(H) SCPS 8th Grade Packet 7

REMEMBER TO SIGN UP FOR REMIND IF YOU HAVEN’T YET.

I pledge that I have neither given nor received unpermitted aid while working on this packet. All work is entirely my own or cited properly. ________________________________ (sign here)

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Sources:
Jumpman Image is a registered image of Air Jordan by Nike (circa 1985)

Student Message:
Shalom! Shalom is just another way to say hello or goodbye Hebrew-meaning peace. We hope you enjoyed the change of pace displayed in the last packet focusing on infographics. Our central focus in this lesson will take us into the success and failure of the one, the only, some call him the G.O.A.T. (greatest of all time), basketball phenom, Michael Jordan. Get your skills up, just like Jordan and the Bulls during their reign, while you practice identifying the author’s central idea and how it is supported. Pay attention to the evidence and reasons given for the claim. As you read, make note of the details that support the author’s central idea. As you reflect on this reading, think about how personal failures and successes impact not only you, but others you may never meet. #beyourownjumpman

The learning outcomes of your journey through this packet will allow you to:

MCCRS Standards:
RL.8.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RL.8.2 Determine and examine the relationships between and among ideas throughout a text.
RI.8.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).
SL.8.1.a Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
MICHAEL JORDAN: A PROFILE IN FAILURE

by Jeff Stibel

[1] Michael Jordan needs no introduction. Something of a legend for turning failure into success, he is the author of the longest quote on my company’s failure wall — which was tricky to paint but worth the extra effort:

“I’ve missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times, I’ve been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”- Michael Jordan

[3] Most of us don’t fail or succeed in the glare of a national spotlight, much less do it thousands of times, with analysts endlessly critiquing every move. Perhaps that’s why people love sports: they provide a black and white analogy for the gray backdrop of life. The ball is in or it’s out, the basket is made or missed, the game is won or lost. Watching our favorite stars pull through when the chips are down inspires us to do the same in our own lives. And no one has inspired more sports fans, young and old alike, than Michael Jordan.

The story of Michael Jordan not making his high school team has been told and retold, but continues to inspire with each retelling. In 1978, sophomore Michael Jordan tried out for the varsity basketball team at Laney High School. When the list was posted, Jordan’s name wasn’t on it. Instead, he was asked to play on the junior varsity team.

[5] The reasoning behind the choice wasn’t that Jordan didn’t have enough talent or hadn’t already distinguished himself as an outstanding basketball player. Rather, it came down to seniority, size, and a strategic decision: The varsity team already had eleven seniors and three juniors. That left space for only one more player, and the coaches chose another sophomore, Jordan’s friend Leroy Smith. Smith was not as good as Jordan but he added size to the team, as he was 6’6” compared to Jordan’s diminutive 5’10”. What’s more, the coaches knew that if Jordan had been chosen for the varsity team, he would play only when needed as a substitute for the more senior varsity players. On the junior varsity team he would get more playing time and a chance to truly develop.
It was a perfectly logical choice for the coaches to assign Jordan to the junior varsity team for his sophomore year. But 15-year-old Jordan was devastated\(^5\) when the list was posted without his name. In his mind, it was the ultimate defeat, the ultimate failure. “I went to my room and I closed the door and I cried. For a while I couldn’t stop. Even though there was no one else home at the time, I kept the door shut. It was important to me that no one hear me or see me.” Jordan was heartbroken and ready to give up the sport altogether until his mother convinced him otherwise.

**Footnotes:** 1. Critique (verb): to examine carefully or call out mistakes and errors 2. Analogy (noun): a comparison between two things 3. when in a difficult or dangerous situation 4. the first-string team in a sport at a school 5. Devastate (verb): to cause someone to feel great emotional pain

[7] After picking himself up off the floor, Jordan did what champions do. He let his failure and disappointment drive him to be better. He played on the junior varsity team, and he worked himself to the limit. “Whenever I was working out and got tired and figured I ought to stop, I’d close my eyes and see that list in the locker room without my name on it, and that usually got me going again.”

It became a pattern throughout Jordan’s life that a disappointment or setback resulted in a redoubling of effort\(^6\). High school rival player Kenny Gattison, who led his team to beat Jordan’s team for the high school state championship, put it this way: “You got to understand what fuels that guy, what makes him great. For most people the pain of loss is temporary. [Jordan] took that loss and held on to it. It’s a part of what made him.”

For most people, public failure becomes public humiliation,\(^7\) and that leads to retreat. Fear of public speaking is a good example. Few people are psychologically afraid of speaking their mind and even fewer have physical speech impediments\(^8\) preventing them from doing so. Yet glossophobia, the technical term for speech anxiety, is consistently ranked among the most prevalent\(^9\) mental disorders, with a reputed 75% of the world’s population experiencing some degree of anxiety around public speaking. Our fears have little to do with speaking, of course, and far more to do with the perceived impact and reaction that our audience may have. But for Jordan and elite\(^10\) performers like him, the fear of failure and public ridicule is transformed into a drive for success.

[10] The pattern of defeat followed by success would follow Jordan to the University of North Carolina and later to the NBA. His **relentless** drive would lead him to break numerous records and become the most decorated player\(^11\) in the history of the NBA. What’s more, he’s credited with dramatically increasing the popularity of basketball both in the United States and internationally, and **inspiring** the next generation of basketball players including Lebron James, Dwyane Wade, and Kobe Bryant. You can’t think of the word “champion” without thinking of Michael Jordan, and there’s no better proof that failure is simply a stepping stone to success.

Michael Jordan faced another formidable\(^12\) challenge decades later, when he became the owner of the NBA basketball franchise, the Charlotte Bobcats. Jordan had been a minority owner since 2006 but bought the majority stake from Bob Johnson in 2010. At the time, the business was hemorrhaging\(^13\), so Jordan used his own money to cover the significant operating losses\(^14\) the team was experiencing.
The first season was lackluster\textsuperscript{15} but things got worse. In the 2011-2012 season, the team earned a mere 7 wins alongside 59 losses — the worst record of any team ever in the history of the NBA.

In addition to — or maybe because of — their disastrous record, the Bobcats had poor community support. The Bobcats brand was synonymous\textsuperscript{16} with disappointment, \textbf{despite} having one of the best basketball brands of all time at the helm — Michael Jordan himself.

\textbf{Footnotes:} 6. Effort (noun): trying harder; increasing effort 7. Humiliation (noun): a feeling of great embarrassment when one looks weak or silly 8. a physical condition that makes speaking difficult 9. Prevalent (adjective): widespread or common 10. Elite (adjective): belonging to a group with power due to money, knowledge, or special skills 11. the one who has received the most honors and awards 12. Formidable (adjective): very powerful or intimidating 13. losing a large amount of money 14. when a company is spending more money than it earns 15. Lackluster (adjective): lacking greatness; unimpressive 16. Synonymous (adjective): having the same or nearly the same meaning as another word

But after the 2012-2013 season came to a close, Jordan started to turn things around. First, he brought in former Lakers assistant coach Steve Clifford to replace Mike Dunlap. In a change every bit as important as the new coach, Jordan agreed to remove himself from the process of managing the team’s operations.

[15] Instead, Jordan focused on what Jordan can do better than anyone else: revitalizing\textsuperscript{17} the brand. He \textbf{applied} for and received permission to change the team name to the Charlotte Hornets. Jordan himself became more involved in community events and forged a connection between the team and the city.

The changes paid off. The team finished the 2013-2014 season with a winning record of 43-39, the second best year in the history of the franchise. They even made it to the playoffs. At the same time, ticket and merchandise sales skyrocketed\textsuperscript{18} and public opinion improved dramatically. The team was well on its way to making both a comeback and a profit.

Most of us look to successful people and assume they can do anything because of their past successes. The old joke about asking your doctor for stock tips comes to mind, as if just because you can cure an illness, you have wisdom about everything. Doctors don’t make great stockbrokers,\textsuperscript{19} brain surgeons are horrible rocket scientists, CEOs aren’t usually exceptional cooks, and basketball stars are rarely great baseball players (you can ask Jordan about that last one as well).\textsuperscript{20} Experience and knowledge are only valuable where \textbf{applicable}.

This mindset doesn’t just fog our external lenses,\textsuperscript{21} it also blurs how we see ourselves. It is often hard for successful people to admit that they won’t be good at something new. In Jordan’s case, his basketball skills didn’t translate into basketball management. It took some time, but Jordan certainly deserves credit for acknowledging \textsuperscript{22} what wasn’t working and trying new things until he hit on a winning combination. He gave up managing and focused on marketing, a skill he was uniquely qualified for. For Jordan, that became the recipe for success:

\textit{It’s harder than most people think. Some people have been in this business a lot longer and still haven’t put together a sustainable, successful scenario. When you make bad decisions, you learn from that and move forward. I think I’m better in that sense. I’ve experienced all of the different valleys and lows about ownership and the success of businesses. Does that constitute me being a better owner? Then I guess I am.}

[20] Hard, yes, but flexing a new muscle is also exhilarating, especially when you eventually succeed. As Jordan puts it, “…it’s been fun. It’s been hard, but I’ve had fun doing it.”
Assignment 1: Text-Dependent Questions

1. PART A: What is a central idea in the article?
   A. Michael Jordan inspired many through his skills and talents on the basketball court.
   B. Michael Jordan inspired many through his message that failure is not necessary for success.
   C. Michael Jordan succeeded through failure after adopting the attitude that failure can lead to success.
   D. Michael Jordan succeeded through failure after adopting the attitude that avoiding risks can lead to success.

2. PART B: Which detail from the article best supports the answer to Part A?
   A. “Twenty-six times, I’ve been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.” (Paragraph 2)
   B. “The story of Michael Jordan not making his high school team has been told and retold, but continues to inspire with each retelling.” (Paragraph 4)
   C. “The pattern of defeat followed by success would follow Jordan to the University of North Carolina and later to the NBA.” (Paragraph 10)
   D. “It is often hard for people to admit that they won’t be good at something new.” (Paragraph 18)

3. Which of the following provides the best summary of the article?
   A. When he failed to make the varsity team, Michael Jordan let the bad news devastate him, causing him to spend the afternoon crying in his room. Later that day, his mother encouraged him to play junior varsity.
   B. When he failed to make the varsity team, Michael Jordan let the rejection devastate him, causing him to give up and allowing the failure to ruin his career. Later in life, after making bad decisions with business, he refused to change, continued to make mistakes, and lost his money.
   C. When he failed to make the varsity team, Michael Jordan let the devastation drive him to work harder, using the rejection to push himself to succeed. Later in life, he increased the popularity of basketball, won many awards, and inspired a new generation of basketball players.
   D. When he failed to make the varsity team, Michael Jordan let the rejection drive him to double his efforts, using failure to push himself to be better. Later in life, after making bad decisions with business, he learned from these mistakes, made new choices, and continued to succeed.

4. Which of the following best describes how the author develops the connection between success and failure in the article?
A. The author establishes Michael Jordan as a successful player due to long hours of practices and pure talent and skill.
B. The author reports statistics from Michael Jordan’s basketball record to prove he was both a success and a failure at the sport.
C. The author highlights key events in Michael Jordan’s basketball career to show how moments of failure or rejection pushed him harder.
D. The author describes what happened at Michael Jordan’s junior varsity games to show how he used missed opportunities to push him harder.

**Assignment 2: Determining Central Idea**

**Directions**: Use the following graphic organizer to identify key details that some would see as failures in the Michael Jordan text you read. Discuss how this “failure” could have contributed to later success, or what lesson someone else could learn (future implications) from his decisions.

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<td>Even successful people can experience failure.</td>
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Paragraphs 10-16

Paragraphs 17-20

Think About: What are the advantages and disadvantages of failure? Does failure produce success? Explain your response.

Assignment 3: Critical Thinking

Read the following brief text and respond to the question that follows.

We hear it all the time: “Why is it called Formula 409®?” First, let’s put the urban legends to rest. No, 409 is not the area code where the formula was first concocted, or the number of bacon strips consumed by the inventor that day. The Formula 409® name is actually a tribute to the tenacity of two young Detroit scientists hell-bent on formulating the greatest grease-cutting, dirt-destroying, bacteria cutting cleaner on the planet.

Thing is, creating the ultimate cleaner doesn’t just happen on the first try. And it didn’t happen on the 101st or the 301st either. It wasn’t until batch number 409 that they were finally satisfied. And so, the name stuck. Formula 409®. True story.

1. Briefly explain the message about failure of “Why is it called Formula 409®?”
2. Would the writer of the Formula 409® story and Michael Jordan agree about the role of failure being an important part of success? Explain your response using support from each passage.
Assignment 4: Make a connection

Discuss the Michael Jordan story and the Formula 409 story with a parent, guardian or sibling. Conduct a short interview to observe how other people handle failure. Ask the following questions and write their responses. Next, answer the reflection question at the end.

1. When you think of failure, what is one big event in your life that comes to mind?

2. How did you overcome this failure?

3. What did this teach you?
Reflection Question: After reading about Michael Jordan and Formula 409, as well as learning about a person close to you who also had a failure that they overcame, has your attitude changed about failure? What have you learned? How will you deal with failures in the future?