

NEVER GIVE UP, CHARLIE BROWN!

Dear Educator,

Is there a more iconic example of perseverance than good old Charlie Brown? We know he's going to miss that football, yet he tries anyway—and we can't help but admire him for it. He's persistent, thoughtful, and always optimistic—traits we hope to see in ourselves and in our students.

The award-winning curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired (YMI) have developed this program to help students in grades 3 through 5 learn what it means to persevere by looking to the example of the Peanuts gang, adding a deeper dimension—and a bit of fun—to your language arts curriculum.

Please copy and share this copyrighted program with other teachers at your school. Visit ymiclassroom.com/feedback-peanuts to give us your comments. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired

Program Objectives

- To teach students the importance of setting goals.
- To remind students that it's OK to fail and ask for help.
- To inspire students to be positive, try again, and persevere.

Target Audience

Students in grades 3-5.

How to Use This Program

Review, photocopy, and distribute the reproducible activity sheets for each activity. Modify the activities as necessary to meet the needs and abilities of your students. Visit ymiclassroom.com/peanuts for standards alignment.

Activity 1

You Gotta Believe, Charlie Brown!

Work with students to compile a list of character traits that they think make someone a good friend, e.g., loyalty, good sense of humor, kind, etc. Point out that we tend to like people who believe in themselves and in the positive qualities of others. Why can a positive mindset help a person succeed in life? Take Charlie Brown: He keeps failing to kick that football, but continues to try anyway. How does that persistence help him face other trials in his life?

Divide students into small groups, and assign each group two or three of the traits listed earlier. Have each group share their thoughts about how those traits contribute to a positive mindset. Give them an example: Someone who is kind to others will also probably be kind to himself. This means that instead of feeling bad when he makes a mistake, he will remind himself that everyone fails sometimes, and then he will try again! Follow small-group discussions with an overall classroom discussion.

Now distribute the activity sheets. Review the meaning of the words with students after they complete the word search. Then ask them to choose three words that describe themselves, and write a paragraph about how those traits help make them a better person—just like Charlie Brown!

Answers:



Activity 2

What's the Plan, Charlie Brown?

Ask students to give you a "thumbs up" if they have at least one short-term goal, then a "thumbs up" with the other hand if they also have at least one long-term goal. Let a few students share their goals, if they wish. What do they need to achieve their goals in addition to a positive mindset? Answers might include gaining knowledge, developing a skill, acquiring resources, planning, and practicing. Even armed with all that, setbacks can happen. When they do, it's important to ask for help instead of just giving up.

Distribute the activity sheet and have students consider Schroeder's and Lucy's goals. Schroeder wants to be a famous composer like his idol Beethoven, and Lucy wants to be president. If they both have confidence and persistence, what next steps could they follow? Have students list their ideas. Possible answers for Schroeder could include taking lessons in composition and, for Lucy, volunteering for a student council or other leadership position.

Now ask students to list one goal for themselves, steps that would help them achieve that goal, and whom they might ask for advice when and if they are tempted to give up. Ask volunteers to share their thoughts if they wish.

Activity 3

I Can Do It, Charlie Brown!

Part 1: Distribute the activity sheet and ask students to list the name of someone they admire and could interview, and why they admire them. Have students brainstorm and then record on the sheet interview questions they might ask, such as how long did it take for the person to achieve success, what setbacks did they encounter, whom did they go to for help, and what was the biggest surprise they experienced. When they conduct their interviews, students should also record advice that person might give them to help them meet their own goals. Afterwards, ask students to share highlights of their interviews in class.

Part 2: Tell students that Charlie Brown always talks to himself to build himself up before he tackles a task, such as flying his kite or kicking that football, despite obstacles he suspects might get in his way. Then tell students that, like Charlie Brown, they are going to write a motivational message to themselves as a reminder to persevere when things get tough. Share some quotes to help give them ideas—a Google image search using "motivational quotes for students" will provide many examples. After they compose their motivational messages, have students cut off the bottom of the sheet and post it in their lockers or bedrooms at home. Alternately, post the messages around the classroom as inspiration for students.



YOU GOTTA BELIEVE, CHARLIE BROWN!

Remember what you learned about the importance of having a positive mindset? Use your own positive mindset to help Snoopy, the world-famous detective, and his sidekick Woodstock search this puzzle for the “positive mindset” words listed below.



“Positive Mindset” Word Bank

BRAVE	DETERMINATION	NOBILITY
COMMITMENT	FAITH	OPTIMISM
CONFIDENCE	HONOR	PERSISTENCE
COURAGE	HUMILITY	POSITIVE
COURTEOUS	HUMOROUS	THOUGHTFUL

Now, choose three of the words that describe qualities you have, and use the back of this sheet to write a paragraph about how those traits help make you a better person—just like Charlie Brown!



WHAT'S THE PLAN, CHARLIE BROWN?

Schroeder and Lucy have big goals! Schroeder wants to be a great musician like his idol Beethoven. Lucy wants to be president of the United States. They both have the positive mindset to achieve their goals, but what steps can they take to see their dreams come true? Write down some suggestions for Schroeder and Lucy based on what you discussed in class.



Schroeder _____

Lucy _____

Now that you've helped Schroeder and Lucy achieve their goals, what about yours?
Write one of your goals here:

Next, list some steps you can take to help meet that goal:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Now list three people you can ask for help and advice when you are tempted to give up. (You can write "teacher" or "parent" if you don't want to list real names.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I CAN DO IT, CHARLIE BROWN!

Part 1: We all have people we admire—teachers, coaches, family members, or friends who inspire us by working to achieve their goals. Write the name of someone you admire and why you admire them:

Now plan to interview the person you admire. What questions can you ask that person about how their mindset and actions help them achieve their goals? Write your questions below, then interview the person and write their answers below each question. Use the back of this sheet if you need more space.

1. _____

Answer: _____

2. _____

Answer: _____

3. _____

Answer: _____

4. Did the person you interviewed give you advice to help you achieve your goals? If so, what was it?



Part 2: Charlie Brown looks for the positives in others and in himself. In fact, he tells himself that he can do anything, and even though he often fails, he never gives up. Use this space to write yourself a motivational message, just like Charlie Brown.

