

The Practice Project

Essential question: What makes someone good at what they do?

Individually or in twos or threes, students talk or write about their own experiences with getting good at something. Examples: basketball, running, cheer-dancing, cooking, hair styling, sewing, singing, acting, playing an instrument, breakdancing, stepping, drawing, slam poetry, speaking another language, building things, fixing things, etc.

Prompts for student reflection:

- Think of something hard that you are good at doing.
- How did you first learn to do it?
- What was hardest when you first started doing it?
- What made you keep doing it even though it was hard?
- What helped you get better at it?
- Did anyone else help you with it? How did they help?
- Describe one time that you knew you were getting better at it. How did you know?
- Once you started to get good at it, how did you feel about getting even better?
- Who do you trust to tell you how you're really doing? How do you know they'll tell you the truth?

Students then share their reflections with the larger group.

- What was similar about their experiences?
- What was different about their experiences?
- Do you think everybody has a longing to be really good at *something*? Why or why not?

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Now brainstorm areas in which adults out in the world get recognition because they are very good at something. Examples: medicine, law, television/radio/movies, police detectives, chefs, teachers, reporters, artists, car mechanics, . . .

- Is there a difference between adults getting really good at work like this and *your own* experiences getting really good at something?
- Are there similarities?
- What adult can you name in your community who is very good at something?

Interview questions for adults:

- How did you first learn to do what you do?
- What was hardest when you first started doing it?
- What made you keep doing it even though it was hard?
- What helped you get better at it?
- Did anyone else help you with it? How did they help?
- Describe one time that you knew you were getting better at it. How did you know?
- Once you started to get good at it, how did you feel about getting even better?
- Who do you trust to tell you how you're really doing? How do you know they'll tell you the truth?

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