



## Resilience and Perseverance

### Materials:

- Worksheet

### Brainstorm

The teacher should relay a story about a time when something went wrong and you had to overcome it. Personal stories help build a connection with students and they are more likely to remember your story. For example, I once ran for an office and I lost the election. I was very disappointed and thought about quitting the organization. Then I talked with the person who won the election and became friends with them. I was appointed to a different role in the organization and was able to make a difference there.

### Discuss

I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.

– American inventor, Thomas Edison

**Resilience** is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness. What would have happened if Edison had given up when the light bulb didn't work?

“The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even (or especially) when it's not going well, is the hallmark of the growth mindset. This is the mindset that allows people to thrive during some of the most challenging times in their lives.”

— **Carol S. Dweck, Mindset: The New Psychology Of Success**

**Perseverance** is persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success. Let's go back to Thomas Edison. How did he show persistence when inventing the light bulb?

What is the difference between the two? Accept and correct answers as they are provided.



## High School

### Dive in!

Partner students. Give one student a cup and one student five small items (paper clips, erasers, rubber bands, etc.) The goal is for the student with the items to throw all five items into the cup held by the other student. They should be placed at least a few feet apart from each other.

At the end of the activity, ask the students:

On a scale of 1-5 (1 being easy, 5 being difficult) how difficult was this task?

What made this task easy or difficult?

What strategies did you use to overcome the challenges?

How did you talk to yourself and your partner to persevere through the challenge?

### Activity

Think about a problem you've had recently. There are many causes for this problem. Sometimes we think it is caused by others. Sometimes we think we are to blame. Sometimes we think it is caused by both ourselves and others. In order to overcome the problem (resilience), we have to look at the many causes of our problem and what we can change to make the situation better.

For example: I did not do well on my history test.

Cause 1: My teacher doesn't like me (caused by others)

Cause 2: I don't have a good memory so I can't do well (caused by me)

Cause 3: I was distracted in class so I didn't learn well (caused by others and me)

Cause 3: I didn't ask for extra help (caused by me)

Cause 4: I didn't study long enough for the test (caused by me)

Cause 5: The test was too hard (caused by others)

Sometimes we think we can't do anything about the problem if it's caused by others. We develop a "fixed mindset" For instance, thinking the teacher doesn't like me and that the test was too hard are things I don't think I can change. I think it's predetermined and that there is no way I can improve in history.

Sometimes it's even hard to change a belief or attitude that I have about myself, such as "I don't have a good memory". That is also part of the fixed mindset. I believe that my poor memory is just a characteristic I have that I can't change.



## High School

But let's stop for a second.

What can I change?

Can I ask others not to distract me?

Can I ask for extra help?

Can I study longer for the next test?

Can I improve my memory?

Does the teacher really not like me? Was the test really too hard? Or is it easier for me to think this way, because then I don't have to change?

If I can change my thinking about myself, I can develop a "growth mindset". I can choose to think that next time, I will ask for extra help. When I ask for extra help, and my grade improves, then I have been resilient!

### Reflect

What is the benefit to me to have more perseverance and become more resilient? What steps can I take to do this?

### Extend and Enrich

Think about a time in your life when you overcame a challenge. Write a letter to your younger self who is going through the problem. What did you learn from that experience and what advice can you give your younger self?

### For Further Study

<https://www.edutopia.org/video/teaching-grit-cultivates-resilience-and-perseverance>

<https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience/bounce-teens>

<https://choices.scholastic.com/pages/content-hubs/perseverance-and-resilience.html>

<https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/educators-need-grit-too>

### Professional Development

How can teachers develop resilience and perseverance? Think about a lesson or activity that you would like to try but has a 50% success rate. Then plan and implement the lesson.

Afterwards, reflect on the activity. What can you change next time to improve upon it? Be sure to make note of those items, and try the lesson again. Sometimes veteran teachers feel like they shouldn't be struggling with a lesson, but it happens to everyone. Trying to overcome the obstacles will help you develop resilience!