

# Character Education

May/June 2014

## Perseverance

### Define Perseverance

- a. Being persistent in the pursuit of worthy objectives in spite of difficulty, opposition or discouragement.
- b. Exhibiting patience and having the determination and strength to try again when confronted with delays, mistakes or failures.

### Literature Selections

Choose a book to read aloud and discuss.

1. “The Little Engine that Could” by Watty Piper
2. “The Tortoise and the Hare: an Aesop fable adapted by Janet Stevens
3. “Three Cheers for Tacky” by Helen Lester
4. “Angus and the Cat” by Marjorie Flack
5. “Ox Cart Man” by Donald Hall

### Activities

Summer Goal & “Try, Try, Try...” worksheet

“Trying my Patience” worksheet

Rewrite negative phrases *As a group, or individually, have students rewrite the negative phrases into more positive phrases. Share aloud with the class.*

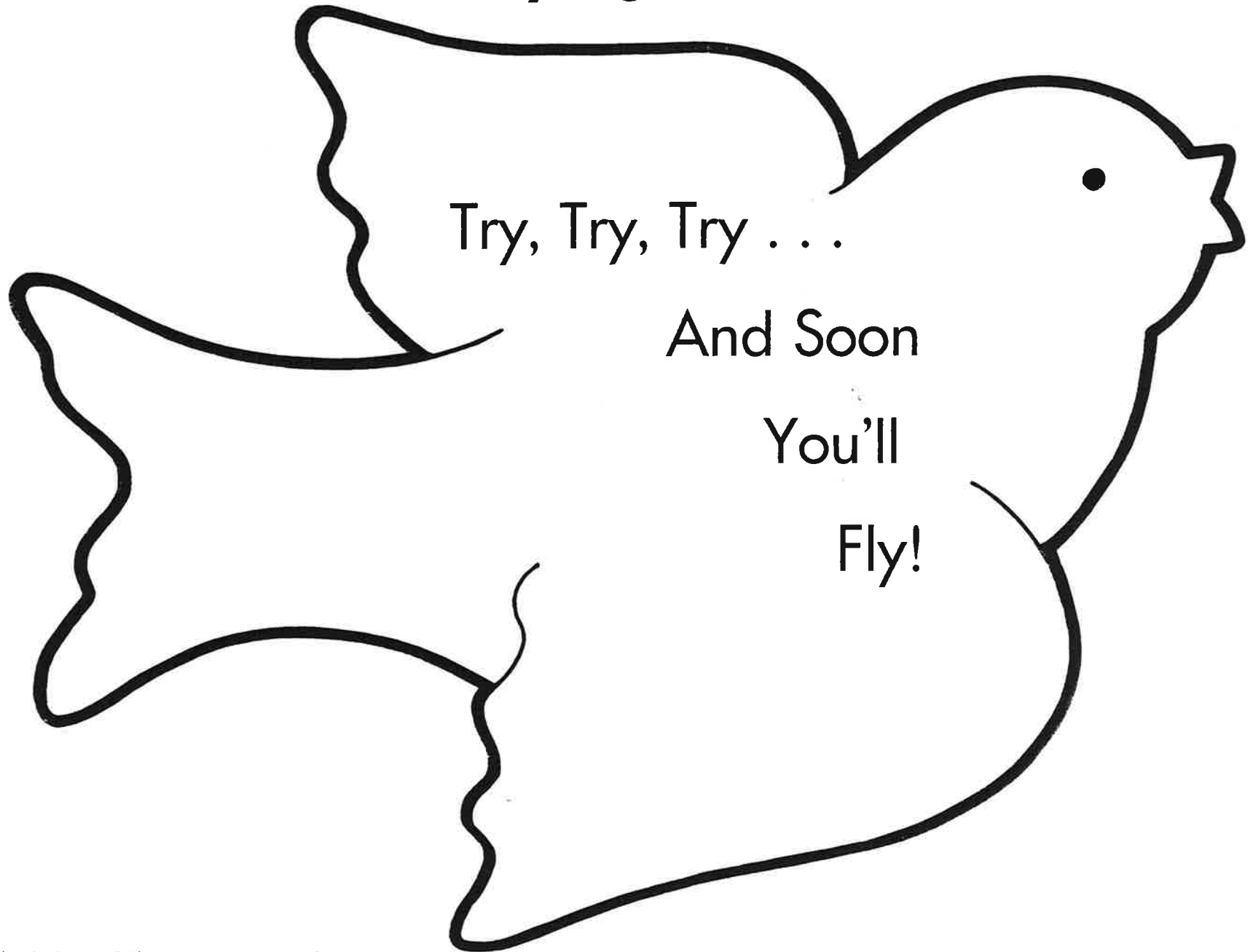
“Goalies” game

### Closing

## Summer Goal/ Flying Bird

- Have the children brainstorm about things they would like to learn, accomplish or achieve.
- Encourage each student to decide on one goal that they will work towards this summer.
- Have student write their goal on the Flying Bird.
- Each student should cut out their bird and attach a piece of yarn to the top so that it can “fly.”
- Verbalize that they can work hard and persevere to achieve their goal... “Try, Try, Try...And soon You’ll Fly!”
- Birds can be hung in the classroom or at their home to remind them to persevere and achieve their goal this summer!

# Flying Bird



## Trying My Patience

Read the following situations. Then, decide which would be the most appropriate, patient response.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Situation 1

Your teacher gave a small group assignment to make a poster. There is only one bottle of glue for all groups to use, and the poster must be completed by the end of the school day. In this situation you would . . .

- ask a person in the group who is using the glue when your group can use it
- give up on the project since it might not get done in time if you wait for the glue
- when the group next to you is not looking, take the glue from their work table

### Situation 2

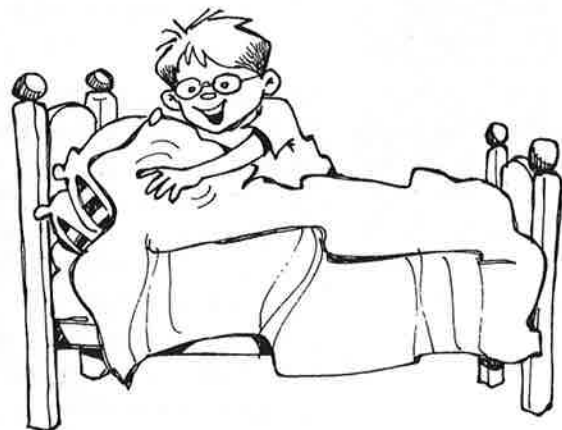
A friend borrowed your favorite book a few weeks ago and hasn't returned it. You keep your books in good shape and are concerned that it may get tattered by your friend. In this situation you would . . .

- ask to get your book back immediately with no explanation
- ask to borrow something that your friend has and keep it until you get your book
- ask your friend if she is enjoying the book and when she thinks she'll return it

### Situation 3

Two weeks ago your mom told you that she would raise your allowance after she saw that you were consistently keeping your room clean. You've made extra effort recently to make sure your room is neat because you're ready for the allowance raise. In this situation you would . . .

- ask Mom if she had an idea of how long it would take to prove to her that you are making more effort to keep your room looking neat
- demand that she give you your allowance raise since your room was looking so neat
- stop cleaning your room since it will take too long for Mom to notice improvement



## **Perseverance**

Re-writing negative phrases into positive statements.  
Have the students re-write the following statements:

1. I can't do this!
2. This is impossible!
3. This is the end of the world!
4. I'll never be able to do that!
5. That will take forever!

Discuss how having a more positive attitude and outlook on a situation is a healthy way to persevere.

## Goalies

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*Group size:* 2 or more

*Age:* 5 and up

*Materials:* handful of pennies or other coins

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**E**xplain to a child that you're going to play a little game. Show her the handful of pennies and tell her that these are special pennies called "goalies." Stand a few feet away from the child and ask her to see if she can catch the "goalies" when you toss them. Then toss seven or eight or the whole handful of coins in one throw. Naturally, they will go all over the place and your child will probably catch only one or two, if any.

Now try it again, except this time, carefully toss just one coin at a time to the child. After you have gone through all the coins, count how many she was able to catch (hopefully, most of them).

Explain that the reason these pennies are called "goalies" is that they are like goals. When we try to work on too many goals at the same time, it is difficult, and most of the goals won't be accomplished—like the pennies tossed all at once, most of which will be caught. But when we take each goal one or two at a time, with plan-

## Goal Setting

ning and forethought, we will have more success and less tendency to feel overwhelmed.

For older children and teenagers this activity can also relate to the principle of setting short-term and long-term goals. Just as the child was not able to catch all the pennies at one time, a long-term goal cannot be accomplished overnight. It needs to be broken down into smaller bites and taken one step at a time. This idea can be applied to such goals as learning to play the piano, earning scouting awards, working on a term paper or project for school, getting in shape, or saving money for a new bike, CD player, or college.

With young children, I usually extend this activity with a fun coin-toss game. The easiest way is to simply pitch pennies into a jar or bowl; each child is given three pennies and must stand behind a line or marker as he tosses his pennies. He gets a point for each penny that goes into the bowl. Then it's the next person's turn. A more challenging game is to toss coins into a muffin tin. You can count one point for every coin that lands in a cup, and two points for those landing in one of the two center cups. If you feel an enormous spurt of energy, you can put a small piece of masking tape inside each cup of the muffin tin and label each cup with a number (1 to 12 for a 12-cup muffin tin). Add up the total points from all the cups where a coin lands.

This activity worked for me with my son Alex when he was eight years old. One night as we talked, I could see his lip begin to tremble and his big blue eyes widen like saucers to hold his tears. He had just joined the Cub