

Robyn Silbey Professional Development Raising Teacher Quality and Student Achievement in Mathematics



Who among your staff or students do you envision being most successful? What makes you think so? Do they have *grit*? Read on and Click on for some tips from the experts!

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Angela Duckworth's TED Talk on Grit

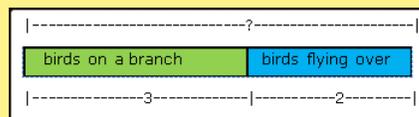


Angela Duckworth left a demanding job as a management consultant to teach 7th grade math. Her findings about the relationship between talent and success are clearly conveyed in this short [TED Talk](#). Duckworth has since left the classroom to study the psychology of learning at the [University of Pennsylvania](#), taking cues from educational giants like [Carol Dweck](#) and the work she shares in [Mindset](#). Duckworth believes that the two greatest indicators for success are grit and

Shout Out! Park Elementary



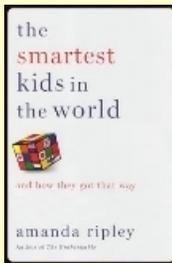
Intermediate teachers at [Park Elementary School](#) in [Anne Arundel County](#), Maryland were interested in learning about Bar Diagrams as a problem solving strategy. Robyn's demonstration lesson with fifth graders revealed the diagram's power and complexity.



self-control. She has developed grit scales that can be utilized by adults and children.

"We need to take our best ideas, our strongest intuitions, and we need to test them. We need to measure whether we've been successful, and we have to be willing to fail, to be wrong, to start over again with lessons learned."

The Smartest Kids in the World, by Amanda Ripley



In The Smartest Kids in the World, Amanda Ripley follows three American students as they study abroad for a year in three countries that excel in education: Finland, Poland, and Korea. Ripley's research reveals fundamental themes. Students, parents, and teachers see getting an education as a serious quest, more

important than sports or self-esteem. Therefore, only the most educated, high-achieving citizens are permitted to teach. Because they are serious people doing hard jobs, teachers are given leeway to do their jobs autonomously, given that programming is adequately rigorous. The resulting rigor requires failure, and students have the freedom to fail when they are still young enough to learn how to recover.

Ripley's book embraces the theme of grit. Her experiences with the exchange students paint a clear picture of how grit looks in schools around the world. Fortunately for us, she closes the book with suggestions that we can strive to accomplish.

High-Stakes Assessments are Coming

In most states, High-Stakes Assessments are around the corner. What are some things we



Two weeks later, the whole Park Elementary staff participated in a workshop designed to build expertise with bar diagramming. The leadership and staff at this Park Elementary clearly demonstrate the determination required to learn new and challenging material That grit will surely be passed on to Park's fortunate students!

Six Strategies of a Successful Coach



In the February Coaches' Corner of Teaching Children Mathematics, Robyn details six strategies of a successful coach. They include (1) making good relationships a priority; (2) demonstrating faith in teachers;(3) facilitating communication between stakeholders; (4) working through teachers' lenses; (5) diagnosing and treating

corner. What are some things we can do to help our students focus, care, and do their best work?



Two ideas:
(1) Work through one of [Angela Duckworth's grit scales](#). A discussion following this experience might motivate your students to persist through challenging tasks and take pride in their perseverance. (2) Ask students to compare their academic effort with their effort in athletics. Suggest to students that they apply the same level of grit that they would for a big game.

Customized Visits to Suit Your Needs

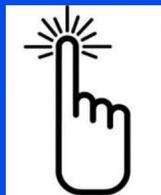


Call 301-802-5285 or email [Robyn at robyn@robynsilbey.com](mailto:robyn@robynsilbey.com) to talk about visits to your district or school.

teachers needs; and (6) taking pleasure in teachers' successes. Details and strategies for implementing these goals appear in the [article](#).



Preview! In the next [Coaches Corner](#), Robyn elaborates on the February theme as she specifically outlines best practices for collaborating with teachers.



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