

This may be the first time a teacher has been asked to clarify directions. For this reason, prepare your questions before approaching the teacher. Avoid saying, "I don't get this assignment." Be very clear about what you do not understand. This requires a different type of reading. Be sure that you understand all terminology. Even if you think you know the meaning of a word or words in the directions, ask to be sure you have the same understanding as the teacher.





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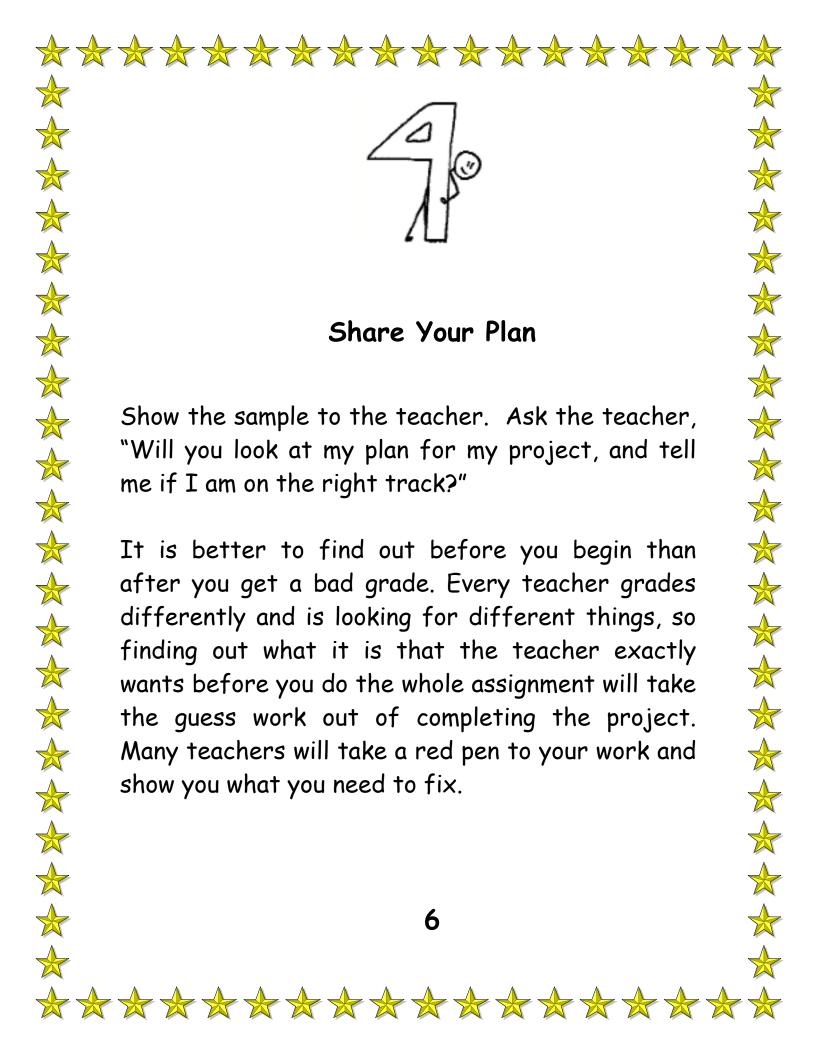
Preplan

Before you do any planning, turn off all forms of possible digital distraction. Devices are designed to draw your grab your attention and keep it. Whether it is a phone or your Chrome book, the developers have access to your attention if you are connected to the internet. They know how the brain works and want to capture your attention, because it is how they make money. Students have found that putting their devices in another room and preplanning their projects with pencil and paper has saved them valuable time. Working in a program that is not connected to the internet, such as Pages or Word, is helpful, but only if your internet connection is turned off.

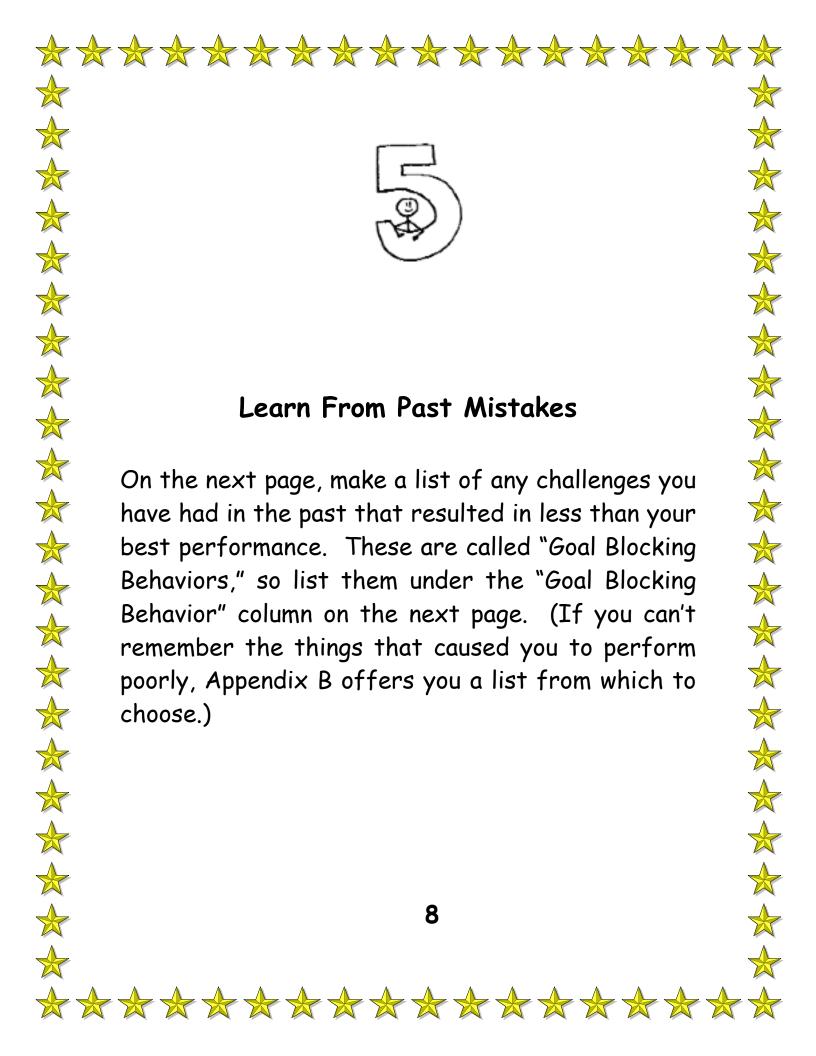
Knowing where you are going and what the end product will look like will speed your project work. If you are to do a poster, diagram, model, or diorama, sketch a picture of your plan to make sure you understand the assignment. If the assignment is a report or speech, do an outline of what you want your report to look like and the content you want to include.

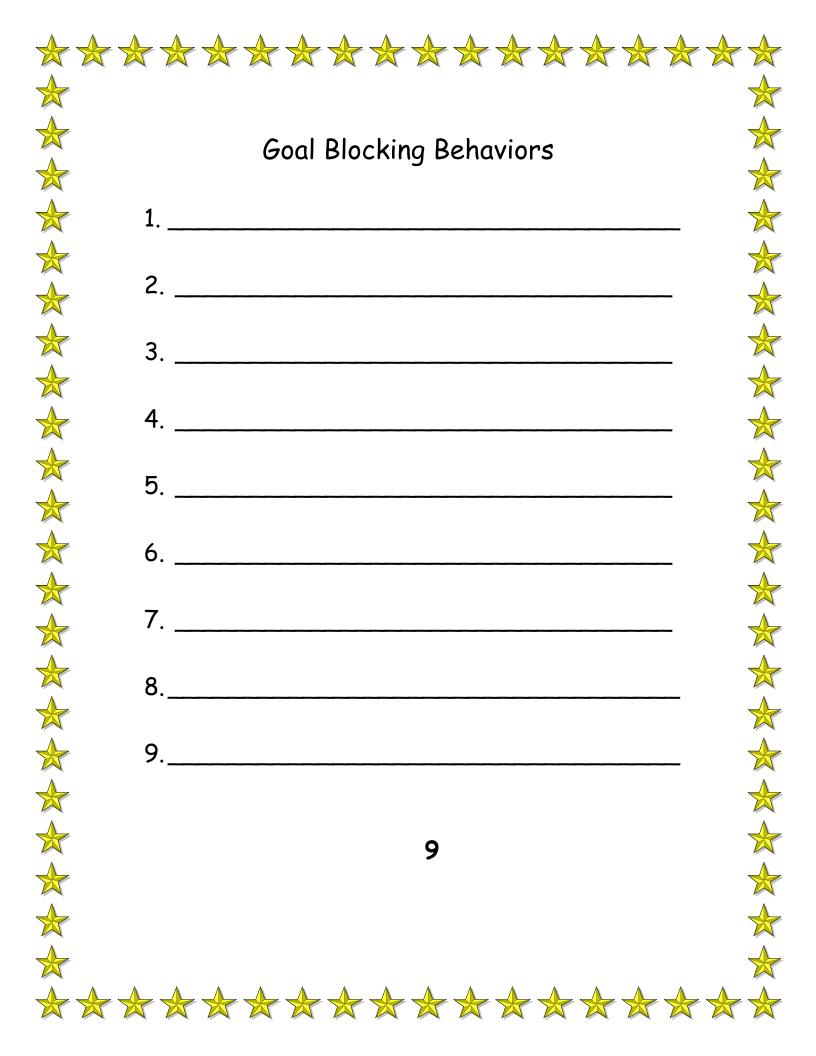
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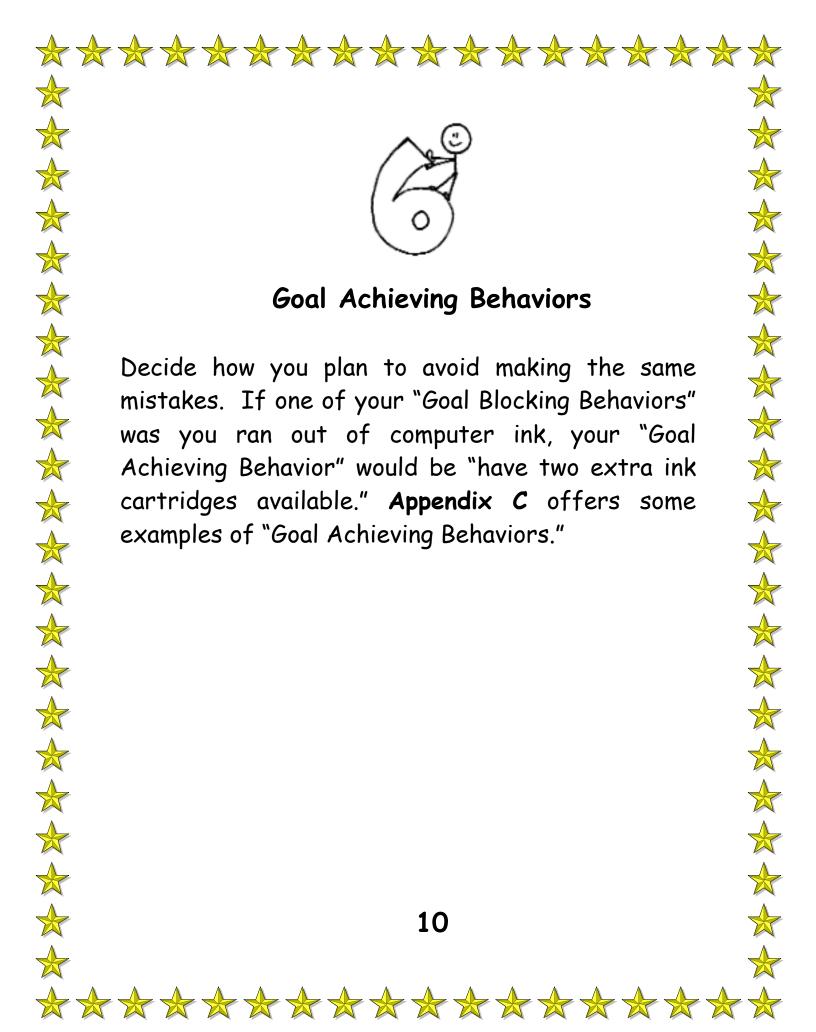
If you are not clear enough to do this task, ask the teacher to show you a model of what he/she expects the end product to look like.

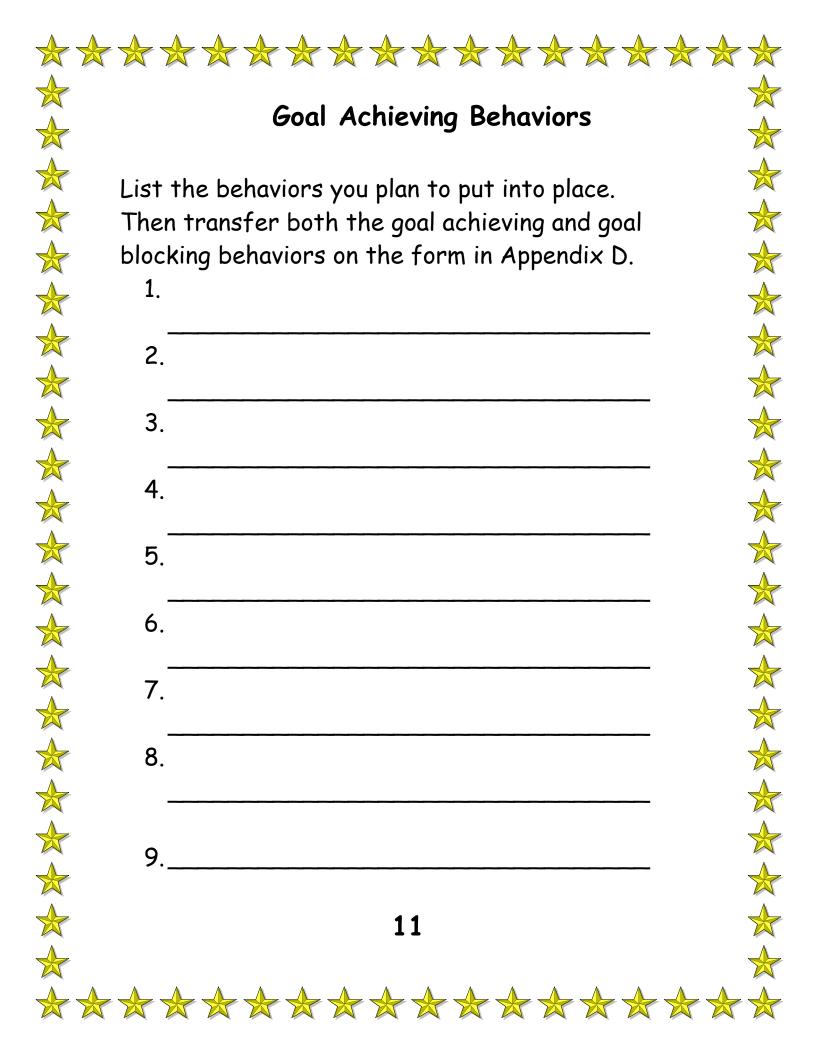


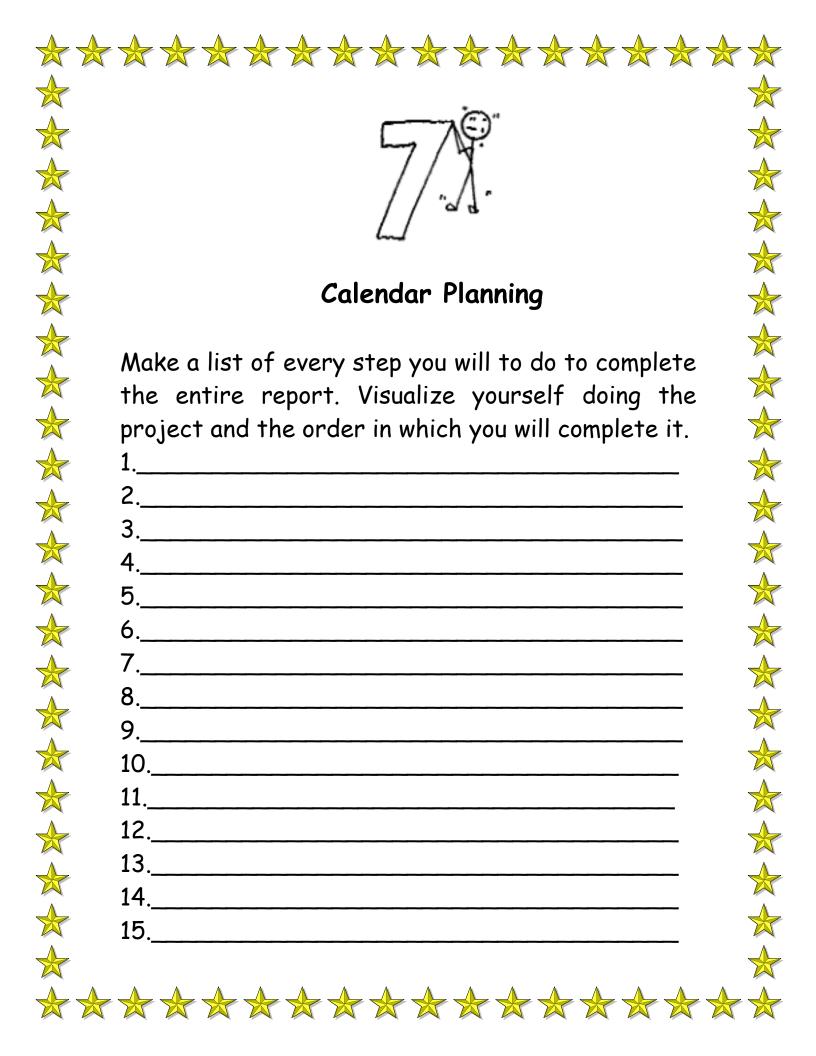
**** * Completing the preplanning and presenting for review earlier than the due date will make a good impression about your desire to excel. Because grading is subjective, if your grade is between a C+ and a B-, teachers will be more inclined to give you a B- instead of the C+, because of your effort. \Rightarrow * * * 7 ****







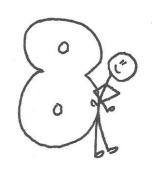




The next step in calendar planning is to make a list of all the activities that you have after school and on the weekends. Include trips that your parents are planning. You may not know about them yet, so you will need to ask your parents if they have anything planned for you for the period of time that you will be working on your project. Be sure to list weekly practices and chores. This would also include athletics, art classes, and instrument practice. Consider whether you have tournaments or weekend scout outings that would take up time that you will need to plan for when doing your project. List anything that consumes time outside of school.

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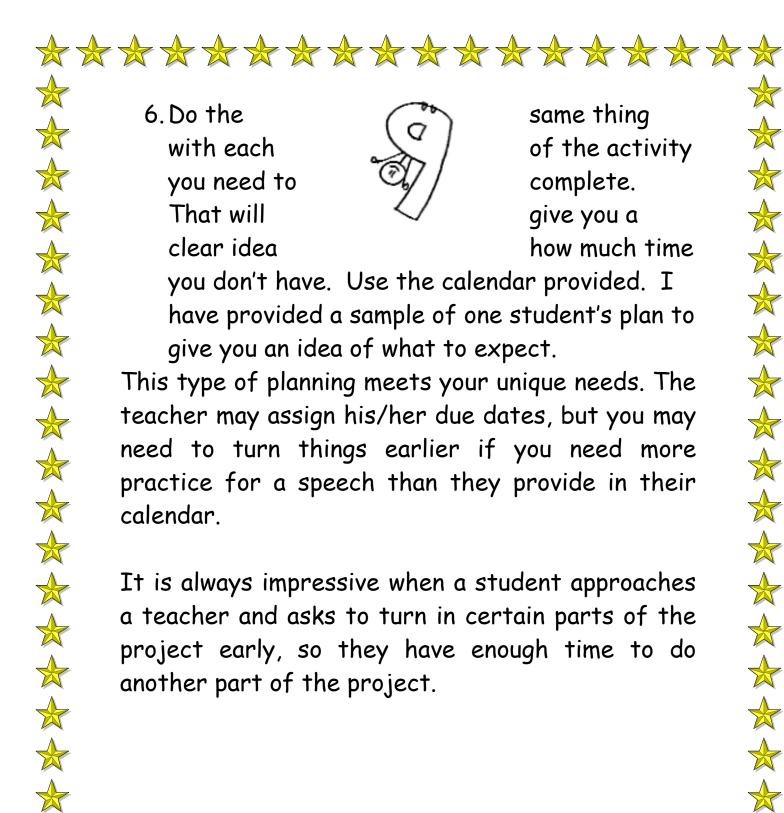
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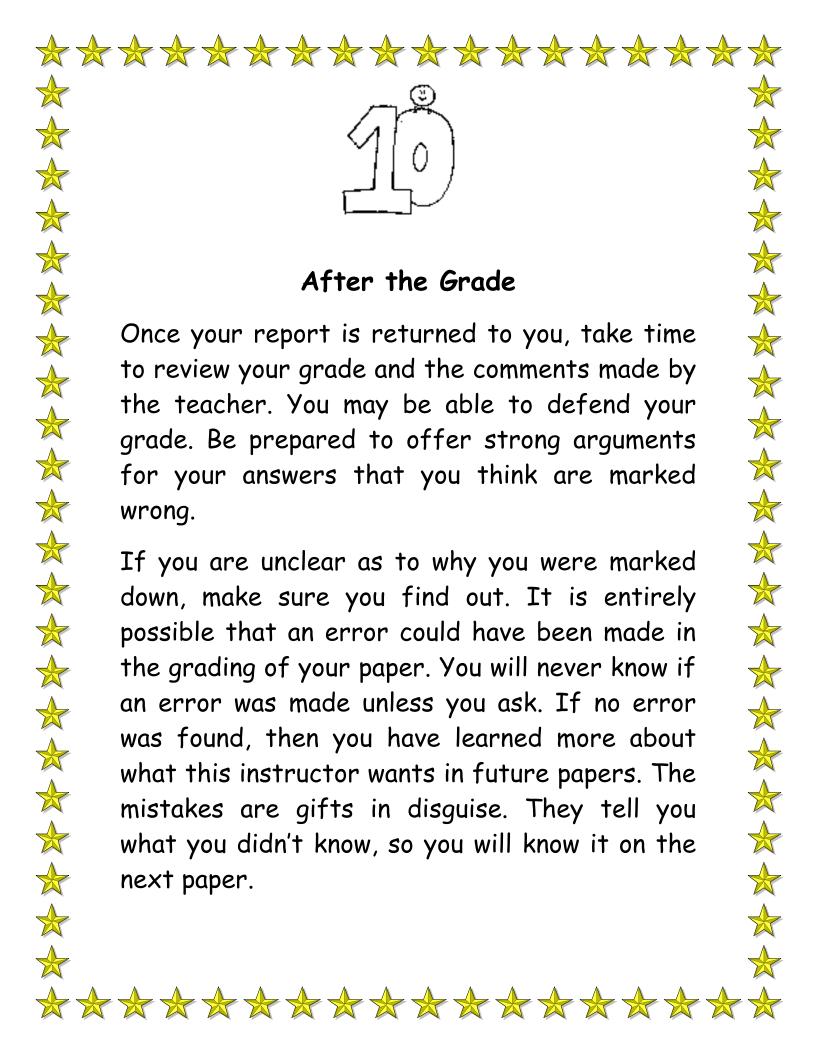
"Backwards Calendaring

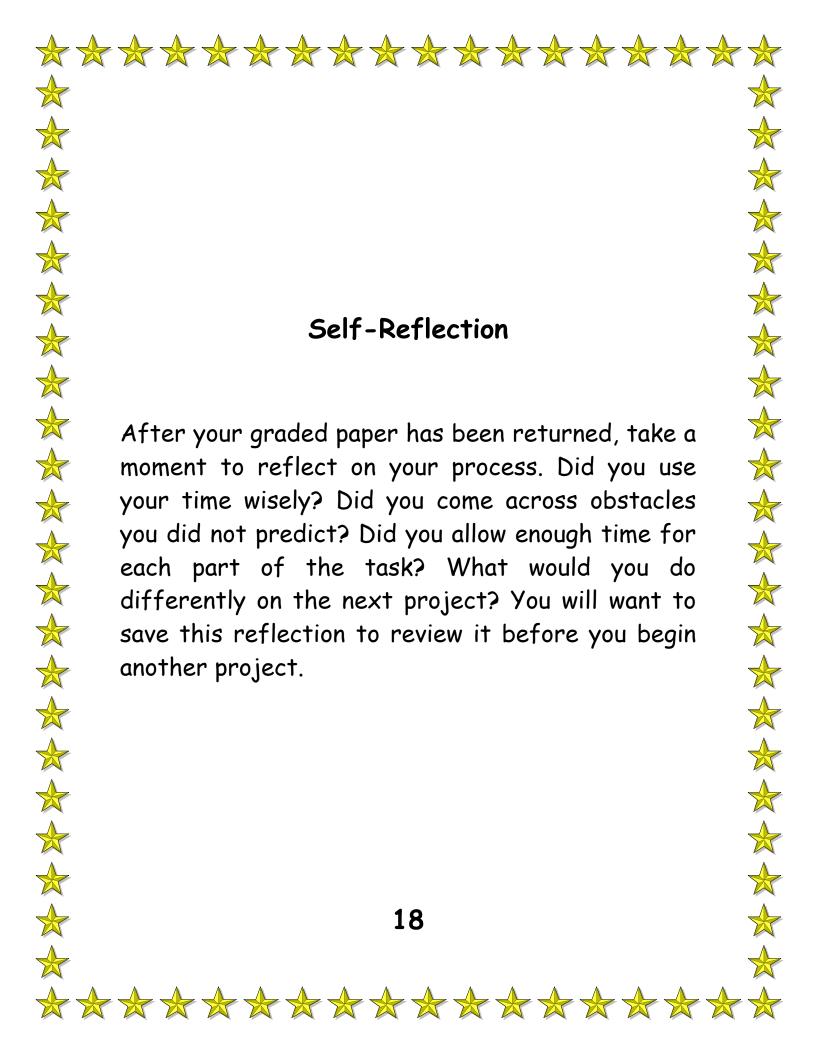
- Using the calendar that displays a month or more depending on your assignment, record all your extra-curricular activities and family responsibilities on the days you will complete them.
- 2. Using the list you created for the steps you needed to complete the assignment, decide the last thing you are going to do just before you turn in your project.
- 3. Determine how much time you will need to do a phenomenal job.
- 4. Add a few days to this date to allow for surprises you don't expect, such as tests and assignments that other teachers may assign.
- 5. Count backwards from the due date and record when you will begin that part of the project.

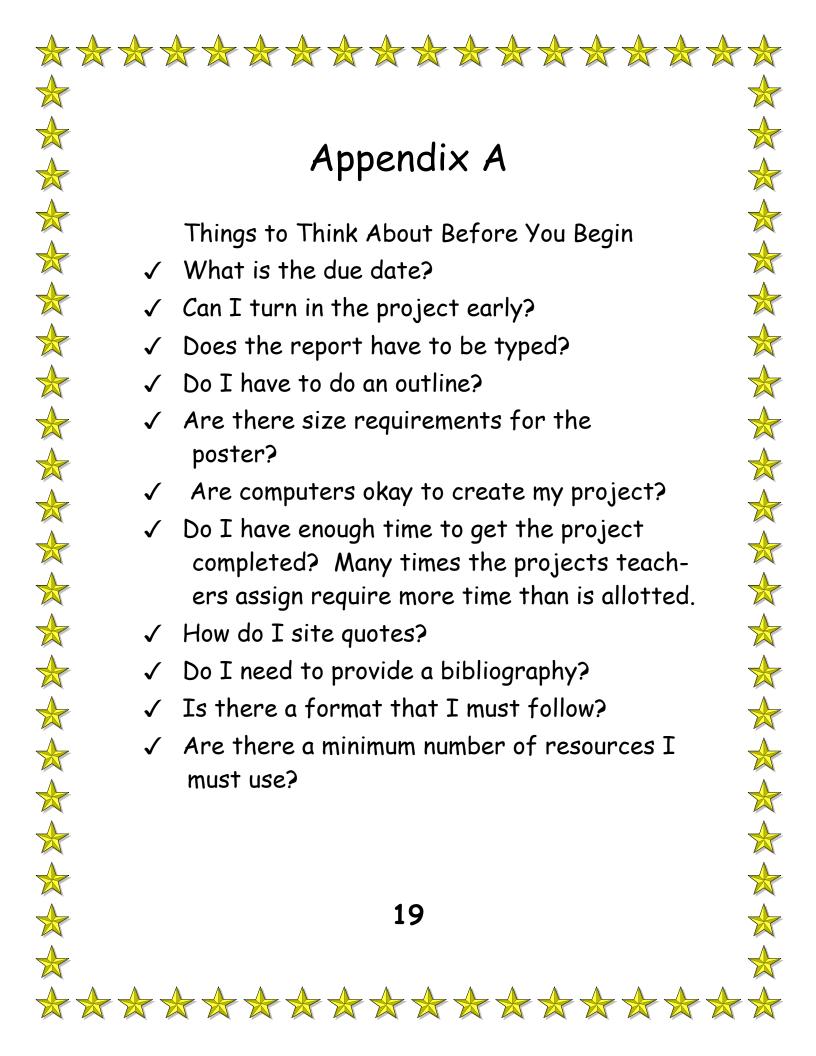


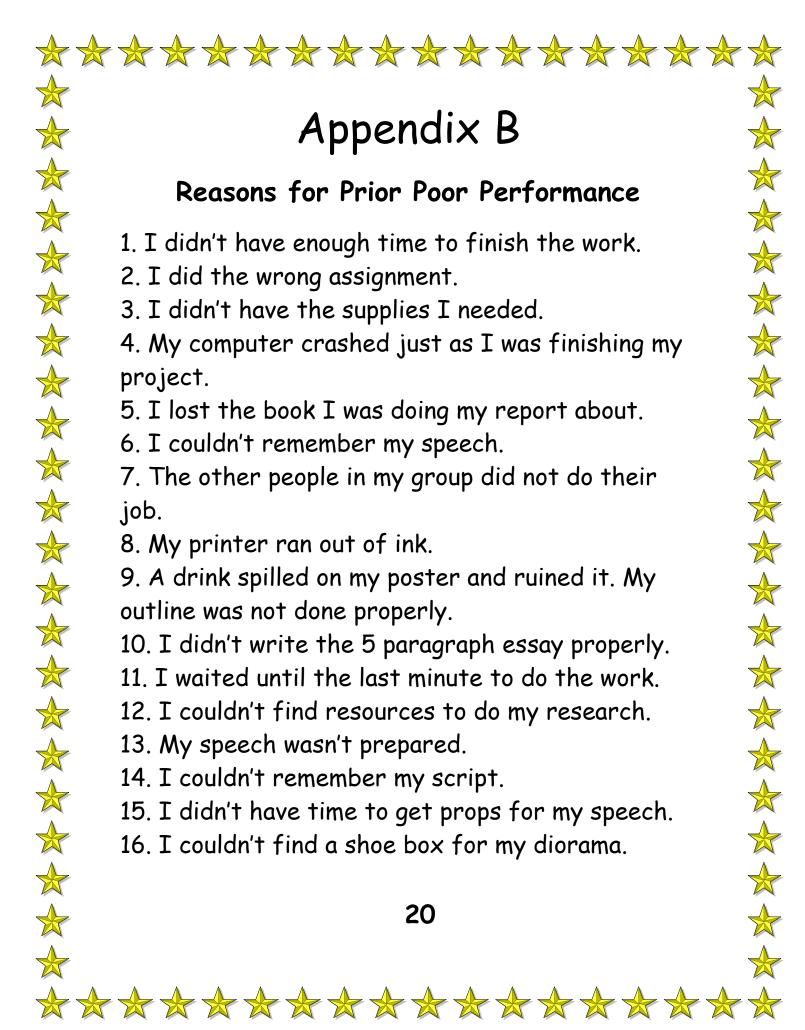
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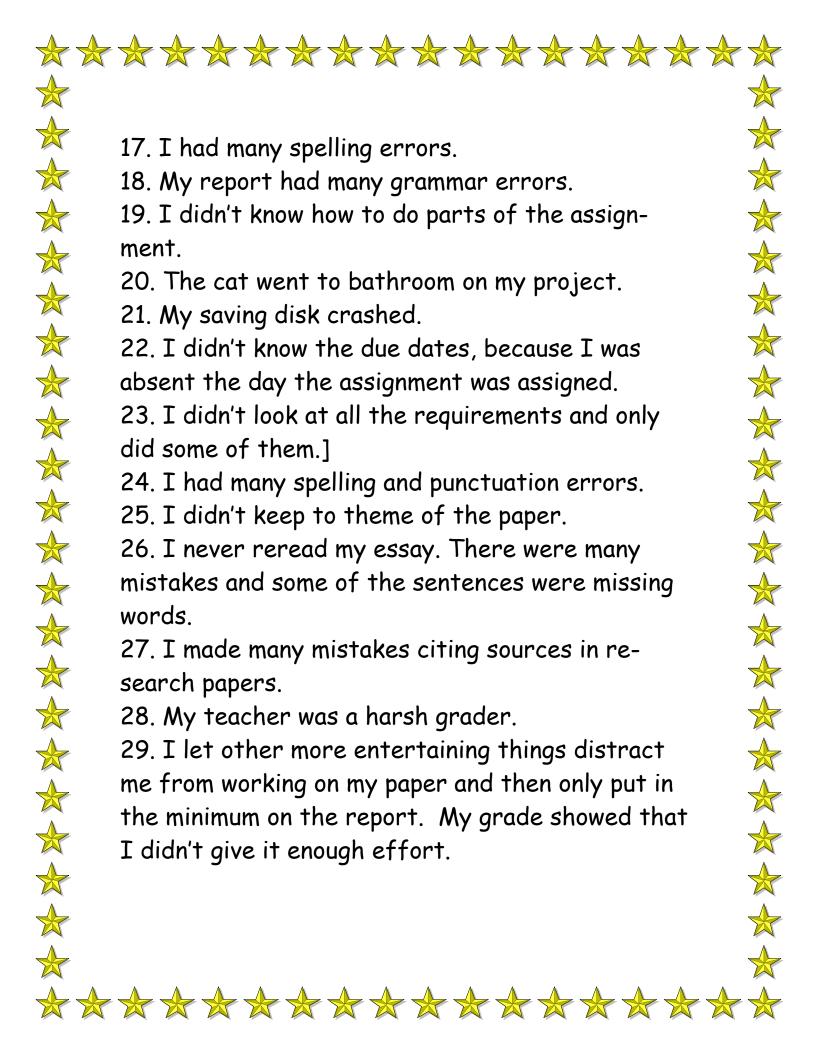
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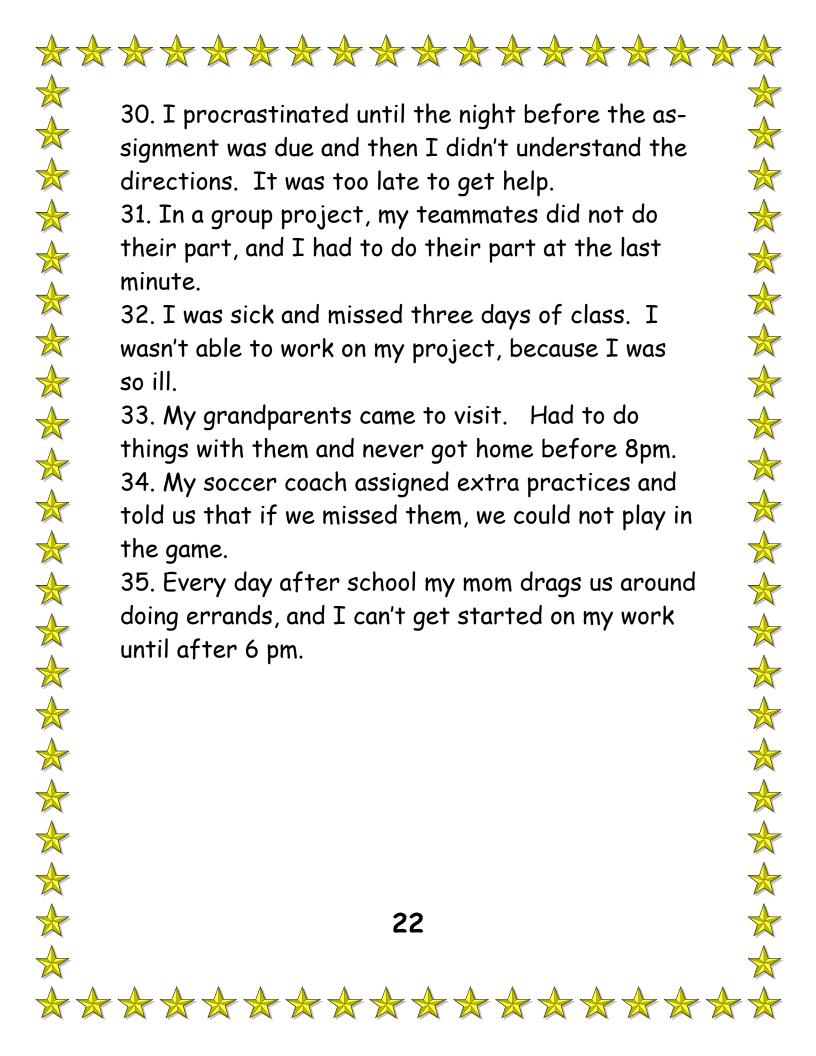














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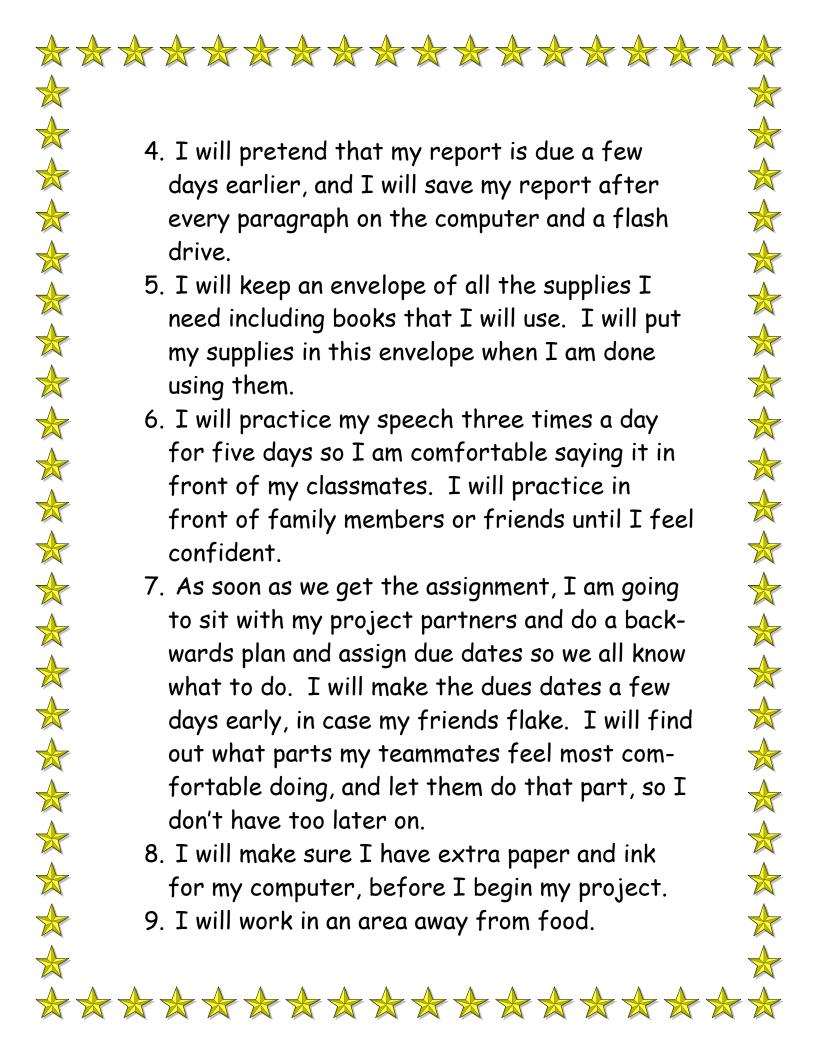
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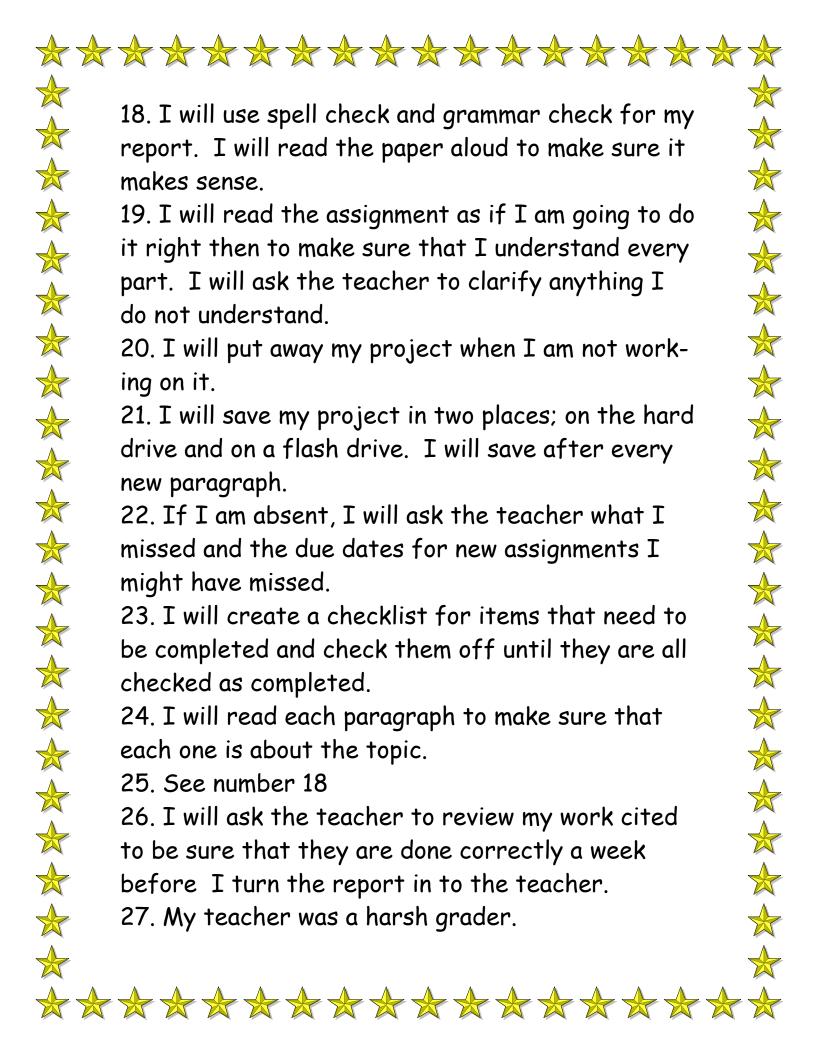
Goal Achieving Behaviors

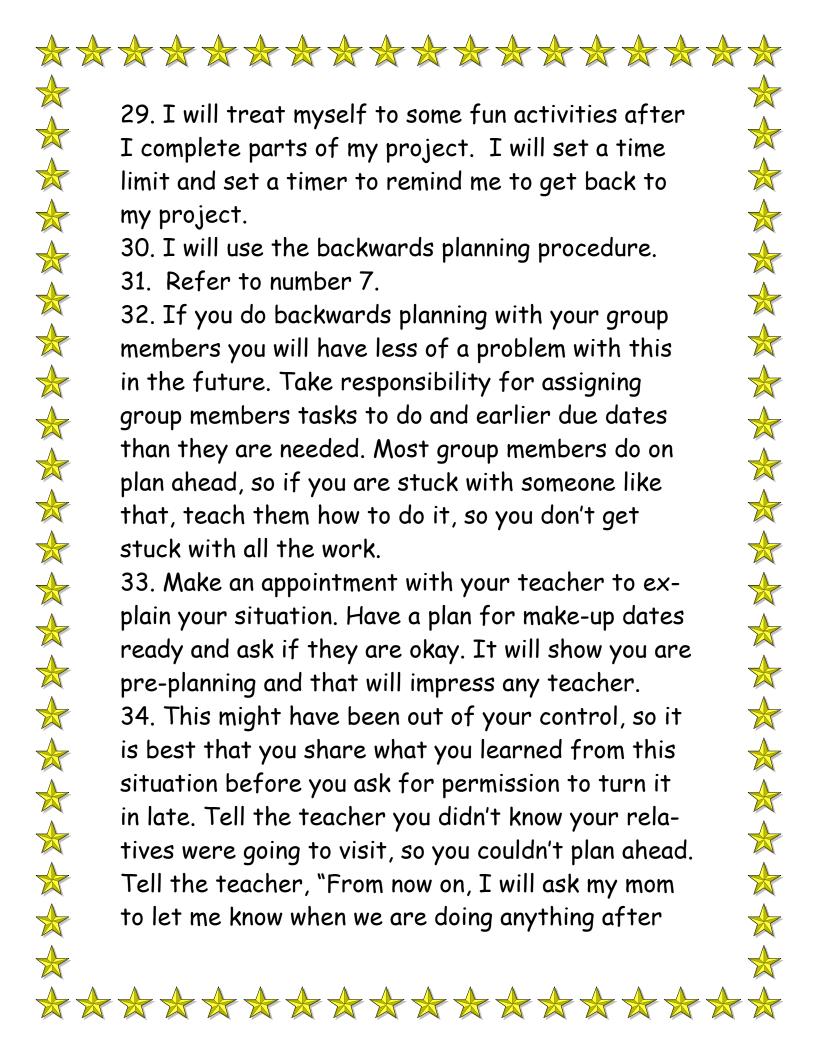
Flipping your "Goal Blocking Behaviors" into "Achieving Behaviors" will help improve your performance.

- I will schedule each part of the project as soon as the teacher assigns it and do a backwards plan.
- 2. I will read the assignment before I begin and make sure that I understand how to do each part as soon as the teacher assigns the work. If I don't understand how to do a part, I will ask the teacher to show me an example of what he/she would like the work to look like.
- 3. I will make a list of supplies I will need the first day I receive the assignment. I will ask my mom to take me to the store, so I can have what I need before I begin.



**** 24 10. I will complete my outline three days early and have the teacher check it to see if I am doing it correctly. 11. I complete my essay three days early and have the teacher check it to see if I am doing it cor-rectly. 12. I complete a backwards plan and calendar all my assignments before I begin my project. I will look at my plan every day. 13. I will let the teacher know 14. Since I know that I will be doing a speech at the end of my research, I am going to jot down notes as I research. I will write my speech as soon as my research is complete, so I have enough time to practice. 15. I will decide on props for my project right away, so I have time to get them. * * 16. If I need a shoebox, I will go to a shoe store and ask if they have extra ones I could buy to use for my project. 17. I will read my paper backwards to find spelling errors. I will read it a few days after I have writ-ten it. The final time I correct it, I will read it * aloud. ****





**** school that will prevent me from turning in my homework on time. Could I turn it in tomorrow?" 35. If you know you have soccer on school nights, ask permission to get started on your homework at recess or lunch. Parents need to step in if the demands of the coach are interfering with your school work. 36. Ask you mom what her plans are after school for you before you leave for school. This way you can get to work on it during lunch or recess. * * * 27 ****

