

Unit Overview: Parent Guide

Steve Jobs, Grade 6

What is the goal of this unit?

- Your child will read fiction and nonfiction texts about the role of failure in success. Your child will learn about the importance of hard work, deliberate practice, and how people can learn from their mistakes and failures.

What topics and skills is your sixth grader learning in this unit?

- Role of failure in success
- Perseverance
- Author's word choice
- Use of evidence
- Text organization
- Purpose of text
- Informational writing
- Narrative writing

What tasks will your child engage in to help them consider the topics and skills of this unit?

- **Culminating Writing Task:** Your child will bring together all her learning near the end of the unit by writing an essay in response to the prompt: *Compare and contrast how a central idea in Steve Jobs's Stanford commencement address and J.K. Rowling's Harvard commencement address is introduced and elaborated.*
- **Extension Task:** Your child will conduct research on a person who overcame failure. Then your child will write a first-person speech modeled after Steve Jobs's commencement address that focuses on how the person they studied overcame failure.

Your child will read these texts and watch these videos:

Text Title	Author/Source	How it is used in the Unit
Stanford commencement address (2005)	Steve Jobs	Main text of the unit
"Overcoming Obstacles: How Your Biggest Failure Can Lead to Your Success"	Jody Michael	Student text
<i>The Collected Poetry of</i>	Langston Hughes	Student text

<i>Langston Hughes (Mother to Son)</i>		
"To Failure"	Philip Larkin	Student text
"Mindset for Achievement"	Carol Dweck from www.mindsetonline.com	Student text
"The Story of David and Goliath"	1 Samuel 17, Bible	Student text
"Casey at the Bat"	Ernest Lawrence Thayer	Student text
"Letters of Wilbur Wright"	Wilbur Wright	Student text
"Courage of Famous Failures" (video)		Read aloud

Ideas for discussing failure and success

- What does it mean to fail?
- What does it mean to succeed?
- What can you learn from failure?
- How can failure help you succeed?
- Can you think of a time when you've failed at something? What did you learn?
- How has your failure pushed you to do better?

Want to deepen your and your child's knowledge on the topic being studied?

Here is a suggested book list:

Title	Author
<i>Fantastic Feats and Failures</i>	Yes Magazine
<i>Second-Chance Soccer</i>	Thomas Kingsley Troupe
<i>How They Choked: Failures, Flops, and Flaws of the Awfully Famous</i>	Georgia Bragg
<i>Vision of Beauty: The Story of Sarah Breedlove Walker</i>	Kathryn Lasky

What does independent reading look like at home?

Independent reading gives your child the opportunity to read and interact with books

that are on her reading level and that address topics that she chooses. Supporting independent reading at home helps build your child's confidence with reading, her reading stamina and reading achievement, and will help her do better in school.

Here are some ways you can encourage independent reading at home:

- Let your child pick out books that she finds interesting
- Prioritize reading. Protect time every day for reading (weekends and school breaks too!). Before bedtime is a great time to read.
- Read together
- Read aloud
- Discuss your child's reading. Ask questions like:
 - Tell me about what you read today.
 - What did you like about it?
 - What didn't you like about it?
 - What did you learn?
 - What questions do you have about what you read?
 - What didn't you understand about what you read?
 - What do you want to learn more about after reading?
 - How does what you've read connect to other things you've read?