

Lesson Plan

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IN627 Contemporary Learning Theory for Diverse Learners

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Lesson Plan

Grade Level: 9th-grade special education class (60-minute class)

Objectives/Standards:

Applied Studies Curriculum

Domain: Independent Living

- Independent Living includes teaching students about their disability and understanding their strengths and needs, **identifying personal goals**, knowing their legal rights and responsibilities, and communicating these to others. The ability to self-advocate is important for students to learn to be successful at all stages of their lives. Independent living addresses self-management, hygiene and grooming, **goal setting**, leisure, community participation, planning (meals, social and work appointments, multi-step tasks, and projects), travel and mobility, and household maintenance. This domain includes personal health care skills, which, if not addressed, will become employment barriers for individuals with disabilities.

Objective: Students will learn about the trait of perseverance and how it relates to making and pursuing goals.

List Materials:

Inspirational messages printed out

Tape

Youtube Video (2:30 minutes): [Caminandes 3: Llamigos](#)

Chart paper and different colored markers

An ice cube for each student with a penny frozen inside

Paper towels

[Never Give Up Sheet](#)

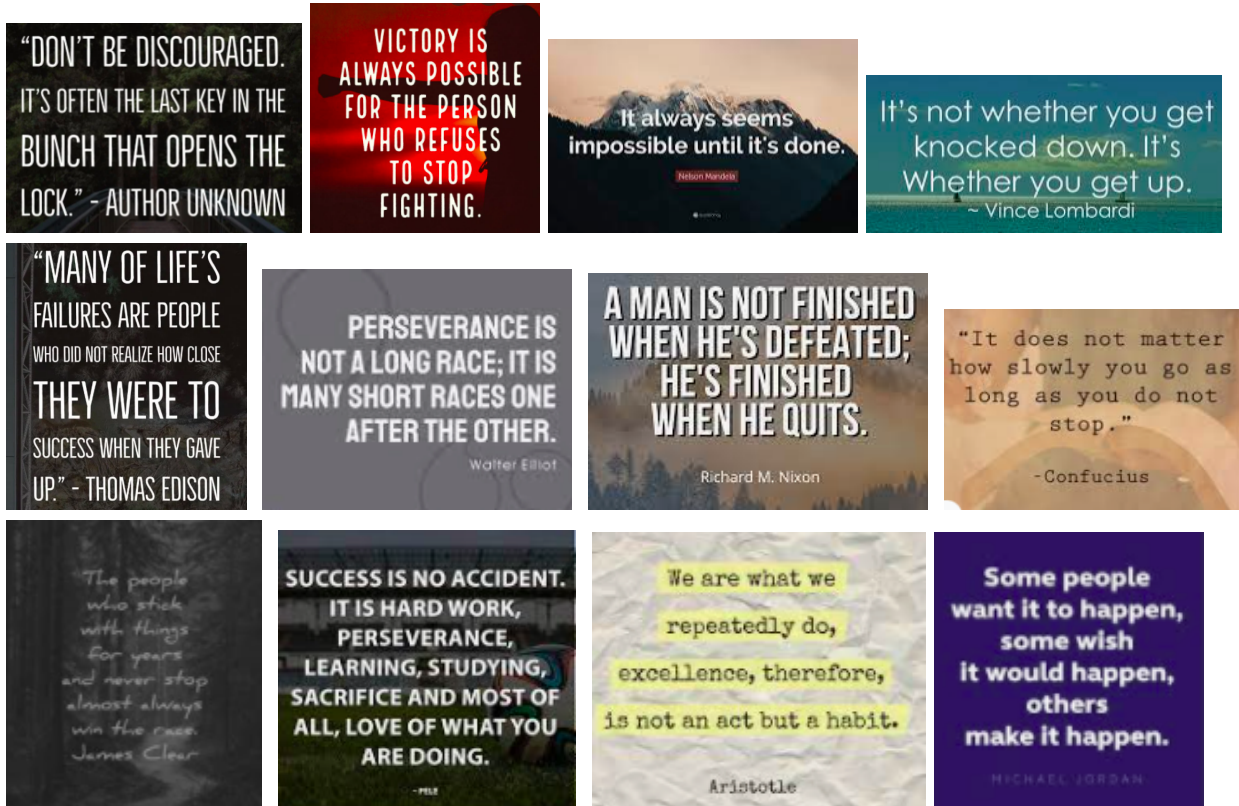
Pencils

Introduction:

Students will come into the room while relaxing music is being played. Students will be asked to sit and read positive messages that have been hung throughout the room. When class starts, students will be given an ice cube with a penny frozen inside. Students will try to get the penny out as fast as possible without putting the ice cube in their mouth or using something to smash it. Once there is a winner and everyone has time to get the penny out, students will discuss the experience with student-led questions guided by the teacher. The teacher will then lead a review of what a goal is and link it to the new idea of perseverance with all ideas being written down on chart paper. Next, students will watch *Caminandes 3: Llamigos* and will discuss it after viewing the video. The discussion will be learner-driven but guided by the teacher. Students will then break into pairs where they will actively process the experience together and create goals for themselves and motivational posters for perseverance.

Lesson:

- Creating **Relaxed Alertness** in the classroom
 - Students will come into the classroom with relaxing music playing.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFZKK7K52uQ>
 - Students will be encouraged to read the following messages that have been hung all over the room.



- Hands-on Activity/ **Complex Experience** (10-15 minutes)
 - Tell students that they are going to do an activity where they must follow the rules. Each student will be given an ice cube with a penny frozen in it. The first person to get the penny out of their ice without putting it in their mouth or hitting it with another object is the winner. Students must stay in their seats.
 - Give each student a paper towel.
 - Place an ice cube with a penny frozen in it on every student's paper towel.
 - Once every student has an ice cube, tell them to go.
 - While students are trying to figure out how to thaw the ice cube, walk around and communicate with them. Remind them of the rules: No putting it into their mouth or hitting it with another object. Students must stay in their seats.
 - When the first person gets their penny, congratulate them but let all the other students finish thawing out their penny.
 - After everyone is finished, allow students to talk about what they just did. Let students generate their questions and talk about the process. Guide students to

questions about accomplishing goals and what it takes to accomplish a goal. (See following possible questions.) (5-10 minutes)

- Was there anything familiar about the challenge that you just had?
 - Can you relate it to any other challenges you might have faced?
 - What was the goal of this challenge?
 - How does melting the ice cubes compare to reaching your goals?
 - Did you ever feel like quitting? Why do some people quit before reaching their goals?
 - Could you have gotten the penny quicker had you broken the rules?
 - Would you feel as good about winning if you didn't follow the rules?
 - How do hard work and perseverance help you achieve your goals?
- Teacher Lead Lesson/**Processing Connections/Learner-Driven Questions:**
 - Teacher will write the word “Goals” on one side of the chart paper and “Perseverance” on the other side. (10 minutes) Leave hanging in the room.

GOALS	PERSEVERANCE

- Say “In the classroom, we have been talking about making and setting goals for ourselves. Let's review what a goal is and then let's see if we can figure out what the word perseverance means and how it relates to our goals.”
- Ask students if they know what goals and perseverance mean?
 - As they answer, write down the answers on the chart paper.
 - Possible answers for “GOALS.”
 - *Definition: the object of a person's ambition or effort; an aim or desired result.*
 - A goal is **something that you want to do, to be, or to have**, and you don't have the resources (time, money, permission, etc.) to get it right this moment. It is something you will work to get in the future after you figure out what resources you need to get it/achieve it/do it.
 - Something that you determine you want, and you work hard to achieve it.
 - Possible answers for “PERSEVERANCE.”
 - *Definition: persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.*
 - Staying with the task and not giving up
 - Showing commitment, pride, and a positive attitude in completing a task
 - Trying again and again and again
 - Being patient and willing to work hard

- Ask students if any of the messages hung in the room can help with the definition of goals or perseverance. Which one do they like? Why?
- Ask the students if they can name some people who have shown perseverance?
 - Possible answers:
 - Thomas Edison, Harriet Tubman, Helen Keller, Stevie Wonder, Walt Disney, Michael Jordan, Bethany Hamilton
 - Their parents, friends, etc.
- Students will watch [Caminandes 3: Llamigos](#). (2:30 minutes)
 - Let students generate their questions and talk about the video they just watched. Guide students questions: (10 minutes)
 - What did the video want you to see?
 - What challenges did the llama face?
 - How did the llama pursue his goal?
 - What feelings do you think he experienced while chasing the fruit?
 - How does it feel when you face challenges when you're working toward a goal?
 - What kind of things can you say to yourself to help you work toward a goal?
 - Write student answers on chart paper under "What kind of things can I say to myself when I am working on a goal?."

What kind of things can I say to myself when I am working towards a goal?	Strategies for myself when facing challenges:

- Possible answers
 - "I can do this!"
 - "It might be hard, but I know I can do it!"
 - "I think I can, I think I can!"
- What can you do if you are having a tough time reaching your goal? What are some possible strategies to help you?
 - Write student answers on chart paper under "Strategies for myself when facing challenges." (Leave hanging in the room.)
 - Possible answers
 - Take a break
 - Break your goal into smaller goals
 - Write down your goal and put it somewhere you can see it
 - Re-think your strategy
 - Ask for help

- Celebrate small successes
- Follow-Up Activity/**Active Processing** (10-15 minutes)
 - Students will break into partners.
 - Hand out Never Give Up Worksheet to every student
 - Say “Everyone will work in pairs and discuss goals that you are either working on or a goal you would like to have. Talk with your partner about some ideas on how you can reach your goal, what challenges you may have, and some strategies you could use to help you. Bounce ideas off of each other. When you have two goals, document them on the sheet. At the bottom of the sheet, create three motivational posters about perseverance that you could use in the classroom or at home. The posters can be for personal use or for others. Be creative!”
- Further Study Activities/Extra Credit Opportunities
 - Research individuals that have perseverance.
 - Research more strategies for accomplishing goals.
 - Talk to family members about setting and accomplishing goals.
 - Research the power of positive talk.
 - Look up motivational posters on the internet and re-create them for the classroom.

Closing Reflection:

In the classroom setting, students participated in a multisensory experience where they tried to get a penny out of an ice cube. Afterward, the students processed the activity with student-led questions guided by the teacher. The teacher led a discussion connecting prior knowledge with a new concept, perseverance. Students watched a video connecting goals and perseverance. They processed the video with student-led questions guided by the teacher. Lastly, for active processing, the students broke up into partners where they discussed goals they might want to achieve, what challenges there might be with achieving the goals, and strategies they could use to help them achieve the goals.

Lesson Plan Explanation

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Caine et al. (2016) define natural learning as a means of making sense of experience and developing new capacities to act in the world. It is my job as a special education teacher to take the experiences my students have and help them interpret and learn from them. I need to teach my students in a way that helps them to grow and make decisions based on their expanding knowledge. This lesson plan was created with what Caine et al. (2016) say are the three critical elements of instruction: relaxed alertness, complex experience, and active processing. I have used these three different concepts to plan a lesson for my ninth-grade special education class.

Relaxed alertness is a state of mind where students are at their best for learning. Caine et al. (2016) explain that learning in a pleasant environment actually can have an effect on the brain. Students who are comfortable, confident, and happy are ready to learn. For students to be in the best headspace to learn, they need to be relaxed and feel comfortable in the classroom. I will start working on relaxed alertness on the first day they walk into the classroom with shared procedures and expectations. I will also do this by spending time making personal relationships with my students. Over time, they will see that our classroom is one that they can be free to be themselves and a place where they can make mistakes and learn from them. The classroom environment will be one that they can be heard, seen, and respected.

When the students come into the room the day of the lesson, relaxing music will be playing softly. I will greet each student by name and ask them to sit quietly and start reading the messages around the room. I will speak to any students who need to talk to me and give them my time and attention. I will make sure there are no distractions while the students are reading the inspirational messages placed around the room.

The second element of the lesson plan will be a complex experience. Caine et al. (2016) state all students learn more effectively when involved in experiences that naturally call on the

use of their senses, action, movement, and decision making. In the lesson, students will be given an ice cube with a frozen penny inside. They will race against each other to be the first person to get their penny out. They cannot use their mouths and cannot use something to smash it. This hands-on experience will make the students have to think about their prior knowledge of different states of matter and problem solve how to get the penny out of the ice.

There is a second complex experience where the students will watch the short film *Caminandes 3: Llamigos*. Enriched environments should be stimulating, complex, and challenging, with elements of novelty and variety (Caine et al., 2016). In this lesson, I am having the students watch a video that would appeal to them, is short and to the point, and sends a good message. This is a visual experience for students that will appeal to their interests and emotions.

The third element of instruction in the lesson plan is active processing. This is where students process each complex experience and consolidate it into their memory. Caine et al. (2016) state that active processing is the art of digesting, thinking about, reflecting on, and making sense of experience and of consolidating learning. Students will generate questions with guidance from the teacher about the experience they just had. Together, the class will connect their prior knowledge (of goals) with the new element (perseverance) that the teacher presents. The teacher will guide the lesson about goals and perseverance with student feedback and will write down their answers in charts to be hung in the classroom for use later by the students.

Continuing to actively process the lesson, students will partner with each other and will discuss goals they want to work on and how they will accomplish them. Students will collaborate and help each other work on the Never Give Up Worksheet. Together they will also create motivational posters about perseverance.

For further study, students can work on extra credit opportunities where they can learn more about goals and perseverance and share their research with the class.

I put this lesson together because the Applied Studies Curriculum works on making and pursuing goals. The ninth graders in the special education classroom have had previous lessons on how to create goals. They needed to still learn about attaining goals and the challenges that might happen. I introduced the trait of perseverance in this lesson so they could understand its meaning and how it relates to making and pursuing goals. I hope that after this lesson, students will understand that working towards their goals might be challenging, but now they have strategies to help keep them motivated to reach their goals.

I used the three critical elements of instruction: relaxed alertness, complex experience, and active processing because they are fundamentals to good teaching. I wanted to deliver the lesson in a way that would have the most impact on my students. I want the students to be able to use this knowledge to connect to new learning and to use it in the future while working towards their goals.

References

Caine, R. N., Caine, G., McClintic, C., Klimek, & Klimek, K. J. (2016). *12 Brain/Mind Learning Principles in Action: Teach for the Development of Higher-Order Thinking and Executive Function* (3rd ed.). Corwin.