

# PERSEVERING

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## AGENDA

- Starter
- The Magic Word
- Make a New Plan, Stan
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

### Objectives

Students will recognise that they do not need to abandon a goal when they meet obstacles or difficulties.

Students will define “perseverance” and discuss its importance.

Students will revise stepping-stone goals in order to overcome an obstacle and achieve a goal.

### Materials Needed

- Objects eg. cones, balls, hoops. Materials/Blindfolds for a quarter of your class. (Part I)

**Starter (3 minutes)**

Give students an example or two of fictional characters who exemplify perseverance. Choose characters from books, movies, or television who would currently be well known by your students. Call on students to tell what they know about the characters before making your point. Elicit responses that indicate the obstacles that the characters overcame.

Explain that in today's class, students will learn that they don't have to give up on something that is important to them just because they have run into an obstacle. They can find ways around it in order to keep striving for their goal.

**Part I The Magic Word (10 minutes)**

Purpose: Students define "perseverance" and discuss its importance.

**1. Students define "perseverance."**

Write the verb "persevere" on the board. Prompt students to discuss and formulate a definition of "persevere." Have students write ideas and definitions on the board.

At the same time, ask a student to look up the word in the dictionary and read the definitions aloud to the class. (Merriam-Webster defines "persevere" as "to persist in a state, enterprise, or undertaking in spite of counterinfluences, opposition, or discouragement.") Challenge students to consider the dictionary definition in light of their own definition and to make adjustments as they see fit.

Ask students if they think that perseverance would help them achieve their goals. Call on individuals to explain their answers.

**2. Students reflect on the obstacles they may face as they strive to achieve a goal.**

Point out that no one can accurately predict the future, so it's hard to know exactly what might happen when we make an action plan to achieve a long-term goal. Explain that when students meet an obstacle, their first reaction should not be to give up; it should be to persevere—to keep trying.

Invite students to brainstorm factors that could become difficulties or obstacles to achieving a long-term goal. Prompt students by mentioning obstacles such as the following:

- Time: One stepping-stone goal may take more time than you thought, or there may be other steps you need to take that you didn't know about at first.
- Expenses: Something may cost more than you anticipated, or you may need things that you didn't even know about at first.
- Interest: You may lose interest for a while, or you may choose to do something else temporarily.
- Illness: You may get sick, or you may have to postpone everything for a while because of a health problem.
- Distractions: You may have friends who distract you from your goals.
- Other changes: Your family may move, you may change schools, or individuals who are important to your plan may end their involvement for some reason.

Through discussion, elicit from students the idea that they can overcome these obstacles by revising their stepping-stone goals or by making a new action plan. Remind students that if they persevere, they will overcome obstacles and they will succeed.

## **Part II    Make a New Plan, Stan (15 minutes)**

Purpose: Students revise stepping-stone goals in order to overcome an obstacle and achieve a goal.

### **1. Students set stepping-stone goals.**

Divide the class into groups of four or five students. Assign a long-term goal to each group, and have them make a plan for achieving it. Choose goals such as the following:

- Make a sports team.
- Get the lead part in the school play.
- Sing and play in a rock band someday.
- Go to university/college or get an apprenticeship.

Give students about five minutes to work out an action plan for achieving their goal.

### **2. Students revise their plans.**

After students have completed their plans, explain that they have run into an obstacle. Suggest the following obstacles to overcome:

- You make the varsity team, but break your arm.
- You win the lead part in the play, but you get laryngitis.
- You are in a band whose members can't play their instruments very well.

Encourage students to make new action plans based on the difficulties they have encountered. Give them another five minutes to work out their new plans.

When students have finished, invite students from each group to share their new action plans with the class. Encourage other students to offer additional suggestions for overcoming the obstacles presented to each group.

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### Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to explain how they can ensure that their goals are realistic. Ask students to define “persevere.” Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- To overcome obstacles on the road to achieving a long-term goal, revise your action plan.
- Successful people don't give up—they persevere.

### Student Assessment

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1. Explain why perseverance is vital for achieving your goals.
2. Describe a situation in your life in which you faced an obstacle and overcame it.
3. Think of an obstacle that could come between you and your long-term goal.  
Write down ways that you can overcome or avoid this obstacle; then, revise your plan in a way that lets you still achieve your long-term goal.

## LESSON EXTENSIONS

### Using Quotations

“Success is failure with the dirt brushed off.”

Have students create posters or collages to illustrate this idea.

### Addressing Multiple Learning Modes

Have students reflect on the goals they have written previously and make changes now that they are more knowledgeable.

### Writing in Your Journal

Have students make a list of the goals they achieved in the past week and how it felt to make those goals happen.

### Using Technology

Explain to students that many editors are rejected by publishers before they sell a book! Have students research information about people from various fields who struggled and eventually achieved their goals.

### Homework

Read Langston Hughes’s poem “Mother to Son” aloud. In it, a mother tells her son that “life for me ain’t been no crystal stair,” advising him to keep on trying even when life gets hard. Have students devise interview questions for their parents/guardians about obstacles they’ve overcome.

### Additional Activity

Have students plan a class goal to celebrate the end of term.