

PSP Preparation Essentials Book Report
Grit by Angela Duckworth Part 1&2
Trinity McCall-Peaks

Grit, written by Angela Duckworth, takes its reader on a journey to solving the mystery of what factors make a person successful. Through analyzing West Point soldiers, Chicago Public School students, the National Spelling Bee, and other moments in history, Duckworth finds that what separates those who succeed from those who don't isn't talent, it is Grit. According to Duckworth, "Grit isn't talent. Grit isn't luck. Grit isn't how intensely, for the moment, you want something. Grit is passion and perseverance for long-term goals."

This self-help book analyzes grit in three parts containing eleven chapters. The first part gives a background on Duckworth and her curiosity in figuring out what factors led to why some people succeed, while others don't. As she researched, she found that natural talent, although helpful, was not enough to make others succeed. For a while, she could only find what factors weren't responsible through similarities in different studies such as the West Point Soldiers. Although the soldiers were predetermined to be successful based on their test scores and other determinative factors, only a small percentage would make it to the end of the process. It was clear that talent was not enough to make these soldiers finish the process, but it wasn't clear on what was. Once she realizes that it is a person's willingness to persevere that differentiates those who will succeed, Duckworth coins the term Grit. Duckworth states that "if we overemphasize talent, we underemphasize everything else", leading her to create a formula for both skill and achievement. Now that there is a name and formula for the mystery factor determining success, and a formula for skill and achievement, Grit can now be measured. In the last chapters of part one, Duckworth now asks the reader "How Gritty Are You?". Creating goals, managing them, and achieving them are all discussed throughout the remaining chapters and how grit is developed and grows throughout the course of a person's life.

After establishing what Grit is and why it matters, in part two Duckworth focuses on finding passion and purpose because these are important things to consider when creating a goal to be gritty for. Before purpose and before passion, there is interest, and our interest begins to form at a young age. Our life experiences create these interests, and with practice can become a passion. Duckworth quotes Gladwell's 10,000 hours in reference to how much practice and dedication should be put into an interest. In the last chapter of part two, Duckworth explains growth mindset and how it can affect Grit. People's biggest fear is the fear of failure, which often leads to their demise. Failure shouldn't be looked at in a negative connotation, it should be looked at as a learning process. Gritty behavior in addition to a growth mindset will allow you to become successful because every opportunity is looked at as an opportunity to learn and grow and you won't turn away from experiencing new things and attempting to face new challenges.

My final thoughts on Grit by Angela Duckworth are that it is a motivating book that educates readers on the mystery factor behind what separates the successful from the talented. As a middle and high school student, I remember taking Grit tests often, but not understanding the concept of what Grit is. I enjoyed that this book explained the problem, the research that led to the conclusion, what the conclusion was and what it means for others, and how to apply this conclusion to your own life and goals to attain success. Ultimately, this was a great read, and I would recommend it to anyone looking to improve their work ethic.