### Intermediate Lesson Plans

**Ideal for Grades 3-6**

**Six lesson plans that introduce and focus on growth vs. fixed mindset**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title and Author</th>
<th>Printable Activities</th>
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Do Your Best  
Grow Your Brain  
Growth Mindset  
I Can  
Never Give Up  
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• Magnets: Home Connection for Parents | |

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Objectives

Growth Mindset
Grow Your Brain
Do Your Best
Never Give Up
I Can
Learn from Mistakes

Mindset: your attitude or ideas with which you approach a situation. Your mental disposition that determines your response to problem solving, overcoming obstacles or facing challenges.

Growth Mindset: Everyone has a brain! My smarts and abilities can grow if I challenge myself and exercise my brain by trying new things and doing my best all the time. I may not always succeed at first, but I can’t give up – I will make mistakes but I must keep trying and learning from every mistake. Mistakes help my brain to grow. Every mistake is a step closer to success. I don’t say, “I can’t do that.” Instead I say, “I can’t do that YET.” I keep my brain growing and learning and believing in myself and the power of my brain. NED can help you remember to keep a Growth Mindset by NEVER GIVING UP and DOING YOUR BEST!

Fixed Mindset: Everyone has a brain but some brains are better than others. It doesn’t matter how hard I work, I just can’t get better at it. I don’t want others to know that I haven’t learned something yet, so I pretend to know things I haven’t learned. I am afraid to try new things because I might fail. Once I fail, I don’t want to try again so if it doesn’t work the first time, I don’t like to try it a different way.

Building Background

1. Brainstorm a list of things that are “fixed.” Define fixed in each example given.

   Provide additional examples that help kids to think outside their definitions to include:

   - mend or repair
   - prepare to state of completion
   - make steady or stable
   - fasten securely
   - bring into a final or unalterable state
   - firmly establish

   Examples:
   - Fixed date – New Year’s Day is always January 1, unchangeable
   - Fixed dog – spayed; altered so no puppies can be made; permanent, unaltered state
   - Fixed table leg – repaired after damage
   - Fixed dinner – prepared and completed
2. What does it mean if your MINDSET is fixed? Define mindset.
   Answers will vary. Stuck on one idea, unchangeable, can’t grow, etc.

3. What is the difference between a GROWTH MINDSET and a FIXED mindset?
   Answers will vary. Use the printable to allow students to think before discussing. Then lead the discussion to build on understanding of these two important concepts:

   **Videos**

   **Parable of the Two Builders – Wise & Foolish (2:10)** by Max7
   www.max7.org/en/resource/WiseFoolishBuilders# or vimeo.com/130593967

   Discuss the different mindsets you see in this video
   - Attitudes when facing a challenge (2 boys-2 different reactions)
   - Learning from mistakes (take note of instructions given at beginning)
   - Being a risk taker (one boy embraces project/other boy sits back and watches to completion)
   - Seeing other’s success (decides to copy)
   - Confident vs fearful when new challenge arises (weather)
   - Other observations

   **Ormie the Pig (4:00)** by Arc Productions
   www.vimeo.com/27256955 or www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUm-vAOmV1o

   Discuss the “never give up attitude” and growth mindset. Why did Ormie keep trying a new idea after one didn’t work?

   **Writing Prompts**

   **There once was a day that I was stuck with a “Fixed Mindset.”** Write about a time when you faced a challenge or obstacle with a FIXED mindset. Write about your actions, attitude and emotions during the process. What could you have done differently in the same situation to have a GROWTH mindset?

   **There once was a day that I mastered a “Growth Mindset.”** Write about a time when you faced a challenge or obstacle with a GROWTH mindset and a NED mindset. Write about your actions, attitude and emotions during the process.
How to Grow A Brain
Introducing Growth vs. Fixed Mindset

Activities

NED Says
Create NED says messages to post around your school. Encourage others with reminders to have a growth mindset. Examples:

• I give up trying; I'll try it a different way
• It's good enough; Is this really my best?
• I can't make this any better; I can always do better
• This is too hard; This may take some time
• I made a mistake; Mistakes can help me learn
• I just can't do this; I am going to train (exercise) my brain
• I'll never be that smart; I will learn how to do this
• Plan A didn't work; There's always Plan B
• My friend can do this; I will learn from them
• I can't do this; I can't do this YET

Home Connection

Teaching Growth Mindsets - Kelly Corrigan’s video for parents
www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhLJPhxuvGM
Direct parents to watch this compelling conversation between a parent and Dr. Christine Carter, executive director of the Greater Good Science Center. This four and a half minute video is part of a discussion series called HALF FULL - Social Science for Raising Happy Kids.

For more info...

Check out this article by Michael Graham Richard called Fixed Mindset vs Growth Mindset: Which one are you?
Available at: http://bit.ly/1Hon9B
a Fixed Mindset says...

a Growth Mindset says...

Two Mindsets
NED Says...
This is a story about a little girl with a big plan to make the most magnificent thing. She quickly discovers that her perfect plan doesn’t work as perfectly as she planned. Through a wide range of emotions, she learns that by having perseverance and a growth mindset, her plan can still work in the end as long as she is willing to keep trying new ideas.

Before Reading: Discussion Starters

1. **Brainstorm a list of synonyms for the word “magnificent”**.
   Answers will vary. Brilliant, splendid, glorious, impressive, fantabulous, splendiferous, magnificent, excellent, resplendent, superb, first-class, glorious, bright, smart as a whip, brainy, splendid, brilliant, vivid. Post in the classroom for visual reminders for writing, discussion, building self-esteem, etc.

2. **If you could make the most magnificent thing (not a toy) that could help you – what would it be and how could it help?**

3. **How does something become a magnificent thing?**
   Discuss the process for creating. Lead the discussion to include what happens in the process when you reach an obstacle.

4. **If you had a fixed mindset – how would you react to an obstacle in the process? If you had a growth mindset – how would you react to a challenge you face?**
5. Make a list of emotions you might feel during the creative process.
   Answers will vary....get a list of words and then have kids discuss whether the emotion word fits
   best under fixed mindset or growth mindset. Allow kids to debate and support their answers as
   the point of this is for them to see it’s not the emotion or feeling that determines mindset, it’s the
   action you take after you feel the emotion. Example: Frustration can cause you to quit and give-
   up (fixed mindset) but if you walk away and keep thinking about the challenge and ways to solve
   it, you will return and try again with new ideas (growth mindset).

After Reading: Discussion Starters

1. What positive attitudes do you see in the girl during her creative process?
   Thoroughness, creativity, organized, determination, persistence, flexibility etc.

2. Did the girl have a Growth Mindset or a Fixed Mindset? What did she do and feel when
   she met a challenge?
   Answers will vary. Discussion should focus on specific examples that show her displaying both
   mindsets with growth mindset winning! In the beginning, she had a growth mindset that allowed
   her to keep trying new and different ways. She had a fixed mindset when she got angry, smashed
   her work, and quit. In the end, she came back to the project and looked at it in a totally new way.

3. Why was she so mad when her hard work attracted a few admirers? Why did they admire
   hard work?
   She was wanting to create a magnificent thing in her mind – her hard work wasn’t enough.
   Hard work is important to growing your brain – sometimes results don’t happen but without hard
   work – you can’t persevere and keep trying. It is a positive character trait to never give up and do
   your best.

Writing Prompt

Once I quit but I wished I didn’t Write about a time you gave up. Describe the situation and
your feelings. What could you have done differently if you had used your growth mindset? What
kind of self-talk would have helped you?

My Most Magnificent Thing If I could make the most magnificent thing, it would be
_________. Write about what you would make and why it would be magnificent.

Self-Talk List Make a list of 10 things you could tell yourself to keep a Growth Mindset. Share
your 10 things with 3 others in your classroom and add one thing from their list to your list.
Choose your top 3 and make a bookmark to remind yourself.

Choose your own mindset adventure: Write your own story with a character who faces an
obstacle or challenge. Write 2 different endings – one where the main character has a Fixed
Mindset and the other with a Growth Mindset. Use the printable Story Planning sheet to create
your adventure.
The Most Magnificent Thing
by Ashley Spires

Activities

Create a Deconstruction/Construction Zone
Bring in old appliances, toys and take-apart tools. Allow students to deconstruct junk for the parts. Encourage free creativity to make something new, reminding them to be in a growth mindset – be flexible, try alternative options, redesign when necessary and, most importantly, to never give up.

Encourage Your Classmates  How can you encourage your classmates with examples of self-talk that will remind them to have a growth mindset? Create growth mindset posters for your classroom or school.

Home Connection
Invite parents to share stories of “growth mindset” that they see at home. Use your newsletters, conferences or open house events to encourage parents to look for “growth mindset” moments.

For more info...
Accelerated Reading Quiz: 164735
Directions
Create inspiring bookmarks about things you can do to grow your brain.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characters:</td>
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<td>Setting:</td>
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<td>Opening:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Events building up to problem:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem, Challenge, obstacle:</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Events building to <strong>Solution A</strong>:</th>
<th>Events building to <strong>Solution B</strong>:</th>
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<th>Ending A:</th>
<th>Ending B</th>
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**Mistakes That Worked**

by Charlotte Foltz Jones and Illustrated by John O’Brien

A collection of stories about 40 familiar inventions and how they came to be. Mark Twain was asked to name the greatest of all inventors and he responded...“Accident.” Children will be fascinated by great inventions and discoveries that were accidental, unintentional and even mistakes! It is easy to fail and abandon an idea (fixed mindset) but it’s more difficult to fail, learn from the failure and recognize another use for the failure or try another direction (growth mindset). “Intelligence is not to make no mistakes, but quickly to see how to make them good.” Bertolt Brecht, 1930

**Note to teachers:** If your students are not familiar with Growth Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset, we encourage you to first use NED’s How to Grow a Brain introductory lesson to build background.

**Key Vocabulary**

**Growth Mindset:** Everyone has a brain! Your smarts and abilities can grow if you challenge yourself and exercise your brain by trying new things and doing your best all the time. You may not always succeed at first, but you can’t give up - you will make mistakes but you must keep trying and learning from your every mistakes. Mistakes help your brain to grow. Every mistake is a step closer to success. Don’t say, “I can’t do that.” Instead say, “I can’t do that YET.” Keep your brain growing and learning and believing in yourself and the power of your brain.

**Fixed Mindset:** Some people act and believe that some brains are better than others. If you have a fixed mindset-you believe that it doesn’t matter how hard you work, you just can’t get better at it. NED knows that if you do your best your best will get better! If you have a fixed mindset, you don’t want others to know that you haven’t learned something yet, so you might pretend to know things that you really haven’t learned yet. You might be afraid to try new things because you might fail and once you make a mistake or fail, you don’t want to try again or try it in a different way. NED says “Never give up and keep trying and you will learn something new each time and eventually get better at it.”

**Inventors:** A person who creates or makes something new, like a new device, process or object that is useful to others.

**Discoveries:** The act of finding or learning something for the first time. Research and exploring often lead to discoveries that are not expected.

**Accidents:** Something that happens suddenly or unexpectedly. It was not planned or intended but happened by chance. Some accidents are great discoveries.

**Objectives**

- Growth Mindset
- Do Your Best
- Never Give Up
- Learning from Mistakes
- Failures are Important

**Before Reading**

Choose any of the short stories from this collection of 40 short stories of mistakes that worked. They can be used on a regular basis in the classroom to inspire, motivate and encourage kids to keep a growth mindset when they face obstacles, challenges or failures. If multiple copies of the book are available – instruct groups of students to read different examples and share with the class.
**After Reading**

Summarize the story using cause and effect language. Include phrases such as *therefore*, *because*, *so*, *so then*, *in order to*, *as a result*, etc. Use the printable Cause & Effect flow chart as an aid.

**Writing Prompts**

*Once I made a mistake that turned out to be wonderful.*
Describe your situation when a mistake wasn’t so bad after all. What did you learn? What was your attitude? How did you use your growth mindset?

*I would like to invent a ________________*
Write a detailed description of what your invention would be and how it would help you (and others).

**Activities**

*Summarize It* Write a summary of the mistake that worked. Use the graphic organizer to gather your information. Partner share with another student to learn about another mistake that worked.

*Imagine Life Without It* Gather in small groups and read one of the mistakes that worked. Discuss what life might be like if this mistake was never made and the discovery didn’t happen. Example: Life without post-it notes.

**Home Connection**

*Encouragement Notes* Brighten your child’s day with notes of encouragement, especially when your child makes a mistake. Use the printable notes and personalize them for your child.

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**For more info...**

Accelerated Reading Quiz: 159342

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**Never Give Up  Encourage Others  Do Your Best**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The reason why something happened</td>
<td>The result of what happened</td>
</tr>
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Cause & Effect Flowchart

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# Summary Organizer

<table>
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<th>Somebody</th>
<th>wanted</th>
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</table>

| But then | so     |

**summary:**

________________________

________________________

________________________

________________________

________________________
Encouragement Notes

Brighten your child’s day with notes of encouragement, especially when your child makes a mistake. Use the printable notes and add a personal note for them on the back.

I am so Proud of You for Not Giving Up! Keep Trying.

I Love that you are Not Afraid to make mistakes.

Don’t Quit. I know you can do this!

Never Give Up. I know it’s hard, but—

Don’t be afraid to Try new things. It’s Fun.

You Make my Heart smile when you do your best.

Keep Exploring. I can’t wait to hear about what you learned!

I wish that PLAN A had worked...

Try PLAN B.