

Lesson 27

Patience and Perseverance

TEACHER PREPARATION

KEY CONCEPTS

Perseverance helps you reach your goals in life.

Patience helps you learn how to work through hard things in life.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. recognize the value of patience and perseverance.
2. summarize ideas they can take to redirect frustration into patience and perseverance.
3. recognize the value of delaying gratification.

KEY TERMS

Frustration: the feeling of being upset or annoyed, especially because of the inability to change or achieve something.

Patience: the capacity to accept and tolerate delay, trouble or suffering without getting angry or upset.

Perseverance: steadfastness in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Patience and perseverance are such important character traits for our students to develop. Like so many other character traits, they do not come naturally or easily. In our world of instant access, it is even harder for our students to learn to be patient and to persevere when something is hard. It is crucial for you to model these traits for your students and help guide them to learn how to become a patient person.

You can encourage perseverance in many ways:

- be sure they know you believe in each child's ability to succeed.
- help them set goals (start small) by listening to their hearts.
- provide reality checks while helping them recognize steps they need

to take to reach their goals.

- expect their best and do not accept excuses for inferior work.
- give positive feedback for good effort.
- help them realize mistakes are part of the learning process.
- teach them how to regroup and start over when they make a mistake.
- motivate them to try new things.
- encourage them to take responsibility for their efforts and make good choices.
- let them see you struggle to accomplish something and model not giving up.

It is important for us to provide challenges not easily achieved. Our students need to know it is okay to get frustrated, but to not let it stop them from continuing to try. Offer praise for their good efforts.

Instead of always praising them by telling them how smart they are, you may want to consider praising their efforts. For example, instead of saying, “You did such a good job on the math test! You are so smart!” You might want to say, “I really noticed how hard you worked on the math test even though it was difficult.” You are acknowledging their sincere effort rather than just acknowledging their grade.

Some students will not take chances by challenging themselves with harder opportunities because they do not want to make a poor grade. Part of learning to persevere is learning to accept challenges in life and working diligently to achieve them.

MATERIALS/PREPARATION

1. In **Discovering the Lesson**, one of the activities involves making ice cream. You may want to practice this at home before you conduct this experiment at school. You will need a small plastic bag and a larger plastic bag. The bags need to close either by zipping them shut or by putting tape across the folded opening. Also needed: ½ cup (125 ml) of milk, 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of sugar, 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of vanilla, ice for the larger bag, and a little bit of salt. If you decide to make more ice cream, you will need to bring more ingredients. Bring the needed measuring utensils and spoons for the students who will

- taste the ice cream. If you choose to do one of the alternate activities, you will need to prepare ahead of time for that activity.
2. For **Applying the Lesson**, write the first part of the chart on the board or large paper before the lesson starts. You will need a marker or chalk to complete the chart. You will also need two marshmallows or pieces of candy for each child.
 3. For **Sharing the Lesson**, prepare three poster signs with the slogans listed in this section.
 4. For **Going Deeper**, you will need a 2-3 foot (1/2–1 meter) piece of string or twine for each student. In each string, tie between two and five knots, some tighter than others.

LESSON

BEGINNING THE LESSON

[Say to the students:] **When we left Hector, Dugan and Trish, the Librarian had given them their library cards and talked to them about the importance of being responsible. Let's see what she is going to tell them to do with their cards.**

READINESS [5 minutes]

[Read to the students:] **Chapter 27 – A Girl Named Star**

Trish was looking at her library card. She'd never had anything with her picture on it before, and she was trying to decide if she liked how she looked. She suddenly remembered the words of the old woman on the Isle of Beute. "True Beauty comes forth when it is welcomed and put to good use."

"I think you may be ready to check out your book now," said the Librarian.

"The one about the orphaned girl who became a queen?" asked Trish.

"The very one!" said the Librarian.

As she spoke, the table that had swallowed their books at the beginning of their adventure, began to transform.

The table's wooden top buckled and flipped back on itself creating a two-foot tower in the middle with a small slide descending from the miniature tower.

SWWWISH! The book Trish had selected slid down the slide directly

in front of her.

Trish picked up the book, and when she did, she found she couldn't put it down. Her longing to step into the story was so compelling that she sat down and read it from cover to cover.

Dugan, Hector, and even Edgar tried to distract her, but to no avail. They had never seen Trish so captured by anything, let alone a book.

Some time later, Trish let out a long sigh, closed the book and looked up at her friends.

"Welcome back," said Hector.

"Seems that we lost you to the pages of your book," added Dugan. "Want to tell us what was so interesting that you could ignore even Edgar." Edgar pushed his snout under Trish's hand to get her to pet him. She smiled.

"There is so much to tell!" exclaimed Trish. "The king in the story held a beauty contest and a girl named Star won! The king fell in love with her and married her. Then her cousin, who had adopted her after her parents died, got in trouble with the king's top general, who wanted to kill him and all of his people!"

"Slow down and take a breath," laughed Hector.

"Way too much information," added Dugan picking up the book and turning it over in his hand. "I take it this girl named Star was quite beautiful."

"Oh, yes," said Trish. "But she used her beauty to help save her people, not to make a big deal of herself. She was very brave and her cousin, who was like a father to her, guided her and encouraged her. But a moment came when there was a good chance that the king might actually kill her for stepping into his presence uninvited and she was scared. Her cousin said, 'Who knows if everything in your life has been leading to this defining moment?' And you know what she said? 'If I die, I die!' She knew she had to try and keep her people from being killed."

"You need to take another breath," laughed Dugan.

"And did she?" asked Hector.

"Did she what?" asked Trish.

"Did she die? Did the king kill her?" asked Hector.

"No, he didn't. But the king's top general did his very best to kill her cousin and he would have killed her, too. He was such an evil man," said Trish.

"So your book was full of adventure and danger, beauty and

ugliness,” interrupted the Librarian. “Is that what you take from the story? Courage, or perhaps, responsibility?”

“That is all there, and more,” replied Trish. “But that is not what stood out to me about Star. Star spent an entire year just getting ready to meet the king. And even after they were married and she was a queen, Star had to prepare herself to face her enemy, the commander with a murderous hatred for her cousin and all of her people. At times in the story, I wanted her to just tell everyone how cruel the commander really was. But she waited and patiently prepared for just the right moment — and I realized if she had not waited, all would have been lost.”

“Do you know what that quality is called?” asked the Librarian.

“Oh, do tell me,” pleaded Trish.

“Perseverance,” answered the Librarian. “It is not easy to develop, but it is absolutely critical to any long-term success.”

“I still don’t know what perseverance means,” said Dugan.

“Perseverance is not giving up on something you want,” replied the Librarian.

“That’s right,” added Trish. “Star faced a whole lot of obstacles but wouldn’t quit even though it could have cost her life!”

“So how does the story end?” prompted Hector.

Trish smiled and said, “I wouldn’t want to spoil it for you by telling you what happened next.”

“I’m in!” said Dugan. “Sounds like a great adventure story and I love make believe stories.”

“This book isn’t fiction,” corrected Trish. “It really happened, outside the library in the real world.”

“No way!” exclaimed Dugan.

“Yup!” replied Trish.

EXPLORE (10 minutes)

[Say to the students:] **Trish really enjoyed reading Star’s story, didn’t she? What is perseverance? What did the children learn about perseverance from Star’s life? Sometimes having to be patient and wait for something causes a lot of frustration. That is very natural. I am sure Star felt frustrated sometimes as she waited for just the right time to tell the King what was going on. If you learn how to handle frustration by being patient, you will have perseverance and you will learn how to work**

through the hard things. Being patient helps you know things are worth waiting for ... you will watch and know when to act just like Star did.

You saw in Star's story how patience and perseverance go hand in hand. You need patience in your life in order to persevere! Can you name any areas of your life where you need patience? *[You may hear answers like "I need to be patient with my little sister;" or "I need patience when I am waiting my turn to play."]* Now, let's think of some times when you need perseverance. *[Possible answers: learning to play an instrument; learning to ride a bike; learning to swim; learning to play sports better; memorizing information for school; sticking with an assignment until it is finished. Help guide your students to think of activities they would do in their culture and at their age that would require perseverance.]* When you think about doing these things, can you understand why you need patience in order to persevere?

We are going to do an experiment that will require patience. You will find if you will persevere and stick with this experiment until it is finished, there is a reward for your perseverance. That is called delayed gratification. You work hard and keep pushing toward the goal of whatever you are doing and, at the end, you will see good results. In this lesson, we are going to learn about patience and perseverance and how you can handle frustration.

DISCOVER (20 minutes)

[If you do not have access to the ingredients for making ice cream, please choose from alternate activities listed at the end of this section. If you do have access to the ingredients for making ice cream, say to the students:] I am going to invite three of you to come to the front of the room. *[If you want to end up with enough ice cream for everyone to have a spoonful, you will need to have several teams participating in this experiment.]* We are going to make ice cream today! That is our goal ... but it is going to take some patience! One of our friends will hold a large plastic bag, one will hold a smaller plastic bag and one will help me with all the ingredients. *(As you talk, direct the students to help set up the experiment.)* We are going to pour ½ cup (125 ml) of milk, 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of sugar, and 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of vanilla into the smaller plastic bag. Let's fill the larger plastic bag with ice and pour a little salt on top of the ice. Now, we will tightly close the smaller plastic bag and put it inside the larger

bag. Close the larger bag tightly. Our helpers will vigorously shake the bag for 5-8 minutes. While they are shaking, I would love for some of you to tell us about a time when you persevered and accomplished a goal. *[After the ice cream is done, you may want to have enough spoons for everyone to try the ice cream.]* What was the purpose of this experiment? It was a fun example of how we need to be patient in order to accomplish a goal. Our goal was to make ice cream. Did we accomplish our goal? Did it take patience? Did it take perseverance?

Were you ever frustrated while we were doing our experiment? *[They may have gotten frustrated waiting for the ice cream to harden enough to eat ... especially the ones who were doing the shaking!]* When we get frustrated while waiting, we need to learn how to stop and redirect our thoughts to help us wait. What did we do while the shaking was going on? We started thinking about times when we persevered and accomplished a goal. That helped pass the time, didn't it? You can do the same thing. When you get frustrated while working toward a goal and having to wait and persevere, stop and think about how you could make the situation better. You might need to put the project down and walk away to get some fresh air. If you are waiting in line, you might smile at the person in front or behind you and start a friendly conversation. It is a good idea to remember ways to calm yourself down when you start feeling frustrated. That will help you learn how to think through problems and resolve them with patience and perseverance.

Alternative activities:

[Help your students visually see the benefits of patience and perseverance by:

- *observing an ant farm.*
- *observing a caterpillar transform to a cocoon and, then, a butterfly.*
- *planting seeds and watching plants grow and produce fruit or vegetables.*

Choose one of these activities and allow your students opportunities over time to document the changes.]

APPLY (30 minutes)

[Say to the students:] Before we begin this part of the lesson, I am going to give each one of you something special but I don't want you to touch it

yet. *[Place on each desk a small delicious treat – it could be a marshmallow, a piece of candy ... something that would be tempting to your students to eat right away.]* **You have a choice. You can either eat your treat right away or if you wait until this lesson is over, you can have two of them.** *[Continue right into the lesson. The point of this part of the lesson is to see which of your students grasp the point of delayed gratification. Those who wait understand waiting can produce even better results.]*

[Share your chart you have prepared on the board or on a large piece of paper:]

“What can I say to myself?”

Instead of:

I’m not good at this.

I give up.

I can’t make this any better.

I just can’t do math.

It’s too late. I made a mistake.

It’s good enough like it is.

She’s so smart. I will never be that smart.

Try thinking:

[Invite your students to take each statement one at a time and brainstorm what they could put under the “Try thinking” side of the chart. Here are some possible answers.]

“What can I say to myself?”

Instead of:

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Try thinking:

I am going to try again.

I am going to ask for help.

I will keep trying.

I am going to train my brain to do math better.

Mistakes help me learn what not to do next time.

Is this really my best work?

I am going to figure out how she does it.

When you are faced with challenges and need to persevere, remember these things. You can do it!

Now, who still has their treat on their desk? If you waited to eat it, I am going to give you another one. If you decided to go ahead and eat it sometime during the lesson, I hope you enjoyed it! Those who waited enjoyed it twice! Perseverance and patience pays off!

SHARE (5 minutes)

[Say to the students:] You have learned a lot about the importance of being patient and persevering to accomplish a goal. Turn to your neighbor and Think/Pair/Share what you are going to do this year that will take perseverance.

ENDING THE LESSON

[Say to the students:] I have made three posters for our room to help us remember to persevere. [Show the students your posters.]

Poster Slogans

**I can't do it ... YET!
Practice makes progress!
Mistakes are opportunities to learn!**

We are going to use these thoughts in our class this year. I am proud when I see you developing these kinds of character traits in your lives.

GOING DEEPER (optional)

[Prepare lengths of string or twine, one for each of your students. Each should be 2-3 feet ($\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 meter) in length. Tie between two to five knots in each length, with some students' knots tied tighter than others. The point of the variation is to make sure some students will take longer to untie them than others.

Distribute the strings with knots, one to each student. If you have any students who are disabled, less dexterous or have any other reason the task will be harder for them, be sure to give them a string with only two knots.]

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[Say to the students:] Untie your knots as quickly as you can. When you are finished, take your string to the back of the room and hold it up so I can see there are no knots in it. [If anyone asks why some strings have more knots than others, tell them you will explain later. While the students are working, circulate and encourage any who seem frustrated or are quitting before they are finished.]

[When everyone has gone to the back of the room, except one or two, say to the students:] I'd like our last student (or students) to come to the front of the room. Let's everyone clap for our last finishers! [Lead everyone in clapping or cheering. Ask the class:] Why do you think I had us all applaud for the ones who finished last, instead of the ones who finished first? [Let one or more students answer.] I think there is something in the Bible that will help explain why we were cheering for those who finished last.

[Ask a student to read the passage, or for younger students, read the passage to them.]

The man who does not give up when tests come is happy *[James 1:12, New Life Version].*

[Say to the students:] In this lesson, we've been learning about patience and perseverance. I intentionally tied more knots in some of the strings than in others. I also tied some of the knots tighter. In your life, you will always find some things harder than others. You'll also learn in any task, some people will find it easier than others do. What do you think James, who was a member of Jesus' family, is saying in this verse? [Let one or more students respond.] I think he's saying that sometimes the greatest achievement is not giving up, but instead, persevering, especially when something is really difficult. That is why we clapped for those who persevered, even when it was very difficult. In fact, let's all applaud for them one more time. Hooray, for those who persevered! [Lead the class in applauding.]

PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

The lesson this week was about perseverance and patience. Patience and perseverance are very important character traits for your child to develop, but young children are wired to want and need things immediately. Like so many other character traits, patience and perseverance do not come naturally or easily. In our world of instant access, it is even more difficult for children to learn to be patient and to persevere when something is difficult.

You can encourage perseverance in many ways:

- be sure your child knows you believe in his or her ability to succeed;
- help your child set goals (start small) by listening to his or her desires;
- provide reality checks while helping your child recognize steps he or she needs to take to reach goals;
- expect your child's best; lovingly do not accept excuses for inferior work;
- give positive feedback for good effort;
- help your child realize mistakes are part of the learning process;
- teach your child how to regroup, or start over, when mistakes are made;
- motivate your child to try new things;
- encourage your child to take responsibility for his or her efforts and make good choices;
- let your child see you struggle to accomplish something; model perseverance ... not giving up.

Questions you might ask your child:

1. Would you please tell me about Star? (Star was an orphan who became a queen. She had to have wisdom, courage, patience and perseverance to stand up for her people when others wanted to kill them.)
2. What are some things challenging your patience at school? At home?
3. How can your teacher and I encourage your patience or perseverance?

Parents, share with your child about a time when you had to persevere. What were the results of your patience and perseverance?



