

*Dedication*

Aim High,  
Use Powerful  
Resolve,  
and Stand Firm

“Character  
consists of what  
you do on the  
third and fourth  
tries.”

--James A. Michener



## September Character Connection Theme: Dedication

### Definitions

Dedication is the state of being committed to a particular course of thought or action.<sup>1</sup> It is focussing your energy and efforts on a task and sticking with it until it is done. A dedicated person uses his willpower to do something even when it isn't easy.

### Quotes

"In order to excel, you must be completely dedicated to your chosen sport. You must also be prepared to work hard and be willing to accept destructive criticism. Without 100 percent dedication, you won't be able to do this." –Willie Mays

**"The concentration and dedication- the intangibles are the deciding factors between who won and who lost."** –Tom Seaver<sup>2</sup>

"A jug fills drop by drop." --Buddha<sup>3</sup>

"Ninety and nine are with dreams content;  
But the hope of a world made new  
Is the hundredth man who is grimly bent  
On making the dream come true."

--Ted Olsen<sup>4</sup>



"Some men give up their designs when they have almost reached the goal; while others, on the contrary, obtain a victory by exerting, at the last moment, more vigorous efforts than ever before." --Herodotus

**I am a slow walker, but I never walk backwards.** –Abraham Lincoln<sup>5</sup>

### Activities

\*\*Memorize a poem or verse such as this one by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow:

***"The heights by great men reached and kept  
Were not attained by sudden flight,  
But they, while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upward in the night."***<sup>6</sup>



\*\*After John Hart, delegate from New Jersey, signed the Declaration of Independence, British soldiers pursued him. He left his wife on her sickbed and went into hiding. When he returned, his farm was destroyed, his wife had died and his children were scattered. *Talk about how we now show our own*

<sup>1</sup> "dedicate" [The American Heritage Dictionary](#)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_dedication.html](http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_dedication.html)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/authors/quotes\\_buddha.html](http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/authors/quotes_buddha.html)

<sup>4</sup> Lyon, Jack M. [Best-Loved Poems of the LDS People](#) Salt Lake City, 1996, page 337

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_perseverance.html](http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_perseverance.html)

<sup>6</sup> "Quotes To Do Business By" <http://www.shianet.org/~source/images/quotesto.htm>

*dedication to freedom. As a class, plan a time to make posters and encourage voter participation in the upcoming election.*

**\*\*Have students talk to their parents about the causes to which they are dedicated. Have the students report, then combine and graph the answers.**

**\*\*Play Virus Ball:** Divide the group into two teams. Each team must stay on his half of the gym. Balls are placed in the middle of the gym. At the blow of the whistle, all try to keep the balls (virus) out of their area. After about 45 seconds, the whistle is blown again. Play stops. The winner is the side with the least virus balls. Play this again, only have a few people on one side quit 10 seconds before the last whistle.<sup>7</sup> *What does being dedicated have to do with winning a game?* Said John Wooten, "It's not so important who starts the game but who finishes it."<sup>8</sup>



## **Stories**

### **Bruce and the Spider**

Hundreds of years ago Robert the Bruce was the king of Scotland. The King of England invaded his land with the intent to make Scotland a part of England.

Robert the Bruce and his brave army fought six battles with the English. Six times his men had been beaten. At last the Scottish army was scattered and the king went into hiding.

One rainy day, Robert the Bruce lay in a cave on Rathlin Island in Northern Ireland. He was exhausted and ready to give up all hope. As he lay thinking, he noticed a spider over his head, getting ready to swing across the corner. Six times the spider swung. Six times the spider missed. On the seventh time, the spider reached the intended corner. Drawing inspiration from the spider, Bruce again gathered his army and in his seventh battle defeated England.<sup>9</sup>

### **A Dedicated Gymnast**

A Deseret News article featured 17 year-old Aimee Walker, a gymnast. She had talent, success, and personality. She was also deaf and blind in her right eye. The deafness made it difficult to perform her floor routines that are choreographed to music. Her blindness made the balancing beam challenging. Yet, Aimee was two steps away from qualifying for the USA Championships. Sometimes being able to communicate only with sign language was advantageous. At 15, Aimee was invited to be America's lone representative to Kazkstan in the old Soviet Union. No one else spoke English, yet she managed to "talk" with people. When asked if she would give up gymnastics to have her sight and hearing, she surprised her mother with a "No" answer. "Because gymnastics has brought so much to her life," said her mother.<sup>10</sup> *What does dedication have to do with overcoming obstacles to achieve success?*



### **The Girl and The Toad, a Tale of Dedication From Korea**

A kindhearted maiden lived in a village in Korea. She was barely able to support herself and her elderly mother, for whom she cared.

One cold day, as she was preparing dinner, a toad jumped heavily into the kitchen and onto the hearth where it hungrily devoured a few grains of rice that had been spilled. The girl watched the shivering toad, and then said, "You must be hungry and cold, too. Why don't you stay on my warm hearth?" She spilled more rice and the toad hungrily ate.

From that day forward, the toad made his home on the girl's hearth. Time passed and the toad grew bigger and fatter.

<sup>7</sup> The Best of Scout and Youth Games, Sandy, Utah Bright Impressions Inc. Distributing

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_perseverance.html](http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_perseverance.html)

<sup>9</sup> [http://hazel.forest.net/whootie/stories/bruce\\_and\\_spider\\_scotland.html](http://hazel.forest.net/whootie/stories/bruce_and_spider_scotland.html)

<sup>10</sup> "Beyond Routine," Deseret News, May 23, 2000, p. D1,D2

It so happened that there lived a huge snake in a cave on the outskirts of the village. The snake was a menace that ruined rice paddies, tormented farmers and kidnapped wandering children. Master bowmen and famed marksmen had come to rid the village of this menace. However, all had failed and the snake continued its reign of terror.

A few years passed and the girl's mother passed away, yet still the snake tormented the village. Finally the maiden determined that she would try her hand at subduing the snake by offering herself as a sacrifice if the snake would not harm her village again. Accordingly, she put her house in order, kissed her toad good-bye and ventured to the cave of the snake. She called to the snake repeatedly, and finally at dusk it emerged. So great and terrible was the appearance of the snake that the maiden fainted. Just then a streak of silver flew over the maiden at the snake. It was poison from the girl's toad. The snake threw its own poison and the battle began. Although the toad was smaller, he was fighting to protect the girl. For two hours, poison crisscrossed the air. Gradually the snake's poison began to weaken, while the toad's poison seemed to grow stronger. Suddenly the snake let out a groan and rolled off the hill, dead. The toad collapsed, exhausted.

In the morning a villager chanced upon the scene of fighting. He found the girl and carried her to her home. Meanwhile, the toad was roused by a light rain and hopped to the girl's home again. Every few days, the villager visited to check on the girl. Soon he fell in love with her. They were married and lived happily ever after.

No one ever understood what happened to the snake, but the entire village rejoiced in their freedom. And the dedicated toad was content to live out his days on his mistress' hearth.<sup>11</sup>

## **Writing or Discussion Topics**

\*\*Read Lassie Come Home by Eric Knight and talk about dedication to goals. *What obstacles did Lassie have as she traveled back home? What obstacles arise in working towards goals? How can these obstacles be overcome? What are the rewards of being dedicated to a goal?*

\*\*Aesop tells of a thirsty raven that raised the water level of a watering can by dropping pebbles in the can. *What does dedication have to do with daily practicing, and the developing of talents in sports, music, and other areas?*

\*\*How does someone determine what to dedicate time and effort to?

## **Role Plays**

\*\*Sam has decided to get an A in history this term. One week into the term, he is sitting at home at his desk. As he opens his history book, he notices Adam out on his basketball court. A basketball game sounds so inviting. *If Sam is truly dedicated to his goal of achieving top marks, what should he do?*

\*\*Joshua is the third child of his family. Pantomime how he can he show his dedication to his family and their values at the dinner table, at school, and as he plays.

## **Book List**

*Drawing Lessons from a Bear* by David McPhail

*Mush!* by Patricia Feibert

*Amazing Grace* by May Hoffman

*Honk* by Pamela Duncan Edwards

*Snowflake Bentley* by Jacqueline Briggs Martin



October: Valuing Diversity /Tolerance

November: Gratitude

December: Love

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<sup>11</sup> [http://hazel.forest.net/whootie/stories/girl\\_toad\\_korea.html](http://hazel.forest.net/whootie/stories/girl_toad_korea.html)

**I am DEDICATED to being  
a person of character.  
This year I will be:**

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**Character Goal:** \_\_\_\_\_

**OBSTACLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TO BE OVERCOME BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**OBSTACLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TO BE OVERCOME BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**OBSTACLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TO BE OVERCOME BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

“Defeat may test you; it need not stop you. If at first you don't succeed, try another way. For every obstacle there is a solution. Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. The greatest mistake is giving up.”