

# Exploring Success and Failure

Integration: Health (Mental/Emotional Health, Personal Health); Language Arts

Grade Levels: 4-6

Time: 1-2 class periods

Materials:

- *Explorers Face Challenges* handout
- *Good Fortunes* handout
- Shoebox

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Analyze proverbs to grasp concepts of success and failure.
2. Consider the importance of proverbs to understand different life circumstances
3. Examine success and failure as tools for learning.
4. Imagine success through positive visualization.

Lesson:

Full Group

1. Write the following proverbs on the chalkboard, on a poster, or on an overhead:

“The person who fails while trying has more honor than the one who succeeds by accident.”

“If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again”

“Failure is not the worst thing in the world. The very worst is not to try.”

“The person who gets ahead is the one who does more than is necessary—and keeps on doing it.”

“Fear of failure is the father of failure.”

- a. Ask students if they know what is meant by a proverb. Explain that a proverb is a short, clever saying that many people have used over a long period of time to express a commonly held belief.
- b. Discuss what these particular proverbs mean, encouraging the students to give examples of them from their own lives.

2. Have students discuss the importance of proverbs to understand different life circumstances. How do proverbs help people deal with negative life events? How do they help people deal with positive life events?
3. Have students share some of their own favorite proverbs. Write them on the chalkboard, on a poster, or an overhead, and discuss their meanings.
4. Tell students about Ann Bancroft from the United States, and Liv Arnesen of Norway, explorers who want to succeed in setting records for their accomplishments by skiing across Antarctica. They realize that through rigorous training, proper planning and preparation, teamwork, and belief in themselves, they will be more likely to "achieve their dreams." One strategy that they employ to "achieve their dreams" is visualizing their success. They see themselves skiing on polar ice, climbing snow covered mountains, repairing equipment, and coping with challenges.
5. Distribute the *Explorers Face Challenges* handout and have students read aloud to the class or individually.
  - a. How did Liv overcome her sense of failure?
  - b. What did she learn from her expedition to Mt. Everest?
6. Ask students, "Do you ever fear failure before doing something challenging or difficult?" Explain to them that they need to visualize (see in their mind) a positive outcome to a situation that is challenging.
7. Tell students to close their eyes and think of a challenging situation such as the final soccer game of the season, a game that will determine the championship. Ask them to "see in their mind" the important and challenging game. Guide them to visualize with the following statements. Substitute another situation if necessary.

Imagine playing the game.

See yourself walking on to the field and getting into position.

See your coach and your team members.

See yourself kicking the soccer ball.

See yourself playing confidently.

See yourself kicking a goal.

See yourself winning...and having fun.

8. Ask students how they think this "see in their mind" exercise can help them? Ask students, "Do you feel this technique can replace or reduce practice and training?" (no) What are the

benefits of combining it with training? (decreases fear and tension, increases concentration, promotes confidence)

9. Write the following proverb on the chalkboard, a poster, or an overhead.

“Wisdom is learned more from failure than from success.”

10. Have students write about one success and one failure that they have had. Tell them to include how the failure can be looked at as a “learning lesson”.
11. Tell students to imagine that they lost the important soccer game. How can this proverb apply to the loss of the game? What do they think the team might do to ensure a better season the next year? Ask students what role they think luck or good fortune plays in success or failure.
12. Write the following proverb on the chalkboard, a poster, or an overhead.

“Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.”

- a. Ask students to share examples of their personal “good luck”. Ask students, “Why do you think some people are luckier than others?”  
Lead discussion with students regarding the concept of preparing for “good luck”, or good outcomes.
- b. Ask students, “Why do you think some people are always “unluckier” than others?”  
Explain that some bad luck is unavoidable, but that it is important to work, plan, and prepare to avoid circumstances that cause bad outcomes.
13. Write the following proverb on the chalkboard, on a poster, or on an overhead:
- “Luck is a wonderful thing. The harder a person works, the more of it he seems to have.”
- a. Ask student if they agree or disagree with this proverb. Why or why not?
14. Tell students that they will write some “good fortunes” for themselves. Reinforce that they can expect “good fortunes” when they prepare to make them happen.
- b. Distribute the *Good Fortunes* handout and have students write messages for each day of the month. Then cut them into strips. (Or, have students write fortunes on strips of paper). A few examples are already written.
- c. Fold each fortune strip and put them in a box. Have students pull out one each day of the month and read it to the class.
- d. Tell students to imagine the good fortune happening and to see in their mind, the fortune coming true. Remind them that believing in good fortune can help it come true, but only if they are always preparing for it. Also, remind students that believing it will come true does not guarantee that it will. If they fail, they can use it as a learning experience.

## Learning Log

15. Have students express their personal beliefs about one of the following concepts by writing a proverb that illustrates it.
- a. Success.
  - b. Failure.
  - c. Luck.

### Assessment:

Teachers will assess:

1. Student's ability to describe proverbs and to give an example.
2. Student's understanding of positive visualization.
3. Student's evaluation of their own successes and failures.
4. Student's writing skills.