

Diligence

Syllables
dil•i•gence

Pronunciation
dil-i-juhns

Definition

Working hard in a steady and continuing manner.
(The ants showed great **diligence** as they moved the sandwich crumb by crumb.)

Simply put: Sticking with a project.

Related Terms

Industrious: Busy.

Fundamental Question:

Do you spend the time and energy needed to complete your jobs?

Students will investigate the idea that diligence requires best efforts, self-discipline, focus, goal-setting, and stick-to-it-iveness; as well as risking failure and learning from mistakes.

Objectives

Each student will:

1. Assess his or her own diligence skills/diligent behaviors.
2. Help assess the class's diligence skills/diligent behaviors.
3. Will develop a list of words that relate to the term diligence.

Before you begin

- Print out one copy of *I Can Relate* for each student.
- On the board, under a heading of DILIGENCE write:
Most of the time:
 - I finish my projects and see them through to completion. I don't give up when the going gets difficult.
 - I do my jobs correctly. When I work on something, I really try to do it right.
 - I follow directions.
 - I stay focused and concentrate on my work. I have self-discipline.
 - I'm not lazy. I don't put things off until later or leave things unfinished.
 - I learn from my mistakes ... and I'm not afraid of failing to meet my goals.

Suggested Sidebars:

Speaking of Dependability (Discussion Idea)

If you could only be one or the other, which would you rather be, diligent or lucky? Why?

Diligence

Taking It to the Next Level

With your classmates or by yourself, select a task that you know will require diligence on your part. Think of something that will be challenging, but not impossible for you to do. Most importantly, pick something that will help others. Examples might be to volunteer to serve food at a senior center or homeless shelter once a week for a month, plant a vegetable garden for those without food, or raise a puppy for Leader Dogs for the Blind. (Obviously, projects such as these will require parental – as well as teacher – input and guidance.)

Procedure

1. (Optional: Select one student to be the reader and another to be the recorder. After each of the following [procedure #2] diligence-related statements is read aloud by the reader, take a hand-count and ask the recorder to write your numbers [of “trues” only] on the board. Of course, you may do this yourself, if you’d prefer.)
2. Ask the class for honest answers to the following “most-of-the-time” statements (true: one hand up; false: no hands up). Explain that there are no right or wrong answers, and that wishful thinking doesn’t count.

Most of the time:

- I finish my projects and see them through to completion. I don’t give up when the going gets difficult.
 - I do my jobs correctly. When I work on something, I really try to do it right.
 - I follow directions.
 - I stay focused and concentrate on my work. I have self-discipline.
 - I’m not lazy. I don’t put things off until later or leave things unfinished.
 - I learn from my mistakes ... and I’m not afraid of failing to meet my goals.
3. Using a graphing technique of your choice and the bold-face words above, have the children help you plot the responses to illustrate the comparison between your class’s strongest area and most challenging area of diligent behaviors... as well as the placement of everything in between. Discuss the results with your students. Ask them why they think the strongest and weakest points are the strongest and weakest. Have them propose activities or exercises to strengthen the weaker areas. Try a few!
 4. Distribute the *I Can Relate* sheets and review the directions with the class. (Optional: When the students have completed their lists, compile the entries [all of the Ds together on the first page, all of the I’s on the second and fourth pages, all of the L’s on the third page and so on, until DILIGENCE is in order]. Place the sheets in a binder that the students may look at. Encourage the children to figure out how specific terms relate to the theme of “diligence.”)
 5. **Follow Up:** Diligence is about investing time and energy to reach goals. Invite a musician, athlete, or other role model who has achieved his or her status through diligence to speak to your class.

Name _____

Reminder: Diligence means working hard in a steady and continuing manner.

I Can Relate

Use each letter in the word DILIGENCE to start a different word or phrase. Here's the catch: Each of your words or phrases must be related to the character trait of diligence in some way!

D ifficulties don't stop me when I set a goal!

I

L

I

G

E

N

C

E

Today's Thought: *Patience and diligence, like faith, remove mountains.* – **William Penn, founded the Province of Pennsylvania**