

## Grit Lesson Plan: The Perseverance Walk

From "A Bit of Grit" by Amy Lyon

**PURPOSE:** To allow students the opportunity to hear from someone who has achieved a BIG goal, and then share that person's story with others to use as a real-life example of exhibiting grit. When I assign this project to my students, I ask that they interview someone who is at least eighteen years old, as the more life experience a person has, the richer their story will be. I also encourage them to interview someone who is not a relative, because I think it's good practice for them to interact outside the family.

**CLASSWORK:** Brainstorming a list of questions for students to ask their interviewees can be done in class. In a separate attachment (titled "Grit Student Worksheet: The Perseverance Walk") I've included the ones we asked in my fifth grade classroom. Another consideration for ten-year-olds is appropriate interview etiquette. Included in the worksheet are reminders to practice asking questions before the interview, to be a good, respectful listener, to take the interview seriously, and to ask permission to get in contact with the interviewee again if necessary. This is a good opportunity for students not only to hone interview skills, but to become highly invested in the experience.

**OUTCOME:** The final Perseverance Walk product could be presented in many formats: a regular paper storyboard, a Powerpoint or Google presentation, a Prezi, a 3-D model story, or whatever the students can dream up. There should be three parts to the final product. The first should portray the goal the person set. The second should depict obstacles and roadblocks the person encountered along the way, and a description of how they were managed. This is a good place for students to inquire if and when their interviewees considered giving up. The final part should share what their subject's life became once the goal was achieved. Students will eventually present their product to the class.

**NOTE:** For the purposes of this assignment, a distinction should be made between setting a goal and systematically working to achieve it, and being faced with a challenging situation and handling it with resilience. For instance, the challenge of starting one's own restaurant and becoming successful is more appropriate for the Perseverance Walk than, for instance, being diagnosed with cancer, enduring treatment, and beating it. They both require similar character qualities, however for the purpose of this assignment, I think it's important for students to understand what it's like to set a far-off goal, years in the making, and to strive to reach it -- rather than dealing with imposed adversity. It's a subtle difference, but one I think worth mentioning.