Hard Work, Talent or Drive?
How children reason about the causes of success.
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Abstract/Intro
*What do children think is the key to success? Being skilled, practicing a lot or just really wanting to do well?*

*In adults different theories of intelligence give rise to different explanations for success and failure. Adults who think intelligence is fixed, attribute failure to lack of intelligence (i.e. “She failed the test because she is dumb”) Whereas adults who think intelligence is malleable tend to attribute failure to behavior (i.e. “She failed the test because she didn’t study”) (e.g. Dweck, 2000)*

*These are different causal theories. Some people think a person's behavior causes them to succeed, others think a person's traits/skills cause them to succeed.*

*The present study asked how children treat three possible explanations for success: (1) talent, (2) practice and (3) a desire to do well.*

Discussion
Both younger and older children thought that students who said they had a good memory would do better. However, only the 5-7 year olds thought that practice and wanting to do well would make a difference. This suggests that the two age groups have different implicit theories about success. Younger children seem to think that having a good memory is the key, while older children took all three factors into account.