

Twelve Famous People Who Succeeded Against the Odds

Thomas Edison, the inventor of the light bulb, was told by his teacher that he was too stupid to learn anything.

Louisa May Alcott, author of *Little Women*, was turned down by countless publishers who told her no one would ever read her now classic children's book.

Woodrow Wilson, a Rhodes scholar and president of the United States, didn't learn the alphabet until he was eight; he didn't read until he was eleven.

Wilma Rudolph contracted polio at age four, crippling her as a child. She was told she would never walk. She decided to become a runner and went on to win three Olympic gold medals and was named the "Fastest Woman in the World."

Albert Einstein did not talk until age four or read until age nine. He performed badly in almost all of his high school courses and failed his college entrance exams.

Abraham Lincoln began his service in the Blackhawk War as captain. By the end of the war he had been demoted to private.

Lucille Ball was told when she first started studying acting by an instructor to "Try any other profession. Any other."

Ludwig van Beethoven was initially told by his music teacher that he was hopeless as a composer.

Cher had learning disabilities as a child.

Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team.

Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor for lacking great ideas. He went bankrupt several times and was told repeatedly to "get rid of the mouse because there's no potential in it."