

Perseverance

Anyone who has ever had the pleasure and frustration of working through a challenging jigsaw puzzle will know that it takes time, thoughtful struggle, and attention to detail. It can be incredibly hard to envisage completion of the end product working through one piece at a time. It can also be an incredibly satisfying process once everything is assembled and you can see, comprehend and appreciate the bigger picture of the product of your efforts.

Assembling the 'jigsaw puzzle pieces' of subject knowledge, understanding and skill can also be frustrating and satisfying. At first you may struggle to see how the pieces of your own learning puzzle fit together to be a part of your own 'bigger picture'.¹

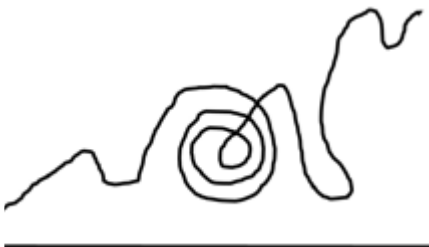
This struggle requires perseverance.

The dictionary defines perseverance as *"the steady persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success."*

Perseverance is an important habit to develop as progress (in and outside the classroom) is rarely linear and smooth like this:



But more like this:



Persevering can be hard. There is rarely a quick-fix or short-cut to a mistake or challenge. Nelson Mandela once said, *"It always seems impossible until it is done."* It also takes time, effort and self-belief

even when the end goal seems far from attainable. Confucius said, *"It does not matter how slowly you go, as long as you do not stop."*



Over the page you will find some suggestions that might help develop habits of perseverance in KHVIII learners.

Developing habits of perseverance

¹ Evidence Based Education <https://evidence-based-education.thinkific.com/>

Pupils can

- ✓ focus on the growths, not the gaps even when the going gets tough. Consider how far you have come from last month and last year even if yesterday or today are hard! Believe in yourself!
- ✓ respond to teacher feedback to make improvements in your learning, no matter how small. Be pro-active about working on your EBI (Even Better If).
- ✓ break down complex tasks into manageable steps or 'chunks' – one piece of the puzzle at a time. This is especially useful if you get stuck!
- ✓ try to resolve problems yourself using your own considerable knowledge, skills and resources e.g. textbooks, exercise books, selective use of reliable internet sources. Use advice from the 'Help! What do I next?' support resource (below).
- ✓ If learning feels easy, try to step out of your comfort zone. Try a Stretch and Challenge activity.

Teachers can

- ✓ use specific and timely feedback to help pupils target their effort, making effort a focal point to build self-belief and motivation (WWW combined with EBI)
- ✓ plan opportunities for pupils to implement and reflect on feedback. Take time to talk to them about what it is, why it matters and what influence it is likely to have on their learning.
- ✓ model processes to breakdown complex tasks into manageable steps.
- ✓ plan for opportunities to critique pupils' work (which includes pitfalls in learning) with constructive criticism which feeds forward. For example: photocopying work or using a visualiser and asking pupils to review it.
- ✓ build challenge into learning sequences.

Parents can

- ✓ encourage children to use the 'Help! What do I next?' support resource (below).
- ✓ vary the questions asked of children about the process of learning. For example:
 - "What did you put the most effort into today?"
 - "What feedback on your learning have you received today and how have you/are you going to use it?"
 - "How have you acted upon your 'Even Better Ifs' (EBI)?"
 - "Can you show me a piece of work you are proud of because of how much effort you put into it?"
- ✓ help children to see the results to which targeting effort gives rise. For example, having conversations comparing two pieces of work – one in which children employed maximum effort and one in which effort was minimal.
- ✓ remind children frequently of their learning growth and successes even when the going gets tough or when there are gaps to fill and mistakes to learn from.
- ✓ talk to children about: how you learn; which resources you rely upon; mistakes you have made and how you have learnt from them; big tasks you have had to breakdown, the process of doing so and the reasons for your choices; the amount of support you receive from others.

Support Resource:

