

# CHARACTER EDUCATION

## "Perseverance" Grades K-4

### DEFINITION:

Perseverance means to keep going and never give up, even when things are hard.

### STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

- Discuss with students that perseverance is necessary for success when it comes to achieving goals.
- Discuss "What is a 'goal?'" "What does it mean to have a 'never-give-up' attitude?" Examples might include the following:
  - Try to do their best at everything they do.
  - Don't say, "I Can't Do It."
  - Say, "I'll try."
  - Practice those skills that they want to do well.
  - Learn from mistakes.
- Use a "Thought for the Day":
  - If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.
  - A problem will look simple after it is solved.
  - You are always in control of one thing... yourself.
  - Even if you're on the right road, you'll get run over if you just sit there.
  - Never, Never, Never give up- NEVER!
  - If it's worth having, it's worth working for.
  - The early bird gets the worm.
- Have students discuss things they do well. Do those things require practice? How much? Ask students if they dream of being really good at something. What does it take to become an expert? How is perseverance a part of becoming an expert?
- Ask students to develop ways to encourage others to keep trying. Discuss ways they can encourage themselves through positive self-talk.
- Have students name people who have accomplished great things in their lifetime. What would have happened if these people had given up before reaching their goal(s)?
- Ask students to make a list of their dreams and goals. Beside each dream or goal, note what it will take to reach the goal.

- Discuss mistakes or failures with the class. Do failures keep students from reaching their goals? How does perseverance relate to overcoming one's mistakes?
- Have students' journal about a time when they felt discouraged. What are some ways to overcome discouragement? How did they overcome discouragement?
- Have students write about a time when they failed at something but came back to try again? What was the outcome of that "Never-Give-Up" attitude (perseverance)?
- Lead a class discussion. "Do you have to win the game to be a success?" Ask students to explain their opinions.
- Brainstorm a list of everyday situations that require perseverance. Discuss how perseverance is not something one is born with...instead it is a decision or choice one makes every day.
- Discuss the term determination as it relates to perseverance. Talk about how choosing to keep trying takes a lot of courage and perseverance when it would be so much easier to give up. Relate perseverance to other character traits already studied.
- Have students' journal about how friends look up to those who never give up until they reach their goals. Ask them to give examples.
- Discuss how it feels when someone such as a teammate, a cast member, or a group project member just gives up and quits when the going gets tough? How does this affect the outcome of the game, the play, or the project?
- Discuss the role perseverance plays in life-or-death situations of soldiers in battle, hurricane or tsunami victims, emergency responders. Have students think of other circumstance where the community, school, or a friend demonstrated perseverance in an emergency situation. Ask them to give examples.
- Create a WALL of FAME for CHARACTER STARS for each month's character quality (perseverance being one). Let students wear a MEDAL of HONOR every Friday of that month for those who demonstrate that quality in authentic action.
- Talk about what makes a hero a hero? Can anyone be a hero? What does perseverance have in common with being a hero?
- Have students write a story (or tell) about someone in their own personal life that they admire for showing perseverance.
- Ask students to research and make a list of famous people who showed perseverance, i.e. one of the Wright Brothers or Lance Armstrong. How did they show this trait?

- Let students role-play situations where one might need perseverance to keep going, i.e. taking a test, running a race, lifting weights at the Olympics, holding their breath under water to save someone who was drowning, etc.
- Discuss what would have happened to Dorothy and all her friends in the Wizard of Oz if she had not kept going down the Yellow Brick Road even when faced with frightening obstacles.
- Help student make a TIMELINE with a starting point of TODAY and the ending point YOUR GOAL. Ask students to chart their progress including practice and steps taken to achieve the goal. Have them make weekly reports on the status of their efforts.
- Have students' interview community leaders/business persons/school leaders to determine what it took for them to get where they are today. Have students ask them if they have achieved all their goals yet and if they have made any new goals? Would they choose the same career again?
- (G/T Project) Give details for how you would go about "DOING" that which was never done before...something thought to be "UNDOABLE"! (For example, use your imaginations in the manner of H.G. Wells and create your own object capable of doing this undoable. Wells, of course, traveled forward and backward in time in his time machine.) Think about something you have heard can't be done. Divide into groups of think tanks and come up with a plan to "DO IT." Make a timeline, detail steps, and illustrate/create prototype of product to present to class for final project.
- Have students use the following Vocabulary Words (3-4 Grade Level) and discuss their relationship to perseverance:
  - Anxiety (test)
  - Courage
  - Determination
  - Encouragement (Toward Others I Self)
  - Failure
  - Goal
  - Hero
  - Perseverance
  - Persistent
  - Stress
  - Success
- Select stories of artists and perseverance ([www.constable.net/arthistory/wri-inspiration.html](http://www.constable.net/arthistory/wri-inspiration.html))

## **BOOKS TO USE TO TEACH “PERSERVANCE”**

*Finklehopper Frog*, Irene Livingston (2-4)

*Finklehopper Frog Cheers*, Irene Livingston (2-4)

*Koala Lou*, Mem Fox (1-2)

*Princesses Are Not Quitters*, Kate Lum (1-2)

*Dudley, The Little Terrier That Could*, Stephen Green-Armytage (K-4)

*Never Give Up*, Regina G. Burch (K-3 Character Ed. Program)

*Handling Your Ups and Downs*, Joy Wilt (3-4)

*Kelso's Choice, Willow Pond, A Kelso's Choice Storybook*, (K-4) Barbara O'Neill, Ph.D. & Diane Glass (K-6 Character Ed. Prog.)

*Toby, the Terrific Test-Taking Toucan* (Strategies for Test Anxiety) (2-4) Mar-Co Products, Inc. (Includes Puppet)

*Tyler Tames the Testing Tiger*, (Strategies for Taking Standardized Tests) (3-4), National Ctr. for Youth Issues

## **SUGGESTED VIDEOS:**

*"I Won't Give Up"*: Perseverance\_K-2, Sunburst

*Turning Failure into Success* 3-5, Sunburst

*You Can Succeed in School* (Student Workshop) 3-5, Sunburst

*SLAM! Full Court Perseverance* (Secret Adventure) K-6, Broadman & Holman Publishers for STARS Program

*Stress. I can Handle It!* (3-5), Sunburst

## **SOURCES:**

Kersey, Cynthia. *Unstoppable: 45 Powerful Stories of Perseverance and Triumph* from

*People Just Like You*. Emmaus, Pennsylvania: Rodale Books, 2005.

[www.brainyquote.com](http://www.brainyquote.com)

[www.k12.hi.us/mkunimit/perseverance](http://www.k12.hi.us/mkunimit/perseverance)

[www.k12.hi.us/perseverance](http://www.k12.hi.us/perseverance)

[www.randomhouse.com/teachers/themes](http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/themes)

[www.writersweekly.com/print/success\\_stories/00216111032004.html](http://www.writersweekly.com/print/success_stories/00216111032004.html)

[www.constable.net/arhistory/wri-inspiration.html](http://www.constable.net/arhistory/wri-inspiration.html)

[www.humanityquest.com](http://www.humanityquest.com)

[www.guotegarden.com/perseverance](http://www.guotegarden.com/perseverance)

[www.thesaurus.reference.com](http://www.thesaurus.reference.com)

<http://www.goodcharacter.com/ISOC/Diligence.html>

<http://www.goodcharacter.com/NCC/DoingRight.html>

<http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/junieb/character.html>

[http://humanityquest.com/topic/art\\_activities/index.asp?theme1=perseverance](http://humanityquest.com/topic/art_activities/index.asp?theme1=perseverance)

<http://www.goodcharacter.com/NCC/DoingRight.html>

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[http://humanityquest.com/topic/art\\_activities/index.asp?theme1=perseverance](http://humanityquest.com/topic/art_activities/index.asp?theme1=perseverance)

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com> (lesson options)