

Leadership and Resilience

SUBMITTED BY: Kathryn McGinn

SUBJECT(S): Career Development

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

Students will read about leaders who overcame challenges, and they will reflect on how they've exhibited resilience as leaders themselves. Students will work constructively in pairs to share one another's stories in a creative format.

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- ["What It Takes to Become a CEO"](#)
- ["The Global Climate Strike and How Business Is Responding in the Face of Activism"](#)
- ["Mountain Guides Teach Us About Leadership"](#)
- ["MLK Day Tribute: Student Lessons in Leadership"](#)
- ["Leadership Lessons from the Thailand Cave Rescue"](#)
- ["Great Leaders Recognize and Value the Power of Emotions"](#)
- ["Educator Toolkit: The Chief Executive Officer"](#)
- ["Educator Toolkit: Leadership in the Age of Activism"](#)
- ["Educator Toolkit: Emotional Intelligence"](#)
- ["Disney CEO Bob Iger Lets Us In on the 'Magic' of His Corporate Leadership"](#)
- ["CEO David Pottruck on How to Be a Great Leader"](#)
- ["Career Insight: The First Woman to Coach in the NFL on Teamwork and the Power of Relationships"](#)
- ["5 Leadership Lessons from Israeli Model Titi Aynaw"](#)

Common Core Standard(s):

- ELA CCR Writing 3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- ELA CCR Reading 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- ELA CCR Reading 3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- ELA CCR Speaking and Listening 1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- ELA CCR Speaking and Listening 4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Objectives/Purposes:

- Students will read/analyze an article and make connections to their own lives.
- Students will work constructively in groups.
- Students will present information in a creative format.

Knowledge@Wharton Article:

- [“Leadership Lessons from Survivors: ‘Climbing on the Mountain’s Schedule, Not Ours’”](#)

Activities:

1. Ask students to define “resilience.” Why is resilience an important quality for leaders to possess?(5 mins)
2. Hand out copies of “Leadership Lessons from Survivors.” Assign half the class the first half of the article (up to “Seeking Guidance from Others”), and have the remaining half of the class read the section “Seeking Guidance from Others.” As students read, they should underline details that illustrate how the subject of their section is a resilient leader. When everyone has finished reading, students should summarize their section for

the other half of the class and share details that show the resiliency of Breashears and Montero, respectively. (10 mins)

3. Have students free write in response to this prompt: “Write about a time when you were a resilient leader: describe what challenge(s) you encountered and what you did to overcome the challenge(s).” (5 mins)
4. Have students work in partners. Explain that Knowledge@Wharton wants to add to “Leadership Lessons from Survivors” and needs students to write up accounts about their peers’ resilience. K@W wants journalistic accounts, so students will have to write brief newspaper articles about the Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How of their partners’ experience. Students share their free writes with their partners, and their partners should take notes and ask any relevant follow-up questions; then have partners change roles. (10 mins)
5. After students have shared with one another, give them time to write their articles. In addition to covering the basics of the story, the newspaper is looking for articles that grab the readers’ attention, provide specific details, and are engaging until the end. (10 mins)
6. Leave enough time so that students can share their articles with the whole class. (5 mins)

Tying It All Together:

Ask students what stood out to them about their peers’ stories? What do strong leaders have in common when they face difficult situations? (5 mins)

Practice Outside of the Classroom:

- Look for other articles on K@W and Wharton Global Youth Program that describe leaders who encounter adversity. (See, for example, “Dick Vermeil: Leadership Through the Eyes of a Football Coach”) What strategies do these leaders employ to overcome challenges?

- Think about a challenge in your own life that you wish you had handled differently. If you could redo your response to the situation, what would you change about your actions and why?

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently:

Students enjoyed the article, and they actually preferred to read the whole article aloud together, rather than dividing it in half and sharing.

The first time I taught this lesson, the students decided that they wanted to pass their stories around and share with each other that way. I let them: students sat in a circle (there were only four students in class that day), read each other's stories, and responded to them in writing. My only regret was that I didn't write my own story, so I couldn't participate in the written dialogue with the students! I'm not sure, but I wonder if because some of the stories were more personal, students were more comfortable sharing the written versions. In any case, students were completely engaged in their (self-designed!) activity.

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