

Name: _____ Date: _____

SHAQUEM GRIFFIN



Shaquem Griffin doesn't let other people define him. He plays football for the NFL, but many people said he could never do that. He just didn't listen.

Shaquem was born with a condition that kept his left hand from fully developing. It was very painful, and he lost what he had of his hand.

But that never stopped him from going for what he wanted—to play football.

Others did not believe he could do it. They wondered how someone with one hand could play football.

Shaquem wasn't going to let others' doubts get in his way. As he said, "You can't set limits on what you can do, whether you have two hands or thirty hands. Show me what you can do, and we'll go from there."

To be a professional football player, he had to train hard and never give up. Shaquem wasn't afraid to face the difficult tasks ahead of him.

"When I started lifting weights, I remember I could barely bench the bar. I mean, I'm shaking all over the place, the bar's falling...but it just goes to show how much work I put in."

He decided to prove everyone wrong. "No matter if you have one hand or two hands, when someone tells you that you can't do something, the only thing you can do is just prove them wrong, no matter how hard it is."

With hard work and continued effort, Shaquem got stronger. He started breaking records. And the coaches and scouts who had doubted him were forced to give him a second look.

Shaquem is still setting records and working hard as a linebacker.

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DETERMINED TO SUCCEED

Directions: Working with a partner, discuss each of these questions together. On your own, write your answers below.

1. What did you learn from reading about Shaquem? What is one thing you will take away from his story?

2. Shaquem Griffin didn't listen to people who doubted he could achieve his goals. How do you think he felt when others told him he couldn't do what he wanted to do? Why do you think he felt that way?

3. Do you think the fact that Shaquem only has one hand made him work harder for his goal? Why or why not?

4. What is one quality you admire in Shaquem? What do you have in common with him?

5. If you could ask Shaquem anything, what would you want to know?

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HOW HARD IS THIS?

Directions: On your own, read through these scenarios and think about how you would react. Rate and circle your reaction, and then describe what you would do.

Use this scale to rate your reaction:

1
I'm fine.
2
I'm a little bothered.
3
I'm upset.

When you're done, form a group with two to three other students. Choose one scenario you would like to share with the group, and discuss your answer.

1. There is a hard problem on a quiz, and you don't know how to get the answer.

Rating: 1 2 3

How I would handle this: _____

2. A teacher asks you to share your work, but you don't think you did the work right.

Rating: 1 2 3

How I would handle this: _____

3. A friend doesn't want to sit with you at lunchtime.

Rating: 1 2 3

How I would handle this: _____

4. You are asked to play a new game that you have never tried before.

Rating: 1 2 3

How I would handle this: _____

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KEEP TOGETHER

Directions: When things get hard, it helps to have support from those around you. As a class, you can help one another by promising to be supportive when difficulties arise.

First, complete the statement below on your own. Share it with your classmates. Then write your class pledges here and save them so that you can look back and remember them when things get hard. See the example answers at the bottom of the page, or come up with your own answers.

When something gets difficult, I will _____

Our Class Pledges

When things get hard, we pledge to...

When things get hard, we pledge to...

When things get hard, we pledge to...

When things get hard, we pledge to...

★ help one another

★ ask for help

★ not give up

★ ask questions

★ try again

★ say "I can," not "I can't"

★ encourage one another

★ keep an open mind

★ stay positive

