



**‘Able and Ambitious’**  
**Maximising potential**



# Aims for the evening:

- Update on 'Able and Ambitious' at Higham Lane School
- Provide you with support and guidance at home
- Observe examples of work from more-able students
- Enable you to speak with current students about their experiences as a more-able student
- Explore opportunities available beyond Higham Lane School



# Who are more-able students?

- Officially using KS2 data classed as a more able student
- This results in high GCSE grades as targets set by national data – grade 7s, 8s and 9s
- But how are students going to do this?



# The teenage years – things change!

- Build stronger relationships with peers – good/bad influence
- Looking for own identity: may not be the same person at 14 as when 11!
- Major distractions in life: social media, boyfriend/girlfriends, fallouts, own image/perceptions...
- Different interests, hobbies taking up time
- Subject content becomes more challenging, more content to cover – less fun? Not as 'easy'



# Primary/Secondary knowledge

- ‘Secondary knowledge needs to be explicitly taught and is usually consciously learned unlike Primary knowledge’
- We have evolved to assimilate biologically primary knowledge:
  - Recognising faces and speech, general problem solving, basic social relations: we learn these skills but there is little evidence they can be taught



# Primary/Secondary knowledge

- We have not evolved to learn to write, the instructional process to learn to write is vastly different to when learning to speak
- Whilst we learn to speak by immersing ourselves in a spoken society, we are unlikely to learn to write just by immersion in a writing society

Cognitive Load Theory  
(Swellers, Ayres, Kalyuga  
2011)



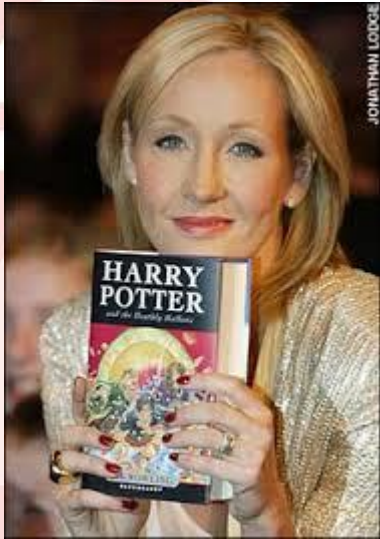
# What's the key ingredient?

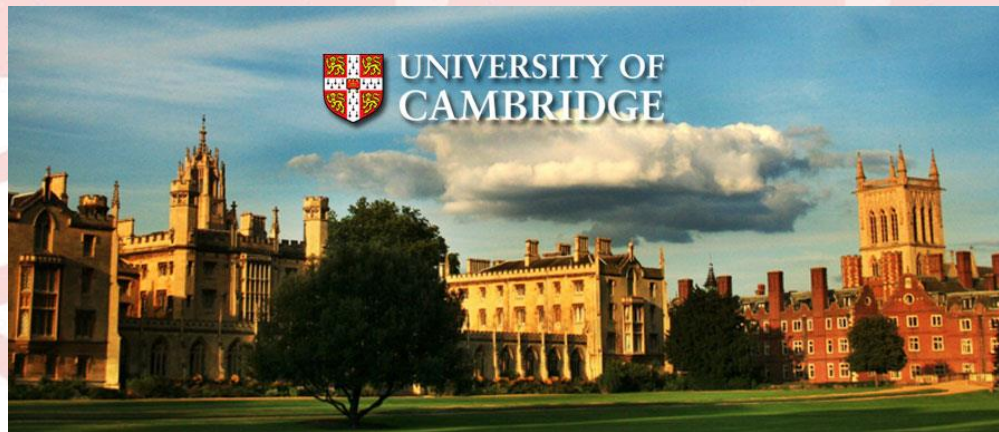
- Effort
- Attitude to Learning





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## Long term advantages

- Enhanced career choices/ fulfilment
- Higher starting salary
- 38% better salary by early 30s
- Chances of unemployment halved
- 40% of graduate jobs open to graduates of any discipline



## Long term gains

- It is also claimed that on average graduates live longer & are healthier, happier, less prone to depression, more likely to exercise & more likely to make a significant & satisfying contribution to the community around them.



# How are they going to get there?

- Further education?
- Students will need a whole range of strong qualifications all above grade 5
- The best courses at the best Universities often require grade 7s, particularly in Core subjects
- Skills-based approach?
- Students will still need to have that range of strong qualifications all above grade 5



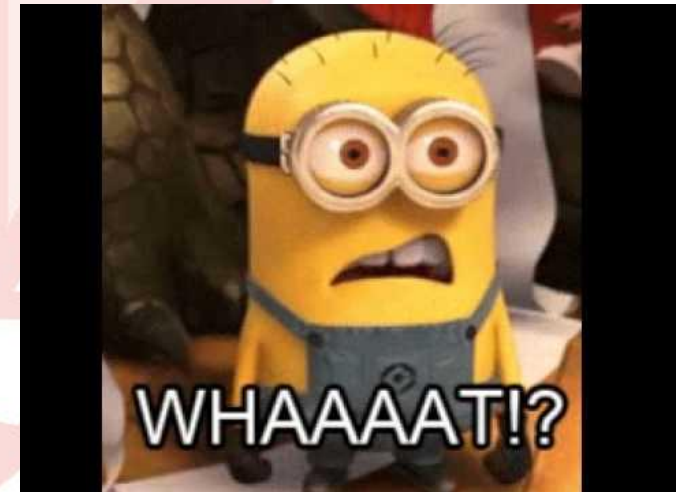
# Skills Deficit Audit

- Ability to work independently
- Ability to write an extended essay
- Ability to think critically
- Ability to solve problems
- Ability to manage time effectively
- Ability to contribute to team thinking
- Numeracy
- These skills were said to be ones that admissions tutors and FTSE employers look for and are finding less often



# Think ahead...

- **What are their aspirations? What dreams do they have?**
- **Open up conversations – journey, not a destination**
- **How are they going to achieve them?**



# The Iceberg Illusion

Success is an iceberg

SUCCESS!

WHAT PEOPLE SEE

Persistence



Failure



Sacrifice



Disappointment



WHAT PEOPLE DON'T SEE

Dedication



Hard work



Good habits



@sylviaaduckworth





## Practical action points:

- Ensure you meet your progress and attainment targets
- If students are falling behind, take action immediately!
- Look through exercise book/assessments
- Talk to subject teachers/subject leaders
- Look at follow on tasks to improve performance
- **REMEMBER:** Mistakes are a part of learning; it is what we learn from them which matter.



# Not saying...

You can't have a life

You can only eat & sleep on alternate nights

You can't enjoy yourself

.....on the contrary; work SMART!



## Six Tips for managing stress:

- **Be organised** – plan time wisely. Work out when time will be spent on home work, and when there will be the time to relax and enjoy activities. Spend a sufficient amount of time on home work with maximum effort followed by a break.
- **Set SMART Targets** - setting realistic goals which break down the steps to achieve bigger ambitions will help to reduce stress and protect your child's emotional and psychological wellbeing, which will make them more successful long term.
- **Eat right** – Treat the body like a well honed machine - eat fresh fruit and veg and have a proper breakfasts. Fuel the brain as well as the body - no one can think straight on an empty stomach.



## Six Tips for managing stress:

- **Sleep well** – Wind down before bed and don't revise under the duvet – bedtime should be a sanctuary, not a desk. Aim for around eight hours per night.
- **Exercise** – Nothing de-stresses the mind faster than physical activity, so build it into the weekly/daily plan. Being a sloth makes our mind sloppy too.
- **Mindful breathing** – Panic is often triggered by hyperventilating (quick, shallow breaths). So if you feel yourself losing it, sit back for a moment and control your breathing. Deep breath in and out through the nose, counting to five each way.



# Will your journey be easy?

- Simple answer is no!
- Learning takes time and practise
- Have you got what it takes NOT to give up?

**SUCCESS**

**SUCCESS**

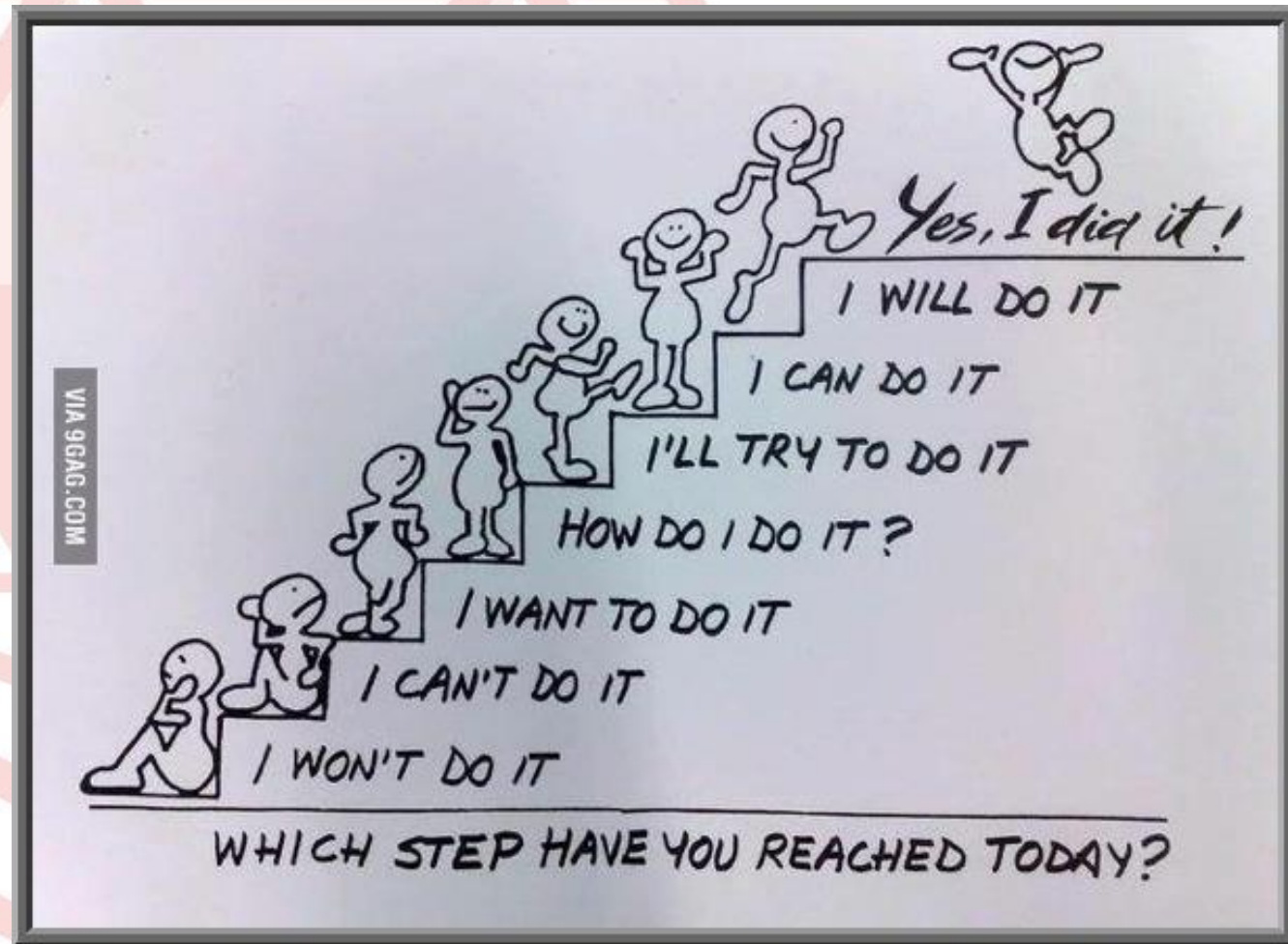
**WHAT PEOPLE THINK  
IT LOOKS LIKE**

**WHAT IT REALLY  
LOOKS LIKE**

NEVER GIVE UP ON  
A DREAM JUST  
BECAUSE OF THE  
TIME IT WILL TAKE  
TO ACCOMPLISH IT.  
THE TIME WILL  
PASS ANYWAY.

- EARL NIGHTINGALE

Which step will you reach  
today... this week... this  
term... this year?





# Be like Cliff!

- **Determination**
- **Effort**
- **Belief**
- 'Hard...pressure's there all the time'



Self:

A wareness

B elief

C onfidence

D etermination

E ffort

...enjoy and embrace it!

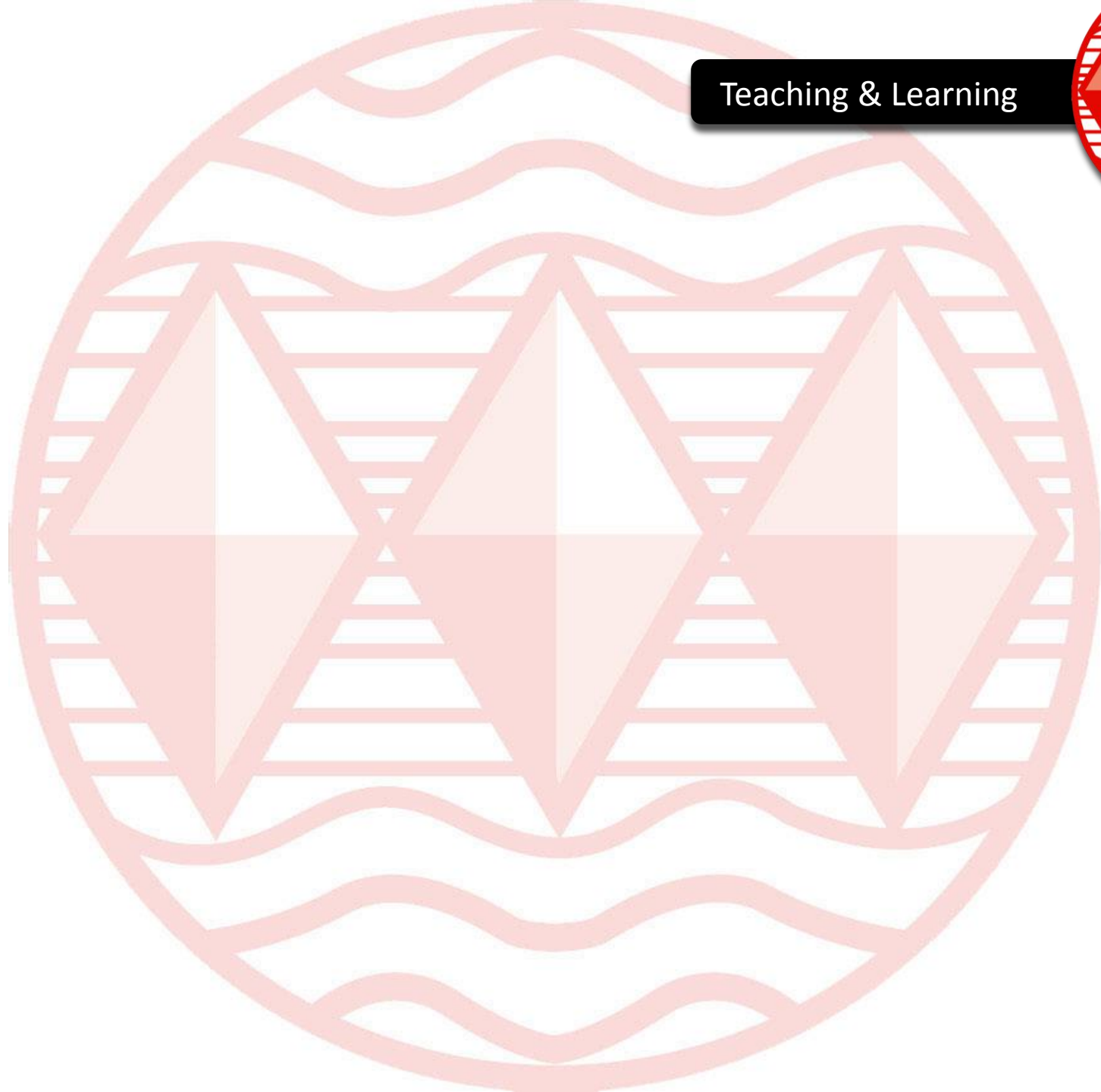




## Recommended reading

- 'The Element – How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything' by Ken Robinson
- 'Bounce' by Matthew Syed

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