

Persistence in the Classroom

Persistence is the act of enduring in the face of difficulty.

For example, this happens when a student struggles with a math concept until he or she understands it.

For the item, “When I don’t understand something, I ask the teacher again until I understand,” students’ responses were:

Not at all true: 24% A little true: 37% Pretty much true: 25% Very much true: 13%

Goal-Setting

For each academic unit or concept, aid students in setting specific, achievable goals related to these concepts. Research indicates that when specific and attainable goals are set, task persistence increases.

If-Then Obstacles Strategy

When goal-setting with students, devote some time to allow the class to formulate if-then plans to overcome obstacles. For example, for a class research paper or project, have students brainstorm possible obstacles and what they plan on doing to address these obstacles – “If I have trouble finding research sources, I will ask my teacher for help.

Progress Monitoring

Include frequent checks on students’ progress on assignments with multiple steps. When homework checking, also allow students to provide feedback on their own progress and what barriers have come up in completing tasks. Have students share strategies with one another to tackle those barriers.

Recognize Student Effort

When praising a student’s accomplishments, link the student’s success to the effort they invested in the assignment: “You really worked hard on this paper and showed determination when the assignment challenged you.” Students persist on difficult tasks when they believe skills can be built upon and are not fixed.



Persistent students perform better in school.

Studies report that persistence has been positively related to...

- Increased achievement in school
- Success in one’s vocation
- Self-esteem
- Self-regulation
- Problem solving abilities
- More positive emotion

Resources

- Goal-setting and hope.
- Promoting grit, tenacity, and perseverance. Critical factors for success in the 21st century, Chapters 4&5.
- Self-regulation strategies improve self-discipline in adolescents: benefits of mental contrasting and implementation intentions.

For more information about the Social Emotional Health Survey, see: www.project-covitality.info