

PERSEVERANCE & PERSONAL BEST

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Students will interact with others to explore ideas and concepts, communicate meaning, and develop logical interpretations through collaborative conversations.
- Students will build upon the ideas of others to clearly express their own views while respecting diverse perspectives.
- Students will summarize key details and ideas to support analysis of thematic development.
- Students will learn how to set goals.
- Students will demonstrate how effort and persistence positively affect learning.
- Students will use persistence and perseverance in acquiring knowledge and skills.

Objectives

Students will be able to define the word perseverance.

Students will be able to make and set goals.

Students will be able to list examples of things one can do to show perseverance.

Materials Needed

- Board or chart paper and markers (“We Do”)
- “The Goals of Perseverance” activity sheets for each student (“You Do”)

Starter (10 minutes)

Ask the students what challenges they face in their lives and invite students to share their stories. (*You may need to share an example to spark discussion.*) Following the discussion, tell students that perseverance is the ability for one to do their best in order to reach a goal, even if it is challenging.

Teacher Presented Knowledge/I Do (10 minutes)

Before class begins, write the following quote on the board: “I have missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I have lost almost 300 games. On 26 occasions I have been entrusted to take the game-winning shot, and I missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”
—Michael Jordan

Begin the class by asking students, “Do you know who Michael Jordan is?” Tell them that he is one of the most successful athletes in the world and spent 15 seasons playing basketball in the NBA, winning six national championships and three MVP trophies. Then, ask students to read the quote on the board and share aloud their thoughts on what they feel the quote means and how it may connect to their lives.

Then, tell the class, “Did you know that Michael Jordan did not make his high school basketball team? What if he had let that stop him? What if he had not persevered?” Allow students time to respond.

Guided Student Practice/We Do (20 minutes)

Discuss with the class things that they have done already that took perseverance (*for example, riding a bike, learning to tie their shoes*). On chart paper, create a list of these events along with a description of what students needed to do to persevere and demonstrate success. Then, create a list of things that one can do to show perseverance in any situation (*for example, practice, have patience, ask for help, keep trying*).

Give students examples of things that they will likely experience in their lives that require perseverance to be successful. You may choose to post the lists in the class as perseverance reminders.

Lead the discussion toward goal setting, which is a very important skill students can use as a perseverance tool. Define short-term goals (*goals that do not take much time to complete*) and long-term goals (*goals that one hopes to accomplish in the future*) with students. Tell students “short-term goals are the stepping stones that lead to accomplishing long-term goals. By breaking a large goal down into manageable chunks, a person is more likely to persevere and accomplish a goal.”

Have the class choose one of the examples that was given of an experience that requires perseverance and work together to think of the short-term goals needed to successfully complete the long-term goal. (*For example, if a student's goal is to make the sixth-grade middle school basketball team, his/her short-term goals would be to practice each day, attend basketball workshops or camps during the summer, keep his/ her grades up during school, etc.*)

Student Independent Practice/You Do (20 minutes)

Direct students to think of a difficult goal they have in their life. Pass out “The Goals of Perseverance” activity sheets to each student. Have each student write his/her goal down on the first activity sheet, along with a drawing of him/her completing the goal. Then, instruct the students to identify and write on the second activity sheet the short-term goals they will need to complete to reach their longterm goal.

Closure (10 minutes)

Allow the students to share with one another what their goals are and what they need to do to reach these goals. Discuss with the students how it is easier to accomplish our goals or persevere when we have people cheering us on. Encourage students to cheer on one another when they notice that someone is having a difficult time. A little encouragement goes a long way. Remind the students how important it is to persevere and never give up because it will enable them to do great things and reach their goals.

Student Assessment

1. Why is perseverance such an important trait to have?
2. Do you think you can be successful in life without perseverance? Why or why not?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Art Extension

Create a class collage using drawings, pictures, words, or magazine clippings representing “perseverance.”

Culture Extension

Bring in a challenging puzzle and invite the class to persevere and assemble the puzzle together. Ideally, this puzzle will take at least a few weeks to complete. It can be placed on a side table and students can work on it during indoor recess or during any free time. Whenever the puzzle is complete, hold a class “perseverance” celebration.

Drama Extension

Have students perform short role-plays that demonstrate the effect of perseverance.

ELA Extension

Read the poem “Pretty Good,” by Charles Osgood. Then, have students write poetry about a time when they gave their personal best.

Literature Extension

Read *Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World’s Fastest Woman*, a story about Wilma Rudolph who, despite growing up battling polio, won three Olympic gold medals in track and field. After reading the story, discuss how Wilma continually faced hardships (*poverty, racism, polio*) and how she continued to overcome these hardships. To prompt student thinking, ask the following questions: What was the setting of Wilma’s childhood? How did this affect her life? What happened to Wilma when she was five years old, and how did Wilma respond to this hardship? Explain how Wilma was able to achieve the nearly impossible and walk again at church. What would you have done if you had been Wilma or a child with polio? What character traits helped Wilma to be successful? Remind students of the definition of perseverance and discuss how Wilma persevered to reach each of her goals, even when things didn’t go her way.

Technology Extension

Discuss with the class that there are many successful people who have failed before they succeeded, and it was their perseverance that got them where they are today. The following link shows some excellent examples of people who first failed before they succeeded:

<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/15-highly-successful-people-who-failed-their-way-success.html>.

THE GOALS OF PERSEVERANCE

My long-term goal is: _____

When I complete my goal, it will look like...

THE GOALS OF PERSEVERANCE

WHEN I COMPLETE MY GOAL, IT WILL LOOK LIKE...

Short-Term Goal 1:



Short-Term Goal 2:



Short-Term Goal 3:



Short-Term Goal 4:



Short-Term Goal 5:



COMPLETED LONG-TERM GOAL: