

Productive v. Destructive Struggle in the Math Classroom

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#CelebrateTheStruggle

Students are called to

make sense of problems and
persevere in solving them

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persevere in solving them

Teachers are called to

support productive struggle in
the learning of mathematics

Shame

Shame

is a feeling of self-worth accompanied
by a need to hide an exposed weakness.

Kaufman, 1992; Nathanson, 1992

Compass of Shame

Compass of Shame



Compass of Shame

isolating oneself
running and hiding



Compass of Shame

isolating oneself
running and hiding



self put-down
masochism

Compass of Shame

isolating oneself
running and hiding



self put-down
masochism

denial
distraction

Compass of Shame

isolating oneself
running and hiding



blaming
lashing out

self put-down
masochism

denial
distraction

The Shame Paradox

The Shame Paradox

Math

Reading

The Shame Paradox

Math

Core Subject in School

Reading

Core Subject in School

The Shame Paradox

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Core Subject in School

Experience Struggle

Reading

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Done by Others

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Willing
to announce lack of ability

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Unwilling
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No Shame

Shame

The Shame Paradox

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Done by Others

Done by All

Willing
to announce lack of ability

Unwilling
to announce lack of ability

No Shame

Shame

Need to value Struggle

Need to reposition Struggle

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What now?

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Expand what it means to be a doer of mathematics

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Utilize authentic, developmentally appropriate tasks

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How?

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