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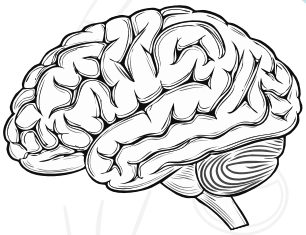
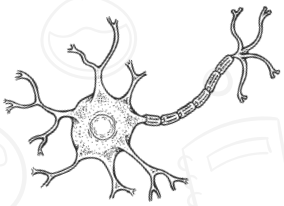
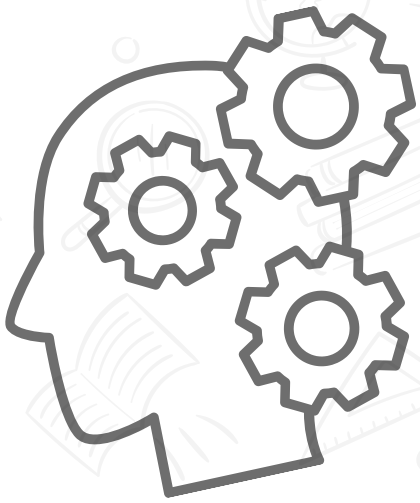




Metacognitive Skills

Growth Mindset Thinking

Secondary



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Growth Mindset Thinking

Growth mindset thinking is a skill that helps students approach challenging tasks with an attitude that enables them to succeed even when confronted with major obstacles.

Introduce the skill of growth mindset thinking using the video lesson or an introduction of your own design that covers the same content. The text of the recording is below:

Video script -- Have you ever started something difficult and thought, "There's no way I can do this." Maybe it was a challenging math problem or a reading passage that didn't make sense at first. Or maybe you were learning a difficult skateboard trick or a complicated dance routine. In situations like these, it's easy to think, *"I'm not good at this,"* or *"This is too hard."* That's when the skill of Growth Mindset Thinking really matters.

Growth mindset thinking is a skill that helps you take on challenging tasks with an attitude that helps you succeed, even when confronted by major obstacles. If you have a growth mindset, you approach difficult tasks with the belief that you can improve through effort, persistence, and practice.

Here is a strategy that can help guide your thinking as you develop a growth mindset.

1. Before starting something challenging, pause for a moment, end what you were doing, and tell yourself you're going to give this task all your attention.
2. Notice your thinking about the task. This is boring. I'm not going to do well. I'm not learning anything from this. I'm just not good at this.
3. Try to reframe your negative thoughts in a positive way: I'm going to find something interesting in this. I can do well if I try hard enough. I'm going to learn something from this. I can be good at this if I practice.
4. Make a commitment to giving this task your best effort.

5. When you've completed the task, identify some of the good things you've accomplished by engaging in the task.

Here's an example of someone using this strategy.

Talia is dreading her math homework. She's always told herself she's just not good at math and that it's boring. When she opens her book and sees a complicated multi-step problem, her first thoughts are, "This is way too hard. I'm never going to get this." But before she lets those thoughts take over, she remembers the strategy.

First, she resets and gives the problem her full attention. Then she notices that she's already started out telling herself she can't do it. She reframes her thoughts by reassuring herself, "I can get better at math if I try hard and stick with it." She also decides to stay open to the idea that she might learn something useful from the problem. Changing her negative thoughts to positive ones helps, and she finishes all the problems that were assigned. When she finishes, she reflects on how it went. She not only solved most of the problems correctly, but choosing a growth mindset over a fixed one helped her move past her doubts.

Growth mindset thinking is useful outside of school, too. Here's an example. Theo is at the skateboard park practicing a difficult trick he's been working on for weeks. He sees some other kids landing it easily, and he feels that familiar doubt creeping in. He tells himself, "I'll never get it because I'm just no good at skateboarding." After trying the trick a few times and wobbling off his board, he starts to feel frustrated. But instead of packing up and going home, he regroups and tells himself, "It's ok. Skateboarding takes a lot of practice, and I need to keep working on it." He tries the trick a few more times, adjusting his balance and timing, and can feel himself improving. When he leaves the park, he is proud that he faced the challenge instead of giving up.

Whether you're in school or not, having a growth mindset helps you take on challenges, stay open to learning, and keep trying even when something feels difficult. As you practice this skill, you'll start to notice moments when you're

slipping into fixed mindset thinking—like avoiding a challenge or assuming you're just not good at something. When that happens, you can pause, reframe your thinking, and keep moving forward. Over time, you'll notice yourself approaching challenges with more confidence and seeing effort as a normal part of learning.

Once students have been introduced to the skill of growth mindset thinking, emphasize the following points with them:

- Growth mindset thinking means approaching challenges with the belief that abilities can improve through effort, practice, and persistence rather than seeing difficulty as a sign of inability. Discuss with students using prompts like, “What is the difference between thinking ‘I can’t do this’ and thinking ‘I can’t do this yet’?”
- This skill is especially useful in situations that feel challenging, unfamiliar, or frustrating, such as difficult schoolwork, learning a new skill, or practicing something that takes time to master. Discuss with students using prompts like, “What kinds of tasks make you most likely to think something is ‘too hard’?”
- Negative or fixed mindset thoughts often show up automatically and can interfere with effort and learning if they go unnoticed. Discuss with students using prompts like, “What kinds of thoughts usually pop into your head when something feels difficult?” “Are those thoughts part of having a growth mindset or a fixed mindset?”
- An important part of growth mindset thinking is noticing your thoughts about a task and recognizing when they are limiting or discouraging. Discuss with students using prompts like, “How can you tell when your thinking is holding you back?”
- Growth mindset thinking involves intentionally reframing negative thoughts into more productive ones that support effort and learning. Discuss with students using prompts like, “How did Talia change the way she talked to herself about math?” “How could you change some of your negative thoughts into positive ones?”
- Making a commitment to giving a task your best effort helps you stay engaged even when progress is slow. Discuss with students using prompts like, “What does it look like to give your best effort on something, even when it feels hard?”
- Persistence is a key part of growth mindset thinking and means continuing to try even after mistakes or setbacks. Discuss with students using prompts like, “How did Theo respond when the skateboard trick didn’t work right away?”
- Reflection after completing a task helps you notice what you accomplished and how your effort contributed to improvement. Discuss with students using

prompts like, “What did Talia realize about herself after finishing her math homework?”

- Growth mindset thinking helps you see mistakes and challenges as opportunities to learn rather than reasons to stop trying. Discuss with students using prompts like, “How can making mistakes help you improve over time?” or “How might changing the way you think about challenges affect how you approach them in the future?”

Levels of Competence

There are specific levels of competence for this skill against which students can be evaluated (see **Table 1**). It is important to note that the levels of competence are articulated as a scale that can be used to make judgments about students' status and growth. That scale has score values that range from 0.0 to 4.0. At the 0.0 level, the student cannot demonstrate any part of the skill even with help. At the 1.0 level, the student can perform some of the foundational aspects of the skill with help but not independently. At the 2.0 level, the student can independently demonstrate the foundational aspects of the skill but not the behaviors described at the 3.0 level. The 3.0 level on the scale represents proficiency in the skill. When students can independently demonstrate these behaviors, they have reached the desired status for the skill. At the 4.0 level, the student demonstrates everything at the 3.0 level AND goes above and beyond expectations by adding useful adaptations to the skill. Finally, the scale describes half-point scores that indicate partial progress toward the next level of the scale.

Periodically evaluate students' status relative to these levels of competence using the assessment activities in **Table 4**.

It is also important to note that **Table 2** and **Table 3** contain versions of the scale that can be used by students to rate themselves. These scales are both stated in an "I CAN" format. Periodically, students evaluate themselves relative to the levels of competence using the Full-point or the Half-point self-evaluation scales.

Table 1: Levels of Competence

4.0	The student can articulate specific situations (in school and outside of school) in which they should employ a growth mindset, set goals to do so, and evaluate progress.
3.5	In addition to score 3.0 performance, partial success at score 4.0 content.
3.0	The student will recognize when they don't have a growth mindset and respond by executing a complex strategy involving self-analysis.
2.5	No major errors or omissions regarding score 2.0 content, and partial success at score 3.0 content.
2.0	The student will recognize or recall vocabulary associated with self-analysis as it relates to growth mindset thinking (for example, *challenges, improvement, persistence, reframing*) and perform basic processes such as: ● Describe a complex strategy involving self-analysis for growth mindset thinking (articulated by the class or the teacher in the form of a standard operating procedure [SOP]). For example; ○ Before starting something challenging, pause for a moment, end what you were doing, and tell yourself you're going to give this task all your attention. ○ Notice your thinking about the task. Ex. Are you uninterested? Are you thinking the task is too difficult for you to accomplish? Are you thinking that the task will be boring? Are you thinking that you won't learn much from the task? ○ Try to reframe your negative thoughts in a positive way. Ex. "I'm going to find something interesting in this task." "I can do well on this if I try hard enough." "I'm going to have fun doing this task." "I'm going to learn something from this task." ○ Make a commitment to giving this task your best effort. ○ When you've completed the task, identify some of the good things that you've accomplished by engaging in the task. ● Understand what an individual might think and feel while operating with a growth mindset. For example, thinking, "I can do this if I try hard enough."

	or “I didn’t do as well as I had hoped on this task, but I know where I can improve.”
1.5	Partial success at score 2.0 content, and major errors or omissions regarding score 3.0 content.
1.0	With help, partial success at score 2.0 content and score 3.0 content.
0.5	With help, partial success at score 2.0 content but not at score 3.0 content.
0.0	Even with help, the student demonstrates no success.

Table 2: I CAN Student Assessment Form (Half-point scale)

4.0	I can articulate specific situations (in school and out of school) in which I should employ a growth mindset, set goals to do so, and evaluate my progress.
3.5	In addition to score 3.0, I can do some of what is required at the score 4.0 level.
3.0	I can recognize when I don't have a growth mindset, and respond by executing a complex strategy involving self-analysis.
2.5	In addition to score 2.0, I can do some of what is required at the score 3.0 level.
2.0	I can recognize or recall vocabulary associated with self-analysis as it relates to growth mindset thinking, (for example, *challenges, improvement, persistence, reframing*), and perform basic processes such as: ● Describe a complex strategy involving self-analysis for staying focused when answers or solutions are not immediately apparent (articulated by the class or the teacher in the form of a standard operating procedure [SOP]: ○ Before starting something challenging, pause for a moment, end what you were doing, and tell yourself you're going to give this task all your attention. ○ Notice your thinking about the task. Ex. Are you uninterested? Are you thinking the task is too difficult for you to accomplish? Are you thinking that the task will be boring? Are you thinking that you won't learn much from the task? ○ Try to reframe your negative thoughts in a positive way. Ex. "I'm going to find something interesting in this task." "I can do well on this if I try hard enough." "I'm going to have fun doing this task." "I'm going to learn something from this task." ○ Make a commitment to giving this task your best effort. ○ When you've completed the task, identify some of the good things that you've accomplished by engaging in the task.

	• I understand what an individual might think and feel while operating from a growth mindset (for example, thinking “I can do this if I try hard enough,” or “I didn’t do as well as I hoped on this task, but I know where I need to improve.”
1.5	On my own, I can do some of the things at score 2.0 level.
1.0	With help, I can do some of the things at score 2.0 level and 3.0 level.
0.5	With help, I can do some of the score 2.0 level things, but not the score 3.0 level things.
0.0	Even with help, I cannot do any of the score levels.

Table 3: I CAN Student Assessment Form (Full-point scale)

4.0	I can articulate specific situations (in school and out of school) in which I should employ a growth mindset, set goals to do so, and evaluate my progress.
3.0	I can recognize when I am not operating from a growth mindset and respond by executing a complex strategy involving self-analysis.
2.0	I can recognize or recall vocabulary associated with self-analysis as it relates to growth mindset thinking (for example, *challenges, improvement, persistence, reframing*), and perform basic processes such as: ● Describe a complex strategy involving self-analysis for staying focused when answers or solutions are not immediately apparent (articulated by the class or the teacher in the form of a standard operating procedure [SOP]: ○ Before starting something challenging, pause for a moment, end what you were doing, and tell yourself you're going to give this task all your attention. ○ Notice your thinking about the task. Ex. Are you uninterested? Are you thinking the task is too difficult for you to accomplish? Are you thinking that the task will be boring? Are you thinking that you won't learn much from the task? ○ Try to reframe your negative thoughts in a positive way. Ex. "I'm going to find something interesting in this task." "I can do well on this if I try hard enough." "I'm going to have fun doing this task." "I'm going to learn something from this task." ○ Make a commitment to giving this task your best effort. ○ When you've completed the task, identify some of the good things that you've accomplished by engaging in the task. ● I understand what an individual might think and feel while operating from a growth mindset (for example, thinking "I can do this if I try hard enough," or "I didn't do as well as I hoped on this task, but I know where I need to improve."

1.0	With help, I can do some of the things at score 2.0 level and score 3.0 level.
0.0	Even with help, I cannot do any of the score levels.

Table 4: Assessment Activities

4.0	Ask students to document specific situations in and out of school when they've used the skill of growth mindset thinking. They should be able to describe the goals they set for themselves, what they did, and how well they performed.
3.0	Have students document a time they used the skill of growth mindset thinking. They should be able to provide a detailed description of the event and a critique of their own behavior.
2.0	Ask students to explain the following terms: *challenges, improvement, persistence, reframing*. Their answers should be generally accurate but not necessarily detailed or complete. Ask students to describe a basic process that has been provided to them for using growth mindset thinking. Their descriptions should include explicit steps such as: ● Before starting something challenging, pause for a moment, end what you were doing, and tell yourself you're going to give this task all your attention. ● Notice your thinking about the task. Ex. Are you uninterested? Are you thinking the task is too difficult for you to accomplish? Are you thinking that the task will be boring? Are you thinking that you won't learn much from the task? ● Try to reframe your negative thoughts in a positive way. Ex. "I'm going to find something interesting in this task." "I can do well on this if I try hard enough." "I'm going to have fun doing this task." "I'm going to learn something from this task." ● Make a commitment to giving this task your best effort. ● When you've completed the task, identify some of the good things that you've accomplished by engaging in the task.

	Ask students to describe some of the self-talk and thinking that should occur when someone is using growth mindset thinking. Their answers should include things like they are thinking, “I can do this if I try hard enough,” or “I didn’t do as well as I hoped on this task, but I know where I need to improve.”