“The 10,000-Hours Rule” by Malcolm Gladwell

Language Arts 7—Kaye

People blessed with innate, natural ability have an advantage. However, only those who are dedicated and disciplined to craft and refine their skillset advance to a level of expertise. According to Malcolm Gladwell’s “10,000-Hour Rule”, interest and talent alone isn’t enough to achieve mastery or expert status. Whatever your passion--designing media, playing a sport, or performing on a stage, for example—Gladwell’s theory is both humbling and sobering: only those that invest 10,000 focused hours on practicing their craft reach the summit of that proverbial mountain.

Besides opportunity and exposure, Gladwell theorizes another critical factor that can impact one’s ability to attain expert status: “It’s all but impossible to reach [10,000 hours] all by yourself by the time you’re a young adult. You have to have parents who encourage and support you. You can’t be poor, because if you have to hold down a part-time job on the side to help make ends meet, there won’t be enough time left in the day to practice enough.”

This gets me thinking about kids already at-risk: those must susceptible to struggles related to home environment or financial matters. What does this mean for teens and families facing economic hardships? Is this another sobering example of the rich get richer—or better, in this case—and the poor get, well you know: are they limited to how far they can advance their skillset? Money affords many advantages in our society—opportunities being one. According to Gladwell’s theory, it also impacts the likelihood of kids and teens advancing to expert status—before the burden of life’s additional responsibilities take their toll.

DIY (do it yourself):

1. Provide an overview/summary/gist

--focus on key issue/idea

--introduce Malcolm Gladwell

--introduce title of work you’re reviewing/summarizing/citing

1. Provide a quote from primary source document to support

--quote is properly identified (source ID tag/label & their title/career)

--quote is properly punctuated

--smooth transition between your summary to the quote

--quote is relevant to the point you make/your summary

--person you’re quoting is relevant to topic & adds credibility

1. Explore the topic from your perspective, focusing on a key issue

OR

Explore the topic, making a personal connection

OR

Explore how the topic applies to others (has universal theme)