



PERSEVERANCE---NOT JUST FOR KIDS

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Teaching a preschooler how to write the letters of the alphabet is probably one of the most trying experiences of all for a parent. Unfortunately, not all of us can afford to have our kids get into an expensive preschool program that would take the load off our shoulders. So we get tested severely with teaching our own kids the rudiments of writing. However, if we examine the entire structure of this process, we will find out that during this time, we would also be teaching our child the trait of perseverance.

We start out with a lot of patience, urging the child to form his lines, to create the curves, to make the lines intersect cleanly.

It is quite easy to lose our patience every time our child says, "I give up mama, this is all too difficult for me." The temptation to just tell the child to do it on another day is great. But that's not how learning happens. Learning is often a bitter pill that the child has to swallow, and we as parents have no choice but to administer that pill. Gentle guidance is the key: take the child's hand and guide it in the strokes of writing. Or have him follow the outlines you have prepared so he will easily gain the confidence of forming the lines on his own, eventually.

Do not incentivize everything, because the child might get the wrong notion about everything. Do not strike fear in his heart by threatening bodily harm, although the temptation may sometimes be great, too. Patience is a virtue, and this is the best setting to teach the child about it. Never give up on your child so he will not give up on his goals. Soon, he will realize that perseverance will pay off with the rewards of a job well done.

Acknowledge his efforts, no matter how small they may be. A child needs affirmation, especially when he shows perseverance in his own way. Great things start small, after all. What we are born with are only physical, the spiritual and intellectual are things we imbibe, learn, get influenced with as we develop. Therefore, it is our goal as parents---and teachers---to make the learning process as rich as possible. Let us recognize the uniqueness in each child in how he faces his own life. There are some who might be slower than others, and others who might be quicker than their peers. But the perseverance that they acquire from each and every learning process can only be measured by what and how they achieve, and we are solely responsible for the whole thing.

Do not forget that perseverance is not something a child has from the day of his birth—it is something which he often learns about from those around him.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. How were you taught writing at home? In school?
2. Was it easy for you to learn things in school? Talk about your various experiences.
3. Does learning English come easy to you? How have your teachers helped you so far?
4. How is perseverance applicable at work? Give examples.
5. Do you believe that with perseverance alone, you can eventually master the use of the English language? What other factors are necessary, if any?