

9. Vision Activity: Grit

We often hear about the term 'grit', but what does it mean and can you measure it?

Grit is about having passion and perseverance for a long-term goal. It's an idea that has been developed by Angela Duckworth, a professor at Stanford University. She's spent years looking at grit and how it can be developed. Most people have at least one area where they might have shown grit. For example, you might have started dance classes when you were young and are still dancing ten years later, you might have persisted in developing as a footballer, have been drawing and painting in your spare time for years or learned how to play a musical instrument.

One of the best-known examples of grit is the author J. K. Rowling. Joanne Rowling first got the idea for the Harry Potter series on a delayed train from Manchester to King's Cross station in London. At the time, Rowling was a single parent and living on state benefits. She often did her writing in cafes in Edinburgh, with her young daughter next to her in a pram, because her apartment was so cold and she couldn't afford the heating. She worked on the first Harry Potter book for five years! It was rejected by at least a dozen publishers before being accepted by Bloomsbury. The Harry Potter series has now sold over 450 million copies worldwide. J. K. Rowling's Harvard commencement speech describes the perseverance to continue her love of writing while experiencing professional rejection and doubt. You can watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHGqp8lz36c>.

It's worth remembering that there's no such thing as an overnight success. Most successful people have usually spent years working behind the scenes to develop their craft. They've often show passion and perseverance for many years before anyone recognised their work. This is true grit.

So, How Gritty Are You?

Below is a version of the Grit Scale developed by Angela Duckworth (Duckworth, 2016, p. 55). Don't think about the questions too much. Just go for your gut feeling and answer the questions in relation to most people.

	Not at all like me = 1	Not much like me = 2	Somewhat like me = 3	Mostly like me = 4	Very much like me = 5
1. New ideas and projects distract me from previous ones.					
2. Setbacks don't discourage me. I don't give up easily.					
3. I often set a goal but later pursue a different one.					
4. I am a hard worker.					
5. I have difficulty maintaining my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete.					
6. I finish whatever I begin.					

October Activities

	Not at all like me = 1	Not much like me = 2	Somewhat like me = 3	Mostly like me = 4	Very much like me = 5
7. My interests change from year to year.					
8. I am diligent. I never give up.					
9. I have been obsessed with an idea or project for a short time but later lost interest.					
10. I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge.					

To calculate your grit score, add up all the points for the boxes and divide by 10. The highest score you can get is 5 (very gritty) and the lowest score is 1 (not at all gritty).

You could discuss your findings with your parents, tutor or friends. Do you think the score is accurate?

Final Thoughts

SCORE:

When you've discussed the questionnaire answer the questions below:

1. When have I been most gritty?

.....

.....

.....

2. How could I become grittier with my schoolwork?

.....

.....

.....

Remember, you are only young so your grit score hasn't fully developed yet. You might also find it useful to watch Duckworth's famous TED Talk at on grit: https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance.