Beyond the Report Card
Identifying talent in low SES students

Henry South, a1212395
What is SES?

- SES stands for socioeconomic status
- A family’s socioeconomic status is based on family income, parental education level, parental occupation and social status within the community
- Socioeconomic status has the ability to affect a child’s academic progress at school
What does this mean for students from low SES families?

- Students from high SES families are often better prepared to begin school as their parents are able to provide them with a wide range of resources to promote and support their development.

- On the other side of the equation, students from low SES are often underprepared for school, they often have limited access to educational supports because of financial and social constraints.
What does this look like in schools?

- Let’s take a practical look at this scenario,

“In a public country school students come from a variety of different backgrounds, but the majority (70%) come from a low SES family. Attendance at school is mostly good, however some students may be absent for long periods of time. A small percentage of the low SES background students are disinterested in learning and are reluctant to be at school.”
How can we motivate these students and how do we identify their talent?
Let’s look at three case studies

1. The ‘trust’ learner
2. The ‘nup’ mentality
3. The ‘I’m too dumb’ mentality
‘Trust’ Learners

- ‘Trust’ learners are often wary of people in authoritative positions.
- May come from a variety of backgrounds and often have suffered from trauma.
- Teachers may implement a Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) based on the principles of empowering, connecting and correcting (Parris; Dozier; Purvis; Whitney; Grisham; Cross, 2015).
Empowering

- Students feel safe and nurtured in their environment and physical needs are met (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998; Lickliter, 2008)
- Safe and predictable environment (Van den Boom, 1994, 1995)
- Develop healthy emotions and behaviours that are trust-based rather than fear-based (Knight; Smith; Cheng; Steing & Helsetter, 2004)
Connecting

- Promote relationship building
- Focus on four skills:
  1. The ability to seek care
  2. The ability to give care
  3. The ability to negotiate
  4. The ability to feel comfortable with self

(Cassidy, 2001)
Correcting

- Preventing or reducing disruptive behaviour before it happens
How this might look in a classroom

- Setting up a routine that is familiar for the students
- Using respect
- Calm when dealing with disruptive behaviour
- Kind and caring
- Teaching about expectations and consequences
- Being consistent
The ‘nup’ mentality

- Students are reluctant to participate and learn
- Students don’t see the value in learning
- Often come from low SES backgrounds where often parents/grandparents are unemployed
Reasons for saying no

- **Fear of Failure**: They don’t see the value in putting in the effort.
- **Lack of Relevance**: They don’t see the value in the content itself.
- **Lack of Trust**: They don’t see the value in their teacher.

(Jackson, 2011)
‘Fear of Failure’ Students

- Refuse to try
- Give up easily
- Refusal to hand up work, or incomplete
- Regularly seek reassurance
- The more you push, the harder they resist
- Seem to expect to fail
- Either very grade-conscious or seem not to care
- Avoid situations where they might look stupid
- Blame failure on things they cannot control
‘Lack of Relevance’ Students

- Turn in incomplete work
- Complain assignments are too easy and/or boring
- Frequently ask ‘will this be on the test?’
- Doodle, daydream, distract others
- Look for shortcuts
- Seem not to care about learning
- Fail to see connection between their work and success
- Focus on grade
- Rush through their work
‘Lack of Trust’ Students

- Students are oppositional, defiant or angry
- Do things to intentionally annoy you
- Take your comments about their performance personally
- Blame you for poor grades
- Refuse to follow class rules
- Do not access supports
How to motivate reluctant learners

- Link new learning to prior knowledge
- Teach students about the opportunities to learn that arise from failure
- Plan ahead
- Build in opportunities for students to practice their learning
- Provide feedback, teach students value of learning from feedback
- Allow students to demonstrate their learning in alternative ways
- Generate curiosity, missing information
The ‘I’m too dumb’ Mentality

- Students are disruptive, however will attempt to complete tasks when prompted
- Will frequently downgrade their own ability
- Often have low self-esteem
- May be experiencing bullying at school and/or at home
Can we change our mindset?

- **Fixed Mindset VS Growth Mindset**
- Students with a *Fixed Mindset* see intelligence as a fixed and unchangeable thing. They tend to be overwhelmed and give up easily.
- Students with a *Growth Mindset* see intelligence as a developing thing. They embrace challenge and persist despite setbacks.  
  (Dweck, 2007)
How to engage these learners

- High Energy
- Missing Information
- The Self-System
- Mild Pressure
- Mild controversy and competition

(Marzano, 2007)
Further Strategies/Resources

- Games (Boggle, Celebrity Heads, etc)
- Gallery Walks
- Similarities/Differences
- Think-Pair-Share
- Reciprocal Teaching
- Discussion groups (friendly controversy)
References


