

Determination:

Welcome and hello.

This term I know you are looking at some of the attributes that help to make Olympic Champions. Does anyone know how many days it is until the Olympics? Today we are looking at the word determination. To determine to do something is to settle or fix on a purpose. You can be determined about anything. Obviously athletes are determined to get as fit as they can be and are determined to be the best they can be to become champions. Often this means hard work and sacrifice for them. They have to train hard everyday, eat a special diet, give up doing lots of things because their time is taken up. It is not easy. They have to keep going, even when obstacles get in their way. We can all be determined to do something perhaps learning a new sport or musical instrument and usually whether we succeed or not is dependent on how hard we try. Ask the children what sports they do and what instruments they are learning.

(Story told with strips of card held together with split pins to make various shapes shown in bold to illustrate the story)

There is a story in the bible about some friends. One of the friends was paralyzed and **couldn't walk**. His legs didn't work so he had to **lie on a mat** all day. One day Jesus came to the village where the friends lived and visited someone's **home**. So many people had heard about Jesus and the miracles he had done, that the **house** was packed. There were people looking through the **window** and people looking through the **door**. The man whose legs couldn't walk couldn't get there, but he had **4** good friends.

They picked up his mat and took him to the house, but it was full and they couldn't get near the window or the door. Now in those days the roofs weren't **pointy** like ours, they were **flat**. The friends were determined that they would get their paralyzed friend to see Jesus. So they carried him up the **stairs**, made a hole in the roof, then lowered the man on his mat down through the hole right in front of Jesus. Jesus looked at the man and then **up** at the 4 friends who were looking **down** through the hole and said.

"My son all the wrong things you've ever done are forgiven." Some people were absolutely shocked, only **1** person can say that – God. Jesus looked at them and knew what they were thinking. Jesus said which is it easier to say? Son all the wrong things you have ever done are forgiven or get up, pick up your mat and walk? I will prove that I have the power to forgive wrong things. Jesus turned to the man and said "Get up, pick up your mat and walk." And the man did. Everyone praised God.

In this story the friends were determined to get their paralyzed friend to see Jesus, because they knew if they did he might be able to heal him. They didn't let the fact that there was a crowd inside and outside the house stop them. They were so determined that they carried him up to the roof, made a hole in it and lowered him down right in front of Jesus. Their determination was rewarded in that Jesus healed their friend.

Perhaps there is something we would really like to do, but sometimes we are afraid, or sometimes we don't want to practice a skill or put the work into making it happen. Sometimes we let things get in the way. Perhaps we just need some determination to set a purpose. We need to keep on going and maybe we will have to try something a number of times before we get it right, however the feeling of satisfaction in achieving a goal is amazing.

Song:

Be Bold, Be Strong.

Prayer:

Dear Lord,

Thank you for all the gifts and talents that we have and thank you for the opportunities we have to use them. Please help us to be determined to make the most of them.

Amen