

Cal's Big Challenge on World Never Give Up Day

Story from: **National Day Classroom**

It was a bright August morning, and Ms. Willow's classroom buzzed with energy. The words "*World Never Give Up Day*" were written in bold letters on the board.

"Class," Ms. Willow began, "today is a day to remind ourselves that no matter how hard something is, we keep going. We don't give up—just like inventors, explorers, and... students learning fractions."

Everyone laughed, except Cal, who was frowning at his desk.

"Cal, is something wrong?" asked Ms. Willow.

"I've been trying to solve yesterday's math puzzle," Cal admitted, holding up a crumpled sheet of paper, "but I've done it ten times and it still won't work. I think my brain just gave up!"

Ms. Willow smiled. "Perfect timing, Cal. Today, we'll all take on a special *Never Give Up Challenge*. You'll work on something tricky, and you'll try until you succeed—or at least until you learn something new."

Cal's friend Mia decided her challenge would be to balance a ruler on her finger for 30 seconds. Eli tried to build a house of cards. Cal decided to stick with his math puzzle—though part of him wanted to switch to something easier.

At first, everything went wrong. Mia's ruler kept falling. Eli's cards collapsed. Cal's numbers never added up right.

"I'm starting to think this is *Impossible Day*," Cal muttered.

But then Ms. Willow reminded them, "Every mistake is just another step toward figuring it out."

Mia tried balancing the ruler by focusing on her breathing—success! Eli changed his card base so it was sturdier—success! Cal noticed he'd been multiplying instead of adding in one step. He corrected it, and—

“YES!” Cal shouted, throwing his hands in the air. “I DID IT!”

Everyone clapped. Ms. Willow wrote a quote on the board: “*A river cuts through rock not because of its power, but because of its persistence.*”

Cal grinned. “So, I’m like a river, and that math problem was a big rock.”

“That’s right,” said Ms. Willow. “And you didn’t give up.”

On the way out, Cal whispered to Mia, “Next time, I’m picking the house of cards challenge.”

Mia laughed. “Only if you promise not to give up.”