

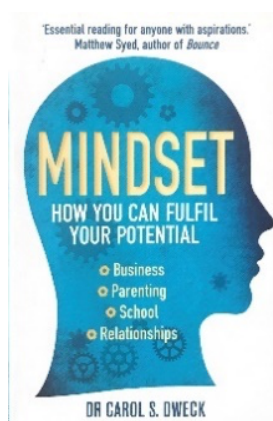


Growth Mindset



What is Growth Mindset Work?

Growth mindset work refers to teaching children that their abilities (especially in learning, problem-solving and emotional resilience) can grow and improve with effort, practice and support. It is based on the research of Dr Carol Dweck, Psychologist, who found that children who believe their intelligence and skills can develop over time are more motivated, more resilient and more successful in school.



Fixed verses Growth Mindset

Mindset Type	Beliefs	Behaviours/Feelings
Fixed Mindset	Children believe abilities and intelligence are static and cannot be changed significantly.	Children give up easily and fears mistakes. Children feel their value and intelligence is based on correct responses and test scores.



	<p><i>Examples include:</i></p> <p>Challenge "I'm just not good at maths, so there's no point in trying."</p> <p>Failure "I failed the test, which proves I'm not smart."</p> <p>Effort "If I have to try hard, it means I'm not naturally good at it."</p> <p>Feedback "This criticism is unfair—it just shows I'm not cut out for this."</p> <p>Success of Others "They're lucky or naturally talented. I could never do that."</p>	<p>Children are more likely to compare themselves to others and feel that others are better or more intelligent than them.</p>
Growth Mindset	<p>Children believe that abilities and intelligence can be developed through effort, learning and persistence.</p> <p><i>Examples include:</i></p> <p>Challenge "This maths problem is tough, but if I keep practicing, I'll get better."</p> <p>Failure "I didn't do well on the test, but I can learn from</p>	<p>Children keep trying and see mistakes as learning.</p> <p>Children see learning as a lifelong process.</p> <p>Children are less likely to compare themselves to others through negative comparisons.</p> <p>Children feel happier to celebrate other children's skills without it impacting their self-beliefs in their own capabilities.</p>



	<p>my mistakes and improve."</p> <p>Effort</p> <p>"Hard work and trying different strategies will help me succeed." "I can get better with practice."</p> <p>Feedback</p> <p>"This feedback is useful; it shows me what I can work on."</p> <p>Success of Others</p> <p>"I'm inspired by their success. What can I learn from them?"</p>	<p>Children see learning as a journey rather than a result or destination.</p>
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Why Growth Mindset Matters in School?

Having a Growth Mindset:

- Encourages perseverance and positive attitudes toward learning.
- Helps children bounce back from setbacks and challenges.
- Builds confidence and self-awareness.
- Reduces the experience of stress or worry that can resonate when learning new concepts.
- Supports inclusive classrooms where effort and the learning process is celebrated.

What Growth Mindset Work Looks Like in Practice

Teachers:

- Praise effort, not just outcomes, "You worked really hard on that!".



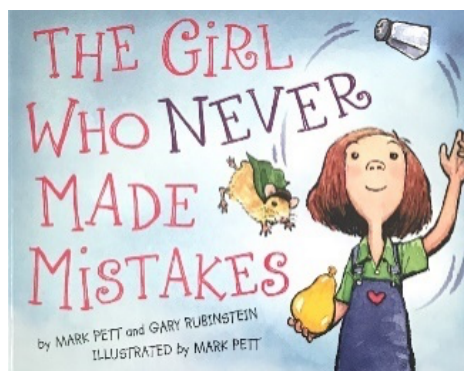
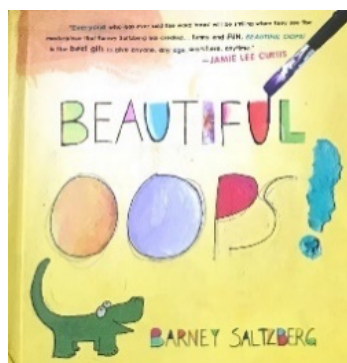
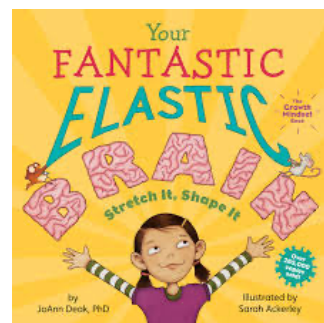
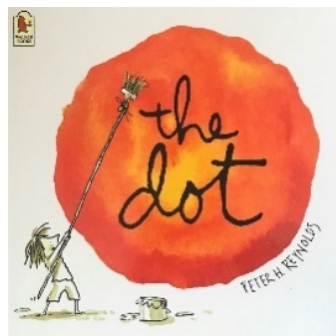
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- Model learning from mistakes, "Share your own challenges and how you overcame them".
- Use growth language, "You haven't mastered it *yet*".
- Teach children about the brain and how learning strengthens neural pathways.
- Celebrate progress and use visual trackers, reflection journals or class shout-outs.

Suggested Activities

- "My Learning Journey" posters showing progress over time.
- "Mistake of the Week" discussions to normalise learning through error.
- Growth mindset stories (for example, *The Dot*, *Your Fantastic Elastic Brain*, *Beautiful Oops* and *The Girl who Never Made a Mistake*).





- Role-play scenarios where persistence leads to success.

A Whole Class Growth Mindset Approach

A whole class approach to growth mindset can help build confidence and resilience to take learning risks. This can be implemented through PSHE lessons and adult language applied in the classroom.

A whole class lesson may be needed to directly teach the class about mindset and explore feelings associated with learning, getting things wrong and problem solving.

Key classroom expressions and feedback that may be supportive include reframing learning challenges to celebrating *"the uncomfortable feeling of learning – because you are learning something new"* and asking the children key questions, such as:

- "What have you found difficult today – have you learnt anything new?"
- "Did you make any mistakes and, if so, how did you problem solve them?"
- "What was your learning challenge?" "Did it challenge you?"
- "Don't tell me how many you have got right, tell me what you found easy, difficult and what your next steps of learning are?"
- "Don't ask me if I like it (teacher), explain to me what you have (written/drawn), tell me what you like and how you could make it even better."
- "If you get everything correct, then have you learnt anything new?"
- "Have a go." "Feel safe to be wrong."
- "That is not the right answer." "This is brilliant 😊." "Listen closely and let's support X to learn something new."