Setting Goals and Selecting Tasks

1	PEG SMITH:	Setting a goal is the first step before engaging in the five practices.
2		Because you have to be clear about what it is you want students to
3		learn as a result of engaging in the lesson. If you don't know where
4		you're going, you're going to end up someplace else. And
5		oftentimes, goals are stated in terms of what students are going to
6		do, not in terms of what students are going to learn. And while
7		knowing what they're going to do is certainly important, it's the what
8		they're going to learn that serves as the driver for the questions that
9		you ask throughout the lesson.
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11	CORI MORAN:	One of the benefits of setting clear goals is everything is a jumping
12		point off from there. I knew what task I wanted to use. I knew what
13		questions I might anticipate, what solutions I might anticipate. I was
14		able to connect everything really to those goals. I also then knew
15		how I wanted to sequence, and how I wanted to connect. And I
16		some connecting questions ready. I had my monitoring chart ready,
17		just building off of those goals.
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19	MICHAEL MOORE:	When selecting the mathematical goal, probably the biggest
20		challenge is making sure that it's not too much, really getting that
21		one piece, that one goal and focusing on it.
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23	MATTHEW HARMON:	One benefit of stating a clear math learning goal is just that thing
24		that permeates the conversations that you're having, the questions
25		that you're asking. It's just giving a focus to all your intentional
26		movements within the class.
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28	PEG SMITH:	Once you set a goal for instruction, you need to find a task that
29		aligns with it. That is a task that actually has the potential to
30		accomplish what you've said you want to do during the lesson.
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32	MICHAEL MOORE:	Task selection's super important because it not only allows you to
33		hopefully really achieve your goal, but also gets kids to buy in that
34		it's exciting.
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36	PEG SMITH:	Tasks that lend themselves best to discussions are tasks that we
37		would consider to be high level, or what we've also referred to as
38		cognitively demanding. And what I mean by that are tasks for which
39		there is no specified pathway as to how you would solve it. So that
40		students actually have to think, reason, and make sense of the
41		situation.
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43	CORI MORAN:	One of the benefits of these rich tasks are listening to students think.
44		Students that maybe had not participated when it was more
45		procedural are stepping up when it's conceptual. And how much I

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46		plan and anticipate, it's really great to hear those aha moments and a
47		lot of the discussion that happens.
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49	PEG SMITH:	Also, it's really important to pick a task for which there is a low
50		floor so that students can enter the task, and a high ceiling so that
51		there's the potential to really accomplish something that's
52		mathematically important. So if you end up with a mismatch, or you
53		may end up with a high level task, but you're going after very low
54		level goals where you're focusing on what students are going to do,
55		not on what you're going to learn. So in the ideal, when you're
56		having a discussion, you want a learning goal that explicitly talks
57		about what students are going to learn and a task that is high level
58		that has the potential to get you there.