

From language lessons to life lessons

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Pleven, Bulgaria
29 March 2019



In this talk

- language skills and life skills
- collaborative and co-operative skills
- mindsets for learning
- grit and resilience
- setting the right example

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Language skills and life skills

Paired task

Students have different skills and strengths, e.g.

- vocabulary skills
- observation skills

When working with mixed pairs, do activities that exploit these differences



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Language skills and life skills

Which ones do you teach?

Language skills

- the four skills (LSRW)
- grammar
- vocabulary
- pronunciation

Life skills

- working with others
- avoiding distractions
- finding solutions
- handling setbacks

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Collaborative and co-operative skills

What is the difference?

collaboration

- a way of working together
- involves pair work and group work
- can be project work

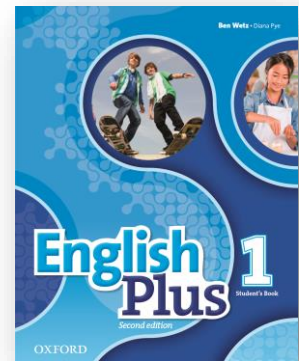
co-operation

- a way of learning together
- can result from pair work and group work
- students learn from each other

Look at the picture for
10 seconds.
Memorise the items!



BANANAS!



Did anyone notice the unusual word here? →

How many items did you remember?

Work in pairs

- Students write down what they remember in Eng/L1
- Provide time for them to translate L1 → Eng
- Check:
 - Start with whoever had the fewest
 - Others listen and check off what's been said
 - Continue until all the items have been said



Pair work and group work

Collaborative work

Bring in other skills, such as artwork and presentation skills

Footgolf

Footgolf is a hybrid of football and golf. You play it on a special golf course or a park. The rules are not very difficult. It's similar to golf, but you use a football. The players don't hit the ball; they kick it. Footgolfers say the best thing about their sport is that you don't need a lot of money to play – all you need is a football and a place to play.

2 Invent a new hybrid sport. Follow the steps in the project checklist.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

1 Choose two sports in the box.

cycling football basketball
tennis swimming

2 Think of a name for your new hybrid sport.

3 Write about your sport. Include:

- the name of the sport
- which two sports it is a hybrid of
- what you need
- where you play it
- rules: what you can and can't do
- why you think it's a great sport

4 Draw a picture of your sport or use a computer to make one.

5 Present your new hybrid sport to your class.

6 Collect all the ideas for the new hybrid sports and make a class poster.

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Fixed mindset v growth mindset

Carol Dweck

Fixed mindset

ability is fixed

talent matters

be better than others

avoid challenges

Growth mindset

ability can be developed

hard work matters

be better than you were

enjoy challenges

Growth mindset

The importance of effort, the power of *yet*

“your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts.”
Dweck

I can't do this.

I can't do this yet.

Growth mindset

What can teachers do?

Evidence suggests it is hard to teach *growth mindset*

However, it can be learned. What we can do:

- praise students for effort, not intelligence
- remember the *power of yet*
- turn *I don't know* into an opportunity to learn
- encourage speculation

Encouraging a spirit of enquiry

Helping students to speculate

Fear of being wrong

Students are often reluctant to speculate

→ Praise guesses as well as correct answers

Give students useful language:

I have no idea but I'll say...

It could be...

I think it's...

I'm pretty sure it's...

I know this one, it's...



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Grit

The importance of effort

Two components:

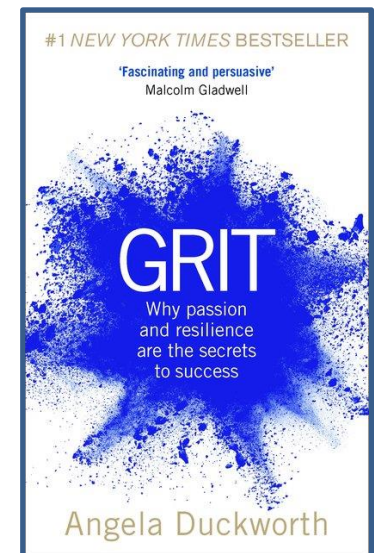
passion (staying focused)

perseverance (bouncing back from setbacks)

talent x **effort** = skill

skill x **effort** = achievement

Angela Duckworth *Grit*

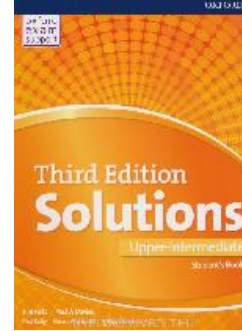


SLANT

Helping students develop useful habits

S	=	Sit up in class
L	=	Listen to the teacher
A	=	Ask questions
N	=	Nod your head when listening
T	=	Track the speaker with your eyes

(used in *KIPP* schools in NY)



Making an effort in class

‘joint hardship’

The local newspaper published an article suggesting that schools should no longer have a long holiday over the summer. Write a blog post outlining the benefits of summer holidays and describing a long summer holiday you have enjoyed.

- do writing tasks in class, not for homework
- students can foster a sense of *joint hardship* (Dörnyei)
- they work together on things that need practice
- *pain is inevitable; suffering is optional*

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Shaping attitudes and beliefs

A checklist for modelling helpful attitudes

As teachers, we should:

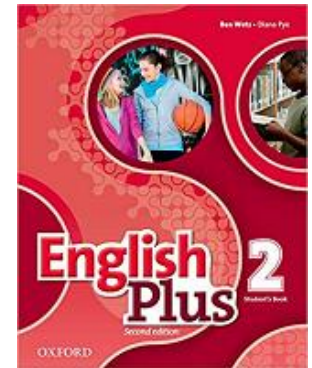
- look beyond language when appraising students
- reinforce effective habits
- be a role model for positive attitudes and beliefs
- be a guide and a warden
- give the students – and ourselves – time to grow better

Setting the right example

Time limits and word limits

A TASK

Write a short text for a project about an author you know about. Use the notes on Hergé or details about another writer you admire.



Different students work at different speeds.

→ Give *time limits* for writing tasks instead of *word limits*.



Giving students more of a say

Speak, pass, or nominate

After pair work, give students the option of *not* speaking; instead, they can choose to ***pass*** or ***nominate*** their partner

- builds trust
- is face-saving
- increases confidence
- works well try it and see for yourself!

8  **USE IT!** Work in pairs. Compare your sentences in exercise 7.

I lived in another city when I was younger.

Me, too! I lived in Paris.

Really? I didn't. I lived here.

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