

LIFE IS FULL OF HARD KNOCKS

Overview: Failing is a part of life. In fact, it accounts for many, many successes – for without failing, success is almost impossible. Learning how to bounce back from failure is not always easy, but it is necessary. Enthusiasm for goal attainment is a necessary characteristic for success. This activity helps participants understand that failure is not something to fear, and in fact, is often a necessary step on the path to success.

SD Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success:

K-12 College, Career, and Life-Ready Competencies for Every Student:

- B-LS 1. Critical thinking skills to make informed decisions
- B-SMS 5. Perseverance to achieve long- and short-term goals
- B-SMS 7. Effective coping skills

Estimated time: 20 minutes

Materials:

- Famous Failures Pictures
- Famous Failures Descriptions
- Famous Failures Answers
- Tape

Instructions:

1. Setup:
 - a. Tape Famous Failures Pictures on the wall within the same vicinity, leaving plenty of margin room underneath each picture.
 - b. Cut out Famous Failures Descriptions and place upside down on a table with a bubble of tape on the back of each one.
2. Either write the following statement on the board or show up on the screen: THE ROAD TO SUCCESS IS PAVED IN FAILURE.
3. Divide the class into smaller groups. Ask each group to discuss the statement and what they think it means.
 - a. (Alternative: Ask each student to draw a picture of what this statement means to them.)
 - b. Ask each group to share their feedback and encourage other participants to comment or expand on their responses.
4. Direct the students to look over at the wall with the Famous Failures Pictures hung up.

5. Tell them that each small group will be given a description, and their task is to figure out which famous person it belongs to.
 - a. When they think they know who it belongs to, they can place it on the wall under the famous person's picture.
 - b. Let students know that it's OK to guess if they do not know who their description belongs to.
6. Bring the whole group together to look at each Famous Failure picture, one at a time, and read the guessed description that students put underneath it.
 - a. Allow student engagement by asking the whole group if they think this description belongs to that famous person or if it goes somewhere else.
 - b. Reveal who the description belongs to, moving it to the right famous person if it was put under the wrong person.
 - i. Using the Famous Failures Answers handout, read the rest of the story for the famous failure.
 - c. Repeat this process until all descriptions belong with the appropriate Famous Failure.
7. Ask students what all of these people discussed today have in common.
(The answer: they refused to quit.)
8. Tell students that failure will happen to all of us. But like the Famous Failures we learned about today, you can overcome it to achieve great things!

Processing/Application Questions:

- What are some ways people might deal with failure?
- If you need some help, who are some people you can turn to for help or encouragement?

Adapted from:

U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Policy. (n.d.). Life is full of hard knocks. Skills to pay the bills: Mastering soft skills for workplace success. Retrieved from: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/individuals/youth/transition/soft-skills>.





















