

Study: Kids Who Learn About Scientists' Struggles Do Better In Science

We're all familiar with Thomas Edison's famous quote, "Genius is one percent inspiration, ninety-nine percent perspiration." But, seeing real-life examples of this principle in action might actually help motivate kids to work harder in school.

A new [study](#) in the *Journal of Education Psychology* suggests that students who learn about famous scientists' struggles do better in their science classes than students who learn only about the scientists' accomplishments. According to [PBS](#):

"The researchers studied a group of 400 freshmen and sophomores from the Bronx and Harlem. Some of the students read about scientists' accomplishments, as they might read in a traditional textbook—while two other groups of students read about celebrated scientists' personal struggles and professional hurdles, respectively..."

'For low-performing students, the exposure to struggling stories led to significantly better science-class performance than low-performing students who read achievement stories.'"

The study also found that students who read only about scientists' accomplishments were more likely to chalk their success up to a "natural talent for science."

Is there something particularly human about deriving motivation from knowing we are all struggling down in the dirt together?