

## Essential Elements of Grit and Perseverance

ELEMENT	EXAMPLE
Teaching necessary skills and procedures	Teach students the skills and procedures that they need in order to master the task. This almost always involves teaching them a series of steps. For example, PALS (specifically shrink-the-paragraph) is an evidence-based strategy, one part of which involves teaching students how to hold onto the subject of each sentence.
Teaching autonomy	Once the strategies have been presented and the steps have been taught, it's important to allow students to struggle through the practice of the skill toward developing automaticity. Students will call on you to help them. Try to resist the urge to do it for them, but rather give them the confidence and the direction to move through the steps, one at a time, each day working autonomously a little bit longer than the day before.
Reinforcing all efforts	Reinforce all approximations toward developing grit and perseverance. We tend to engage in behaviors that are reinforced and stay away from behaviors that are not reinforced or ignored. When students show efforts toward following that checklist when completing a mathematics problem rather than raising their hand to ask for help, they should be reinforced with a comment such as "I really like the way you persevered and continued to work on the problem even when one of the steps was somewhat difficult for you."
Flow	Provide students with work that is at or just above their readiness level, rather than work that is overly challenging. Additionally, as often as possible, allow students to work on material or content that is of interest to them. You can allow them to choose a fiction or nonfiction text that relates to an area of interest, or allow them to go into greater depth in a particular aspect of the curriculum. For example, they could study their animal of choice or examine a time period in history that they find most intriguing.
Quality over quantity	Reinforce to students that it is better to work through one example than quickly, yet incorrectly, work through all problems on a worksheet. If you reinforce the student for persevering through a problem with comments such as "I really appreciate your persistence with that problem," you will likely see more of this type of behavior. When we reinforce quality with comments such as "You've only completed two examples, so you'd better hurry up as you won't have time to complete all of your work," we will likely encourage quantity over quality of work.