

# Making Literacy Cool

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# How can we design “moments” that enhance each student’s experience?

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Lessons we can learn from the book, *The Power of Moments*, by Chip & Dan Heath.

- Chip Heath – professor at the Stanford Graduate School of Business
- Dan Heath – Senior Fellow at Duke University’s CASE Center
- Other books they have written together
  - *Made to Stick*
  - *Switch*
  - *Decisive*

High School Students overwhelmingly use one word to describe their school experience...

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**Boring**

How would your students describe your class?

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**Boring?**

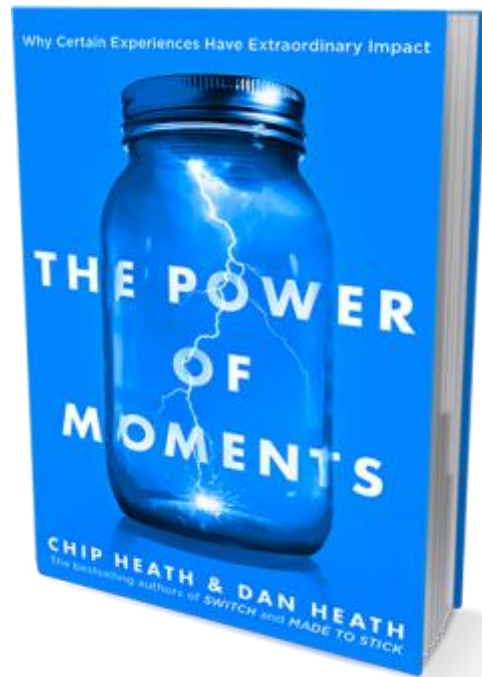
**Exciting?**

**How excited are they to come back?**

**Attendance Problems? Retention a concern?**

# Can we design moments that enhance their experience?

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**The Heath brothers believe so and tell us how. They believe it is possible to design moments that matter.**

# We are in competition

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Our students face demands on their time that younger students don't have.

- Family obligations
- Job Responsibilities
- Problems due to lack of resources:
  - Evictions
  - Convictions
  - Restrictions
  - Everyday stress

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They are often addressing so many problems they can't look far enough ahead to see the value of education and that it is the way out.

And if you get them in your program it's so hard to keep them. If they have free time they are more likely to escape to video games, hanging out with friends, etc. They are comfortable with what they know and afraid of change.

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I don't pretend to  
have the answer

BUT I DO KNOW THE QUESTION IS HOW  

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DO WE MAKE IT SOMETHING THEY SEE  
VALUE IN AND WANT TO DO?

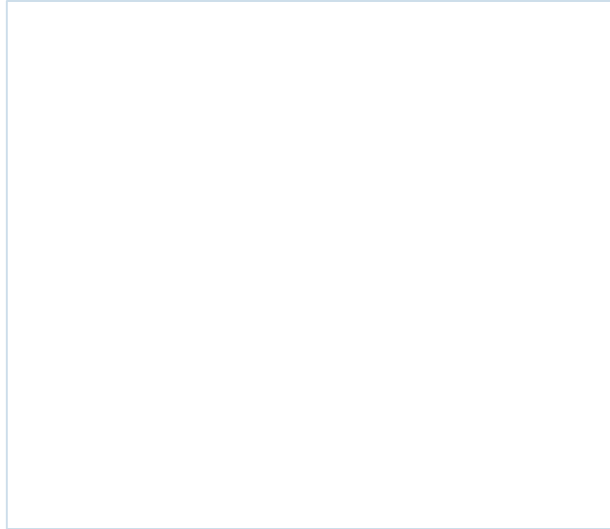
When I read this book last year, I realized there is a way but it takes creativity and work. The good news is that it doesn't have to be fun, fun fun!

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But there need to be moments that make it special and we can design them into our activities.

# How do we do that?

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We all work to improve the experience of the people we care about: the patients we treat, the customers we serve, the students we teach, and the kids we raise. We want to create memories that matter.

Great experiences hinge on peak moments. We'll call them "defining moments": short experiences that are both meaningful and memorable.

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## WE CAN BE THE AUTHORS OF DEFINING MOMENTS BY BUILDING THEM FROM ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING FOUR ELEMENTS:

### ELEVATION

Moments of elevation are experiences that rise above the routine. They make us feel engaged, joyful, surprised, motivated. To create them, we can (1) boost the sensory appeal (*Popsicle Hotline*); (2) raise the stakes (*The Trial of Human Nature*); and/or (3) break the script (*Joshie the Giraffe*). Research suggests that organizations dramatically under-invest in building peaks, choosing instead to fill potholes.

### PRIDE

Moments of pride commemorate people's achievements. We can use three strategies to deliver pride: (1) Recognize others. A small investment of effort yields a huge reward for the recipient (middle school singer Kira Sloop); (2) Multiply meaningful milestones—reframe a long journey so that it features multiple "finish lines." (*Couch to 5K program*); and (3) Practice courage by "preloading" our responses in advance, so we're ready when the right moment comes. (*Nashville counter sit-ins*)

### INSIGHT

Moments of insight deliver realizations and transformations. To produce moments of insight for others, we can cause them to "trip over the truth" (*the shocking CLTS story*) by revealing (1) a clear insight; (2) compressed in time; and (3) discovered by the audience. To produce moments of self-insight, we must stretch, placing ourselves in situations that involve the risk of failure (*Lea Chadwell's Bakery*).

### CONNECTION

Moments of connection bond us together. Groups unite when they struggle together toward a meaningful goal; they often begin their work with a "synchronized moment" (*Sharp HealthCare*). In individual relationships, it's responsiveness that deepens our ties. A responsive interaction can bring people together very quickly (*Stanton's teacher/parent meetings*; *Art Aron's 36 questions*).

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# Some Educational Examples in the book.

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YES Prep – Senior Signing Day

Hilsdale High School – Trial of Human Nature

Stanton Elementary School – Home Visit

# Yes Prep –Houston, Tx.

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Teachers were inspired by watching national signing day for high school football players to declare which college or university they will play for.

First year, 17 seniors / crowd of 450 including all students from 6<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grades.

Sixth year -126 Seniors – moved to basketball arena at Rice Univ. for 5,000

# Hillsdate High – San Mateo, Ca

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English class reading Lord of the Flies by William Golding. Social Studies class was studying WWII.

Trial of William Golding for misrepresenting human nature in the trial of the boys.

Classmates will conduct the trial, playing roles of witness, attorneys, judges, etc. Jury is administrators

Created in 1989 and done every year since.

# Stanton Elementary School – Washington D.C.

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1<sup>st</sup> year, new staff, new paint – still 321 suspensions

2<sup>nd</sup> year – home visits over the summer by teachers

- No contracts, actually no papers allowed at all, just questions
- Tell me about your child's experience in school, tell me your's
- Tell me your hopes and dreams for your child
- What do you want your child to be someday?
- What do I need to do to help your child learn more effectively?
- On parent's night attendance went from 25 parents year one to over 200 parents in year two.

# Insight

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**Allow them to find out insights about themselves**

**Stretch to produce moments of insight.**

**The promise of stretching is not success, it's learning**

**Expecting our learners to stretch requires us to overcome our natural instinct to protect them from risk.**



# Elevation

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**Sensory Appeal**

**Exceed expectations**

**Raise the stakes**

# Pride

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**Multiply milestones**

**Recognize others**

**Before / After examples**

# Connection

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**Groups bond when they struggle together**

**Connect to meaning**

**Individual relationships**

**1. Sign Up**



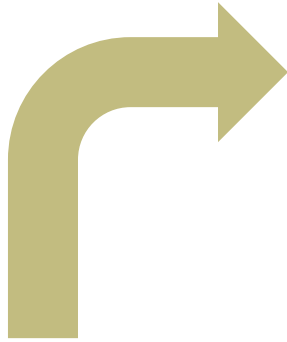
**2. Interview**



**3. Assessment**



**4. Match**



**5. Whatever**



What are some of the things we could do at each interaction to add elevation, insight, pride, or connection?

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- 1. Sign up**
- 2. Interview**
- 3. Assessment**
- 4. Match**
- 5. Following activities**

# Sign Up

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**No forms**

**Free T-Shirt**

**Follow up welcome call**

## 2. Interview

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**Introductions**

**Tour**

**Their goal**

**Explain the process**

# Assessment

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**Make them comfortable**

**Explain the value**

**Immediate feedback**

**Meet with Director**

**Policies/Expectations**



# Match

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**Celebrate a new match**  
**Staff / Tutor / Student for half of session**  
**Tutor / Student last half of session**

# Celebrate Active Matches

Milestones  
Personal Achievements



# Invest in a few moments of Magic

Beware of the soul sucking force of reasonableness.