

# Excellence

**EXCELLENCE** means very high quality—something that sets a person or thing apart.

## LESSON 1

Read the definition of **EXCELLENCE**. Tell students that a “motto” is a short saying or phrase that describes a goal or belief. Write the following mottos about excellence on the board: **Excellence is never an accident! and Give your best -- nothing less!** Discuss the meaning of the two mottos. Encourage students to never be satisfied with anything less than their best effort. As time allows, ask students to create their own motto about excellence or brainstorm together to create a class excellence motto. Post it where all can see. Encourage students to do and be their personal best.

*School/Home Link Ask students to talk with a family member about one of the mottos on excellence.*

## LESSON 2

Review the definition of **EXCELLENCE**. Read and discuss the quote by educator Marva Collins, “**Excellence is not an act, but a habit. The things you do the most are the things you will do best.**” Ask students to think about an activity or area of interest where they would like to excel. Examples include: soccer, math, dancing, reading, playing the violin, basketball, writing stories, etc. Instruct students to estimate the amount of time they spent participating in their chosen activity during the past week. As time allows, have students calculate how much time they would have spent on the activity over the course of one month if they spent the same amount of time each week. Ask: **Are you spending enough time working on your interest to improve?** Call on students to explain why or why not. Remind students that the things they spend the most time doing will be the areas where they will excel.

*School/Home Link Ask students to talk with a family member about areas where they want to excel.*

## LESSON 3

Review the definition of **EXCELLENCE**. Tell students that setting high goals can help them achieve excellence. Ask: **What can you do each day to achieve excellence in your schoolwork?** Write their ideas on the board. Examples include: getting enough sleep each night, reading your assignments twice, doing your best job, turning homework in on time, asking questions when you don’t understand, eating healthy foods, etc. Encourage students to make specific plans that will help them achieve their goals of excellence. As time allows, have students write a compound sentence stating their goal and what they will do to accomplish it. (Example: I want to make an “A” on my math test, so I will review what I learned in class every night.)

*School/Home Link Ask students to talk with a family member about setting goals to achieve excellence.*

## LESSON 4

Review the definition of **EXCELLENCE**. Have students analyze the following statement: Excellence in performance and life begins with a vision of where you want to go and a commitment to do what it takes to get there. Instruct students to write the title Visions of Excellence on paper. Tell students to complete the following instructions: Read:

- On your paper, state a Vision of Excellence that you wish to achieve in your life.
- Make a personal commitment to yourself that you will realize your vision.
- List the steps required to accomplish it.
- Begin the first step today.

As time allows, have students share their Visions of Excellence. Encourage students to remember their commitment and work towards it daily.

*School/Home Link Have students share their Vision of Excellence with a family member.*

## LESSON 5

Review the meaning of **EXCELLENCE**. Write the following sentences on the board or dictate them to students: **Excellence is a better teacher than mediocrity. The lessons of the ordinary are everywhere. Truly profound insights are to be found only in studying the exemplary.** Brainstorm with students exemplary examples from which they can learn. Examples could include exemplary schools, an exemplary team, an exemplary speech, etc. As time allows, have students describe how these words apply to their lives, to their school, and to their community. As an extended activity students can research exemplary events that have recently been recognized in their community.

*School/Home Link Have students identify exemplary insights with a family member.*

## Louisiana Content Standards and Grade Level Expectations

ELA-2-M6, ELA-4-M2, ELA-4-M4, ELA-4-M5 ELA-4-M7 ELA-7-M2, LA-1-M1, ELA-1-M4, ELA-7-M1, ELA-3-M, C1-A-M7, C1-B-M5