



Parent's Guide to 'Growth Mindset'



"The hallmark of successful individuals is that they love learning, they seek challenges, they value effort, and they persist in the face of obstacles." Carol Dweck.

GROWTH MINDSET: A Guide for Parents

Hopefully you have heard your child talking about 'Growth Mindset' in School and if you have had the opportunity to be in and around the school you will have seen some of the displays to encourage the children to develop a 'Growth mindset', but what does this really mean?

Research by American psychologist Professor Carol Dweck, of Stanford University, has shown that how we view ourselves as learners has a huge impact on what we are able to achieve. Therefore, the beliefs children have about intelligence, effort, and struggle impact the choices they make about their learning. Dweck suggests that people broadly fall into one of two categories: those with a fixed mindset and those with a growth mindset.

FIXED MINDSET Aim to avoid making any mistakes and immediate success	GROWTH MINDSET Understands that intelligence can be developed
Those with a Fixed Mindset: • Avoid challenges so they do not fail • View effort as a sign of failure • Will give up easily when a task becomes hard • Will only focus on grades given, not any useful feedback which is given to help improve the quality of work produced • Believe intelligence is fixed e.g. "I'm not good at Maths", "I can't spell" • Think "Why bother – I can't do it!"	Those with a Growth Mindset: • View challenges as way of stretching their learning and growing their brain • Understand that mistakes can lead to learning and will persist when things get difficult • View effort as the path to success and mastery • Will learn from feedback – "How can I improve?" • Is able to persevere - "I struggle at maths but will improve!" • Develops a positive attitude "I can't do it yet!"

Research in neuroscience shows that brains can grow and that learning changes our brains. This is called neuroplasticity which means that intelligence is not fixed, but can be developed. Beyond improved attainment, research also suggests that having a growth mindset has other advantages too, including coping better with change/transition, higher self-regulation, resilience and pro-social behaviours. There is also evidence suggesting mental health benefits – those with a growth mindset have been found to be less aggressive, with higher self-esteem and fewer symptoms associated with depression and anxiety.

If you are interested in finding out more about Growth Mindset this link (although American!) is useful:

<https://www.mindsetkit.org/growth-mindset-parents/learn-about-growth-mindset/what-is-growth-mindset-parents>

How do we promote a Growth Mindset at Thomas Harding?

- ✓ Assemblies and PSHE lessons devoted to Growth Mindset to inform students
- ✓ PSHE sessions informing students how to develop positive mindsets
- ✓ Marking comments and feedback to improve thinking and learning and to reflect a 'Growth Mindset' philosophy
- ✓ Children receive team points for displaying 'Growth Mindset' behaviours
- ✓ Mastery and a challenge focus within lessons
- ✓ 'Growth Mindset Champions' to acknowledge those children who displaying growth mindset behaviours such as effort and persistence
- ✓ Growth mindset and team point rewards at the end of term

How can you foster a Growth Mindset at HOME?

1. Offer feedback and verbally praise your child for the skills, attitudes and processes they have used to reach an outcome: hard work, persistence, rising to a challenge, learning from a mistake etc. to develop resilience and see learning as something that builds their brain muscle rather than being just being "smart", "brilliant" or "gifted". Be proud of their persistence and willingness to learn from mistakes.
2. Be a growth mindset role model. Be honest: how often do you say "I can't (cook/sing/balance my bank account)" or "I'm terrible at (sports/spelling/public speaking)" as if there's no hope for you? Make sure you're sending the right message – maybe even take on something new! The children all know that in school we expect them to finish any sentence about something they are currently unable to do with the word "yet"!
3. Encourage your child to forget taking the easy route (where little learning is done) and instead embrace challenges. A sheet full of questions he/she already knows the answers to won't "grow their brain" like one deeper problem to solve (even if they don't get the correct answer).
4. Remember growth mindset isn't just academic: it applies to many areas of life (athletic, musical and social). Having trouble getting the football into the net? Keep making mistakes on a guitar chord? Tried to initiate play with someone but it didn't go well? Discuss strategies that could help and the next step for improvement.
5. Discourage envy of peers, and talk to your child about what he or she can learn from others who appear more successful. While skills may come more easily to some, most often there's a (possibly unseen) element of practice, persistence and hard work which leads to achievement.

Embracing a growth mindset isn't always easy, but it can have a huge impact on your child... and perhaps on you, too!

PARENT'S GUIDE TO A GROWTH MINDSET

Big Life Journal

*Your brain is like a muscle. When you learn, your brain grows.
The feeling of it being hard is the feeling of your brain growing!*

PRAISE



FOR:

EFFORT
STRATEGIES
PROGRESS
HARD WORK
PERSISTENCE
RISING TO A CHALLENGE
LEARNING FROM A MISTAKE

NOT FOR

TALENT
BEING SMART
BORN GIFTED
FIXED ABILITIES
NOT MAKING MISTAKES

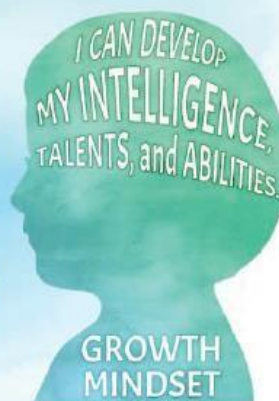
THE POWER OF "YET" SAY

"YOU CAN'T DO IT YET."
"YOU DON'T KNOW IT YET."
"IF YOU LEARN AND
PRACTICE, YOU WILL!"

BRAINS can GROW



VS



FAILURES AND MISTAKES = LEARNING

SAY

"MISTAKES HELP YOU IMPROVE."
"YOU CAN LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES."
"LET'S SEE WHAT OTHER STRATEGIES YOU CAN TRY."

RECOGNIZE YOUR OWN MINDSET

BE MINDFUL OF YOUR
OWN THINKING AND THE
MESSAGES YOU SEND
WITH YOUR WORDS AND
ACTIONS.



ASK

"WHAT DID YOU DO
TODAY THAT MADE YOU
THINK HARD?"
"WHAT NEW STRATEGIES
DID YOU TRY?"
"WHAT MISTAKE DID YOU
MAKE THAT TAUGHT YOU
SOMETHING?"
"WHAT DID YOU TRY
THAT WAS HARD
TODAY?"

MY GROWTH MINDSET STATEMENTS

I can CHANGE my MINDSET with my WORDS!



INSTEAD OF:

I CAN SAY:



- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| I am not good at this. | ● I am not good at this YET, but I will learn. |
| I am great at this. | ● I practiced and learned how to do this. |
| This is too hard. | ● This will require effort and finding the right strategy. |
| This is too easy. | ● How can I make this more challenging? |
| I am afraid I will make a mistake. | ● When I make a mistake, I will learn from it and get better. |
| I give up. | ● I will succeed if I put forth effort and find a better strategy. |
| I can't do this. | ● I need some feedback and help from others. |
| This is good enough. | ● Is it my best work? Can I improve it? |
| I won't try because I might fail. | ● If I fail I can try again until I succeed! |
| I am not as smart as my friend. | ● I am in charge of how smart I am because I can grow my brain by learning hard things! |