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Conferring for Agency
How to Reveal Productive Struggle to Students

If you see a student stall during independent practice ***then*** begin the conference

Teacher's Role: WATCH (look, listen) (identifying the what)	Student's Role: ENGAGE (showing and telling) (honoring the how)	Next Steps SHARED INTENTIONS (defining the why)
<i>Ask, "What have you tried so far?"</i>		
<i>Ask, "How is it working? Would you show me?"</i>		

If this is an issue of strategy, and there is evidence of productive struggle, ***then try***

Teacher's Role: WATCH (look, listen) (identifying the what)	Student's Role: ENGAGE (showing & telling) (honoring the how)	Next Steps SHARED INTENTIONS (defining the why)
<i>Ask</i> , "What else can you try?"		
<i>Encourage, say</i> , "When you figure this out, it is going to feel so much more amazing than if I told you. Just wait and see!"		
When the student is successful, celebrate it and <i>say</i> , "You did it!" then say, "You, (name the thing) yourself, how do you feel?"		

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If the student seems exhausted or frustrated this is unproductive struggle <i>then try</i>		
Teachers: WATCH (look, listen) (<i>identifying the what</i>)	Students: ENGAGE (showing & telling) (honoring the how)	Next Steps SHARED INTENTIONS (defining the why)
Ask: “Do you need a break?”		
Confirm, say, “Yes, I agree with you. You are really working hard. You did all these things.” Share your observations of all that the child did. Ask: “How does working hard make you feel?”		
Ask, “When will you try again? What would you like to try next time?”		
Encourage, say, “When you figure this out, it is going to feel so much more amazing than if I told you. Just wait and see!”		