



Character Education Infused English-Language Arts Lessons

Perseverance and “I Prove Myself a Hunter”

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| <p>Grade Level: 6-7 (Remedial Reading)</p> <p>Character Education Focus: Perseverance</p> <p>Summary</p> <p>Using the short story “I Prove Myself a Hunter” as a beginning point, students will connect the definition for <i>perseverance</i> with Paul, the main character in the story. The students will evaluate him and his actions based on this definition and see that the importance of having perseverance is the theme of this story. Students will reflect on how perseverance applies to their own lives. (Two to three 40-minute periods.)</p> | <p>Materials Needed</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. “I Prove Myself a Hunter,” short story in <i>Bridges to Literature: Level II</i>, McDougal Littell, 20022. <i>Vocabulary Words And Definitions</i> handout3. <i>Plot Diagram</i> handout |
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Academic-Character Education Objectives

Students will:

1. Understand and define the trait of *perseverance*.
2. Understand, define, and write a sentence for each vocabulary word: current, fracture, handicapped, infection, kayak.
3. Analyze the main character’s thoughts and evaluate his actions.
4. Understand and identify the theme of the story.
5. Demonstrate their understanding of the plot elements of the story.
6. Reflect on how the trait of perseverance relates to their own life experience.

California English-Language Arts Standards Addressed

Reading

- 1.0 Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development
- 1.3 Clarify word meanings through the use of definition, example, restatement, or contrast.

Reading

- 3.0 Literary Response and Analysis
- 3.2 Identify events that advance the plot and determine how each event explains past or present action(s) or foreshadow future action(s).
- 3.3 Analyze characterization as delineated through a character’s thoughts, words, speech patterns, and actions; the narrator’s description; and the thoughts, words, and actions of other characters.
- 3.4 Identify and analyze recurring themes across works (e.g., the value of bravery, loyalty, and friendship; the effects of loneliness).

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Lesson Procedures

Part One

1. Tell students they will be reading a story about someone who demonstrated *perseverance*. Ask them what they think *perseverance* means (*working hard to set and achieve my personal goals, not letting obstacles get in the way*). Discuss the term *perseverance* and provide an example. Ask students to work in pairs to come up with their own example. Have students share their examples with the class.
2. Distribute the handout with the vocabulary words. Introduce the vocabulary words from the story and their definitions to the students. Ask the same pair of students to work together to generate and write one sentence for each word.

Part Two

3. Give students the following response journal prompt:
Based on our discussion on perseverance, tell about a time when you had to persevere. Did you ultimately reach your goal? What obstacles did you have to overcome? How important was it to you that you finish the task?
4. Read the story, "I Prove Myself a Hunter," aloud in class, having different students read different sections of the story.
5. During reading, stop and discuss situations in which Paul has something difficult to overcome. Discuss how he deals with it. For example:
 - *When Paul's leg was amputated he thought he had lost everything. Why?*
 - *What do you think will happen to Paul when he returns to his village?*
 - *Do you think Paul will be able to continue to hunt now that he has only one leg? Why or why not?*
 - *What problems did Paul have when he tried to hunt?*
 - *How do you think he will try to overcome his problems?*

Part Three

6. After reading the story, discuss the elements of plot with the class: characters, setting, conflict/resolution, and theme.
7. Have students complete the Plot Diagram handout, which addresses the plot elements listed below. The most important part is the **theme** of the story, which ties in with the trait of *perseverance*. Students should be instructed to use the lesson vocabulary words in their plot diagrams.
 - Introduction (including characters, setting, and the conflict)
 - Rising action
 - Climax
 - Falling action and conclusion
 - Theme
8. As a closure, have students respond to the following journal prompt:
Describe what could have happened to Paul if he had not shown perseverance. How do you think his life would have been different? Why do you think Paul wants us to hear his story? What is he saying about perseverance?

Academic–Character Education Assessment

- Assess journal responses for comprehension, clarity, and appropriateness.
- Assess the participation in class discussions about the story.
- Teacher uses his/her own grading scale for the Plot Diagram activity.

Reflective Journaling Prompts

- Do you know of a family member or famous person who demonstrated *perseverance*? Who is the person? Explain how they persevered to achieve a personal goal? What obstacles did they have to overcome to reach their goal?
- How can *perseverance* help you achieve your goals?

Extensions and Variations

Ask a war veteran to speak to the class about how they had to persevere. Students may have family members who could be guest speakers.

Teacher Notes or References

“I Prove Myself a Hunter” is the true story of Paul Tiulana, an Inupiat from Alaska. His people survive by hunting and fishing. When Paul loses his leg in the army he feels he has lost everything. His story tells how he overcame adversity and persevered so he could hunt again.

If you don't have access to the text where this story is found, Paul's life story can be found in a children's book by Vivian Senungetuk entitled *Wise Words of Paul Tiulana: An Inupiat Alaskan's Life*. This book, suitable for ages ten and up, presents Paul's life as a hunter, storyteller, craftsman and traditional leader who grew up on King Island, Alaska in the 1920's.

Author: Karen Pollack
Editor: Cheryl J. Jensen



I Prove Myself a Hunter

Vocabulary Words and Definitions

Directions: With a partner, think together and write one sentence using each word.

1. **Perseverance** (noun) *Working hard to set and achieve personal goals; overcoming obstacles to reach a goal* To persevere (verb)

2. **Fracture** (noun) *A break in a bone*

3. **Kayak** (noun) *A small, one-or two-person boat with oars*

4. **Infection** (noun) *Germs invading a wound*

5. **Handicapped** (adjective) *Having a physical or mental problem*

6. **Current** (noun) *A steady flow of water*

Name _____ Period _____

I Prove Myself a Hunter

PLOT DIAGRAM

