PERSEVERING

THERE ARE NO OVERNIGHT SENSATIONS

ED U. GATOR’S PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

A SPACE PIONEER
C

THERE ARE NO
OVERNIGHT SENSATIONS

an you think of something that Helen Hunt, Garth Brooks and Dr. Seuss might have in common? Well, for one thing they’re all internationally famous. For another thing they’ve each achieved a high level of success in their respective fields of acting, music and writing.

But, do you know what’s the most important thing they share? Perseverance. Do you know what that means? Perseverance means working hard, being patient, completing tasks and believing in yourself. If Helen Hunt, Garth Brooks and Dr. Seuss hadn’t had perseverance, they probably wouldn’t have become so successful and well-known.

Some people think success like that just happens. When a person suddenly becomes famous, they’re sometimes referred to as an “overnight sensation.” But success almost never comes overnight.

Helen Hunt had to rehearse long hours, take many acting lessons and play small parts in television and films before becoming a big movie star. Garth Brooks probably practiced in a garage somewhere and played many years for small audiences in tiny clubs before selling out concerts all over the world. He also wrote hundreds of songs before he had his first hit record. Dr. Seuss’s wonderful children’s books were rejected by 43 publishers before someone finally said “yes.” Since then, hundreds of millions of his books have been published and sold! Wow, that’s an amazing accomplishment!

But it takes a ton of patience to wait that long for something to happen. It takes a great deal of diligence, initiative and energy to work that hard to achieve your goals. And, above all, it takes believing strongly in your own abilities to get the job done. That’s remarkable! That’s perseverance!

ACTIVITY:

Try to think of somebody famous and successful whom you really admire. It might be a sports figure, an actor, a musician, a politician, a teacher! See if you can find a book in the library about this person. It might be interesting to discover how long it took that person to achieve success and how hard they had to work to get there!

VOCABULARY:

Internationally: having to do with all the nations of the world.
Respective: in order or in the same order.
Diligence: careful and steady work or effort.
ED'S PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

Hi, friends. Ed here. Gabe and I were talking in the hall at school the other day when I noticed a poster on the bulletin board. It said, "STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST. 1st PRIZE: A TRIP TO GRIZZLYWORLD, USA!"

Wow, I'd always wanted to go to Grizzlyworld! But win a photo contest to get there? I didn't stand a chance. Gabe said he thought we should both try to win. "I've never taken a picture in my life!" I said to Gabe.

"Well," said Gabe over his shoulder as he wheeled off to class, "everybody's got to start somewhere! Practice makes perfect!" Yeah, I'd heard Dad say the same things a hundred times before. But winning that contest seemed next to impossible. Still, a trip to Grizzlyworld sounded pretty enticing!

When I got home that afternoon, I searched through my dresser drawer for my camera. Gramps had given it to me on my 6th birthday, and I had never used it! Mom drove me down to Tracy's Drugstore, and I bought a roll of film with my allowance money. I spent the rest of the afternoon roaming the neighborhood, searching for prize-winning photo opportunities. In an hour I had taken 36 terrific shots! In the morning, Mom let me drop off my film at Juan's One Hour Photo on my way to school. I could barely sit still during Mr. Salamander's class, thinking about the results of my efforts. But when Mom and I picked up the film, I was incredibly disappointed! Only 20 of the pictures had actually come out, and of those, only one was halfway decent. And halfway decent wasn't going to get me to Grizzlyworld! "Oh forget it," I said to Mom, "I can't take a good picture. I'll never win!"

"Ed," said Mom, "yesterday was the first time you picked up that camera. You spent exactly one hour shooting pictures, and you expect to be an expert! Photography's like any other skill. It takes hard work, lots of practice and patience!" Gramps had given me some photography books to look at, and I learned a bunch from reading those, too. Thursday afternoon, Gramps and I picked up my photos from Juan's. This batch was much better, and there were even one of a spider web, that Gramps said was great! Well, the deadline for the contest was on Friday, so I turned in my spider shot. Gabe showed me his picture of a sunset. It was beautiful! I told him I thought he had a good chance of winning. He thought mine did, too.

Well, it turns out neither of us got to go to Grizzlyworld. But both of our pictures got Honorable Mention, and they're on permanent display in the school library! Gramps said he was really proud of me for my patience and perseverance. And I really like taking pictures now. I take my camera with me everywhere I go, always on the lookout for that next spectacular photo opportunity!

QUESTIONS

1) When Ed first read about the photography contest, what did he think his chances were of winning? Why?
2) What did Ed do wrong on his first picture-taking walk? Why was he disappointed when he got the pictures back?
3) What did Mom explain to Ed about patience and perseverance? How did Gramps help?
4) Why was Ed more successful on his second roll of film? What did he do differently?
5) Even though Ed didn't win the contest, what did he gain from the experience?
Fun Page

I KNOW I CAN DO IT IF I TRY

Directions: On the lines provided below, make a list of some things you’ve always wished you could do, or something you can do now, but you would like to do better. Pick one thing from your list, and think about what it would take to accomplish this skill.

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

PERSEVERE AND COMPLETE THIS WORD SEARCH

Directions: Find the words below in this word search. Look carefully, the words can go in any direction! Don’t give up!

A U W A I T I N G T W E U
V D Y K A Z S M D R R P Y
B I L G S M H K S Y A W T
L Q C A W A R D M N D R L
H S E C Y B T S F O I J U
S X U B W P G Z Y M L K C
C C O M P L E T E K I M I
H Z L V G S O Z A Q G Z F
J P S E R E V E S R E P F
E N A U M D A S Z E N A I
H S K I L L E L X A C U D
O M B Q Z O I L D C E X W

WAITING
TASK
DUISIENCE
PERSEVERE
AWARD
DIFFICULTY
COMPLETE
SKILL
IN THE NEWSPAPER

Directions: Look through the newspaper for a story about a person who has worked very hard to accomplish something. It might be an artist, or a politician, or a community helper. It could be a story about anyone who has shown perseverance. Read the story, and write a few words below about how hard work and patience contributed to this person's success.

CAN YOU PERSEVERE AND COMPLETE THIS PSP (PROJECT: SOLUTION PUZZLE)?

Across
2. A skill or talent
3. To continue despite difficulties
5. Patient effort
6. Desire to accomplish something
7. Trying hard to get something done
8. Something that requires effort

Down
1. Trust and confidence
2. Accomplish
4. Satisfaction
5. Ability to wait for something

ANSWERS
Across
1. B
2. A
3. E N
4. C E
5. E R A
6. M V A N
7. F F T
8. C H E

Down
1. A
2. L Y
3. E
4. U
5. E
6. A
7. I
8. T
When Rachel first saw the Jet-Black, 10-Speed, Super-Streamlined bicycle in the window of Miller's Bike Shop, she froze. It was the most fantastic bike she had ever seen! She called to her dad who was already halfway down the block. "I've got to have this bike, Dad!" she said. "It's the best!" She grabbed his hand and pulled him inside the store. Mr. Miller took the bike out of the window, and let Rachel ride it around the block. "It's beautiful," said Rachel when she returned. "How much does it cost?"

"Two hundred dollars," said Mr. Miller. Rachel looked down at her shoes. Her family could never afford it. She told Mr. Miller thanks, and sadly walked outside.

"Pretty nice bike," said her dad. "I have a great deal of faith in you, Rachel. I bet you could earn enough for that bike just by doing odd jobs around the neighborhood." As they drove back home, Rachel wondered how she'd ever make that kind of money. Just before she fell asleep that night, she imagined herself riding through the streets of her neighborhood on that Jet Black, 10-Speed, Super-Streamlined bike!

The next morning was Saturday, and Rachel had set her alarm for 7 o'clock. She got up, showed, dressed, ate breakfast and by eight she was knocking on Mr. Spooner's door. Mr. Spooner agreed to let Rachel mow his lawn for fifteen dollars. It took a few hours, but when she was done, the lawn looked terrific! "Good work, girl," said Rachel to herself. "We're on our way!"

Two doors down, Mrs. Abernathy paid Rachel fifteen dollars for trimming her hedges and bundling up dead branches. When she finished, her stomach let her know it was time for lunch. She grabbed a hot dog and a drink and headed over to the Simon house. Mr. Simon was busy painting the outside of his garage, but he offered to pay Rachel twenty dollars to be his helper. It took the rest of the afternoon, but by dinnertime Rachel was pleased with her hard work, and the money she had earned. "Not bad for one day," she thought.

On Sunday it rained all day. Rachel was so disappointed. This was a major setback to her plans! But instead of moping around the house, she thought for awhile, and spent the afternoon making up fliers. Next weekend she would have a neighborhood car wash at her house. The turnout was terrific! By 4 o'clock in the afternoon, Rachel had made $40 more dollars. But she was still short of her $200.00 goal. She was tired from all her hard work, but she wanted that beautiful bike more than anything in the world. Then she came up with a great idea! What if Mr. Miller let her help at the bike shop for a couple of hours after school? That way she might just be able to earn the rest. Her dad drove her down to see Mr. Miller, and he loved the idea. He said he'd pay her five dollars an hour to be his assistant. So for several weeks, Rachel waited on customers, swept the floor and stocked the shelves. Each evening before she left, she took a long loving look at her soon-to-be Jet Black, 10-Speed, Super-Streamlined bike!

One Friday evening Rachel's dad came to pick her up at Miller's Bike Shop. He found Rachel in the stockroom, counting her hard-earned bike money. "Well, Dad," she said quietly, "I was hoping to take home the bike today, but I still need $5 more dollars. I guess I'll have to do some more jobs this weekend."

"You know what?" said her dad. "I am so proud of your hard work and your perseverance. You really proved to me how much this bike means to you. I don't suppose you'd let me pay for the rest?" As they were leaving the shop, her dad asked if she wanted to put the bike in the back of the station wagon, or ride it home. "Two guesses," said Rachel, "and the first one doesn't count!" She climbed on that Jet Black, 10-Speed, Super-Streamlined bike, and before her dad had the key in the ignition, Rachel was out of sight!
What if you were stuck in the same place for 188 consecutive days and couldn’t leave under any circumstances? Take a moment and think about how long 188 days is. That’s six months! That’s 56 weeks! That’s more than a semester of school! That would take an unbelievable amount of patience and perseverance, wouldn’t it? Well, that’s exactly what Shannon Lucid did. Lucid is a NASA space pioneer, and with the company of two male Russian cosmonauts on Russian space station Mir, completed a 67,000,000 mile mission, circling the earth an astounding 3,008 times! Her only complaint during her hugely successful journey was this: she kept running out of M&Ms!

Lucid’s 188-day voyage was a United States record. When she finally landed back on Earth, her colleagues anticipated her lying down, waiting to be removed from the shuttle Atlantis on a stretcher. Incredibly, defying all expectations, she was standing and proceeded to walk the 25 feet to the transporter! Lucid credits her exercise routine on board Space Station Mir. During her flight she logged 400 hours on a treadmill and stationary bicycle. Not bad for someone 53 years old!

Lucid was born in 1943 in China, to Joseph Oscar Wells, a Baptist preacher, and Myrtle Wells, a missionary nurse. When Lucid was six weeks old, her family was held captive in a Japanese prison camp. A year later they were released to the United States, and after a brief time in China, settled in Bethany, Oklahoma. As a child, she was fascinated by flying and space travel, and was determined to become a space explorer. She received her pilot’s license at 17, and became one of NASA’s 1978 class of astronauts. Her endurance, dedication and perseverance is an inspiration to people, and space pioneers all over the world!

**VOCABULARY:**

- **Consecutive:** coming in regular order without a break.
- **Circumstances:** a fact or event connected with a situation.
- **Cosmonaut:** a Russian astronaut.
- **Missionary:** someone who spreads religion in a foreign country.
TIPS

1) Young children are naturally impatient, and without some guidance, are rarely motivated to complete tasks, or follow through on projects independently. It doesn’t help matters that we exist in a lightning-paced world of computers, e-mail, faxes, and other forms of technology that deliver products and information to us almost instantaneously. Look for opportunities to slow down the pace a little, and teach your child that some of the best, and most enduring things in life, are worth the wait.

2) Some young people have a great deal of determination and perseverance, and will try things again and again until they succeed. Others may give up in frustration after just one attempt. Help your child see the benefit in persevering. It may require your assistance initially in completing the task, then withdrawing your support gradually as your child masters the situation.

3) When your child brings home a piece of art, a science project or a story she’s written, take the time to admire and appreciate her hard work and great effort. These accomplishments represent lots of time, energy and creativity. Display your child’s work proudly! Your recognition of her perseverance will encourage her to bring you more of the same.

4) Even if you can easily afford to fulfill all of your child’s material wants and needs, it might be in the best interest of your child to let him “earn” his own resources by taking on some simple responsibilities around the house. Each family has its own policy regarding giving children allowances. You might consider a small, but reasonable weekly payment for completing certain household chores in a regular manner, without constant reminders. It will most likely help save you some time, too!

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Since very few people can do everything well, your child probably has a certain school subject, or a desired skill that gives him more difficulty than others. Perhaps you could spend some concentrated time exploring fun ways to master, or at least improve that particular ability. Working on this project as a team may encourage your child to try harder, and the knowledge that you will succeed together may make working toward the end result more motivating.

RESOURCES

Seuss, Dr. Oh, the Places You’ll Go! Random House, 1990.

FAMILY PLEDGE CARD

Our family has completed the Family Page together.

______________________________    ___________________
Child’s name

______________________    ___________________
Family members:

______________________    ___________________

School: ___________________________

Teacher/grade: ______________________