

What is failure?

Clip

Essential Standard

- 6.MEH.3 - Analyze the relationship between healthy expression of emotions, mental health, and healthy behavior

Clarifying Objectives

- 6.MEH.3.1 - Interpret failure in terms of its potential for learning and growth
- 6.MEH.3.2 - Analyze the relationship between health-enhancing behaviors (communication, goal-setting and decision making) and the ability to cope with failure

Statement of Objectives:

- *Abraham Lincoln is an exemplary role model for the concept of persevering through adversity. By the end of today's lesson, each of you will be able to identify the importance of learning to cope with disappointments in a positive way.*



“Progress always involves risk; you can’t steal second base and keep your foot on first.”

1. *What does this quotation mean?*
2. *Why is this quote important?*
3. *How might it apply to your life?*

Video Clip (YouTube)

- Clip on Failure
- *Were you aware that famous people have experienced many setbacks and failures?*
- *Considering all their defeats, why do you think these people kept trying to achieve their goals?*
- *What did all these people have in common?*

Success or Failure?

- Politician: Ran for political office seven times and was defeated each time.
- Cartoonist: All he wanted to do was to sketch cartoons. He applied with a Kansas City newspaper. The editor said, "It's easy to see from these sketches that you have no talent." No studio would give him a job. He ended up doing publicity work for a church in an old, dilapidated garage.

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- **Writer:** His first children's book was rejected by 23 publishers.
 - **Inventor:** In the first year of marketing his new soft drink, he sold only 400 bottles.

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- Athlete: As a baseball player, he struck out more than any player in the history of baseball: 1,330 times.

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- Athlete: As a high school student, he felt so unpopular with the girls that he thought he might never be able to find a wife. That's why he took a cooking class. He thought he might never have anyone to cook for him.

The answers to the test?

- Whether you answered success or failure, you all made a 100%! Each of these people experienced both success and failure. There is no right or wrong answer. Let's look at these people, one by one.

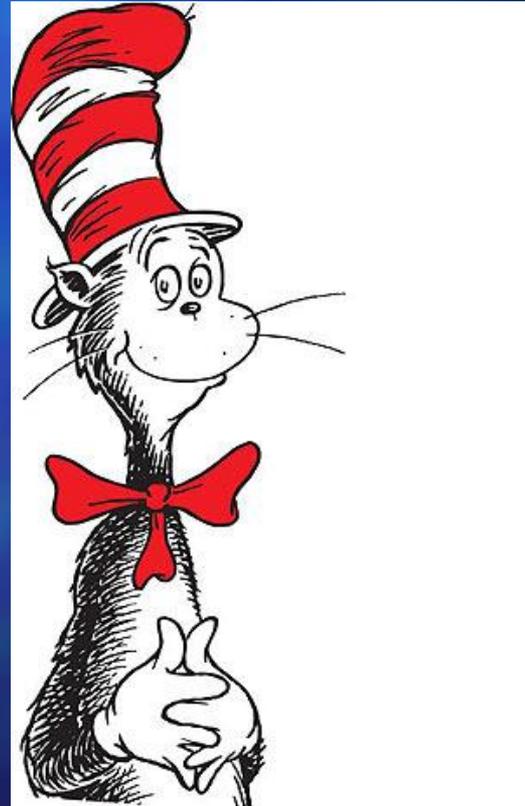
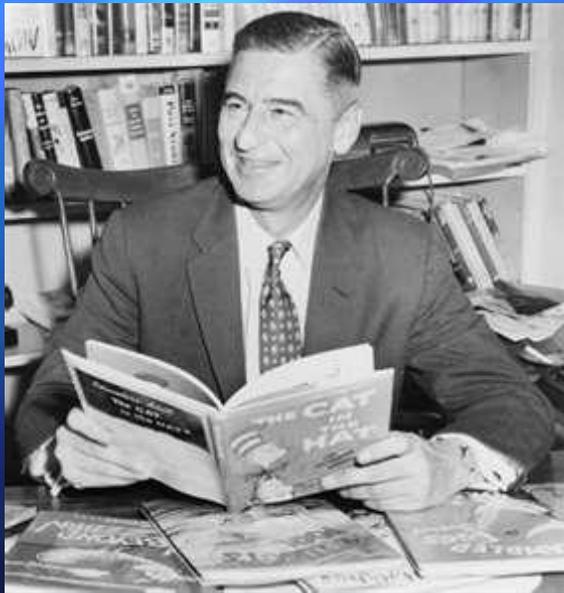
- Would you have given up on politics if you had been defeated 7 times in your run for political office? Any guesses as to who it was?
- I'm glad that **Abraham Lincoln** didn't give up. He was defeated for legislature, defeated for speaker, defeated for nomination to Congress, defeated for Senate, defeated for nomination to Vice Presidency, defeated again for Senate. Yet he hung in there and succeeded in becoming the 16th, and one of the most respected, presidents of the United States.



- And what about the cartoonist whom no one would hire? The one who was told that he had no talent? The old garage he worked in was in such bad shape that it had mice. One day, he sketched one of those mice. Any guesses as to the name of that mouse?
- The mouse one day became famous as “Mickey Mouse.” The artist, of course, was **Walt Disney**.



- The writer whose children's book was rejected by 23 publishers? Take a wild guess....
- **Dr. Seuss.** By the way, the 24th publisher sold six million copies.



- The soft drink that sold only 400 bottles its first year?
- **Coca Cola.**



- The baseball player who held the strike-out record? He also held, for many years, the home run record.
- His name is **Babe Ruth**.



What to take away:

- Don't be discouraged by your **failures**. Remember, the road to success is paved with **failures**.
- In order to succeed in life, you've got to **endure and do not give up**.

Learn From Life's Hard Knocks.

- *People Illustration: Any one who has seen the Star Wars series or the Indiana Jones trilogy knows the incredible excitement that producer George Lucas can pack into a movie. But it's doubtful that Lucas would have made anything at all out of his life, had he not first given up his old dreams. You see, during his teen years, a lot of people considered him a loser who was going nowhere in life. He never applied himself in school and dreamed only about racing cars. But his dreams all ended just a few days before his graduation. While driving home from the library in his Fiat, he prepared for a left turn by glancing in his rearview mirror. But as he started the turn, he heard the sound of another car, a blowing horn, and the impact of speeding Chevy crunching into the driver side of his car. It should have killed him. The little Fiat turned four or five complete flips before it wrapped around a solid oak tree. The impact was so great that it actually moved the entire tree a couple of feet over, leaving a huge hole in its former position.*

- *But miraculously, George survived. Get this: during the Fiat's third flip, his regulation racing seat belt snapped, throwing him out of the open top and onto the ground. He was close to death, but recovered slowly through two weeks in the hospital and months of physical therapy. His Fiat didn't survive, ending up in the junkyard.*
- *After the accident, George was a changed person. He decided there must be some reason he survived, and set his mind to get his act together and make something out of his life. He left his racing dreams behind and decided to go to college. There, he developed an interest in literature and writing. And instead of driving racecars, he began filming them. Today, he's glad for his decision to let his old life and his old dreams die, so that he could go a new direction. You see, without giving up his old life, he would have never found his niche in the film industry, and no one would have ever seen Star Wars.*

- For many people, the car wreck would have been nothing more than a tragedy. But for Lucas, it was a wake up call. You see, some students see only the grief in their heartaches, whether it be the breakup of their family, their failure in a sport or a class, or a breakup with a boyfriend. Successful people like Lucas had these problems too. But the difference between them and people who lose in life is that the successes learn from their tragedies and setbacks. They become better people.
- Listen, you can become either "bitter" or "better" from tragedies. And the only difference between these two words is the letter "i". "I" have the choice as to whether to grow or wither from my tragedies.

Teacher Input:

- *What are some of the goals that you wish to accomplish in your lifetime?*
- *When we set a goal, what is the risk involved?*
 - (**Risk of failure**)

- **It is impossible to achieve all of our goals all the time.**
 - Even the most successful people, like Abraham Lincoln, experience occasional failures.
 - It is a risk that we have to take to reach our goals.
- For example, even though you work hard, you might not always reach your goals.
 - (Example: making a sports team or earning the test grade that you want or earning enough money to buy an item you want)
 - But if you don't try, you won't meet any goals.
- **Failure is a part of every person's life.**
 - It is important to understand this so when a person experiences failure, she or he will overcome the failure and move on.
 - Learning to handle failures can also give one **strength** and more of a direction **for the future**.
 - How a person **cope**s with failure will greatly affect future goals and endeavors.

Guided Practice:

- Divide students into pairs.
- Direct each pair to think of a scenario in which the main character has tried something and failed; then they are to think of a way in which the situation can lead to a learning moment or growth.
- Working at computers, direct students to the website Toon Doo where they are to sign in and create a cartoon illustrating the scenario they imagined earlier.
 - Please note that this is a commercial website; while it is free, there are images that can be purchased. Caution students to only use the free links.
- Conclude this activity by emphasizing that all individuals experience temporary setbacks and failure.
- Emphasize the importance of positive thinking when he/she experiences disappointment.
- *If we can think positively when we encounter problems, it can help us accept setbacks or failure and give us the ability to start again. If the goal we did not accomplish is something that we really want to do, we must determine what is necessary to increase our chances of being successful.*
 - *(Example: Practice our athletic skills to make the team next year.) Learning how to handle our failures in a positive way helps us to maintain a healthy self-esteem.*

Independent Practice:

- Distribute the handout, Taking a Risk (Appendix 4). Students will generate a list of activities they are hesitant to attempt or goals they would like to accomplish. Students will identify strategies to help prepare them for success and then answer the personal questions.

Taking a Risk

Make a list of activities you would like to try or goals that you have.	Is there something that you could do to help you to be successful at this task?
1. Auditioning for the school play.	Practice talking in front of people. Memorize the lines you will be saying for the audition.
2.	
3.	
4.	

Have you ever tried something new, even though you were afraid of failing? (Ex: trying out for band for the first time)

What were some of the feelings you experienced? _____

Were you successful? Why or why not?

What did you learn from your attempt?

“Defeat is not the worst of failures.

Not to have tried is the true failure.” - George E. Woodbury

Once they have completed this handout:

- Solicit student volunteers to share one of their goals and explain how they could increase the likelihood of achieving success.
- Ask class if there is anything else the volunteers could do to increase their chances of success.
- Highlight several goals as class examples.

For the personal questions, ask students:

- *What can we learn from attempting new experiences?*
- *What does the quote by George Woodbury mean?*
- *Is it better to attempt new challenges or be content doing what you know can be achieved? Why or why not?*

Closure:

- *Today we have been discussing ways to cope with failure. You did a super job working together and discussing ways to deal with our setbacks. Each of you should now be able to accept disappointments and identify ways to make improvements for the next time you set a goal or decide to try something new.*