REVISED EDITION

RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGIES

Narrowing the Achievement Gap for Under-Resourced Students

USE WITH RTI

All strategies are research-based best practices

Ruby K. Payne, Ph.D., and Bethanie H. Tucker, Ed.D.

Ruby K. Payne and Bethanie H. Tucker
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Table of Contents

Strategy number	Strategy name	Page number	Effect size	Type of strategy: Academic	Type of strategy: Behavioral	Type of strategy: Academic and behavioral
1	Analyzing Student Resources to Determine Interventions	19	1.07 .54			●
2	Self-Assessment and Development of Resources	23	1.07 .54			●
3	Mental Models for Academic Content	26	.75 .64 .55	●		
4	Mental Models for Processes	34	1.28 .64 .55	●		
5	Building Relationships of Mutual Respect Among Students and Teachers	37	1.62 .72 .52			●
6	Relational Learning	41	.74 .55 .55			●
7	Structured Partners in Learning	45	.82 .55 .47			●
8	Peer Mediation	47	.63 .63		●	
9	Task Mediation	49	.87 .75 .53			●

Strategy number	Strategy name	Page number	Effect size	Type of strategy: Academic	Type of strategy: Behavioral	Type of strategy: Academic and behavioral
10	Teaching Cognitive (Input) Skills	51	1.28	●		
11	Input Skill: Planning (for Task Completion) Step Sheets	57	1.28	●		
12	Input Skill: Planning Backwards	60	1.28	●		
13	Input Skill: Academic-Task Preparations to Control Impulsivity	62	1.28	●		
14	Input Skill: Focusing	64	1.28	●		
15	Input Skill: Bringing Order Out of Chaos	67	1.28	●		
16	Input Skill: Sorting More Important from Less Important Information	70	1.28	●		
17	Input Skill: Planning and Labeling in Academic Tasks	76	1.28	●		
18	Input Skill: Nonfiction Reading Strategy	80	1.28	●		
19	Input Skill: Fiction Reading Organizer/Sorter	85	1.28	●		
20	Input Skill: Procedural Self-Talk	90	1.28	●		
21	Input Skill: Teaching Input Skills Using Games	92	1.28	●		
22	Scaffolding Output: Dealing with Blocking	97	.87	●		
23	Predicting/Planning Your Grade	98	1.33	●		
24	Directionality	101	.87	●		
25	Content Comprehension: Teaching the Purpose, Patterns, Structures, and Processes of Disciplines	104	1.28 .87 .75 .64 .63	●		
26	Problem-Solving Process: Instructions in Mathematics	110	1.28 .87 .75 .64	●		
27	Process Selection	113	.87	●		
28	Managing Cognitive Load: External Task Aids	115	.87	●		
29	Automaticity	117	1.28	●		
30	Activating Prior Knowledge	118	.63	●		
31	Compensating for Missing Prior Knowledge	122	.63	●		

Strategy number	Strategy name	Page number	Effect size	Type of strategy		
				Academic	Behavioral	Academic and behavioral
32	Minimizing Activation of Irrelevant Prior Knowledge	124	.75	●		
33	Using Worked Examples: Replacing Some Practice with Worked Examples for Students to Analyze	125	.57 .37	●		
34	Increased Time on Task	126	.62	●		
35	Teaching Another Student	128	.55			●
36	Structured Academic Controversy	130	.53			●
37	Physical Activity	131	.22	●		
38	Bowtie Feedback	133	.73	●		
39	Student Self-Assessment	141	1.33	●		
40	Formative Assessment	145	.68	●		
41	Question Making	147	.64	●		
42	Possible Selves	157	.44			●
43	Role Identity	159	.53 .52 .49			●
44	Future Self/Future Story	161	.54 .44			●
45	Anticipating and Accepting Challenges and Changes	165	1.16			●
46	Reframing	167	1.16		●	
47	Mediating to Change Behavior	169	1.16		●	
48	Story Book to Improve Behavior	171	.63		●	
49	Classroom Management/Procedures Checklist	173	.75		●	
50	Planning Behavior	178	.75		●	
51	If You Choose	180	.63		●	
52	Metaphor Story	181	.64		●	
53	Building a Reward System Based on Implementing Your Own Plan	183	.73		●	
54	Registers of Language	184	1.16	●		
55	Chronological Story Structure	187	.53	●		

Strategy number	Strategy name	Page number	Effect size	Type of strategy		
				Academic	Behavioral	Academic and behavioral
56	Formal Discourse	189	1.16	●		
57	Folder Activity (Mental Model for Part to Whole): Language Arts Example	191	1.28	●		
58	Writing Organizers	193	1.28	●		
59	Mental Model for Formal Written Expression	197	1.28	●		
60	Voices	199	.53	●		
61	Generative Vocabulary Instruction	202	.62	●		
62	Language: Vocabulary Development	206	.62	●		
63	Sketching Vocabulary	214	.62	●		
64	Sign Language for Comprehension	216	.60	●		
65	Teaching Students Their Lexile Measures	218	.60	●		
66	Tucker Signing Strategies for Reading	220	.52	●		
67	Teaching Adverbs and Prepositions	222	.62	●		
68	Teaching Words for Feelings	225	.62			●
69	Karpman Triangle	229	1.16		●	
70	Setting Appropriate Boundaries	231	.63		●	
71	Bracketing Distracting Thoughts	233	.63		●	
72	Self-Affirmations	235	.47			●
73	Gratitude Journals	237	.47		●	
74	Harsh Environments and Self-Expression: Language Skills	239	.47			●
75	Service Learning	241	.58			●
76	Six-Step Process	243	1.62	●		

Introduction

This book offers strategies that are effective for all students (kindergarten through college/university)—and for teachers to use particularly in order to narrow or eliminate the achievement gap for under-resourced students.

Since the founding of aha! Process in the mid-1990s, the company's focus has been to provide strategies that can be readily implemented and integrated into any curriculum or program that will raise student achievement. This was the case with the first edition of *Research-Based Strategies* (2009) and remains the primary emphasis of this updated version.

Based on multiple responses from practitioners, the basic features of this book remain the same. As before, readers will find a "menu" of strategies (see Table of Contents) that can be used to meet the needs of today's under-resourced learners. To better facilitate addressing students' needs, the strategies have been clustered according to academics and behavior.

If you are familiar with the first edition of *Research-Based Strategies,* you will note that we have retained most of the strategies that appeared in the original. We have done this because both our research and your feedback have indicated that they work. In this edition we also have added more than 20 new strategies.

The Impact of Effect-Size Research

A major addition to this edition of *Research-Based Strategies* is information about the *effect sizes* of 76 strategies. Effect-size research actually began a number of years ago as researchers sought to determine a more precise measure of the effectiveness of the various strategies that educators use, along with the many environmental influences that impact students' lives.

In 1984, for example, Herbert J. Walberg's publication of "Improving the Productivity of America's Schools" in *Educational Leadership* (Vol. 41, No. 8) highlighted the potential value of effect-size measurements of classroom events and posted effects of a number of strategies and approaches.

The best-known current analysis of effect sizes of strategies and influences in the field of education has been conducted by Dr. John Hattie, professor and director of the Melbourne Education Research Institute at the University of Melbourne, Australia, and honors professor at the University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Hattie initially analyzed the results of 800 research studies and ranked the effects of 138 influences in his groundbreaking book, *Visible Learning,* in 2009. In 2011 he ranked the effects of 150 influences, published in *Visible Learning for Teachers.* More recently Hattie analyzed nearly 1,200 studies, kindergarten through college, identified 195 influences, and measured their effects, which he published in *The Applicability of Visible Learning to Higher Education* (2015).

For this edition of *Research-Based Strategies* we quote the effect sizes reported in Hattie's most recent analysis in 2015. Although the title of this article prominently refers to higher education, the list of influences in the study is summative, including both higher education and K–12.

Before we look at the effect sizes of individual influences, it will be beneficial to define key vocabulary labels used in Hattie's reports.

Simply stated, *influences* are all the things—external and internal—that affect how students live, think, and learn. Influences include classroom events, teacher strategies and approaches, relationships, community personal characteristics, and environmental factors.

Not all influences, of course, are created equal; they vary in terms of the impact or effect they have on students' lives and academic performance. Measurements of these effects are reported as effect sizes. As Hattie stated in his inaugural lecture (1999) at Melbourne University, Australia, "We need estimates of magnitude to answer the question, 'Exactly how well does the strategy work?'" Or: How impactful is this influence on a student's life?

Hattie explains his effect-size scale as follows—in eight basic points (paraphrased):

1. A score of 0 (zero) means there is no effect on student achievement from an influence or from implementing a particular teaching innovation. A student exposed to strategies or influences with an effect size of 0, 24/7 for a year, would be no better or worse off than she was at the starting point—no progress, no regression.
2. An effect size of 0 also can mean that the influence does nothing to change everything else that is happening. For example, open versus traditional classrooms have an effect size of 0. The difference between the two simply doesn't matter.

3. A negative effect indicates that the innovation or influence has a *detrimental* effect on student achievement. A year of 24/7 exposure to influences with an effect size of less than 0 would result in actual regression of learning. Seven influences on Hattie's list (he calls them "The Disasters") that have a negative impact on student performance are:
    - Summer vacation: -.02
    - Welfare policies: -.12
    - Retention (repeating K–12): -.17
    - Television: -.18
    - Home corporal punishment: -.33
    - Mobility: -.34
    - Depression: -.42

    A closer look at these "disasters" reveals that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds typically fare worse than their more affluent peers when it comes to the likelihood of encountering these disastrous influences. More information on this dynamic can be found later in the Introduction.
4. A positive effect indicates that the innovation has as increased effect (greater than 0) on students' achievement. Keep in mind, however, that the range of influences greater than 0 is huge, and greater than 0 does not necessarily mean expected annual growth.
5. By averaging the effects across the meta-analyses, Hattie has determined the average effect of strategies and influences to be .40. Hattie reports this to be the benchmark figure and "standard" from which to judge effects.
6. Influences with an effect size higher than .40 have a greater-than-average effect on student growth.
7. 1.0 indicates an increase of one standard deviation above the norm. This means that by the end of the school year a typical student receiving this treatment would make progress equal to the .4 average of the expected one-year progress, *plus an additional one-year benefit derived from that treatment.* The magnitude of a strategy or influence with an effect size of 1, therefore, is huge—more than double the average effect.
8. The influence with the highest reported effect of 1.62 (more about its impact in Strategies 5 and 76) could affect student progress by as much as three years above and beyond the average effect.

To review: Strategies or influences with an effect size of 0 have no effect on student academic growth. Students subjected to influences and treatments with an effect size of less than 0 can actually regress. Those receiving treatment or influences with an effect size of .4 will likely make typical or average progress, and those subjected to influences and strategies with an effect size greater than .4 could possibly make as much as a year or more progress over and above students exposed to "average" (.4) strategies.

Hattie acknowledges that the studies in his analysis were statistically measured to determine an overall effect. Additional factors and moderators (such as age, gender, maturation, socioeconomic class, and teacher efficacy) were not further analyzed, as these did not constitute the overarching goal of the study.

Our observations and research findings about specific effects of socioeconomic class on each of the influences have been added in this edition of *Research-Based Strategies,* reflecting the work's goal of "narrowing the achievement gap for under-resourced students."

In the following chart is a listing of the major influences included in Hattie's analysis as reported in the journal article "The Applicability of Visible Learning to Higher Education" (2015).

Some of the items in the list of influences that Hattie studied are teaching strategies.

He did not attempt to analyze all known teaching strategies, as the magnitude of the resulting report would doubtless be overwhelming. He did analyze many strategies, however, and he includes the remainder in a category of influences labeled (logically) as "strategies."

In his article Hattie has determined the effect size of the category of strategies that teachers use but are not considered individually to be significant—.60. Obviously, some of the strategies in this category are more effective than others. The .60 ranking is an average.

Hattie's Ranking: 195 Influences and Effect Sizes Related to Student Achievement

	Hattie (2015) higher ed N = 195	Hattie (2011) analysis N = 150	Hattie (2009) analysis N = 138
Teacher estimates of achievement	1.62		
Collective teacher efficacy	1.57		
Self-reported grades	1.33	1.44	1.44
Piagetian programs	1.28	1.28	1.28
Conceptual-change programs	1.16		
Response to intervention (RTI)	1.07	1.07	
Teacher credibility	.90	.90	
Micro teaching	.88	.88	.88
Cognitive task analysis	.87		
Classroom discussion	.82	.82	
Interventions for learning disabled	.77	.77	.77
Interventions for disabled	.77		
Teacher clarity	.75	.75	.75
Reciprocal teaching	.74	.74	.74
Feedback	.73	.74	.73
Providing formative evaluation	.68	.90	.90
Acceleration	.68	.68	.88
Creativity programs	.65	.65	.65
Self-questioning	.64	.64	.64
Concept mapping	.64	.60	.57
Problem-solving teaching	.63	.61	.61
Classroom behavior	.63	.68	.80
Prior achievement/knowledge	.63	.65	.67
Vocabulary programs	.62	.67	.67
Time on task	.62	.38	.38
Not labeling students	.61	.61	.61
Spaced vs. mass practice	.60	.71	.71
Teaching strategies	.60	.62	.60
Direct instruction	.60	.59	.59
Repeated reading programs	.60	.67	.67
Study skills	.60	.63	.59
Pre-term birth weight	.59	.53	.54

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	Hattie (2015) higher ed N = 195	Hattie (2011) analysis N = 150	Hattie (2009) analysis N = 138
Spelling programs	.58		
Tactile-stimulation programs	.58	.58	.58
Service learning	.58		
CAI * with learning-needs students	.57		
Mastery learning	.57	.58	.58
Preschool with at-risk students	.56		
Visual-perception programs	.55	.55	.55
Peer tutoring	.55	.55	.55
CAI in other subjects	.55		
Cooperative vs. individualistic	.55	.59	.59
Interactive video methods	.54	.52	.52
Socioeconomic status	.54	.52	.57
Classroom cohesion	.53	.53	.53
Metacognitive strategies	.53	.69	.69
Comprehension programs	.53	.60	.58
Scaffolding	.53	.53	.53
Cooperative vs. competitive	.53	.54	.54
Peer influences	.53	.53	.53
Frequent/effects of testing	.52	.34	.34
Phonics instruction	.52	.54	.60
Classroom management	.52	.52	.52
Home environment	.52	.52	.57
Teacher/student relationships	.52	.72	.72
Play programs	.50	.50	.50
Second-/third-chance programs	.50	.50	.50
Parental involvement	.49	.49	.51
Mathematics	.49	.40	.45
Writing programs	.49	.44	.44
Questioning	.48	.48	.46
School effects	.48	.48	.48
Self-concept	.47	.47	.43
Integrated curricula programs	.47	.39	.39
Student rating of teaching	.47	.48	.44

* computer-assisted instruction

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Enter Marzano

U.S. educational researcher Robert J. Marzano, along with colleagues, also has analyzed classroom teaching strategies—and identified the following 10 strategies to be the most effective classroom interventions:

1. **Identifying similarities and differences**
   Breaking concepts into similar and dissimilar characteristics
2. **Note taking and summarizing**
   Identifying essential components and restating them in one's own words
3. **Reinforcing effort**
   Attributing success and shortcomings to effort rather than intelligence or luck
4. **Spaced repetition**
   Multiple exposure over time to content with a specific goal
5. **Graphical methods**
   Visuals, mental models, and other non-linguistic representations of concepts
6. **Cooperative learning**
   Structured group work that requires all students to be accountable both to self and other students
7. **Goals and feedback**
   Clarification of where students were, where they are now, where they need to be, and how they get there
8. **Hypothesis testing**
   Predicting outcomes, testing predictions, and interpreting outcomes
9. **Activating prior knowledge**
   Connecting new content to students' prior experiences
10. **Advance organizers**
    Outlines, mind maps, or other organization of new content

Source: Adapted and paraphrased from R. Marzano, D. Pickering, & J. Pollock, 2001.

'The Disasters'—Squared by Poverty

As listed earlier in the Introduction, Hattie refers to influences with an effect size of less than 0 as "The Disasters." Most of the negative influences are more frequently observed in under-resourced households than in more stable environments.

The parallel and added complications of poverty as related to the disastrous impact of the seven previously listed influences are highlighted in such studies as the following:

- "Summer Vacation Hurts Poor Children. While middle- and upper-class children flock to sports camps and travel on family vacations, America's poor children—mostly for lack of other options—often head to the couch or the streets" (Hammond, 2011).
- Welfare policies can have negative effects on children: "… [F]amilies receiving assistance from TANF must comply with requirements ranging from drug testing and attending job development classes to accepting minimum wage jobs that require single mothers to be away from their families during evenings and weekends" (Hurst, 2011).
- There is often an association between socioeconomic status and grade-retention rates (Baydar, Brooks-Gunn, & Furstenberg, 1993; Brooks-Gunn, Guo, & Furstenberg, 1993; Liaw & Brooks-Gunn, 1994; Smith, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 1997).
- Poverty and high rates of TV viewing are frequently linked ("Nielsen: Income," 2015).
- Home corporal punishment is more prevalent in households of poverty (Straus, 2001).
- Mobility is usually more harmful for children from poverty. In an article for the *Cornell Chronicle,* Susan Kelley reports findings that frequent moves are particularly harmful to children if they're poor. Children who move three or more times before they turn 5 have more behavioral problems than their peers—but only if they are poor (Morris, Huston, Duncan, Crosby, & Bos, 2001).
- Americans in poverty are more likely than those who are not to struggle with a wide array of chronic health problems, and depression disproportionately affects those in poverty (Brown, 2012; Hurst, 2011).

The Winners (Positive Influences on Student Achievement)

John Hattie says the influence that has the strongest positive effect on campuses, kindergarten through college, is teacher estimates of teacher performance (including self-analysis) with a 1.62 effect size. Hattie notes that teacher performance has a direct impact on student achievement.

Second through 10th, according to Hattie, are:

2. Collective teacher efficacy: 1.57
3. Self-reported grades: 1.33
4. Piagetian programs: 1.28
5. Conceptual-change programs: 1.16
6. Response to Intervention: 1.07

7. Teacher credibility: .90
8. Micro teaching: .88
9. Cognitive task analysis: .87
10. Classroom discussion: .82

As previously noted, Hattie analyzed many influences on student learning, one of which is classroom strategies. Marzano further analyzed classroom strategies. In other words, Hattie assessed the entire tree, while Marzano focused on one branch of the tree.

At the intersection of Hattie's and Marzano's insights is where students from poverty stand to benefit the most. And this is where we begin with *Research-Based Strategies.*

The Purpose of *Research-Based Strategies*

As noted at the outset of the Introduction, the purpose of this book is to narrow or eliminate the achievement gap for under-resourced students.

Does *Research-Based Strategies* have all the answers? No. But it does provide a number of tools to improve the process of increasing achievement, especially among students from poverty.

As with previous editions, this iteration of *Research-Based Strategies* features approaches that can be readily implemented and integrated into any curriculum or program that will raise student achievement. The listing of strategies found in the previous edition has been retained in this update, as teachers often reported this to be an effective organizational structure of materials for selecting responses to intervention (RTI).

These strategies are not a prescription of services. Rather, they are designed for you to implement after you have completed an analysis of your students' resources and needs. Whether you base this analysis on state assessment results, formative assessments, daily observation, or classwork matters little. The important thing is that you are monitoring students' progress and promptly making interventions as needed. Interventions made after a student has failed typically result in a student falling farther behind, often not being able to recover—and sometimes even dropping out of school as a result.

As before, we have incorporated the book *Understanding Learning: the How, the Why, the What.* This is provided to ensure that you have a basic understanding of learning theory that supports these interventions. In keeping with the premise that all learning is about the *what,* the *why,* and the *how,* the interventions are then formatted the same way—providing you the *what* (the strategy), the *why* (the need

for the particular strategy), and the *how* (explanation or process). The research base for each also is provided. *Understanding Learning* is a quick read regarding what students must do inside their head in order to learn.

Historically in the United States, we have taken resourced students and put them into a box called school, and they come out more resourced. When under-resourced students came into school, many times they dropped out or failed because the resources/supports were not there for them. Our task now is to have under-resourced students enter this box called school and also come out more resourced.

How to Use This Book

The book is organized this way:

1. The first section of charts is called Observed Behaviors and Strategy Numbers. When you observe a behavior, next to the behavior is a strategy number.
2. When you know the strategy number, go to that page, read the explanation and the directions—so that you can then use the strategies with students. All of these 76 strategies also can be used as a part of the RTI process.
3. In the Appendixes, in addition to *Understanding Learning,* are several research studies on learning, particularly with regard to under-resourced individuals. The first Appendix is a new article (not in previous editions of *Research-Based Strategies*) about calibration of student work, which means the assignments are leveled to the difficulty of the grade-level standard.

We wish you wonderful success. It is going to take everyone working together to eliminate the achievement gap, which must not be allowed to continue to exist simply because a student is under-resourced. We can do this.

–Ruby Payne and Bethanie Tucker, 2017

Strategy 1

Analyzing Student Resources to Determine Interventions

Academic and Behavioral Strategy

Researchers

Awbrey, S. M. (2005).
DeVol, P. E. (2013).
DeWitz, S. J., Woolsey, M. L., & Walsh, W. B. (2009).
Hattie, J. (2015).
Strayhorn, T. L. (2011).
Vickerstaff, S., Heriot, S., Wong, M., Lopes, A., & Dossetor, D. (2007).

Effect Size

Response to intervention (RTI): 1.07
Socioeconomic status: .54

Added Effect of Poverty

Much of the success of under-resourced students is dependent on resource analysis to determine available resources and response to intervention (RTI). Interventions sometimes are identified that require resources unavailable to students with few resources.

Explanation

Interventions work only if they are based on resources to which a student has access *or* if the resource base is provided.

For the purposes of this book, the following resources are being examined:

Financial
Having the money to purchase goods and services.

Emotional
Being able to choose and control emotional responses, particularly to negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior. This is an internal resource and shows itself through stamina, perseverance, and choices.

Mental
Having the mental abilities and acquired skills (reading, writing, computing) to deal effectively with daily life.

Spiritual
Believing in divine purpose and guidance; having hope or a future story.

Physical
Having physical health and mobility.

Support systems
Having friends, family, and backup resources available to access in times of need. These are external resources.

Relationships/mole models
Having frequent access to individuals(s) who are appropriate, who are nurturing, and who do not engage in self-destructive behavior.

Knowledge of hidden rules
Knowing the unspoken cues and habits of different groups.

Language (formal register)
Having the vocabulary, language ability, and negotiation skills necessary to succeed in school and/or work settings.

NOTE: Motivation, as well as Integrity and Trust, also are included in the list of resources in *Bridges Out of Poverty.*

Directions

Questions to Determine Interventions

Whenever a student is struggling academically or behaviorally, the key guiding questions for determining interventions are:

1. What resources are available to the student?
2. What resources can the student develop or acquire with support?

The following grid provides guidelines for answering these two questions.

Resource	Questions to Determine Best Intervention
Financial	▪ Can the student afford the field trip, or is a scholarship needed? ▪ Can the student afford supplies for the project/science fair/other activity? ▪ Is the student hungry? Must a linkage to food be found?
Emotional	▪ Can the student verbalize choices? ▪ Does the student have the language to mediate situations without resorting to fists?
Mental	▪ Can the student read at the appropriate grade level? ▪ Can the student identify the final product or task? ▪ Does the student know what will be evaluated and how?
Spiritual	▪ Do students believe they have some control over the situation, or do they say there is nothing they can do? ▪ Does the student have a future story and a plan to go with it?
Physical	▪ Is the student clean? ▪ Are the student's clothes clean? ▪ Can students physically take care of themselves?
Support systems	▪ Is the student the primary support system for the student's household? ▪ Is there enough stability in the home that the student can have a place to keep and do work?
Relationships/ role models	▪ Does the student have at least one adult who is nurturing and caring? ▪ Does the student have three or more adults who care about the student's life? ▪ Are all of the student's significant relationships with peers?

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Resource	Questions to Determine Best Intervention
Knowledge of hidden rules	▪ Does the student use the "appropriate" school response to situations? ▪ Does the student try to be invisible?
Formal register	▪ Does the student have access to formal register at home? ▪ Does the student get right to the point when telling a story—or does the student begin at the end of the story and tell the story in no particular order?

Resource Analysis Grid

This student grid is for resource-development activities.

Rate each student's access to each resource on a scale of 1 to 10. Then build from the strength of the resources available. Coaches, for example, develop their game plans based on the skill sets of their athletes, and music and band teachers choose music that matches the skill sets of the student musicians they teach.

Name	Financial resources	Emotional resources	Mental resources	Spiritual resources	Physical resources	Support systems	Relationships/ role models	Knowledge of hidden rules	Formal register