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Take-Home Backpack— Getting Ready for High School

This sample includes the following:

Kids Learn Activity Book

- Table of Contents (1 page)
- Introduction pages (3 pages)
- Student pages (3 pages)

Nonfiction Book Sample

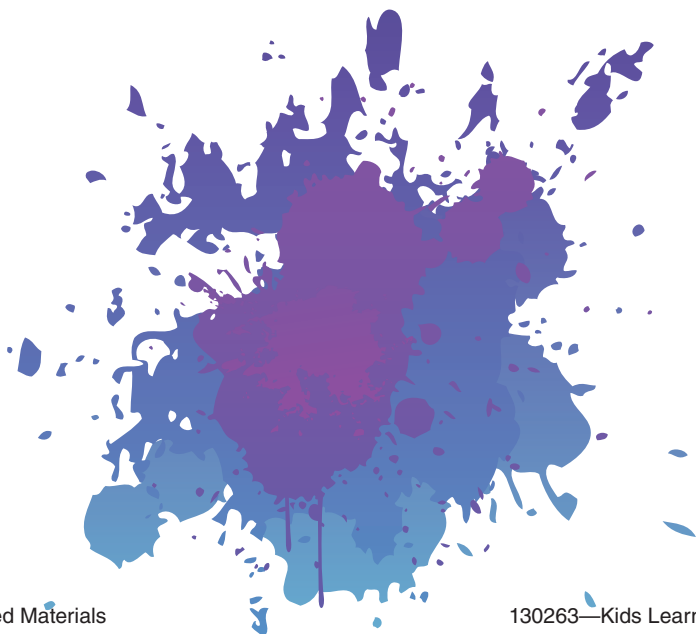
Family Engagement Guide Sample

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Welcome Letter

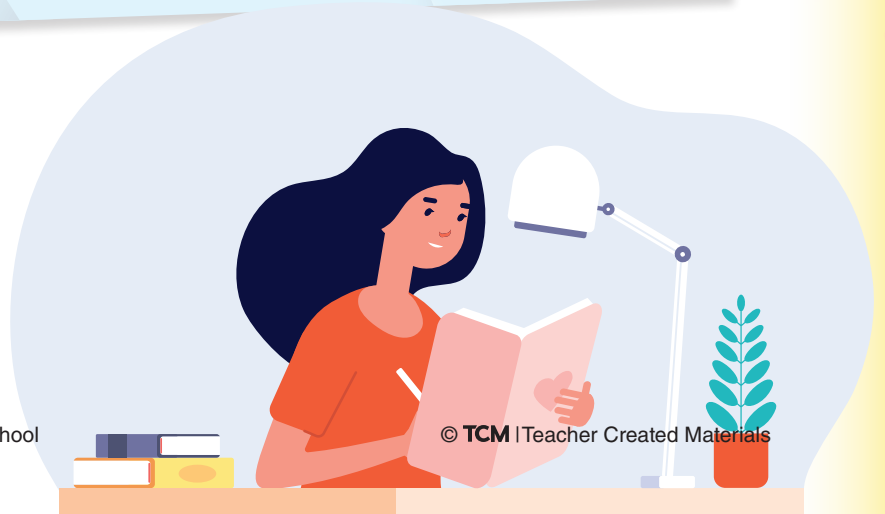
Dear Student,

High school is an exciting time, filled with many learning opportunities—both within the classroom and within yourself. You'll have a chance to build on your academic knowledge in core subjects, such as math and English, while also getting a chance to learn a language, explore electives, play sports, or join clubs. This is a time for you to really take ownership over your education by becoming more independent and self-motivated.

This book will help you sharpen your skills academically and beyond. You will be reviewing math and language concepts that you have previously learned while also picking up some helpful life skills to support you throughout the next four years. Here are some tips for completing this book:

- ◆ Dedicate a specific time to work on the activities every day. Completing this book will be super easy if you add it into your daily routine.
- ◆ Complete activity pages every day. This book is designed to teach you concepts over a longer period of time, and it will not be as effective if you procrastinate. Avoiding procrastination will also help you succeed in high school, so think of this as practice.
- ◆ Creatively share your thoughts and feelings on the My Journal pages.

Change can make people feel nervous, but this book is your guide to a smooth transition into high school. Enjoy your time learning these concepts, and best wishes for a successful four years in high school!



Academic Success Skills

A valuable high school experience is one that is well-rounded. Take some time to learn about academic, social-emotional, and college/career success skills so that you can have a rewarding high school experience and beyond.

Doing well academically is about more than just knowing the information—you have to know it and show it. Learning the academic content alone won't get you the grades you want unless you actually apply that knowledge by doing things such as completing your homework and participating in class discussions. This section will teach you the skills you need to own your learning.

Stay Organized

- ◆ Keep your school supplies on hand at all times (paper, pencils, pens, etc.) so you're always prepared.
- ◆ Find an organizational system that works best for you. You'll want to separate each subject's work and know where everything is at all times. For example, you could use small binders for each class or different sections in an accordion folder.
- ◆ Clean out your backpack regularly. Make sure to put everything in its designated spot, depending on the organizational system you choose.
- ◆ Use a planner to keep track of all upcoming assignments and tests.
- ◆ Use technology to hold yourself accountable by setting reminders on your devices and using digital calendars for important tasks.



Social-Emotional Success Skills

While your job is to be a student, you can't learn effectively if you're not taking care of your social-emotional well-being. This includes forming positive relationships and learning to manage your emotions effectively. This section covers strategies for cultivating a healthy mindset so that you're able to be fully present in your classes and do your best.

Take Care of Your Body*

- ◆ Staying active is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. Not only does regular exercise (about one hour a day) benefit your physical health, but it is also linked to greater levels of happiness and overall stress reduction.
- ◆ Maintaining a balanced diet plays an important role in how you feel. Be mindful of how the foods you eat affect your mood and focus. Some students find it helpful to prepare healthy snacks and meals in advance so that it's not tempting to reach for the junk food when you're in a rush.
- ◆ Drinking water also has a big effect on energy levels and overall mood. On average, drinking eight cups of water a day is a good amount to stay hydrated.
- ◆ Make time for rest and recovery by allowing yourself to get at least 8–10 hours of sleep each night. If you're having a hard time falling and staying asleep, try limiting your screen time before bed to give your brain time to wind down and relax.

**These are general guidelines for teen health, but make sure to consult your parent/guardian and physician for more individualized advice.*



College & Career Success Skills

Some of you may be thinking, “It’s way too early to think about my college or career goals.” Others might have been planning their futures for years. Whether you’ve considered it before or not, the present is a great time to think about how your decisions now can affect your life in the long run.

It’s a good idea to think about your goals for the future while also allowing for flexibility in that plan. Think back to four years ago. Do you feel like you’ve changed since then? Would you be confident in asking your elementary self to make decisions about your freshman year in high school? More than likely, the answer is a big “no.” In a similar way, you don’t want to limit your options after high school. That’s why you want to do your best in school to set yourself up to have the widest range of options once you graduate. This section covers the skills you should work on in high school to best prepare you for college and career success.

Identify Your Strengths

- ◆ Reflect on what your strengths are. This can include your interests, passions, talents, and any other positive qualities that make you, you.
- ◆ Consider how your strengths might translate to your future college and/or career experiences. For example, if you enjoy helping and working with children, you might consider a future as a teacher. You can also take different career quizzes to help guide you in this process.



Writing Questions

Directions: Readers ask questions before, during, and after reading. After reading the title, write a question you have about the article. Write another question while you are reading the text. Then, write one final question after you finish reading.

From Boredom to Bird Watching

It was a class trip, and I had to go. Otherwise, you'd never catch me hiking through the woods swatting mosquitoes and belting black flies while attempting to "record nature" in my journal.

Three days in the wilderness without electricity! Cell phones weren't allowed. Shampoo was unnecessary. The bathhouse had only three toilets and a sink large enough for Smokey Bear. The boys' and girls' camps were separated by the dining hall and miles of snake-infested terrain.

On the first day, we had mandatory activities: orienteering, fire building, plant identification, first aid, and shelter-building. Camping in my backyard is the closest I'll ever get to camping again. No need to know how to construct a branch and twig shelter. On the second day, we could pick our own activities—mountain biking, drawing in nature, and bird watching. I chose bird watching. I figured it would include a nice hike and a nicer place to rest. Boy, was I wrong!

A five-mile hike left me with barely a squeeze of hydrocortisone cream. Ducking the underbrush had my hair follicles crying for soap. The climb burned my thighs, and my hamstrings ached. But when we reached the top, I forgot about my itching and hamburger craving. We were on a cliff of white quartz, streaked with silver. We looked down on tall pine trees. The clouds were touchable, and I had never been so close to the sun or seen the blue of a sky like that.

I thought a bird was a bird, but again I was wrong. We saw cedar waxwings and ovenbirds. We saw turkey vultures, blue birds, warblers, and woodpeckers. I had seen chickadees and goldfinches at my bird feeder. But these birds, along with the sparrows and cardinals, never looked more beautiful.

My journal was full of sketches, information, and...poems. Me! I've never been inspired to write a poem, let alone share it with others! Our descent was too quick. We talked about the differences among the birds—from the songs they sang to the way they looked. At the bathhouse, I heard an ovenbird, "Chirp, chirp, chirp!" I tried to find him, but before I knew it, the dinner horn was blaring angrily—I didn't even have time to shampoo!

But the following morning, the horn from the bus was much more disturbing. I hated to admit it, but I wasn't ready to go home!

Writing Questions (cont.)

Directions: Answer the questions about the article, “From Boredom to Bird Watching.”

1. Which statement gives the most important reason for asking a question before reading?

- A confirms predictions
- B helps you synthesize information
- C sets a purpose for reading
- D helps you making inferences

2. Which word is the best synonym for *terrain*?

- A environment
- B community
- C habitat
- D landscape



3. Which phrase best describes the student’s feelings about his bird-watching experience?

- A from happiness to excitement
- B from exhaustion to amazement
- C from blisters to relaxation
- D from anticipation to disappointment

4. In the text, “the clouds were touchable” is a form of what figure of speech?

- A simile
- B hyperbole
- C metaphor
- D personification

5. *Metacognition* means to think about your thinking. How is questioning text a form of metacognition?

Computing Unit Rates

Directions: Compute the unit rate for each problem.

To compute a unit rate, divide the numerator by the denominator so that the numerator is a comparison to 1.

On Alice's street, there are 6 dogs and 2 neighbors. How many dogs does each neighbor have?

- ◆ 6 dogs divided by 2 neighbors
- ◆ $6 \div 2 = 3$
- ◆ Unit rate = 3 dogs per 1 neighbor



1. The price is \$6.50 for 10 oranges. What is the cost of one orange?
2. The cost of pencils is \$4.20 for 12 pencils. What is the price per pencil?
3. The cost of toilet paper is \$9.99 for 9 rolls. What is the price per roll of toilet paper?
4. The cost of bottled water is \$6.00 for 24 bottles. What is the price per bottle?
5. The cost of bananas is \$2.40 for 5 pounds. What is the price per pound?



Planning a Picnic

Directions: A group of friends is planning a picnic. Use the clues to find out what each friend is bringing.

Clues

- ◆ Mary did not bring meat.
- ◆ One friend brought an item that starts with the same letter as their name.
- ◆ Ariel brought something that would be carried in a bowl.
- ◆ Fred's item was not fresh squeezed.

	Mary	Bryan	Fred	Ariel
lemonade				
hamburgers				
brownies				
potato salad				



Fantastic
Lives

Against All Odds

Fantastic
Lives

Against All Odds

Difficult times happen to everyone. But facing adversity doesn't have to stand in the way of being successful or happy. Adversity can make people tougher and wiser. It can even teach kindness! Discover the stories of people who overcame incredible odds to create fantastic lives, including talk show queen Oprah Winfrey, Ringo Starr of the Beatles, and surfer Bethany Hamilton.

Teacher Created Materials

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Just Incredible

Olaudah Equiano (OH-lah-dah ek-wee-AH-noh) was an 11-year-old boy who lived in what is now Nigeria. One day, the adults in his village were out working when he and his sister were kidnapped. Equiano and his sister were separated and sold into slavery, never to see each other again.

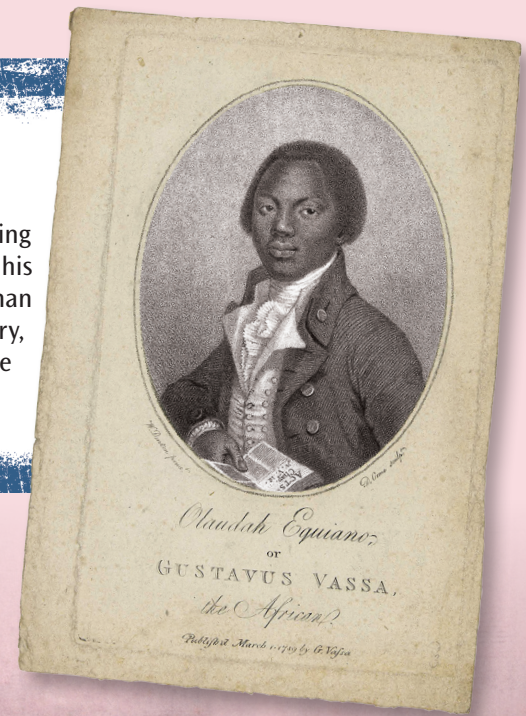
Equiano worked for about 10 years until he earned enough money to buy his freedom. As a free man, Equiano traveled the world. He sailed to the Arctic, managed a plantation in the West Indies, and ultimately settled in England.

In 1789, he published his **autobiography**, *The Life of Olaudah Equiano*. His book was a huge success. Against all odds, the formerly enslaved man became respected, wealthy, and powerful.

Equiano's life is extreme by any measure, but he is not alone. Many people have overcome challenges that seem **insurmountable**. Here are a few of their stories.

A Boost to Abolition

After Equiano earned his freedom, he became a leading **abolitionist**. His book and his moving speeches put a human face on the horrors of slavery, which helped strengthen the cause in Great Britain.



Many Names

Equiano was called "Michael" and then "Jacob" when he was enslaved. He was renamed Gustavus Vassa when a new owner bought him. Although he did not like the new name, he was Gustavus for most of his life. He used his original African name for his autobiography.

Bethany Hamilton

Surf to the Top

Bethany Hamilton was an active young surfer who spent her free time on the water, conquering breathtaking waves near her home in Hawai'i. The 13-year-old was fearless and graceful on her surfboard and was determined to be a professional surfer one day.

One dreadful morning, everything changed. Hamilton and her best friend paddled out far from shore and were waiting for the waves to pick up, when suddenly, the young surfer felt pressure and some sharp pulls on her arm. Looking down, she saw that the ocean water around her had turned the color of blood.

Hamilton realized that a shark had bitten off her left arm just below the shoulder. The attack happened so quickly that no one even saw the animal.

Catching the Shark

A few weeks after the attack, fishermen caught a 13-foot-long tiger shark near the shore. Its jaws matched the bite mark on Hamilton's board. Tiger sharks almost never attack humans, but they will if they feel threatened. Tiger sharks are fierce predators whose strong jaws can bite through the hard shell of a turtle.

See It Yourself

Hamilton's shark-bitten surfboard is in the California Surf Museum in Oceanside. Museum workers say her board is the most popular display in the museum.

The father of one of Hamilton's friends was surfing nearby and saw Hamilton in pain, so he used his shirt to slow the bleeding. It took 20 intense minutes to drag Hamilton, still on her board and fading in and out of **consciousness**, back to shore. The shark attack "was my own personal **tsunami**," Hamilton remembered. She lost 60 percent of her blood and barely survived.

Incredibly, the young surfer was back on her board within a month. Instead of giving up on her dreams, she **painstakingly** adjusted her surfing style.

Some elements of surfing, such as ducking under big waves while paddling away from shore, are particularly difficult with one arm. But Hamilton found solutions and improved her balance.

Despite her physical limitations, Hamilton became a professional surfer. In 2016, she even beat the top-ranked surfer in the world.



Dolphin Defense

Martin Richardson was in the Red Sea when a great white shark attacked him. The shark was tearing him apart, when suddenly three dolphins formed a circle around Richardson and began beating the water with their tails and fins. The shark left, and Richardson's friends rescued him. Richardson needed two hundred stitches and lost 11 pounds (5 kilograms) of flesh in the attack.

THINK LINK

Hamilton figured out a way to continue her favorite activity even though other people might have given up.

- What are some of your favorite physical activities?
- How could you modify them for someone with a disability?
- If you had to give up your favorite activities, what are some similar things you could still do that would bring you joy?

The shark attack was a horrible day in Hamilton's life, but she bounced back and even found a way to use the attack to do good. Hamilton wrote a best-selling book, *Soul Surfer*, about her recovery and the **adversity** she overcame. The book was so popular that it was made into a movie. Soon after the attack, Hamilton became a celebrity.

In 2016, Hamilton had a chance to win an award at the ESPYs, an award show for athletes. Hamilton was nominated for the Best Disabled Female Athlete award, but she took herself out of the running because she didn't think of herself as disabled. "I don't look at it like, 'Wow, I did a really good job with one arm,'" Hamilton said. "It's just, 'Wow, I did a good job on that wave.'"

Today, in addition to surfing and spending time with her family, she travels the world meeting people and sharing her story.

Amazing Hall of Famer

In 2017, Hamilton was inducted into the Surfers' Hall of Fame. The founder of the Hall of Fame described Hamilton this way: "Amazing surfer! Amazing athlete! Amazing person!"



Hamilton carves her name into concrete outside the Surfers' Hall of Fame.

Willing and Able

Jason Lester is another elite athlete who overcame adversity. When he was 12 years old, a car ran a red light and smashed into him, leaving one arm **paralyzed**. As an adult, he became the first disabled athlete to complete the Ultraman—a grueling three-day **triathlon** that ends with a 52-mile run.

The Beat Goes On

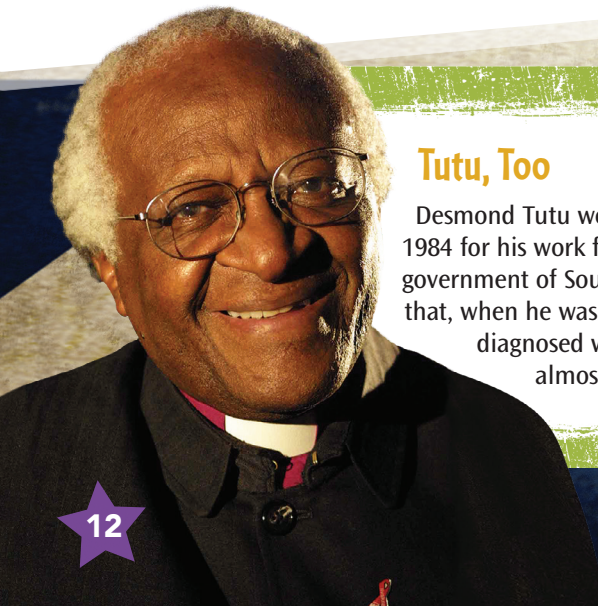
Richard Starkey would definitely not have been considered a healthy child. When he was six years old, his appendix burst and he developed a serious infection called **peritonitis** (payr-uh-tuh-NY-tis), which caused him to spend a year recovering in a hospital. Then, when Starkey was 12 years old, he was **diagnosed** with tuberculosis (tuh-ber-kyuh-LOH-sis), a serious, hard-to-cure lung infection. Starkey stayed in a clinic for two years while he slowly recovered.

In the clinic, a nurse gave Starkey drums to keep him active. He sat propped up in his bed and banged away on his drum, his pillows, and anything else he could find.

After he was released from the clinic, Starkey didn't seem to have a bright future. He dropped out of school because he was so far behind his classmates. He worked various odd jobs in his hometown of Liverpool, England, before landing an **apprenticeship** at a woodworking factory.

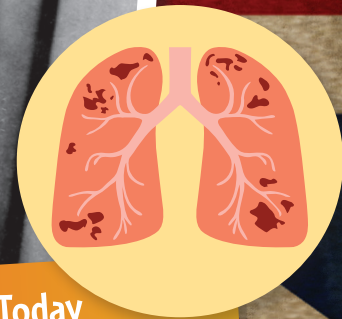


Richard Starkey



Tutu, Too

Desmond Tutu won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for his work fighting the racist **apartheid** government of South Africa. But long before that, when he was just 14 years old, Tutu was diagnosed with tuberculosis. He spent almost two years recovering.



Tuberculosis Today

Tuberculosis has been almost wiped out in much of the world, but it is still a problem in some countries. More than a million people die from the disease each year.

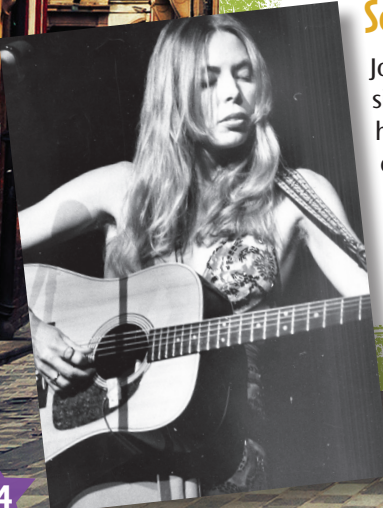


members of Rory Storm and the Hurricanes, including Starr (far right)

While Starkey worked in the factory, he continued to make music with **improvised** drums. “I didn’t have an instrument for years later. I made my first kit...out of biscuit tins and firewood,” Starkey later said.

Eventually, Starkey created a real drum kit, while also building up his reputation as a skilled drummer. As part of a Liverpool band called Rory Storm and the Hurricanes, he toured England and even played in Germany. It was at that time that Starkey decided he needed to start using a stage name—Ringo Starr.

While playing in Germany in 1960, Starr became friends with the band members who were opening for Rory Storm and the Hurricanes. These new friends were John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison—founding members of the Beatles.



Song Solution

Joni Mitchell was an extremely popular singer-songwriter in the 1970s. She had polio when she was nine years old, leaving her left arm weak. She learned new ways to **tune** her guitar that also made the instrument easier to play. These tunings gave her songs a unique sound.

The Dingle

Starr grew up in a harsh neighborhood in Liverpool, called the Dingle. He later said, “You kept your head down, your eyes open, and you didn’t get in anybody’s way.”

Rory Storm and the Hurricanes and the Beatles took turns playing lengthy sets in a dark, underground club—day after day after day. The young musicians kept playing, becoming famous examples of **grit** and determination. By the time they were in their early 20s, they had played more live shows than many bands do in their entire careers.

Starr quickly bonded with the members of the Beatles, as they all knew plenty about overcoming adversity. Lennon's mom and aunt were both killed in car crashes when he was a teenager. McCartney's mom died after problems due to a surgery for breast cancer when he was 14.

In 1962, Starr left Rory Storm and the Hurricanes and became the drummer for the Beatles. The Fab Four (as they were later known) were soon some of the biggest celebrities on the planet.

Play On, Paul

Les Paul is a famous guitarist. One day, his car skidded off an icy road. In the crash, Paul shattered his right elbow. The doctors told him he would never be able to bend his elbow again. He asked the doctors to permanently fix his arm at the exact angle he used to hold a guitar—meaning he could still play after the crash.



Quite a Kit

In 2015, Starr auctioned Beatles items to raise money for his charity, the Lotus Children Foundation. The drum kit he used in the early days of the Beatles sold for \$2.2 million!



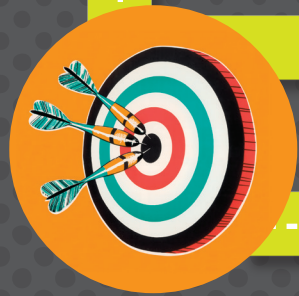
Growth Opportunities

Scientists are studying how people respond to adversity. They have found that going through adversity, especially violent events, can make people stronger. The name for this is *posttraumatic growth*. People often grow in five particular areas.



Relationships

Stress can bring people closer together. People who face adversity can feel a strong connection with other people who have gone through the same problems. Adversity can teach people to communicate and describe their own emotions.



New Horizons

When people emerge from traumatic events, they sometimes feel as though their lives are full of possibilities. It's a chance to rethink their goals.



Spirituality

Adversity can make people more religious or spiritual. It can also cause a major change in a person's belief system.



Personal Strength

When people pull through tough events, they know they are strong enough to endure other types of adversity. Overcoming difficult times can teach someone to think, *I am a survivor*.



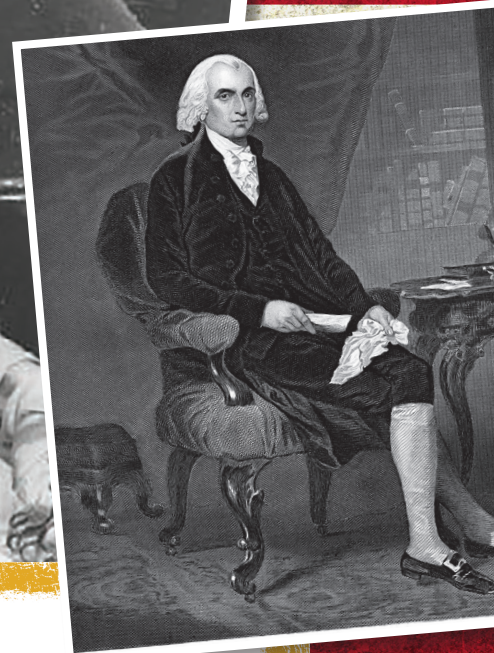
Appreciating Life

Adversity can make people wiser. It can teach people to stay calm in the face of difficulty and appreciate all the great things about their lives.



Splash Down

John F. Kennedy (left) and George H. W. Bush (right) both served in the armed forces in World War II, during which time, both men almost drowned in the Pacific Ocean. Bush's plane was shot down, while Kennedy's boat sank.



Presidential Peril

A number of U.S. presidents overcame serious adversity to rise to the most important position in the country.

Abraham Lincoln suffered from depression all his life. Andrew Johnson was raised in poverty by a single mother. James Garfield's parents died when he was just four years old. Woodrow Wilson did not learn to read until he was 12, possibly because of **dyslexia**.

Modern presidents also had to overcome struggles. Ronald Reagan's father was an alcoholic. Bill Clinton's father died before he was born, and his stepfather was abusive.

When it comes to presidential peril, though, none can compete with Andrew Jackson, the nation's seventh president.

Small in Stature

James Madison (right) suffered from a form of **epilepsy**, among other health problems. As an adult, he weighed about 100 lbs. (45 kg) and was often described as "sickly."

Jackson was born on March 15, 1767, near the border of North Carolina and South Carolina. At the time, the region was so **isolated** that it had not yet been **surveyed**. Jackson's father died before he was born, and his family was forced to move in with relatives. When he was 13 years old, Jackson joined the fight against the British in the American Revolution. Although he was too young to officially join the Continental Army, Jackson worked as a messenger and fought alongside **irregular** troops.

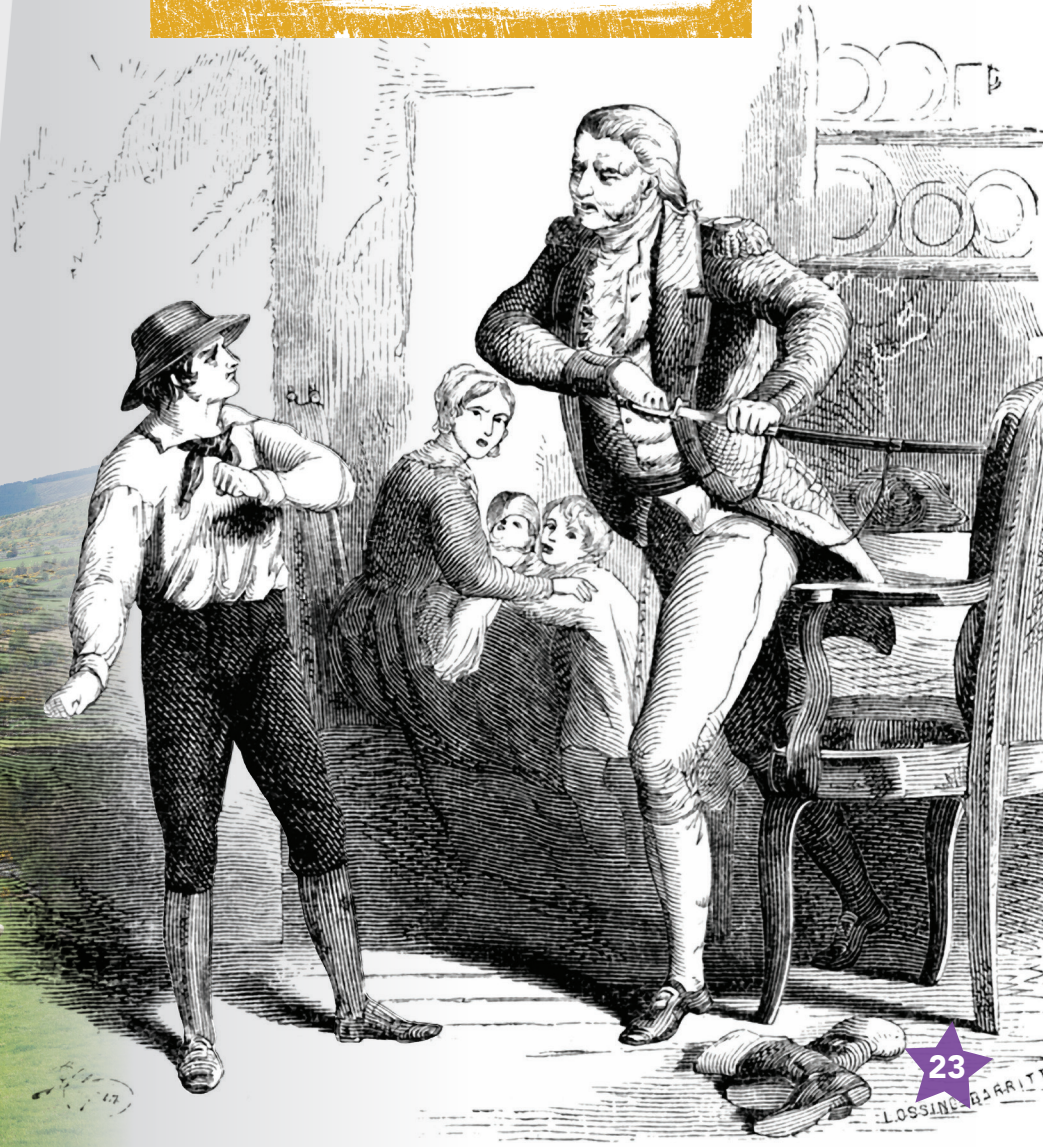
One night, Jackson and his brother Robert found themselves surrounded by British troops. The troops captured and imprisoned Jackson and his brother. At just 14 years old, Jackson was a prisoner of war.

American Success

Jackson was the son of immigrants. His mother and father were farmers from County Antrim in Ireland. They were married in Ireland before coming to the United States in 1765.

A Scar with a Story

While Jackson was a prisoner, a British officer ordered him to shine his boots, but Jackson refused. The officer struck him with a sword, leaving a scar on his face.



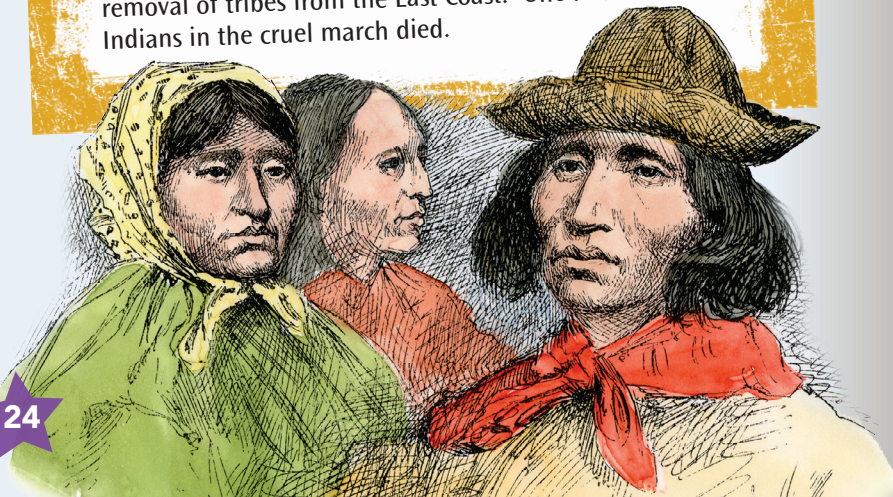
British soldiers forced the Jackson brothers to march 40 mi. (65 km) without stopping for water. They finally arrived at a British camp and were put in a filthy, disease-ridden prison.

Although Jackson's mother convinced the British to release her two sons, her assistance came too late for Robert. A few days after being released, Robert died of smallpox, a disease he **contracted** while in the prison. Jackson's mother died a few months later, leaving Jackson all alone.

When he was 21 years old, Jackson headed to the western frontier to build a new life for himself. He worked as a lawyer and became a war hero for his leadership in the War of 1812, before entering a life of politics. Throughout his life, Jackson was famous for his passionate speeches and strong opinions. "I was born for a storm, and a calm does not suit me," Jackson once said of himself.

A Cycle of Cruelty

Jackson was **controversial** in his life—and still is today. Jackson was forced to overcome a life of cruelty and tragedy, but then forced those same obstacles on others. One of his policies led to the Trail of Tears—a forced removal of tribes from the East Coast. One in six American Indians in the cruel march died.



Dueling Death

In 1806, Jackson killed a man named Charles Dickinson in a duel. Dickinson shot first, hitting Jackson in the chest. The bullet lodged so close to Jackson's heart that doctors never removed it, and he lived for 39 years with it still in his chest.



Andrew Jackson





Four Steps for the Future

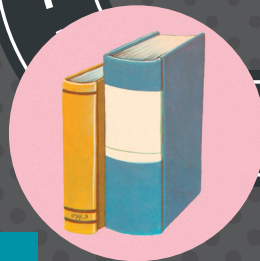
Daphna Oyserman is a professor at the University of Southern California. She researches how people become **resilient**. Her work focuses on what she calls “future selves”—the way that people imagine themselves in the future.

According to Oyserman, these four steps build mental toughness and grit:

1 Have a clear vision of yourself in the future. It can be a vision of what you want (such as straight As) or of what you fear (such as not graduating). Both can motivate you to succeed!



2 Make sure that you understand the link between your current actions and the vision of your future self. If you want to be a straight-A student, what are you doing to achieve that outcome? If you're afraid of not graduating, what are you doing now to avoid that outcome?



3 Understand that you must work now to either build the future self you want or avoid the future self you don't want. This is where grit and resilience come in! Holding on to that vision of yourself in the future helps when you encounter bumps along the way.

4 Keep your goal **SMART**—specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely. Too often, Oyserman says, people have lofty goals for their future selves and just assume that their future selves will figure out how to achieve those goals at some distant point down the road. Her advice is to focus on what you can do *now*.



All About the Base

Base camp at Mount Everest acts as a small city, filled with people going up or down the mountain or spending time getting used to the thin air and high elevation. It is a long, flat area about 17,000 feet (5,200 meters) up the mountain.

The Highest Peaks

The highest mountains on each continent are known as the Seven Summits. Moniz had climbed four of them by the time he tackled Mt. Everest. Mt. Everest is considered the crowning jewel of the Seven Summits because it is the highest and most difficult to climb.

After the Avalanche

Matt Moniz stood at the base camp of Mount Everest in Nepal. He was just 17 years old, but he had already climbed some of the tallest mountains in the world. The Coloradan was preparing to take on his biggest challenge yet—climbing Mt. Everest—when an earthquake struck. The **tremors** created an avalanche that sent an enormous amount of snow plummeting toward the camp at 200 miles per hour (322 kilometers per hour).

Moniz and members of his team crouched behind a boulder as the loud, blinding wall of snow tore past them. The avalanche was so powerful that it sucked all the oxygen out of the air, so for a short while no one could breathe. After the avalanche, base camp was a disaster—tents, computers, and clothing were strewn all over.

As Moniz looked at base camp, he was horrified by the conditions he saw. He later described it by saying, “A lot of people were thrown...a lot of skull fractures and broken legs and broken arms.” At least 17 people died on Everest that day.

The teenager immediately went to work, helping move injured climbers. After a few days, he had a choice to make—he could either catch his flight home to Colorado, or he could stay in Nepal and help. Incredibly, he chose to stay in the devastated country.

Nepal is very mountainous, and many small villages are extremely difficult to reach. The earthquake and its aftermath destroyed some of the paths to these remote villages. Moniz set about raising money to help these hard-to-reach villages and soon, he and his parents had raised \$100,000 in donations.

High Ambition

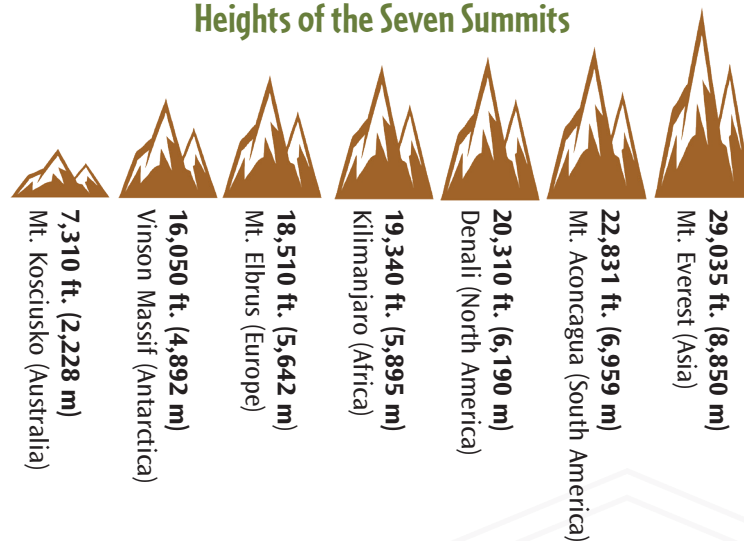
Moniz was just 12 years old when he climbed to the peak of Denali, the tallest mountain in North America. His dad, a serious mountain climber, helped Moniz learn to climb. That, plus the first aid training he received as an Eagle Scout, helped Moniz handle the impact of the Mt. Everest avalanche.



STOP! THINK...

Base camp at Mt. Everest is about 17,000 ft. (5,200 m) above sea level. At that height, oxygen is scarce. Every physical movement is harder, and the brain slows down.

Heights of the Seven Summits



- About how much taller is the summit (or peak) of Mt. Everest than the base camp?
- Where would base camp at Mt. Everest fit on this graph?
- The Burj Khalifa in Dubai is the world's tallest building at 2,717 ft. (828 m) high. How would you describe the Burj Khalifa in relation to Mt. Everest?

Crowded in the Clouds

Hundreds of people climb to the top of Mt. Everest each year, and thousands more climb part of the way. With modern equipment, climbing Everest is much easier than it was a few decades ago. Still, it is considered one of the hardest physical challenges in the world.

Soon after the earthquake, relief groups began dropping supplies from helicopters. The supplies were a welcome sight for the villagers, but dropping by helicopter was very expensive, and the supplies did not always go where they were needed most.

Moniz and his partners used their knowledge of the mountains to come up with a different idea. They hired **porters** from Nepal to carry the relief supplies. This offered local people incomes when they desperately needed money. It also helped reopen mountain paths and ensure that each village got the right amount of supplies.

The young climber turned tragedy into opportunity. Moniz ended up helping thousands of people in their time of greatest need. Moniz's dad summed up his son's impact best, saying, "Destiny definitely put him there to help out. More than that, he's dedicated to continue to help."

Moniz and others work to clean up an area destroyed by the earthquake.

Very Brave Vets

In Nepal, Moniz partnered with Team Rubicon. This group sends military **veterans** into places damaged by disasters. The veterans' experiences going into unsafe places help them reach areas considered too dangerous for other **aid** groups.

An Unlikely Queen

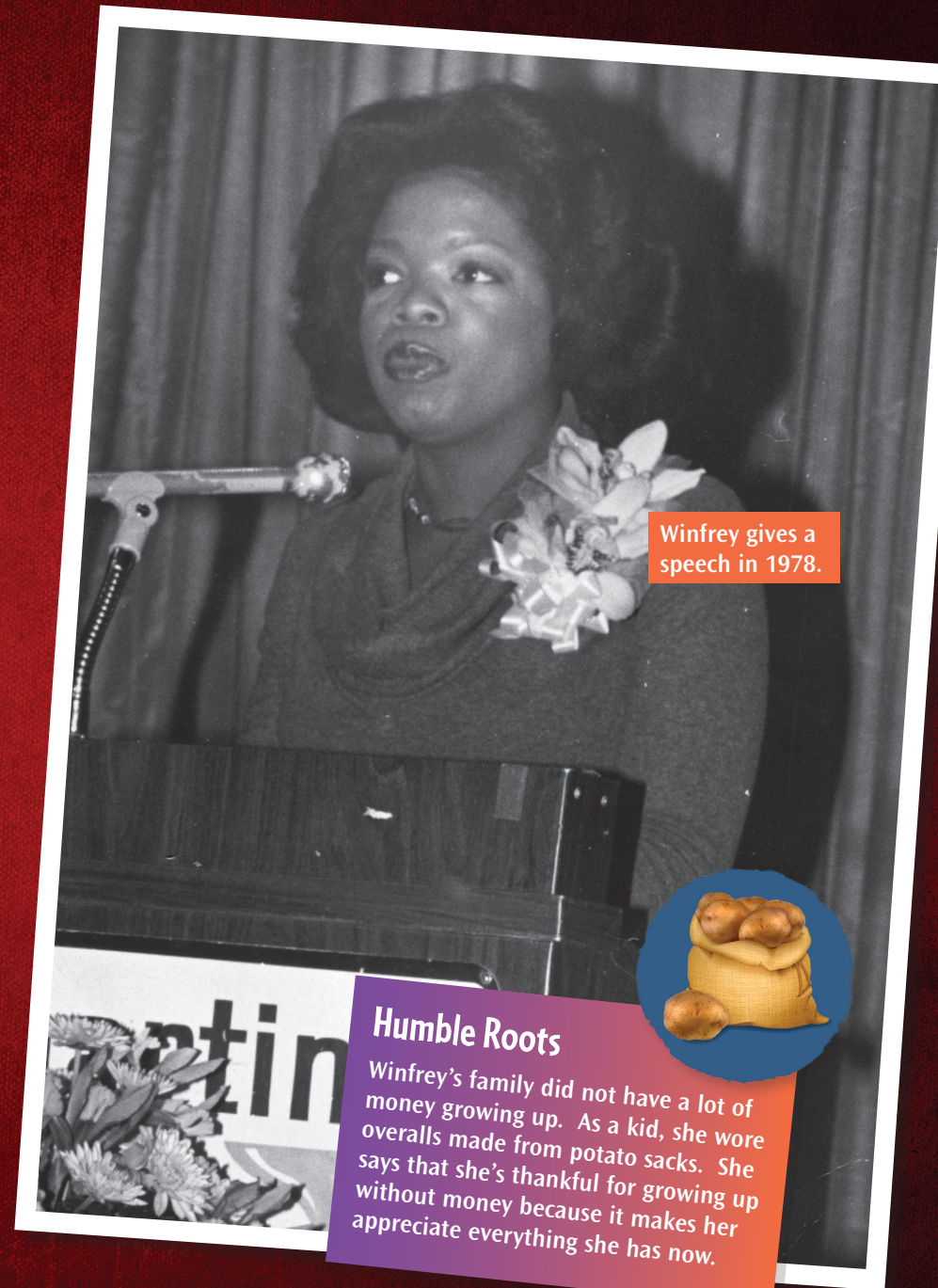
Oprah Winfrey has built an incredible entertainment **empire**. She hosted a top-rated talk show for 25 years, founded a successful magazine, and created a cable television station. Winfrey also managed to find time to become an award-winning actress. It's no wonder she's been called the Queen of All Media.

Winfrey has wealth, power, and influence—and she tries to do good, too. Her talk show covered stories that were inspirational and educational instead of just controversial. She's given hundreds of millions of dollars to good causes.

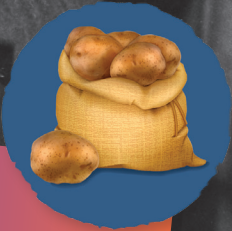
When Winfrey was young, all of her future successes seemed impossible. She was born to a single mother in Kosciusko, Mississippi. Her grandparents took care of her when she was little, and then she moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where her mother was working.

Dr. Phil

Winfrey helped launch the career of **psychologist** Dr. Phil McGraw after he appeared on her show. McGraw had a rough period in his life when he was a teenager. His dad was training to be a psychologist, but the family could not afford an apartment, so he and his dad lived in a car.



Winfrey gives a speech in 1978.



Humble Roots

Winfrey's family did not have a lot of money growing up. As a kid, she wore overalls made from potato sacks. She says that she's thankful for growing up without money because it makes her appreciate everything she has now.

Tragically, while living in Milwaukee, Winfrey was frequently abused by people close to her. Winfrey later said that these experiences made her feel as though her life had hit “rock bottom.”

In an incredible display of determination, Winfrey kept moving forward. She moved to Tennessee to live with her father, and he helped her turn her life around. “His love of learning showed me the right way,” Winfrey recalled.

Winfrey studied hard and eventually won a speaking competition, earning a full scholarship to Tennessee State University. She was named Miss Black Tennessee and got an early start on her career. Winfrey began reading the news on the radio when she was just 16 years old and reporting on live television when she was 19.



17-year-old Oprah Winfrey



Book Club Bonanza

Winfrey’s love of reading led her to launch a book club on her television show. She dramatically boosted sales of every book she recommended. She single-handedly helped many struggling authors and publishing companies achieve best-seller status.

A Way with Words

Winfrey’s father made her learn five new vocabulary words each day before they would eat dinner. Every two weeks, she had to check out five library books, read them, and write book reports!

“I know what it feels like to not be wanted...you can use [that experience] as a stepping stone to build great **empathy** for people,” Winfrey said about her struggles.

In fact, Winfrey’s powerful empathy has been a key reason behind her enormous success. According to *Forbes* magazine, “Whether interviewing a burn victim or interviewing [supermodel] Cindy Crawford, Winfrey managed to shine her spotlight deep into her guest’s soul. Her tool is her empathy.”

Winfrey’s first television boss, Chris Clark, worked for a news program in Nashville. He says that Winfrey was not a particularly good reporter. Instead of working hard on her stories and turning them in by the deadline, she would spend all her time trying to help the people she interviewed. But, he admits, her career turned out pretty well.

Obama presents Winfrey with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2013.



Good Deeds

Winfrey is a faithful **philanthropist**. She has given hundreds of millions of dollars to charity. She especially focuses on boosting educational groups, a cause that is very dear to Winfrey.



Recognition

In 2013, then-President Barack Obama presented Winfrey with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in honor of her charity work. The medal is the highest award a **civilian** can receive.

Being the First

Equiano was mostly forgotten until the 1960s, when his book was reprinted. After that, he became a literary icon again. Some people call him the first African American author, even though he spent most of his life at sea or in England.

From Adversity to Inspiration

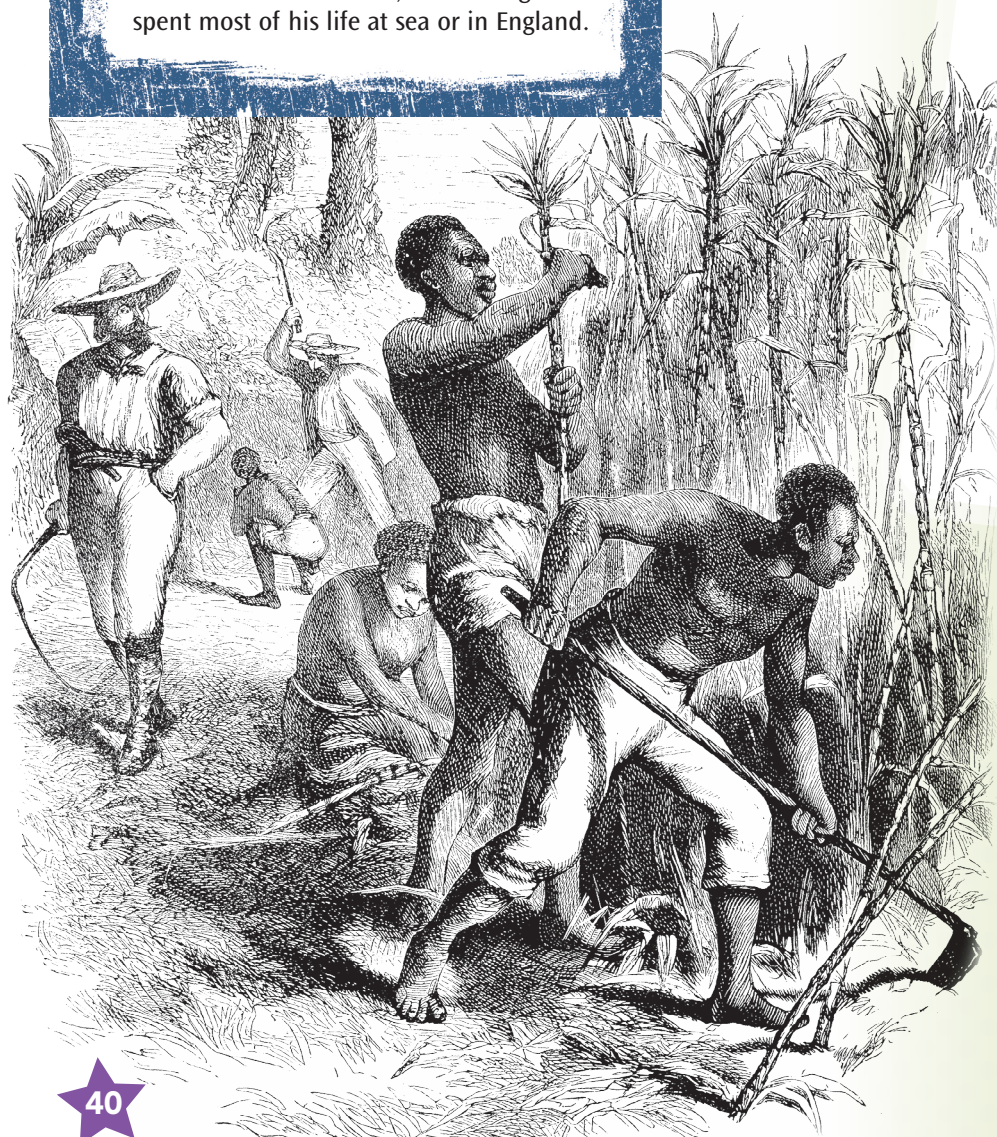
Adversity happens to everyone, it's a fact of life. What matters is how people deal with the obstacles they face as their actions reveal their true characters. As devastating as it can be to face a huge hurdle in life, overcoming adversity can—and does—make people stronger.

Olaudah Equiano, the enslaved man who became a successful writer, had a wonderful view on life. He recognized that his “sufferings were great.” However, he also said he was thankful for the kind people he had met in his life. He focused on making life better for other people. Equiano even delivered a request to Queen Charlotte of England, asking her to put an end to slavery. Equiano never lost his compassion or humanity in the face of great adversity, and he stands as an inspiration to us all.



Good Grit

Many schools are finding ways to teach grit and resilience to their students. Studies show that having grit makes a huge difference in how much success people achieve.



Glossary

abolitionist—a person who wants to abolish, or stop, slavery

adversity—a difficult condition or situation, or a tragedy

aid—something that provides help or assistance to an area where many people are suffering

apartheid—a form of government unique to South Africa, in which racial discrimination was authorized by law

apprenticeship—a position in which a person is taught a job or trade by a skilled worker

autobiography—an account of someone’s life that is written by that person

civilian—a person who is not a member of the military

consciousness—the normal state of being awake and able to understand what is going on

contracted—became ill with a disease

controversial—causing much disagreement or discussion

diagnosed—told that one has an illness or disease

dyslexia—a condition in the brain that makes it hard for someone to read, write, and spell

empathy—the ability to understand and share someone else’s feelings and emotions

empire—a large business or group of businesses that are all controlled by one person or company

epilepsy—a disorder of the nervous system that can cause people to suddenly fall unconscious and have uncontrolled, violent movements of the body

grit—mental courage and strength

improvised—made something by using whatever was available at the time

insurmountable—impossible to solve or overcome

irregular—not part of a regular army but brought together for a specific purpose

isolated—apart from others

painstakingly—done with great care and attention to detail

paralyzed—unable to feel or move part or all of the body

peritonitis—a serious illness in which the stomach, intestines, and nearby organs are swollen and infected

philanthropist—a wealthy person who gives time and money to make other people’s lives better

porters—people whose job it is to carry supplies

psychologist—a scientist who studies and treats subjects relating to the mind and behavior

resilient—able to become strong and successful again after something bad happened

surveyed—measured and inspected an area of land

tremors—shaking movements of the ground before or after earthquakes

triathlon—an athletic contest composed of three long-distance races, such as swimming, running, and biking

tsunami—a large, high wave in the ocean that can cause devastation when it reaches land

tune—adjust a musical instrument so that it makes the correct sounds when it is played

veterans—people who served in the armed forces

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Check It Out!

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Bethany Hamilton. "Profile." www.bethanyhamilton.com/profile/.

Jason Lester. "Biography." www.jplepic.com/bio.

Try It!

Studies have shown that when people help others, it makes them more resilient. Helping others often helps people appreciate what they have. It makes them feel stronger and more connected.

- ★ Bethany Hamilton supports a charity called Friends of Bethany. It helps people who have also lost limbs.
- ★ Make a plan to help Friends of Bethany. How can you raise money? Think of fundraising ideas that you can successfully complete.
- ★ Spread the word. You might put up posters, send out postcards, or just tell as many people as possible.
- ★ Send the money you raise to Bethany, along with a letter you write to her. You could mention any challenges you have had to overcome or how learning more about her has helped you.
- ★ Take plenty of pictures (be sure you ask permission first), and have an adult post them on social media with a shout-out to the charity. There's a good chance Bethany will see you in action!



About the Author



Ben Nussbaum lives in northern Virginia with his wife and their two kids. He spends a lot of time exploring the Washington, DC, area with his family. He's worked with Disney and the Smithsonian Institution, among other organizations, and he was the founding editor of *USA Today's* newsstand magazine team. He is currently a freelance writer and editor. He thinks Ringo Starr's "Don't Pass Me By," from the White Album, is very underrated.





High School

Family Engagement Guide

Welcome to high school! Your teenager has entered a new and probably quite busy time in their life. Coursework will increase in rigor, and extracurricular activities will become more involved or competitive. In these four years, your teen will experience significant physical and developmental changes.

Physical exercise is very important at this age to mold a healthy body as your teenager becomes an adult. Emotionally, your teen will begin to seek more independence, time with friends, and perhaps resist authority figures or experiment with risky behaviors. This is all part of the process of defining their individuality, what they value, and who they want to become. Encourage and support your child, but be sure to maintain boundaries to keep your teenager safe.

As students approach the end of high school, they will reach new cognitive milestones where they will be equipped to think more abstractly, identify solutions to problems, and begin to make goals for their future. During this time, continue to stay active in your teen's life. Listening will go much further than lecturing because a teen's brain can be self-absorbed and mood swings may be noticeable. Maintaining the equilibrium between parenting and respecting your teen's independence may be challenging, but prioritizing communication and mutual understanding is key. Allow your teen to make choices and mistakes and then learn from them. You will begin to shift from taking the lead to supporting the aspirations of your teen as they end the chapter of high school and move on to young adulthood.



Top 10 Things Your High Schooler Needs to Know

- 1 Successful note-taking strategies
- 2 Strategies for reading and citing evidence from a variety of texts
- 3 How to write argumentative, expository, and narrative texts
- 4 Ways to participate in collaborative academic conversations
- 5 Evaluation of an author's stance or claim by validating or challenging them with other information
- 6 Ways to create and solve algebraic equations and inequalities
- 7 How to use arithmetic with polynomials and rational functions
- 8 Comprehension of a foreign language
- 9 Strategies for analyzing political, social, and economic aspects of past and present nations
- 10 Ability to follow a multistep procedure when participating in experimentation