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?
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?