

“Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journaling Guide

Social-Emotional Learning Connections:

- Self-Efficacy
- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Responsible Decision-Making
- Growth Mindset
- Persistence
- Empathy
- Gratitude

What is “Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journaling?

“Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journaling is a great way to support students to set goals and become independent learners. They also support students in growing their self-efficacy (academic self-esteem) and growth mindset (the belief that we can change and grow). Students will be able to identify positive moments and areas where they need support.

Define Terms for the Activity:

- *Rose* – something positive that happened this past week
- *Bud* – something you are looking forward to next week (alternatively, you can use “blossom” instead of bud)
- *Thorn* – something you need help with within the next week
- **Bonus** – what can you do to turn your thorn into a rose for next week?

Directions

Give students 2 minutes to write down their rose, bud, and thorn. If you’re planning on repeating the activity (as a daily check-in, for example) you may want to encourage students to keep a “journal” of their roses, buds, and thorns.

Share your rose, bud, and thorn, and then go around the room asking each student to share their own.

Have students work in pairs to offer each other a strategy for turning their thorns into roses.

Engage students in discussion or in writing with the following:

1. What strategy or resource did you use to turn your thorn into a rose?
2. If your strategy was not as helpful, what’s something that you can try next?
3. What’s a strategy that you will try next to turn this week’s thorn into a rose?
4. What strategy can you share with a friend to help them turn their thorn into a rose?
5. Flip through your “Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journal. How have you seen yourself grow and change?

Sample 4-Week Schoolwide Implementation Plan for “Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journaling

Key Action	Key Player	Key Timeline
Share relevant data and research about the importance of building student’s self-efficacy and growth mindset with staff.	Leadership or other team	Week 1
Introduce “Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journaling to staff; model and practice. Share resources for staff to learn about self-efficacy using this toolkit .	Leadership or other team	Week 1
Introduce videos about what it means to adopt a growth mindset with students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For younger students • For older students 	Teachers/ Counselors	Week 1
Introduce “Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journaling to students by modeling a non-academic or personal example. Have students try non-academic examples with the teacher.	Teachers/ Counselors	Week 1
Have students start a “Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journal and identify their own non-academic or personal examples.	Teachers/ Counselors	Week 1
Communicate with families about “Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journaling, including context and rationale for implementing this activity. Ask families to check-in on their students journals. Incentivize students who share their “Rose, Bud, or Thorn” with families or friends.	Teachers, Counselors, Families	Week 1
Facilitate discussion questions about how students’ thorns have changed to roses after the first week. Identify the strategies that students used to overcome these challenges.	Teachers, Counselors,	Week 2
Grade-level teams or content teams identify upcoming standards for “Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journaling and create a few examples.	Teachers and Counselors	Week 2
Support students in developing meaningful content or other academic goals and start a new entry for academic goals for their “Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journal.	Teachers and Counselors	Week 3
Facilitate student-led conversations on a weekly basis about how thorns have turned to roses over several weeks, months, or the year.	Students	Week 4
Celebrate schoolwide or at other community meetings when students have turned their thorns into roses or met their goals.	Leaders, other teams, counselors, teachers	Week 4+

Sample Student “Rose, Bud, Thorn” Journal Template

Rose, Bud, Thorn Journaling



One rose, or something positive that happened this week is....



One bud, or something that I’m looking forward to next week is..



One thorn, or something I need help with is...



One thing I will try next week to turn my thorn into a rose is...

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Demetrius Lancaster, M.Ed, MPA, is an experienced urban educator, instructional coach, school leader and administrator. In his role as Panorama Education’s Lead of Equity Practice, Demetrius sets the vision for the organization’s approach to delivering equity-centered professional learning experiences for district and school leaders using data to achieve equitable outcomes for students. Prior to joining Panorama, Demetrius served as the Founding Assistant Principal at Rocketship Public Schools in San Francisco (from 2017 to 2019) and the Director of School Culture at City Arts + Prep Public Charter School in Washington, D.C. (from 2015 to 2017). Demetrius received his Master of Public Administration from James Madison University in 2012 and his Master of Education from Columbia University in 2018.

Panorama Education

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