# Persistence and effective effort

Use with *Exploring* "Key influences on learning and achievement"

**Persistence** is continuation of effort and striving in the face of difficulty, opposition, or failure: it is a key characteristic of successful people across professional and academic disciplines. Persistence is evidenced by willingness to continue to try in the face of challenge. For students, this persistence can be a driving force to help them achieve their academic and personal goals.

But where does persistence in the face of adversity come from, and how can educators and parents promote it? Persistence, or **academic resilience**—academic achievement despite a challenging or threatening circumstance in the educational process—is often described as an outcome of high motivation and positive self-beliefs. For example, students with a strong belief in their own capabilities are shown to persist longer through academic difficulty.

Adults play a significant role in helping students develop persistence and apply **effective effort**—proven strategies paired with attitudes and beliefs that enable students to see the greatest benefit. They can reinforce a view of intelligence as malleable, or changeable, provide frequent and specific feedback to students on their academic progress, and encourage students to reflect on their own experiences with overcoming challenges and succeeding.

Educators can foster in students specific skills that are associated with effective effort, such as time management, organizational strategies, and goal setting. When students have a plan for how to deal with challenging academic situations that includes metacognitive strategies, or strategies for examining their own thinking, they are better equipped to continue to try when they struggle.

And classroom practice and routines influence students' effort. Students are more likely to

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persist in productive ways when teachers:

- Allow time for reflection and discussion.
- Include opportunities for error analysis on assignments and tests.
- Use questioning to uncover confusion as opposed to giving an answer right away.
- Assign tasks that have clear outcomes and rubrics so students can self-assess.
- Praise effort and processes as opposed to outcomes.
- Encourage students to use multiple problem-solving strategies.
- Foster a community of learners in their classrooms.
- Push students to honestly evaluate their struggles and their attributions for success and failure.

Related to this key idea, this course will explore:

- Specific tools and processes for introducing and reinforcing effective effort strategies with your students.
- Research related to self-management, self-regulated learning, grit, and goal-setting.
- How persistence and effective effort are related to students' understanding of the malleability of intelligence, their motivation and self-efficacy beliefs, and the culture of learning in classrooms and schools.

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