

# THE #SUPERREADER 7 STRENGTHS MODEL FOR TEACHING READING



## A RESEARCH FOUNDATION

The following is a summary of research behind the strengths, as well as the strengths' relationship to and effect on reading and child development.



## 1. BELONGING

“There is strong evidence that having human connections and being successful at school are related. We have decades of research that suggests having at least one strong and stable relationship with a supportive adult is a key factor in helping children cope with high-stress situations.” (Harvard University’s Center on the Developing Child, 2015)

Bergin, C., & Bergin, D. (2009). Attachment in the classroom. *Educational Psychology Review*, 21, 141–170.

Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment (Vol 1)*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2015). *Supportive relationships and active skill-building strengthen the foundations of resilience: Working paper 13*. Retrieved from <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>

Evans, M., Kelley, J., Sikorac, J., & Treimand, D. (2010). Family scholarly culture and educational success: Books and schooling in 27 nations. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 28, 171–197.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum.

Heard, G. (2016). *Heart maps: Helping students create and craft authentic writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Miller, D. (2009). *The book whisperer: Awakening the inner reader in every child*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

## 2. CURIOSITY

“In Susan Engel’s classroom study, curiosity was measured by the number of questions asked in a two-hour period (Engel, 2015). While kindergartners asked 2 to 5 questions in this time frame, many fifth graders went a full day without showing any signs of inquisitiveness. The lack of questions in classrooms is a direct consequence of children’s disengagement from reading, writing, and a love of learning.”

Engel, S. (2015). *The hungry mind: The origins of curiosity in childhood*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gates, B. (2000). *Business @ the speed of thought: Succeeding in the digital economy*. New York, NY: Penguin.

*Harvard Business Review*. (August 27, 2014). Curiosity is as important as intelligence. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2014/08/curiosity-is-as-important-as-intelligence/>



## 3. FRIENDSHIP

“ Educational psychologist Robert Selman has devoted much of his career to understanding friendship and its importance to children’s social and emotional health and well-being. ... Selman believes that the essence of friendship development is perspective taking, or the ability of young people to take into consideration other people’s points of view.”

Cazden, C. (1988). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Diener, E., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). Very happy people. *Psychological Science*, 13, 80–83.

O’Grady, P. (October 26, 2012). Positive psychology in the classroom: Friendship: The key to happiness. [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/positive-psychology-in-the-classroom/201210/friendship-the-key-happiness>

Schaps, E. (March/April 2009). Creating caring school communities. *Leadership*, 8–11.

Selman, R. (2007). *The promotion of social awareness: Powerful lessons from the partnership of developmental theory and classroom practice*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Wells, G. (1989). Language in the classroom: Literacy and collaborative talk. *Language Education* 3(4), 251–273.

## 4. KINDNESS

“ Daniel Goleman stresses the importance of having leaders who can demonstrate cognitive and emotional empathy. He explains: ‘Because you understand other perspectives, you can put things in ways colleagues comprehend.... Cognitive empathy, along with reading another persons’ feelings accurately, makes for effective communication.’”

Currie, L. (October 17, 2014). Why teaching kindness in schools is essential to reduce bullying. [Blog post]. Retrieved from <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/teaching-kindness-essential-reduce-bullying-lisa-currie>

Goleman, D. (2011). *Leadership: The power of emotional intelligence*. Florence, MA: More Than Sound.

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2015). Supportive relationships and active skill-building strengthen the foundations of resilience: Working paper 13. Retrieved from <http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/supportive-relationships-and-active-skill-building-strengthen-the-foundations-of-resilience/>

Noddings, N. (2003). *Happiness and education*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.



## 5. CONFIDENCE

“ Social psychologists who study motivation tell us that what often separates motivated readers from unmotivated ones is that the latter group lacks the confidence, or the expectation of success in the reading enterprise.” (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002)

ACT (2014). The condition of college & career readiness 2013: Hispanic students. Retrieved from <http://www.act.org/newsroom/data/2013/states/hispanic.html>

Beers, K. (2003). *When kids can't read: What teachers can do*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2002). Motivational beliefs, values, and goals. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53, 109–132.

Gallup. (2014). Postsecondary education aspirations and barriers. Washington, DC: Gallup Inc.

## 6. COURAGE

“ According to Michael Agar (1994), being courageous rewards individuals from living a life of ‘being’ to a life of ‘becoming.’ Courage is critical for change and growth to occur.”

Agar, M. (1994). *Language shock: Understanding the culture of conversation*. New York, NY: Morrow.

Edmundson, M. (2015). *Self and soul: A defense of ideals*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Dyson, A. H. (1995). The courage to write: Child meaning making in a contested world. *Language Arts*, 72(5), 324–333.

Pelkey, L. (2013). In the LD Bubble. In M. Adams, W. Blumenfeld, C. Castaneda, H. Hackman, M. Peters, & X. Zuniga (Eds.) (3rd ed.) *Reading for Diversity and Social Justice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Rittner, C., & Myers, S. (Eds.) (1989). *The courage to care*. New York, NY: NYU Press.

## 7. HOPE

“ Shawn Ginwright has worked with students who have experienced tremendous suffering in their lives. The difference, he argues, between the kids who are able to confront and ultimately overcome obstacles and those who are unsuccessful, is hope.”

Ginwright, S. (2015). *Hope and healing in urban education: How urban activists and teachers are reclaiming matters of the heart*. New York, NY: Routledge.

**The 7 Strengths Model is taken from Pam Allyn and Ernest Morrell’s *Every Child a Super Reader* and is the foundation for the LitCamp Summer school curriculum.**

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