

# Perseverance (Grades 3-5)

## For PurposeFull Families

### EXPLANATION:

This month we're talking about the trait of Perseverance. The dictionary defines it as: "Persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success." The definition we are using in class is:

**Perseverance: the ability to work through situations even when there are obstacles or challenges in the way.**

Angela Duckworth is an author and researcher who discovered that the most successful people in our world right now have one big thing in common: their ability to persevere through tough situations. She calls it Grit! In fact, she found that Grit is a higher indicator of success than SAT scores, IQ, or GPA. This month, we are talking about how we respond when things get really hard or when we feel like we've failed or can't do something. Over the next few weeks, there will be stories of inspiring and resilient role models. We will talk about what happens and what our thought process is when we feel frustrated or stumped. We will talk about having a Growth Mindset instead of a Fixed Mindset - to see challenges and failure as an opportunity to learn or try a new path instead of thinking, "I'm just not good at this" or, "If I failed this time, I will fail again next time." People that persevere are people that know failure is just the beginning of new growth or learning!

### CONVERSATION STARTERS:

- Have you ever heard the word stick-to-it-tive-ness? What do you think it means? When have you shown stick-to-it-tive-ness? How did sticking to something show Perseverance? When have you decided not to stick with something? What happened? What did you learn? How, if at all, might you do that differently?
- "Positive self-talk" is when we say encouraging words to ourselves in our minds and sometimes out loud. What does positive self-talk have to do with Perseverance? Can you name some examples of positive self-talk that you can use when faced with a challenge? Examples:
  - Even though this is tough, I am going to keep trying.
  - If it gets too hard, I can ask for help.
  - Sometimes things don't go as planned and that's ok.
- Share a personal story of Perseverance with your child. What were your challenges? What or who helped you persevere? What tangible steps did you take? What lesson did you learn?

### QUESTIONS YOU COULD ASK:

- What do you think the expression, "Go slow to go fast" means? How could you apply it to the last project you did? How about the next project you'll do? How could we apply it to our chores at home? To keeping the house clean? To straightening our rooms? How about in our relationships?
- How would you teach someone to persevere? What would it look like?
- What's a challenge for you right now? What's the hardest part? What are some resources - people, strategies, tools, inspiration - that could help you? What's one step we can take together to overcome this challenge?

### APPLICATION:

#### Books:

- [Hatchet](#) by Gary Paulsen
- [Almost Home](#) by Joan Bauer
- [She Persisted Around the World](#) by Chelsea Clinton
- [What Do You Do With A Problem?](#) By Kobi Yamada
- [The Most Magnificent Thing](#) by Ashley Spires
- [Leo The Lightning Bug](#) by Eric Drachman
- [The Tortoise and the Hare](#) by Jerry Pinkney

### FOR YOUR READING:

- [Mindset](#) by Carol Dweck
- [10 Big Ideas from Mindset](#)
- [Stop keeping score: learn instead](#)
- [Why "good job!" is the Worst Kind of Praise](#)

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### ACTIVITY:

Work together to create an "I Will" statement to help your children live out the value of Perseverance. For example: "I will fall down 10 times and get up 11." Once they have their own "I Will" intentions, invite them to write them down and post them on the bathroom mirror that they use, so they can see it and be reminded every time they brush their teeth.

### PURPOSEFULL PURSUITS:

#### Unlocking Fixed Mindsets

A hallmark of having a "Growth Mindset" is persevering through challenges and mistakes to adopt an "I can" mindset and attitude. Work together as a family to unlock some fixed mindsets. Come up with a few of your own fixed mindsets to unlock, then focus this week to change I **cannots** to I **can**s:

*I can't do math.*  
*I stink at science.*  
*I'm not that smart.*  
*I'm not a good writer.*  
*I'll never spell very well.*  
*I am not an artist because I can't draw well.*

**Toughness:** 2  
**Time:** 1  
**Type:** Group

#### Book Scavenger Hunt

Go through the books in your home or at the local library to find stories with a Perseverance theme. Set a timer and see who can find the most in a desired time frame (we suggest 15 minutes). Meet back in the living room or the middle of the library and share what you found, giving support for how each book showcases Perseverance.

**Toughness:** 4  
**Time:** 4  
**Type:** Partner

### Perseverance Posters

Part of practicing perseverance is setting specific goals and developing action steps to work towards them!

Optional materials: You can gather a bunch of magazines or newspapers - you can often find inexpensive ones from local thrift stores or libraries - and print out images from online or use your own craft supplies to draw your own images!

Each member of the family should have a piece of paper or poster. Each person should choose a goal they want to work towards and an image to represent the goal. Really focus on an image that shows not only the accomplishment but how it will feel as well. Place the image in the middle of the paper. Then cut out and glue or draw images that show all of the action steps you will take to get there all around your goal. You can also glue or draw words of inspiration and encouragement. When your collages are done, share them with the rest of the family and place them together somewhere everyone can see them regularly. Now not only do you have a goal and action plan, but you have accountability partners to check in with you and motivate you to practice Perseverance!

**Toughness:** 3  
**Time:** 4  
**Type:** Flexible

### Accomplishing the Impossible!

Can you fit your whole body through an index card? While it sounds impossible, with the correct folding and cutting technique, you can make it happen! Give each family member a 4x6 index card and a pair of scissors. Tip: Have extra index cards on hand to allow family members to make multiple attempts! Ready for the answer? Read the directions here: <https://www.wikihow.com/Fit-Your-Body-Through-an-Index-Card> for the solution.

**Toughness:** 3  
**Time:** 1  
**Type:** Group