

# Character Education: Grades 3-5

May 2014

## Perseverance

### 1. Introduction

- a. If this is your first session, introduce yourself and your family.
- b. If you have taught this class before, bring in a picture or souvenir of your child to share with the class.

### 2. Character Education – what it’s all about:

- a. Remember, this is about helping you learn to make good choices – even when you’re having a difficult time. This will help you grow into mature, successful and caring adults.
- b. Recap the previous character traits:
  - i. Respect: Everyone deserves respect. When you respect others – you earn their respect too.
  - ii. Kindness: Being kind to others is not just about making someone else happy – it makes you happy too!
  - iii. Integrity and Courage: Integrity is about doing the right thing even when nobody is looking. Sometimes you need to have courage to show integrity.
  - iv. Self Discipline – only YOU can control yourself.
- c. Now today, we’re going to talk about perseverance.

### 3. Defining PERSEVERANCE

Ask the students to say some words that define or are the same as integrity (write them on the board)

#### THEN SHARE THIS DEFINITION

- a. Having the inner strength to be truthful and trustworthy. (do you know what “inner strength” is?)
- b. Being honorable and having the determination to do the right thing even when others don’t
- c. Working to achieve worthy objectives in spite of difficulty, opposition or discouragement.
- d. Exhibiting patience and having the determination and strength to try again even when you have delays, make mistakes or even fail the first time!

### 4. Discussion questions:

- a. Can you think of a time when you had to use perseverance to complete a task?
- b. How about a time when you didn’t use perseverance and you gave up on something that you really wished you had done? How did that make you feel?

**5. Literature Suggestions:** (Time will probably only allow for one story)

If you have a book at home that you would like to read to the students then please do so. Before reading, think through what you want the students to learn and make a note of questions you intend to ask them. Below are some recommended books (two with suggested questions). All books are either provided in the lesson or can be borrowed from Greensboro Library.

a. **John Henry: An American Legend**, by

- i. When did John Henry show perseverance?
- ii. Why do you think others wanted to follow John Henry all the time?
- iii. Why do the train engineers sing about the story of John Henry?

b. **The Ox Cart Man**, by

- i. Why does the father make the long trip to town each autumn?
- ii. Why does the family need to work so much?
- iii. Why does the family's work change with each season?
- iv. How would you like that life?
- v. Who was perseverant? How? Who else? How?

c. **Now One Foot, Now the Other**, by Tomie de Palao

d. **Abe Lincoln**, by Kay Winters

**6. ACTIVITIES** (Choose one or 2 activities depending on time)

**a. Thinking about Perseverance**

- i. PREPARATION:** Print off enough 'Thinking about Perseverance sheets from the end of this lesson to give one to each student.
- ii.** Hand out the sheets and explain to the students that they will be making a comic strip to show perseverance.
- iii.** In box 1 show the situation and conflict.
- iv.** In box 2 show the decision that is made to persevere.
- v.** In box 3 show the characters working on the solution.
- vi.** In box 4 show the successful outcome.

**b. We all Persevere**

- i.** Write each student's name on a long piece of paper (one name per strip of paper) and place them in a basket or box.
- ii.** Let each child draw a name from the basket and write one sentence on the strip about how that person shows perseverance.
- iii.** Gather all the strips back into the basket.
- iv.** As a whole group, one at a time, remove each strip from the basket. Read aloud the name and the sentence another student wrote about how he or she displays perseverance. Ask students to build on each sentence by providing examples of their own.

- 7. Reminder:** Perseverance is exhibiting patience and having the determination and strength to try again even when you have delays, make mistakes or fail the first time. There is an old saying that goes: *If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.*

## Thinking About Perseverance: A Comic Strip
