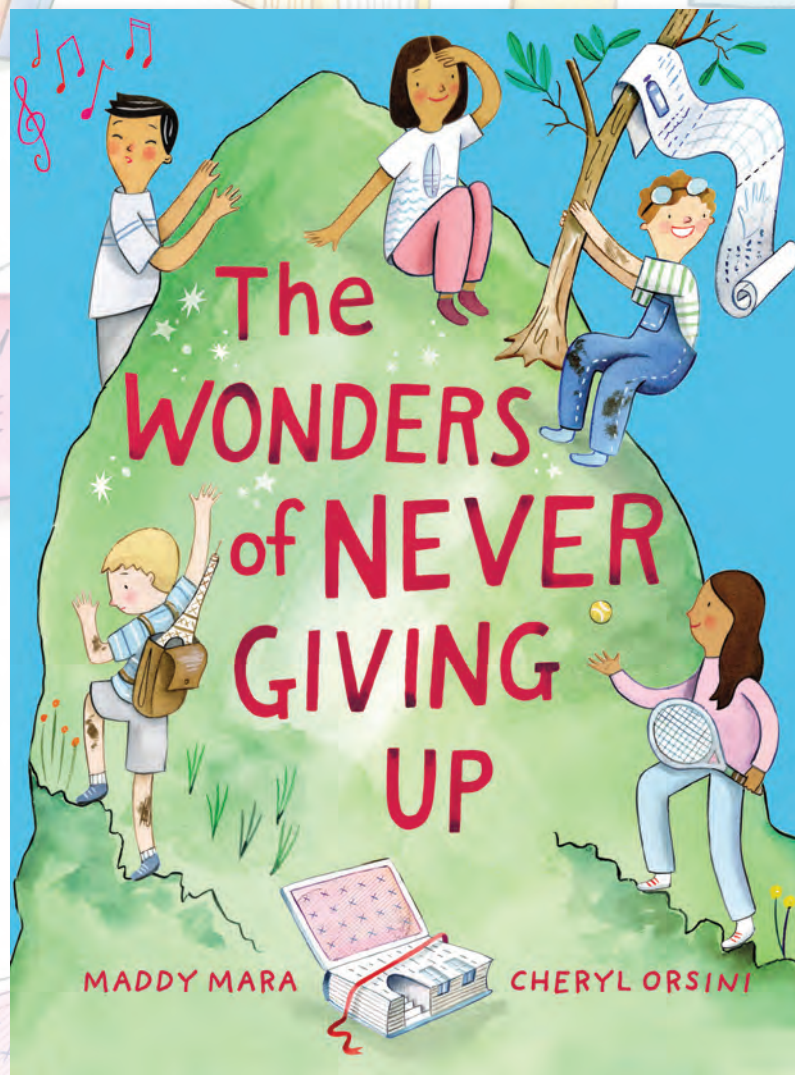


Classroom Resources



Written by
Maddy Mara

Illustrated by
Cheryl Orsini

Suitable for
Ages 3-7

Themes

Having goals and dreams
Determination and
perseverance
Overcoming challenges

 **Affirm**
press

Contents of this pack

- Overview of *The Wonders of Never Giving Up*
- Key themes
- Questions to ask before we begin reading
- While we are reading: discussion in key curriculum areas
- Final reflections
- Four activities

Description

*Success isn't easy, and though it sounds cheesy
Clear paths to great heights are quite rare
Just flip through this book – go ahead, take a look!
Even champions started somewhere.*

From sporting triumphs and engineering feats to best-selling novels and medical marvels, many of our greatest achievements are only possible with a lot of determination.

From the team behind *The Greatest Mistakes That Went Right* comes an uplifting celebration of grit and a humorous reminder to all kids: sometimes the trick is quite simply ... don't quit.

About the author

Maddy Mara is the pen name of Australian creative duo Hilary Rogers and Meredith Badger. Hilary and Meredith have been collaborating on children's books for many years. Hilary is an author and former publishing director; Meredith is the author of countless books for kids and young adults, and teaches English as a foreign language. Maddy Mara is the melding of their respective daughters' names.

About the illustrator

Cheryl Orsini taught herself to draw as a little girl. She grew a little taller, studied Visual Communications at UTS and finally, when she could grow no more, she started illustrating children's books, magazines and decorating a great many peg dolls! She has illustrated for many books and her work also regularly appears in magazines and exhibitions.

Find this book at our website:

<https://affirmpress.com.au/publishing/the-wonders-of-never-giving-up/>

Key themes

Having goals and dreams

Each of the people featured in this book dreamed of achieving something, and no two dreams were the same. Each person is unique in their interests, talents and hobbies, just like the children reading this book. This book is a fantastic resource to discuss the many goals and dreams that we can have.

Determination and perseverance

Every person in this book was determined to achieve their dreams, and they let nothing stop them from getting to where they wanted to be! Use this book as a tool to discuss the themes of determination and perseverance, and why carrying on can be better than giving up.

Overcoming challenges

Many of the people in this book had to overcome challenges, like gender stereotypes or racism. You could discuss the types of challenges that the people in this book faced, and why they didn't give up, even when the odds appeared stacked against them. This book is also a great tool for fostering empathy through discussion about the various obstacles that people faced and how no two journeys to success were the same.

Questions to ask before we begin reading

- Have a look at the front cover; what do you think this book will be about?
- What are the characters on the cover doing? Why do you think there is a picture of people climbing a steep hill on the front cover?
- The title of this book is, *The Wonders of Never Giving Up*. What was the last thing you gave up on? What was the last thing you wanted to give up on, but didn't?
- What does 'determination' mean? Why do you think that determination might be an important quality to have?

Questions to ask while we are reading

Curriculum areas:
Comprehension
Knowledge and Understanding of the World
Social and Emotional Development

- On page 3, the author writes that 'success isn't easy'. Do you agree with that? Why do we keep doing things even though they're not easy?
- Also on page 3, the author writes that 'clear paths to great heights are quite rare'. What do you think the author means by this? What does it have to do with the people described in this book? Can you find a link between this statement and the picture on the front cover?
- On pages 4 and 5, we meet Beth. What challenge does Beth have to overcome? Why does the author say that Beth was 'not floored'?
- Can you spot the broken surfboard? What has happened to this surfboard, and how does it relate to Beth?
- On pages 6 and 7, we meet an author called Matthew Reilly. Why did Matthew decide to publish his books by himself? One day an editor adored Matthew's books. Can you guess what a book editor does?
- On pages 8 and 9, we meet Ginko. Why was it unusual for Ginko to want to be a doctor? Do you think Ginko would face the same challenges nowadays?
- On pages 10 and 11, we see the Eiffel Tower. A lot of people disliked Gustave's tower. What do you think of it? Where in the world is the Eiffel Tower? (Name the country and city!) What language they speak there?
- Why might the Eiffel Tower pages be sideways? What do you think about having these pages sideways?
- On pages 12 and 13, we learn that Evonne made it into the Sports Hall of Fame. What sport did Evonne play? We also learn that Evonne is a Wiradjuri girl. What does this mean? Where in Australia do Wiradjuri people come from? Do you know the Traditional Custodians of the land on which you live and go to school?
- On pages 14 and 15, we meet a scientist called Kati. What did Kati help to do? Why was this important? What year do you think this happened in?
- On Kati's pages we see lots of equipment and charts. What do you

think the equipment is? Where else might you see charts like this?

- On pages 16 and 17, we learn that Malala strives for something. What does she strive for? Look at the artwork on page 16 for a clue! Do you think it's true that in some countries, education is only for boys and not for girls? What do you think about that?
- What is Malala wearing? Why might some of the girls on page 17 be wearing a hijab while others do not wear it?
- On pages 18 and 19, we meet Stevie Wonder. What does it mean that Stevie 'had a hit at 13'? Why does the author describe Stevie as a 'music-machine'?
- Why do you think the author included a section at the back of the book that has a little summary of each of the people described in the book? Is there a special word for this section of the book? Do you think this is useful or not?

Curriculum area: Literacy

Vocabulary

Make a list of these words, which may be unfamiliar to young readers, and find out what they mean:

Determination	Racist	Dejected	Inspire
Vowed	Keen	Mocked	Zeal
Monstrous	Divert	Swayed	Strives
Humble	Glum	Menace	Grit

Rhyme

Look at the first page of the story. Can you identify any rhyming words? As a class activity, you can break the students into groups and get them to work together on different pages in the book, identifying rhyming words and/or the rhyming pattern of the book once they have grasped this concept.

Curriculum area: Numeracy

- How many people are featured in this book? Whose story was your favourite?
- How many books are pictured on Matthew Reilly's pages? (pp.6–8)
- On page 8, we see Ginko watching a medical demonstration. How many other spectators are there? How many of them are women, aside from Ginko?



- Compare this to the audience watching Evonne's tennis match overleaf. How many spectators can you see? What is the mood of the crowd here compared to the spectators on Ginko's pages?
- How many top hats can you count on page 10 and 11? What else can you describe about the fashion styles you see on these pages? Are there any other characters wearing similar clothes elsewhere in the book?
- On pages 20 and 21, we see kids doing lots of different activities. How many different activities can you see? Why do you think the illustrator chose to show these activities? Are any of these activities also things that you like to do?

Final reflections

- What was your favourite part of this book? Why?
- What do you think is the message of this book?
- What are you passionate about? Is it more than one thing? Share your passion/s with a partner. Is there anyone else in your class that is passionate about the same things as you?
- Has this book inspired you to achieve a goal? What goals would you like to achieve? What challenges might you face along the way?
- Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why/why not?

Activity One: Remember when you were determined

Ask students to write a short recount of a time when they have felt determined to achieve a goal. Prompt questions could include:

- What were you trying to achieve?
- Why did you want to achieve it?
- Did you have to try many different times to do it?
- Was there a big challenge or lots of little challenges that you faced along the way?
- Were you proud of yourself when you had achieved it?

Extension activity: you could ask the students to:

- Practice their **oratory skills** and present their recount to the class as a speech, or via a recording as a short video clip.
- **Partner** with a friend or classmate and read each other's work, looking out for similarities and differences in their goals, the way they achieved their goals, and challenges they faced.
- Develop their **literacy skills** by turning their recount into a poem, perhaps similar in rhyming pattern to the stories in the book or perhaps in a rhyming or non-rhyming pattern of their choice.

Activity Two: Research a person from the book

As a class, you could choose a person from the book to focus on and together you could research further into their life and achievements.

For example, if you chose Stevie Wonder, you could play the class a few Stevie Wonder songs and then start your research! Questions of interest might be:

- How old Stevie was when he signed his first record deal? Is this a similar age to the students in class? Do they know of anyone else in history who became famous for being talented at a young age?
- How being blind affects the way Stevie composes and plays music, and how many other famous musicians have/had a disability that affected the way they make music.
- Why Stevie changed his name, and how common 'stage names' are for famous musicians, actors and artists. You could ask the class to come up with their own stage names, too!
- How influential Stevie's music has been. You could ask students to compare Stevie's music to their favourite singers and bands and see how similar or different it is.
- The types of humanitarian work and philanthropy that Stevie has done, which can prompt discussion of why it's important to help people in need.

