

What factors or qualities make a survivor essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Survival is something that's faced often in everyday life.

From something as commonly dealt with as overcoming the loss of a loved one or a falling out with a close friend to the unfortunate circumstances of facing every day life with a disability and managing. There are certain factors/qualities that help make a true survivor. Close family bonds, mental strength, positive attitudes, independent thinking, common sense and determination can play a huge factor in this; as shown in the novel we've studied in class 'The Wave' and my two related texts 'I am Sam' and the short documentary 'Mr Cheng'. 'The Wave' a novel by Todd Strasser follows a high school student named Laurie Saunders and her class members who participate in an experiment conducted by their history teacher Mr. Ross to show what life in Nazi Germany was really like. He sets a few simple rules and takes a different more strict approach towards discipline naming the group participating 'The wave'. It eventually escalates into pure disaster with the children taking 'The Wave' much too seriously, so seriously that people end up getting hurt for not being a member or choosing to follow these ways. Laurie Saunders shows all the qualities of a survivor throughout this novel.

After confiding in her mother about the whole situation she helps point out to Laurie the danger this could cause and Laurie decides to pull out. Because 'The Wave' has such an influence on the students, even her closest friends turn on her no longer wanting anything to do with her. Not even this changes Laurie's mind though due to her independent thinking, the fact she knows her limitations and her determination to not give up. The strong family bond Laurie's family have also plays a huge part in her being able to survive this

whole disaster. She takes one step at a time, hanging in there and sticking to her morals till eventually she convinces a few members that the whole thing is going too far and she doesn't stop until it's put to an end. The movie ' I am Sam' written and directed by Jessie Nelson follows the life of a father with developmental disabilities; after taking in a homeless woman and her falling pregnant then leaving after the baby is born Sam is faced with the challenge of bringing up a daughter who soon enough will have a mental capacity higher than himself. Eventually after a misunderstanding his daughter is taken off him and he is left with the challenge of finding a lawyer who can fight his case to get his daughter back. In the beginning a high class lawyer refuses to take his case on.

But by the sheer determination Sam portrays by the constant visits he pays trying to convince her she gives in and fights his case till eventually he wins custody over his daughter. In the process he also teaches his cold-hearted lawyer the value of love and family. Sam demonstrates the key qualities a survivor needs throughout the entire movie. He has a close bond with his friends who are almost like a family and are always there to support him, he moves forward doing anything he can to get his daughter back including moving apartments and getting an extra job and he follows his intuition which is him knowing that he will always be the best father doing anything he possibly can to make sure." Mr Cheng" the short documentary directed by Maia Harniak looks into the hard life of strong willed Chinese immigrant Laurie Cheng, who survived one of the most horrible and traumatic childhood events imaginable. At only four years of age Laurie was taken into the city of Peking by his father who was ' looking for work' who then never returned,

abandoning him and leaving him to fend for himself for the rest of his life. To begin with, his survival skills involved addressing his physical needs, which included him living in cemeteries as a form of shelter and looking around for whatever food he could possibly find. He demonstrated amazing resourcefulness in finding these basics for surviving at such a young age.

Although this was not even the hardest factor he would have to survive, his greater challenge was surviving the mental and emotional trauma of these years. He later immigrated to Australia and began to build himself a life which he claims wouldn't be this way if he were to have known his family. Laurie also tells the documenter, “ If I wasn't strong... he wouldn't be here,” This documentary is a prime example of a person showing the qualities of a survivor.