

# **From language lessons to life lessons**

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Riga

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## 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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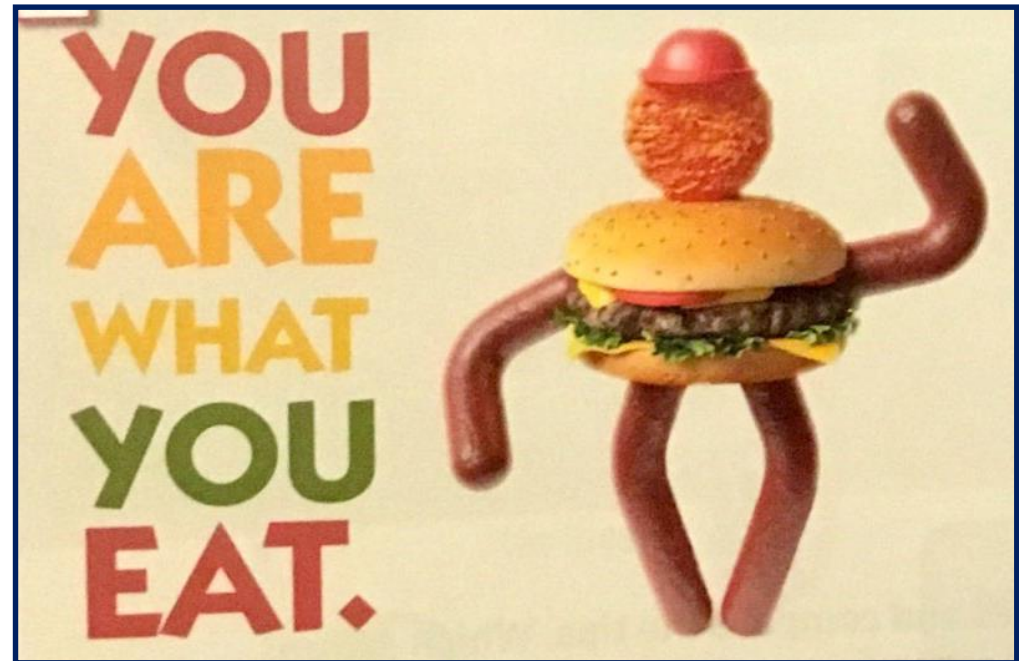
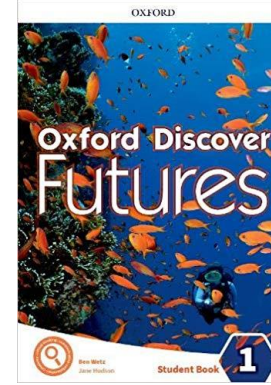
# Language skills and life skills

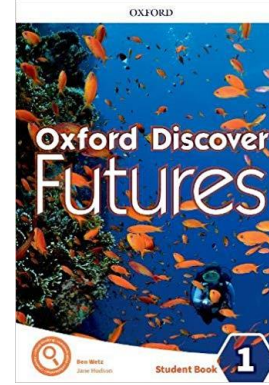
## Paired task

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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- What is the message?
- Who is the audience?
- How effective is each one?
- Which one is most:  
*memorable?*  
*clever?*  
*upsetting?*



# 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
- developing healthy habits

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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

**How can we stay healthy?**



What's good for you?



Why is happiness good for our health?



How can we stay safe?



How can we learn about health?



Who is responsible for our health?



**GREAT  
JOB!**

HOME ABOUT SERVICES BLOG SEARCH

# THE WASTE-FREE ZONE

CREATIVE RECYCLING IDEAS

**A** shelves

**B** candle holders and vases

**C** tic-tac-toe game

**D** bicycle stand

**E** bird feeder

**You will need:**  
scissors, glue,  
cardboard,  
colored paper,  
tape, spray paint,  
bottle tops, string,  
piece of wood

[Click here for instructions](#)

1 minute:

items recycled?  
objects created?  
things needed?



Did anyone notice the unusual word here? →

## How many items did you remember?

items recycled?  
objects created?  
things needed?

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

*Think of five creative recycling ideas*

### Key phrases **Sharing ideas**

One thing / Another thing we can do is ....

One idea / Another idea is to ....

What else?

Any more ideas?

I think we could ....

How about ... -ing?



**7 REFLECT** Share your group's idea with the class. Which is the best idea from the whole class? Does thinking creatively work best as an individual activity, a group activity, or a mixture of both?

*“interthinking”*

# I ♥ Riga

The 2018 Mercer *Quality of Living* survey ranked 450 cities; a number of different factors are taken into account, e.g.:

political stability  
crime  
law enforcement  
medical and health  
international schools  
public services  
transportation  
recreation  
consumer goods  
housing  
climate  
natural disasters  
etc



Which do you want to see: some capitals in the region ranked **higher** than Riga? Or some that were ranked **lower**?



# I ♥ Riga

Higher-ranked capitals in the region

Vilnius = 81st

Warsaw = 82nd

Tallinn = 86th

**Riga = 90th**



# I ♥ Riga

Lower-ranked capitals in the region

**Riga = 90th**

Moscow = 167th

Kiev = 173rd

Minsk = 188th



# I ♥ Riga

What does your choice reveal?

Vilnius = 81st

Warsaw = 82nd

Tallinn = 86th

**Riga = 90th**

Moscow = 167th

Kiev = 173rd

Minsk = 188th



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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

# Developing confidence

*Oracy*: using spoken language confidently and effectively

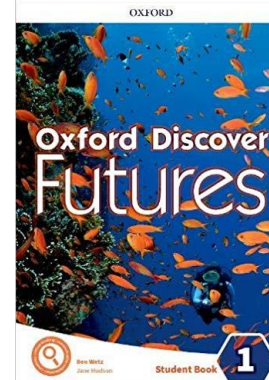
It's not just about language!

Other components of oracy skills:

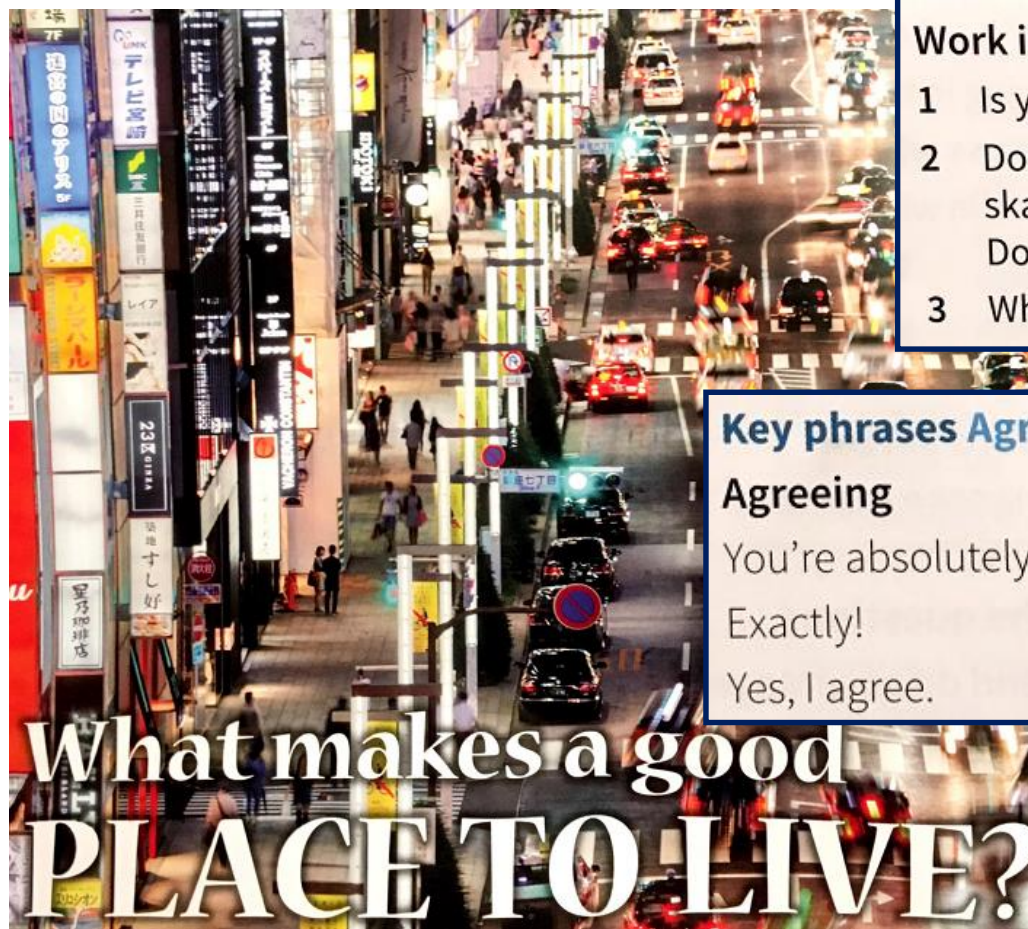
- physical
- cognitive
- ***social and emotional***



# Developing confidence



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Work in pairs. Ask and answer the questions.

- 1 Is your city a good place to live? Why? / Why not?
- 2 Does your nearest city have any of the following: skate parks, street art, or a music festival? Do you like these things?
- 3 What do you think makes the perfect city?

## Key phrases Agreeing and disagreeing

### Agreeing

You're absolutely right!  
Exactly!  
Yes, I agree.

### Disagreeing

I see your point, but ....  
I can't say I agree with you there.  
Do you think so? I'm not so sure.

What makes a good  
**PLACE TO LIVE?**

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# Grit

The importance of effort

Two components:

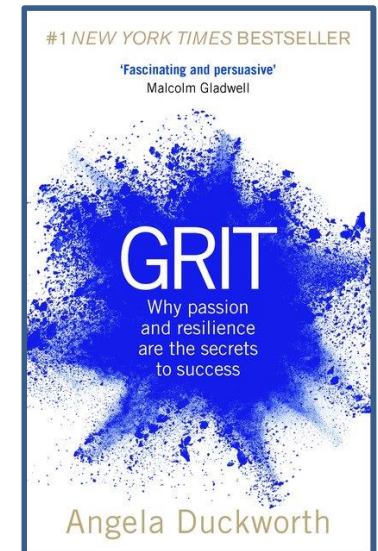
**passion** (staying focused)

**perseverance** (bouncing back from setbacks)

talent x **effort** = skill

skill x **effort** = achievement

Angela Duckworth *Grit*



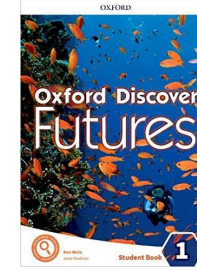
# SLANT

Helping students develop useful habits

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

(used in *KIPP* schools in NY)





# Making an effort in class

‘joint hardship’

## Writing

- 4** Research online and find out about plastic waste. Remember to make a note of your sources. Make a paragraph plan for your article.

Paragraph 1 – What’s the problem?

Paragraph 2 – How / Why does the problem happen? What are the future consequences?

Paragraph 3 – What are the solutions?

### Write a first draft

- 5** **LANGUAGE POINT** Look again at the article about space junk on page 66. Study the **highlighted** phrases for introducing information from different sources. Which sources did the writer use?

- 6** Write the first draft of your article. Follow your paragraph plan from exercise 4. Use phrases for introducing information sources.

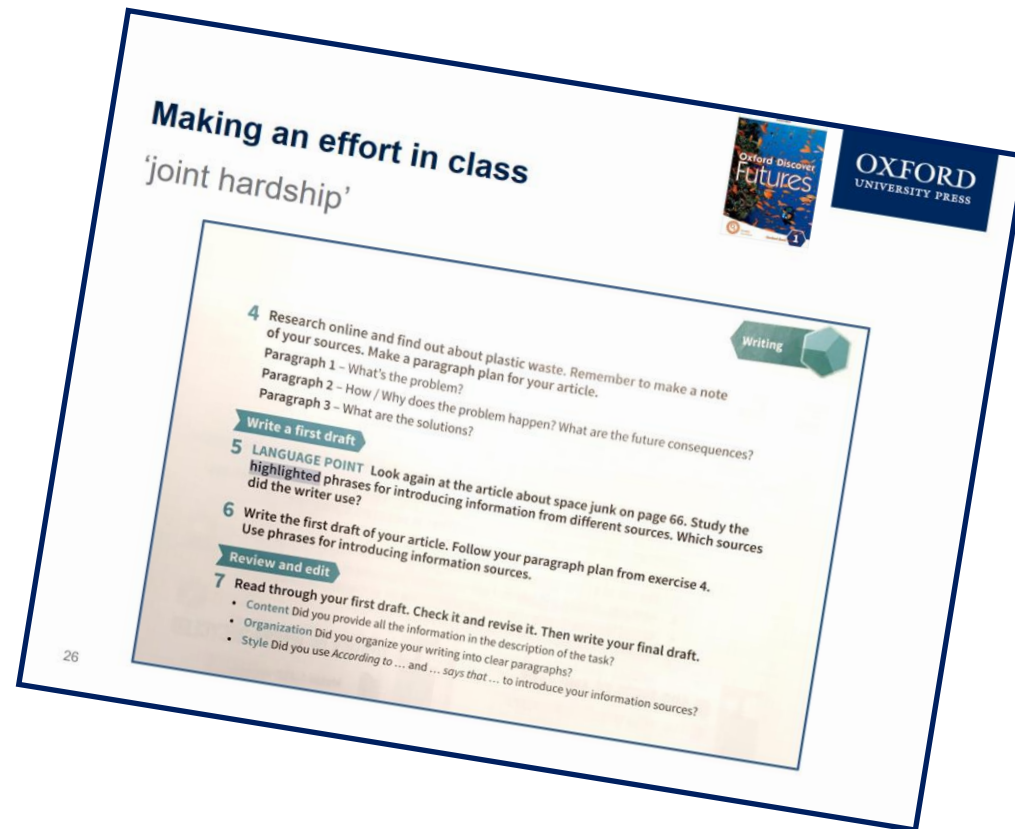
### Review and edit

- 7** Read through your first draft. Check it and revise it. Then write your final draft.
- **Content** Did you provide all the information in the description of the task?
  - **Organization** Did you organize your writing into clear paragraphs?
  - **Style** Did you use *According to ...* and *... says that ...* to introduce your information sources?

# Making an effort in class

‘joint hardship’

- 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

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Slides here:

[legyened.edublogs.org](http://legyened.edublogs.org)

