

## Seminar: Grit Case study

### Case Study: Leah – The Determined Student?

#### Background:

Leah is a 15-year-old student in Year 11 at a secondary school in South Wales. She is preparing for her GCSEs and hopes to attend college to study science and eventually become a paramedic.

Leah is not naturally high-achieving and has struggled with maths and science since Year 9. However, she is known by her teachers for her strong work ethic. She stays after school for revision sessions, watches YouTube tutorials to supplement her learning, and uses flashcards and planners to stay on track. Despite her efforts, her mock results were mostly below average. She received a 3 in Maths and a 4 in Combined Science.

Recently, her teachers have noticed Leah is becoming demotivated. She asked one teacher, “What’s the point in trying if I’m not smart enough?” Her attendance at after-school sessions has dropped. Leah is also helping to care for her younger siblings due to family circumstances, which adds stress and reduces her time to study.

#### 1. Grit Analysis:

- In what ways does Leah demonstrate *grit*?
- Is her perseverance still visible despite recent setbacks?

#### 2. Support and Encouragement:

- How might the school support Leah to *maintain her grit* and sense of purpose?
- What could teachers do to help Leah reconnect with her long-term goals?

#### 3. Limitations of Grit:

- Is grit alone enough to help Leah succeed?
- What other factors (e.g., socio-economic pressures, mental health, support systems) may be influencing her ability to persist?

#### 4. Growth Mindset Link:

- How might promoting a *growth mindset* help Leah reframe her thinking?
- What kinds of feedback and classroom culture might help her believe improvement is still possible?

#### 5. Policy and Practice:

- Should schools explicitly teach grit? If so, how can they do it without ignoring structural issues?
- What are the risks of telling students in Leah’s position to simply “try harder”?