

Fresh Start Reflections Answer Key

A strong response should:

- Reflect on at least one personal lesson learned from the previous year.
- State one clear, realistic, and meaningful goal for the new year.
- Explain **why** the goal is important and **how** the student plans to achieve it.
- Include a personal or motivational closing statement.

Teacher's Guide

- **Before Writing:**
 - Lead a brief discussion about what "new beginnings" mean.
 - Ask students to share examples of goals that focus on **growth**, not perfection.
- **During Writing:**
 - Encourage use of descriptive language and honest emotion.
 - Offer sentence starters or brainstorm lists of verbs (e.g., improve, create, learn, strengthen).
- **Differentiation:**
 - Grades 5-7: Provide a word bank (e.g., hope, courage, patience, achieve).
 - Grades 8-12: Challenge students to connect their goals to a personal value or world issue.
- **Extension Ideas:**
 - Create a classroom "Goal Wall" where students post short versions of their reflections.
 - Revisit the same journal midyear to measure growth and adjust goals.
 - Combine art and writing-students illustrate their motto as a mini poster for display.