

Grade 6 – Challenge #1

You Have a Clean Slate – Get a Fresh Start!

Sixth grade is a great time to start fresh – new school, new teachers, new students, new YOU! Below are a few steps to follow when you are trying to start anew.

1. Let go of what didn't work – past grievances, emotions, etc. However, letting go doesn't mean you forget, but what it does allow you to do is move forward.

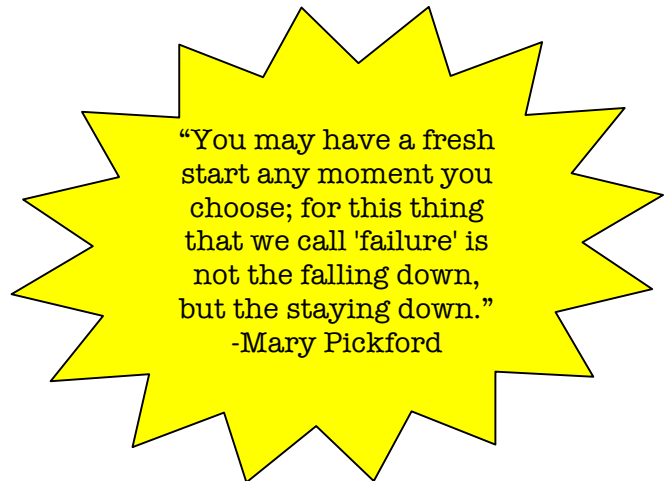
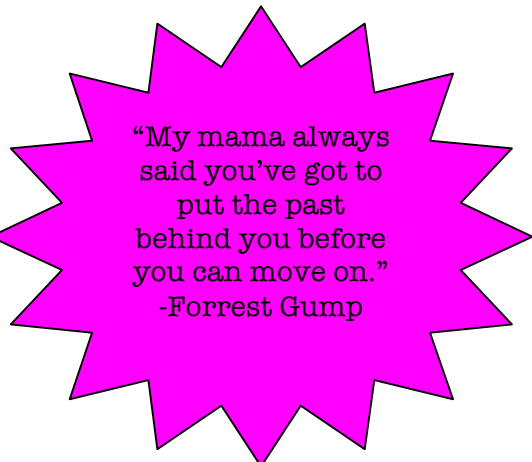
2. Be very clear about what you want to change. Write it down. Be concrete. For example, *I will contribute positively to class discussions.* Then set about breaking down that goal into small steps.

3. Stick to a short list of things you want to change. Try to keep your list of changes/goals to three. By keeping your goal list short, you are better able to focus and accomplish what you intend to.

4. Learn from the mistakes and apply those lessons effectively. When you have missteps, learn the lesson and apply it so that in moving forward you make positive strides in the right direction.

5. Talk to an objective party. If there are things that you aren't quite sure how to change, but desperately want to, talk to someone who is able to give objective advice. This could be a guidance counselor, a teacher or another student, but make sure it is someone you trust. Allow yourself to just listen and digest their advice.

6. Remain committed. To truly change habits will require time – approximately 11-14 times of what ever the new habit is to make it an engrained thought. So be patient with yourself.



7. Positive self talk is mandatory. Remember to surround yourself with optimism – whether it be the people who support your choices, affirmations you've written down and posted in your house, journal or iPad, or most importantly, the self-talk that is constantly going on in your head – keep it positive.

8. Celebrate your accomplishments. Be happy when things go better than expected, no matter how small. Celebrate the change that is gradually becoming the new you and the new life you have designed.

Getting a Fresh Start

Identify three changes you want to make to allow you to move forward in a positive direction here at NMS. Below each change, list the steps you need to take to make those changes. Come back to this list throughout the year and add notes – missteps, discussions with others, accomplishments.

Change #1	Change #2	Change #3
Steps to Make the Change 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	Steps to Make the Change 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	Steps to Make the Change 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Missteps Lesson Learned	Missteps Lesson Learned	Missteps Lesson Learned
Discussions	Discussions	Discussions
Accomplishments	Accomplishments	Accomplishments

Minefield – Watch Your Step!



PURPOSE

Moving forward in a positive direction is not always an easy thing to do – sometimes it takes teamwork. This activity will give students the opportunity to identify those things that can be detrimental to the functioning of a team and work on ways to “avoid” them. Students will also have an opportunity to explore ways to make a team work together successfully.

MATERIALS

1. “Mines” (provided)
2. Blindfolds (provided)
3. “Working Together” Stars (provided)

PROCEDURE

1. Clear a space in the center in your room.
2. Have the students discuss things that make it difficult to work as a group.
3. For each idea the students come up with, throw a “mine” into the playing space, the “minefield.”
4. Have everyone in the group choose a partner. Mini-team leaders can play if they are needed to make an even number of players.
5. One partner is blindfolded at one end of minefield. (*Do not force anyone who is not comfortable being blindfolded to take that role.)
6. The non-blindfolded partner should stand at the opposite end of the minefield. He/She will talk their partner through the minefield helping him/her to avoid the mines.
7. If the blindfolded partner lands on a “mine,” the pair is eliminated.
8. Once everyone has had a chance to go through the minefield, have the students work with their partner to discuss the things that made them successful in the activity. They should write these qualities of good teamwork on their “working together” star.
9. Post the “working together” stars in the classroom.

OPTIONS...Add a timer! You can also time the pairs to see who makes it through the minefield fastest.

REFLECTION/QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What qualities made your team successful?
2. What made it difficult to accomplish the task of crossing the minefield?
3. Why is it important to know how to work well in a group (think about in and out of school – now and in your future)?
4. How does this activity relate to today's challenge – Get a Fresh Start?