**Ashley Matyn**, West Contra Costa Unified School District
“Engaging Struggling English-Learners in Creating Their Identity”

Having an identity and vision motivates us when the going gets tough. This presentation demonstrates a common core aligned unit on how to give struggling long-term middle school English learners the opportunity to identify what characteristics determine success, create their own identity, and present their findings in a way that gives them a sense of control and best represents them. After investigating identities of leaders and brands, students develop an identity of their own as they begin to shape their short and long term goals, both in and out of school, in order to understand the value of success now and in the future. Students complete a webquest, analyze current articles from periodicals, and listen to guest lecturers about companies and people who have effectively created a specific brand for themselves. Citing the guest speakers, analyses, and webquests, students qualitatively describe the characteristics that have made people and brands successful. At the end, students choose from three project options where they share their current identity, what they want to represent, and the actions they believe will help them be successful.