

# The Strengths

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# Champion

Billy Ryan High School

## OUR COUNSELORS LOVE STRENGTHS By Stephanie Valle

A million things could be going right, but we find the *one* thing going wrong and dwell on it. Sound familiar? As adults, many of us are guilty of this. It takes time and intentionality to find the positives. Finding weaknesses comes with such ease. Imagine our students doing the same thing, when developmentally they are at a stage where they are finding their self- image and seeking peer approval is paramount. Positive thinking creates a healthy mindset that is vital to our students' wellbeing.

This year, the Counseling Team is more intentional about learning and incorporating strengths in our work with students. As a department, we discuss our individual strengths and we explore how each person's naturally given strengths can be used to benefit the group. Becoming more familiar with our own strengths will inevitably increase our strengths-based interactions with our students.

We have students that come to the Counselor's Office to talk about a range of issues. Usually the student presents their concern as a *negative* and point out their *weaknesses*, and need support on how to move forward. As counselors, we naturally focus on the strengths of a situation. We have a list of our students' strengths, so it has been helpful to have something tangible and say "Look, these are your actual strengths. Did you know you are naturally talented at (fill in the blank)?" Our students' ears perk up and carry themselves a little taller, knowing they have something great to offer to their situation! Although students come to discuss academic concerns, it is not uncommon for our conversations to include personal issues. "It's important to help students understand all aspects of their strengths and how they may be perceived by others. This can help them be self-aware when it comes to personal interactions," Ms. Biggers said about strengths.

Mrs. Morrison expressed, "When we know our students' strengths, we can help them capitalize on them to persevere in times of struggle as well as using strengths when helping students plan for their future." This is precisely the point!

As Counselors, we get to capitalize on the strengths of our students and they get to leave feeling empowered. It is very empowering for students to recognize that they *already* had the tools to overcome their circumstances, they just needed some guidance opening the toolbox and unpacking the meaning of their strengths.

### AZALEA YUOH IS...INPUT

Azalea Yuoh teaches English I here at Ryan. Azalea is a graduate of the University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff with. Her top five strengths are Input, Communication, Analytical, Achiever, and Significance. This puts her strengths in the Strategic Thinking Domain. When asked which strength she loves about herself, she said, "Love that I communicate very well." She also answered that her Analytical strength is the one that drives her crazy. She added, "I sometimes try to understand things too much in detail; instead of, just rolling with the punches." She envies the Learner strength and feels like it should be in her top five because she sees herself as a learner first, above everything else.



UNIVERSITY  
of ARKANSAS  
AT PINE BLUFF  
1873



Strategic Thinking

When you begin to understand people's talents from a strengths-based perspective, you start to grasp what motivates them and what they need from their experiences.

# STRENGTHS BOOKS FOR THE BREAK...

BY...REINA A. JOHNSON

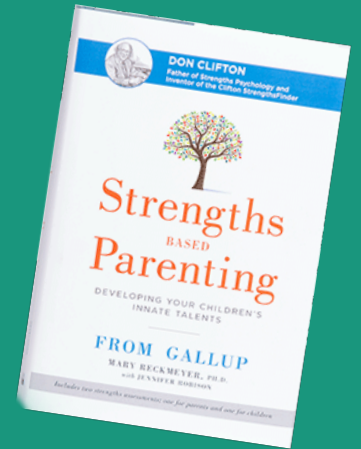
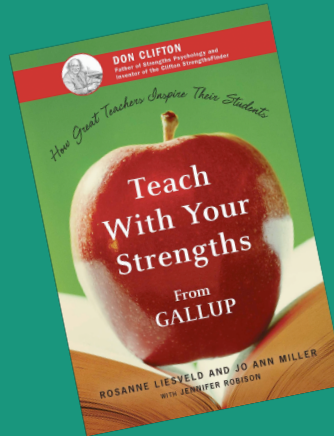
This month's domain spotlight...

## Strategic Thinking

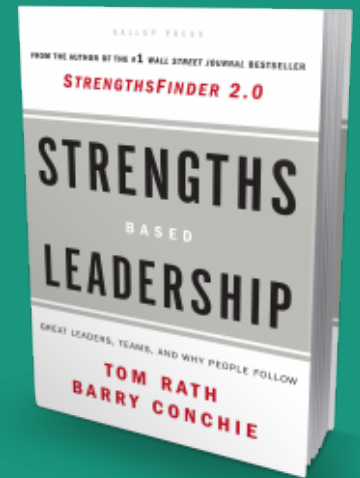
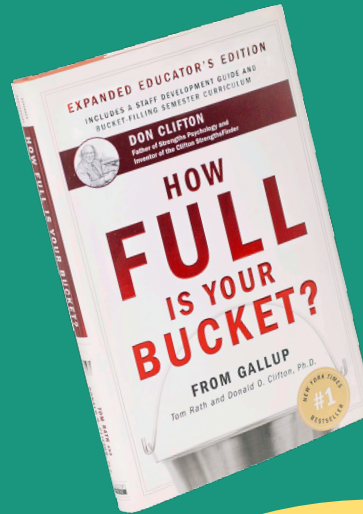


## NANCY KIDDER IS... INPUT

Nancy Kidder has been teaching for 5 years. This is her 4th year at Ryan! Nancy currently teaches Newcomers English Language Development, ESL Reading Improvement, and English IV. She is also our campus ELL Academic Interventionist and sponsors Key Club. She is a three-time graduate of the University of North Texas, with degrees in English-Technical Writing, Political Science, Hospitality Management, and Secondary English Education. Mrs. Kidder's top five strengths are Input, Learner, Responsibility, Intellection, and Connectedness. These strengths fall into the Strategic Thinking domain. When asked which of her strengths she loves, Mrs. Kidder said, "I love all five! They are perfect descriptions of myself." She stated that WOO (winning others over) is the strength that she finds most difficult and not one that she wishes to have in her top 5.



books are linked (roll over)



## STRENGTHS DOOR DECORATING CONTEST..

