

## SASO MIDDLE SCHOOL CHARACTER EDUCATION LESSON

### TOPIC: PERSEVERANCE

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**Note to Teacher:** This lesson is about perseverance—i.e., the importance of working hard and never quitting. It offers the teacher guidelines to follow after students have viewed the SASO VIDEO entitled *Character. Own it.* which features Kevin Noreen (perseverance).

Discussion questions, suggestions for writing and speaking assignments, and scenarios have been designed to develop student critical thinking, reflection, interaction, and creativity. They are interchangeable and should be determined by the teacher.

With regard to discussion questions and scenarios, teachers may pose questions to students individually or in small groups. With regard to the scenarios, a spokesperson for each group should be selected to summarize his or her group's discussion to the rest of the class.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What does perseverance mean to you?
2. Discuss a time when you had a problem and you persevered.
3. Discuss a time that you quit and you regretted it. What happened?
4. Who is a role model for perseverance for you? Why?
5. Discuss a time when someone you know did not persevere. What happened?
6. Can you think about times in life when you should quit? Discuss them. Why do you feel that way?
7. How would you teach someone to persevere?
8. How has your family taught you about perseverance?
9. What does your school do to teach perseverance?

**Scenarios: What would you do?**

1. You really want to learn to speak another language and are taking a class in school. However, you have difficulty understanding the teacher when she speaks it and your grades in the class are not good. What would you do?
2. You would like to improve your athletic ability. Your favorite sport is basketball but you don't have any confidence in your skills. What would you do?
3. You are the new kid in school. Having just moved to the area, you don't know anyone. It seems like everyone has friends except for you. What would you do?
4. You would like to own a construction business some day. In order to learn about construction, you get a summer job as an assistant to a contractor who is building a home. In 98 degree weather, your assignments included lifting heavy items and cleaning up. It is hard work not at all what you expected. What would you do?

**Writing/Speaking Assignments: Students either may write a paper or give an oral presentation about the topic (length and guidelines to be determined by the teacher).**

1. Define perseverance in your own words and give examples to explain your definition.
2. Interview your family members and/or friends and ask them to define perseverance and why they think they demonstrate it. Ask them to discuss why they think YOU demonstrate it.
3. Describe someone you know personally (or know of) who perseveres.
4. Describe someone you know personally (or know of) who is a quitter.
5. Describe someone in the media (e.g., a celebrity) who perseveres.
6. Describe someone in the media (e.g., a celebrity) who is a quitter.
7. Describe how you feel when you see someone who never gives up.
8. How does your family teach you to never give up?
9. How does your school teach you to never give up?
10. Discuss how society perceives those who perseveres. Give examples.
11. Discuss how society perceives those who quite. Give examples.
12. Discuss why perseverance important in our society today.

13. Discuss whether you tend to persevere or quit. Give examples.
14. If you are a person who never quits, how does that affect others around you?
15. Discuss a time in your life when you persevered even though it may have been difficult. What happened and how did you feel? What did you learn from the experience?
16. Write a nonfiction or fiction story about perseverance or quitting.
17. Write a poem or song about perseverance or quitting.
18. Select one of the quotes about respect below and explain what it means. Or, find a quotation about perseverance and explain what it means. Identify the author of the quote and describe who that individual is (e.g., Abraham Lincoln, 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States).

### **Quotations about Perseverance:**

1. Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising up every time we fail. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)
2. Age wrinkles the body. Quitting wrinkles the soul. (Douglas MacArthur)
3. When things go wrong, don't go with them. (Elvis Presley)
4. Where you stand depends on where you sit. (Nelson Mandela)
5. I may not be there yet, but I'm closer than I was yesterday. (Author Unknown)
6. It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop. (Confucius)
7. To keep a lamp burning, we have to keep putting oil in it. (Mother Teresa)
8. When you come to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on. (Franklin D. Roosevelt)
9. Edison failed 10,000 times before he made the electric light. Do not be discouraged if you fail a few times. (Napoleon Hill)
10. Every strike brings me closer to the next home run. (Babe Ruth)
11. Never, never, never give in! (Winston Churchill)
12. People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, either does bathing—that's why we recommend it daily. (Zig Ziglar)

13. The greatest glory in living lies not in never failing, but in rising every time we fail. (Nelson Mandela)
14. In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity. (Albert Einstein)
15. Problems are not stop signs, they are guidelines. (Robert Schuller)
16. Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree. (Martin Luther King, Jr.)
17. It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer. (Albert Einstein)
18. When the world says, "Give up," Hope whispers, "Try it one more time." (Author unknown)
19. Consider the postage stamp; its usefulness consists in the ability to stick to one thing till it gets there. (Josh Billings)
20. It's hard to beat a person who never gives up. (Babe Ruth)
21. I'm a slow walker, but I never walk back. (Abraham Lincoln)
22. Energy and persistence conquer all things. (Benjamin Franklin)
23. It always seems impossible until it's done. (Nelson Mandela)
24. Your persistence is your measure of faith in yourself. (Author unknown)
25. Don't be afraid to give your best to what seemingly are small jobs. Every time you conquer one it makes you that much stronger. If you do the little jobs well, the big ones will tend to take care of themselves. (Dale Carnegie)
26. Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up. (Thomas Edison)
27. Once you quit, it becomes a habit. (Vince Lombardi)
28. Perseverance is failing 19 times and succeeding the 20<sup>th</sup>. (Julie Andrews)
29. Nobody trips over mountains. It is the small pebble that causes you to stumble. Pass all the pebbles in your path and you will find you have crossed the mountain. (Author unknown)
30. Great works are performed not by strength, but by perseverance. (Samuel Johnson)
31. The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a person's determination. (Tommy Lasorda)

32. Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all. (Dale Carnegie)
33. I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career, lost almost 300 games, missed the game-winning shot 26 times. I've failed over and over again in my life. That is why I succeed. (Michael Jordan)
34. The will must be stronger than the skill. (Muhammed Ali)
35. It does not matter how many times you get knocked down, but how many times you get up. (Vince Lombardi)
36. The most powerful weapon on earth is the human soul on fire. (Ferdinand Foch)
37. It is not so important who starts the game but who finishes it. (John Wooden)
38. I can accept failure. Everyone fails at something. I can't accept not trying. (Michael Jordan)
39. Enthusiasm is the mother of effort, and without it nothing great was ever achieved. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)
40. Do not throw in the towel; use it for wiping the sweat off your face. (Gatorade ad)
41. It's always too soon to quit. (Norman Vincent Peale)
42. Fall seven times, stand up eight. (Japanese Proverb)
43. Champions keep playing until they get it right. (Billie Jean King)
44. You miss 100 percent of the shots you never take. (Wayne Gretzky)
45. There are no traffic jams along the extra mile. (Roger Staubach)
46. The difference between try and triumph is a little extra umph. (Marvin Phillips)