

Jumping Hurdles

Introduction

Key Concept:

Everyone experiences setbacks, but successful people “jump back up” and keep trying. They know that there are certain steps they can use to help them overcome their challenges and achieve success.



Vocabulary

- Hurdles
- Give up
- Believe
- Problem-solving
- Creating options
- Self-talk
- Baby steps

Secondary Concepts:

- Everyone has problems or “hurdles” in life, but you can create options to overcome your hurdles.
- You can get help from positive friends, teachers, family members, and other support systems.
- To jump your hurdle, you must first replace certain negative behaviors with positive ones.

Personalize your Lesson:

- How has following these steps helped you or someone you know overcome challenges?
- What role has your belief level played in jumping your own personal hurdles?
- What are the hurdles that your students are facing? How can these steps be applied to their specific challenges?
- Of all the steps, which do you feel is the most important for your students? Why?

Activity:

To introduce this lesson, complete the attention activity “Jumping Hurdles.”

Jumping Hurdles

Lesson Plan: Introducing Jumping Hurdles

No matter how hard you try to change and do the right thing, you are still going to have problems, and even fail sometimes. To get over the hurdles in your way, you will need to have a plan for how to jump over them. Knowing that you

have a plan can give you the courage to keep on trying.

The most important part of your plan for getting over hurdles is the resolve you have to jump back up if you fall. Everyone falls at some point. The winners are the

ones who learn to jump back up and never quit.

Read a book, look at pictures, or watch a video clip of Edwin Moses or another world-class hurdler. Discuss hurdle running.

Jumping Hurdles

Lesson Plan: Visual Analogy Walkthrough

1. Poster

Discussion:

Show the “Jumping Your Hurdles” poster. Explain that the hurdle represents problems or challenges we face in life.

Question:

What are some hurdles (challenges or problems) that you



Write:

List some examples of hurdles (challenges or problems) that they may face. Examples: Passing 3rd grade, cleaning your room, learning to play the piano, making the basketball team, playing in a piano recital, or competing in a gymnastics meet.

have that you would like to jump over?

2. Identify the Problem (Step 1)

Write

Next to the first shoelace, write, “Identify the Problem.”

Question:

What problem do you really want to overcome?

Discussion:

Explain that the first step in jumping over the hurdle is



figuring out what it is. It may sound simple, but we must identify any problem that is holding us back. For example, in order for NASA to put a man

on the moon, they had to overcome the problem of gravity.

Activity:

Have the students turn to the “Introductory Activity” page in their WhyTry Journals. If students don't have journals, have them use a piece of paper. Have them write at the top of the page one hurdle (challenge or problem) they would like to overcome. Then have them draw a large picture of their shoe.

3. Create Options (Step 2)

Write

Next to the second shoelace, write, "Create Options"

Discussion:

For NASA to overcome the problem of gravity, they had to try lots of different experiments until they found one that worked. Discouragement is one of the biggest obstacles to getting over our problem. Creating options can make us feel less discouraged.

Write

On the poster, write and discuss the following ideas for creating options:



- Be creative
- Apply hard work
- Learn from others (support)
- Be flexible
- Use smaller hurdles
- Research: Become an expert on your problem.
- Don't accept No
- Use positive defense mechanisms
- Have fun

Story:

Tell the story in the box below about Olympic Aerials ski jumper Eric Bergoust. This story is an illustration of becoming an expert on your problem.

Activity:

Have students return to their WhyTry Journals, Introductory Activity page. Encourage them to try to create at least three options to jump their hurdle. Tell them it is normal for some options not to work. The secret is staying positive, refusing to give up, and trying the next option. Challenge them to laugh and learn from failed options and move on. Have them list these options somewhere on their shoe.

STORY: BECOMING AN EXPERT

After winning the gold medal in the Nagano Winter Olympics, Eric Bergoust set his sights on the 2002 games in his home country. To try and improve himself, he studied physics. He became an expert on what forces are at play on the body of a aerials ski jumper. He realized that by holding only one arm in the air at take-off instead of both arms, as was the normal procedure, that the body could begin its rotation more quickly. This allowed him to do more complex stunts. He also played a major role in the new design of the training facility in Park City. The facility uses an innovative design that includes a set of jumps that launch jumpers into a swimming pool infused with air bubbles to make the landing soft. This allowed jumpers to train through the summer months, but also let them try new stunts without the danger of hurting themselves on the landing. When the Olympics came, Eric fell out of medal contention with a stumble on one of his landings. However, the results of his research were obvious as everyone, including the gold medal winner, were now using his one-arm technique.

4. Get Help (Step 3)

Write:

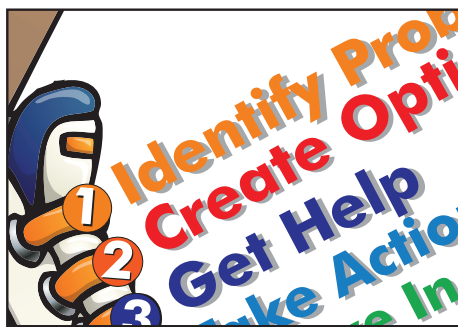
Next to the third shoelace, write, "Get Help."

Question:

Who can help you get over your hurdle?

Discussion:

Getting help from others is a great way to create more options and to see solutions that



we are blinded to because we are too close to the problem. Many people have already overcome the hurdles that we are trying to get over. Remind

students to be willing to seek out and accept help. Getting help from others can make getting over your hurdle more fun, easier, and faster.

Activity:

Have students return to their shoe drawing in their journal. Have them list somewhere on their shoe someone that can help them with jumping their hurdle.

NOTE:

Remind students the importance of expressing gratitude to those who help them over their hurdles. One of the best ways we can express gratitude is by not giving up and continuing to try.

5. Take Action (Step 4)

Write

Next to the fourth shoelace, write, "Take Action"

Discussion:

If we don't take that first step toward solving our problems, we won't solve them. Remind students of the importance of getting a running start. Ask students to identify several behaviors that they need to stop



in order to jump their hurdles. Then put greater emphasis on the behaviors they need to start. We each have limited energy during the day, and it

is much more beneficial to put our energy and thoughts into what we are doing right than doing wrong.

Activity:

Have students think of at least one major change in behavior that will help them get over their hurdle. Have them add this to the shoe drawing in their journal.

6. Believe in Change (Step 5)

Write:

Next to the fifth shoelace, write, "Believe in Change."

Discussion:

If you don't believe change can happen, you are not likely to put effort into trying. NASA had to believe it could put a man on the moon or there would have been no point in putting time and effort into building a rocket.

Ask them if they can remember being scared on the first day of school or the first time they rode a bike or dove off the high dive, etc. Point out that each time we go through a change, we build confidence. If they feel frustrated because of their hurdle, the following can help them believe that things can change.

- Have desire: You have to want to see what's on the other side of the hurdle. Ask yourself, "How will



my life be different when I jump the hurdle?"

- Take a risk: Remember, you miss EVERY opportunity you don't go after.
- Believe in you: Remember positive changes you made in the past and believe in your abilities.
- Be optimistic about change: Life will always have changes. Look at change as an opportunity to create the life you want. If you sit still and try to keep things the same, "life will happen to you" instead of you directing your life. You will never have total control over change, but you can lead it in directions that you want. You must believe that the positive efforts you put

forth today will affect your future in positive ways. For example, a music group that has a number one hit had to believe that the practice and effort they put forth in the past would lead to positive results in the future.

Ask students what their self-talk will be as they try to jump their hurdle. For example, "I will keep trying so I can get more opportunity, freedom, and self-respect," "I can do it," "Nothing will stop me." When they feel down or depressed, tell them to ask themselves, "What is my self-talk telling me?" and make the needed changes.

Activity:

Challenge students to use their positive self-talk to keep their hope alive and keep believing that they can change. Have students list one example of positive self-talk they can use to jump their hurdle on their shoe drawing in their journal.

7. Jump Back Up (Step 6)

Write

Next to the sixth shoelace, write, "Jump Back Up."

Discussion:

Sometimes we don't overcome our hurdles the first time we try, or we may overcome our problems and then make a mistake again. Lasting success comes only if we jump back up and try again.



This last step is the most important. The reality is that we are not all perfect and we won't get over every hurdle

the first time we jump it. We all make mistakes, and often the difference between getting over the hurdle and missing it and falling is very little. If you make a mistake and fail, you haven't failed if you get back up and try again.

Story:

Share the true story in the box below or a personal story of your own to help show the importance of jumping back up.

STORY: RACHEL'S RACE

Rachel was the anchor leg of her high school 4x100 relay team. It was a big invitational track meet with several schools, including their long-time rival Kirtland High School. This was her big chance to shine. She watched as her teammates ran their hearts out. By the time she received the baton, they had a small lead. Rachel took off down the track and began to increase her lead. But then something horrible happened. She was trying to run so hard that she lost her balance, tripped, and fell to the ground. Her coaches and teammates started to run toward her to see if she was alright. Her coach wanted to go out on the track to help her but he stopped, knowing that if he did her team would be disqualified. Instead he yelled to her, "Are you OK? Can you get up?" She looked to see the other teams were catching up to her. Quickly getting back up, she began to run again, now neck and neck with the other teams. But in her attempt to get back up to speed, she lost her balance again! As her knee hit the ground she watched as most of the other teams passed her by. Her first thought was to just give up, since she could not possibly win the race. But instead, with a rush of adrenaline and the cheers of her teammates ringing in her ears, she struggled to her feet and began to chase the other teams. She started to gain on the rest of the field but it was too late. She crossed the line in 4th place.

Rachel felt horrible . . . She had let down her teammates, her coach and herself. As the track meet came to an end, her coach came up to her to thank her. By placing 4th in her race, the team was awarded one point. That one point just happened to be the point that put them over the top to win the meet. They not only beat all of the other schools, but they beat their rival Kirtland High for the first time in over 10 years! Her coach was elated!

NOTE:

The following are some key points to draw from this step:

- When we jump back up, we can learn from our mistakes. This will make us stronger. Then we can focus on the goal and try again.
- Hurdle runners often knock over hurdles. This slows them down but it doesn't stop them from finishing the race or even winning it if they put in the effort.

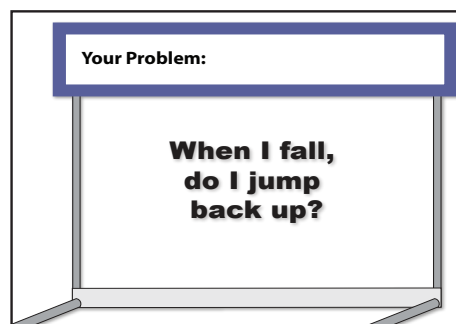
8. Conclusion

Write:

Write on the poster next to the hurdle, "You only lose if you give up" and "You will always win if you jump back up."

Activity 1:

Encourage students to memorize this phrase. Have them



write it in their journals on their show drawing. Then al-

low them time to color and/or decorate their pictures.

Activity 2:

Have students cut out gold a medal that says, "You only lose if you give up, and you will always win if you jump back up." Staple this medal to a ribbon they can hang around their necks.

9. Review Lesson

Vocabulary

For the review lesson, have students define the vocabulary words listed in the introductory page of this chapter in their WhyTry Journals. This will help increase understanding of the analogy and give you an opportunity to assess comprehension and retention from the overview lesson.

Visual analogy

In their WhyTry Journals, students have a copy of the visual analogy. Have students use this to do a review/walk-through of the analogy. Have them make notes, answer questions, or use a personal example to explain the concept.



10. Reflection Question

Until the next WhyTry class, ask students to consider the Jumping Hurdles reflection question:

When I fall, do I jump back up?

