

# Dilworth Elementary Character Education

## Perseverance – April

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**Pre-teach:** Greet the students and tell them that today you will be discussing the trait perseverance. Ask the following questions and call on different students for answers. Listed below each question are examples of responses you are looking for. You may need to rephrase students' answers or guide them along.

(Ask) **What is perseverance?**

1. Staying with the task and not giving up.
2. Showing commitment, pride and a positive attitude in completing tasks.
3. Trying again and again and again.
4. Being patient and willing to work hard.

(Ask) **Can you name some people who have shown perseverance?**

1. Lance Armstrong, Thomas Edison, Harriet Tubman, Helen Keller, Stevie Wonder, etc.

**Book:** Read and discuss a story that teaches a lesson on perseverance.

(Ask) **What are ways you can show perseverance?**

1. When you are near the end of race and struggling to finish, find a burst of energy to cross the finish line.
2. Try a new sport or skill that is difficult and don't quit.
3. Study and work hard to improve your grades.
4. Save up your money and do extra chores to buy something special.
5. Help a younger child learn to ride a bicycle or play a new game.
6. Spend hours practicing to play an instrument.
7. Always finish what you start. Do not give up when things get tough.
8. Try something again, even if you failed the first time. Remember you had to learn to walk before you could run!

**Activity:** Complete an activity to go along with your lesson. (Activity suggestions are attached) You can incorporate your activity at any time during your lesson.

**Closing comment:** It takes perseverance to fulfill your dreams.

**"Be like a postage stamp, stick to something until you get there!" ~Josh Billings**

**"Never, never, never give up!" ~Winston Churchill**

## Perseverance Activities

### **Icy Perseverance** (Suggested for grades 2–5) – **Option for all Dilworth 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Classes**

**Materials:** an ice cube for each student with a penny frozen inside

Begin your lesson by giving each student an ice cube. Explain that the first person to get the penny out of their ice **without** putting it in their mouth or hitting it with another object is the winner. You may want to continue your lesson until you have a winner. Afterwards discuss:

1. How does melting the ice cube compare to reaching your goals?
2. Did you ever feel like quitting? Why do some people quit before reaching their goals?
3. Could you have gotten the penny quicker had you broken the rules? Would you feel as good about winning if you didn't follow the rules?
4. How do hard work and perseverance help you achieve your goals?

### **Sink or Swim?** (Suggested for grades K- 3) - **Option for Dilworth 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Classes**

**Materials:** Clear glass bowl with water, modeling clay (Not Play-Doh)

Roll clay into four balls, three of them small and one a little larger (like small and big marbles). Drop each small one into the water and watch them sink. Tell the students that each ball represents a person that feels discouraged or frustrated by life's difficulties. We all feel like that at times. Just like the clay balls, you may want to give up and sink into a sad state of despair. (You can give the clay balls pretend names and talk about why each one might be feeling low. For example, Susie is struggling to finish her science project on time and wants to give up...) Next, take the larger clay ball and start reshaping it to form the shape of a simple canoe. Talk about how this person is not going to give up when faced with a problem. They are choosing to have a positive attitude and show perseverance. Discuss how it's possible to work through the challenges and achieve your goal by "reshaping" your attitude. Put the "boat" in the water and watch it float. Now take each small ball and put them inside the "boat". Ask the students what can happen when a person has a positive attitude and decides to persevere. They not only achieve their goal, but are a positive role model for others. (10-Minute Life Lesson, by Jaime Miller)

### **All Shook Up!** (Suggested for grades K-2) – **Option for Dilworth 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Classes**

**Materials:** Three or four plastic jars with tight lids, a plastic bowl, three or four pints of whipping cream, honey, plastic knives, and sliced bread

Pour a pint of whipping cream into each container and place the lids on securely. Pass the jars among the students giving each student several moments to shake the jar before passing it on. Remind them not to give up -- with perseverance they will have delicious butter. While the students are shaking the jars you may want to read a story. After a few minutes of shaking, stop the students and ask them what would happen if they gave up now. Explain that quitting keeps great things from happening. If we lose patience and give up, nothing good will develop. It should take about 10 minutes for the cream to separate into a lump of butter in each jar. Carefully remove the butter and place it in a large plastic bowl. Drizzle honey over the butter. Invite the kids to spread the delicious treat on a piece of bread. Perseverance is a "sweet" character trait to generously spread throughout our lives! (Edible Objects Talks, Lingo)

### **Reach for the Stars** (Suggested for all grades) – **Option for Dilworth 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Classes**

**Materials:** Paper stars

Give each student a paper star.

Have students write a dream or goal that they hope to achieve on their star and then decorate it. Tell the students that it takes perseverance to fulfill their dreams.

### **Act It Out!** (Suggested for grades 3 -5) – **Option for Dilworth 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Classes**

**Materials:** None

Have students work in small groups to write their own skit demonstrating perseverance. Allow each group to present to the class. This activity may require a little more time, so check with your classroom teacher in advance.

**Hands of Perseverance** (Suggested for grades 3-5) – **All Dilworth 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Classes**

**Materials:** Copies of sign language alphabet

Obtain a copy of the sign language alphabet from the library or the internet. Make copies and handout to the students. Using the handout, teach the students to spell out the word perseverance as you discuss what it means. Then ask the students to spell out words that represent perseverance. For example: focused, determined, positive, sure, and goal. (The Best of Character, by Duane Hodgkin)

**Try, Try, Try Again!!** (Suggested for grades 2-5) - **Option for all Dilworth 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Classes**

**Materials:** None Discuss this quote from Thomas Edison: "I never failed once when I invented the light bulb. It just happened to be a 2,000-step process." Consider how different life might be today if Mr. Edison had chosen to quit after his first few attempts to invent the light bulb. Have the students work in pairs or small groups to write their own quote for perseverance, and then share their quotes with the class.

**I Think I Can, I Think I Can...** (Suggested for grades K - 1) – **All Dilworth Kindergarten Classes**

**Materials:** Story of "The Little Engine that Could" After reading the story of "The Little Engine That Could" have students form a long train, with you being the conductor. While you lead the train around the room have the students repeat the phrase "I think I can, I think I can." Remind the students that with perseverance they can do anything!

**Stick to it!** (Suggested for grades K-3) – **Option for Dilworth 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Classes**

**Materials:** Empty paper towel tubes, enough for each student to have one

Give each student a paper towel tube and explain that they will make a perseverance stick. Have students write the words "Stick to it!" on their tube and then decorate it. Explain to the students that they are to take the stick home. When they see a friend or family member show perseverance, they are to write that person's name on the stick. Encourage students to share with their family the names of people they saw showing perseverance. (You may want to bring a sample completed stick with you and talk about how you used it.)