

LESSON 1

Mindset Assessment

Duration: 15–30 minutes

TEACHER TALK

We know what you're thinking—ugh. Another assessment? But do not fear, this super-simple, straightforward mindset assessment has no right or wrong answers. You can (and should) take it right alongside your students. The purpose of this assessment is to gauge whether the test-taker leans toward a fixed or growth mindset in their overall attitudes and beliefs about learning. Use it as a foundational tool for examining the entrance into the mindsets. Once students (as well as colleagues, parents, and anyone else who wants to take the assessment) begin to understand their own beliefs about intelligence and how a fixed and growth mindset might influence achievement, you can begin the process of dismantling barriers to a growth-mindset environment and building practices that promote growth and improvement.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to identify whether they tend toward a fixed or growth mindset.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

The resources and materials necessary to conduct this lesson are:

- › Copies of the Mindset Assessment
- › Growth Mindset and Fixed Mindset definitions

METHOD

DO Hand out a copy of the Mindset Assessment. Ask the students to put a check mark next to the statements they believe to be true. After all students have concluded the assessment, they will calculate how many odd-numbered statements had a check mark and how many even-numbered statements had a check mark. The odd-numbered statements represent fixed mindset thinking; the even-numbered statements represent growth-mindset thinking. If they have more of one than the other, it is likely they default to that mindset when dealing with life events and challenging situations. Share the definitions of growth and fixed mindset with students.

Growth mindset is the belief that intelligence and other qualities, abilities, and talents can be improved with effort, learning, and dedication over time.

Fixed mindset is the belief that intelligence and other qualities, abilities, and talents are fixed traits that cannot be significantly developed.

SAY Research has shown that when students approach their school work and other pursuits with a growth mindset, they get better results. We will be talking a lot about growth mindset this year. I want you to have the ability to call on your growth mindset when you need it—like when you are taking on a hard challenge, solving a really difficult problem, or when you feel like you want to give up.

If your score leaned toward a fixed mindset, that’s okay. We are all a mixture of fixed and growth mindsets. *(Here, you have an opportunity to share personal examples of situations in which a growth or fixed mindset impacted your outcome.)* But we’re going to start practicing how to use our growth mindsets as we approach challenges and learning in our classroom, because I believe you can learn anything, and I want you to believe that too.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Review the students’ Mindset Assessments for completeness and accuracy of calculations. Check for understanding of fixed mindset and growth mindset definitions.

SUPPLEMENTAL/EXTENSION IDEAS

EXIT TICKET Ask students for examples of when they had a growth mindset and/or a fixed mindset in their own lives.

WATCH “Growth Mindset for Students (1 of 5)” by ClassDojo on YouTube

WATCH “RSA Animate: How to Help Every Child Fulfill Their Potential” by The RSA on YouTube

DO Have students take copies of the assessment to parents to start an at-home discussion.

MINDSET ASSESSMENT

Directions: Put a check mark next to all the statements you agree with.

- _____ 1. There are just some things I will never be good at.
- _____ 2. When I make a mistake, I try to learn from it.
- _____ 3. When others do better than me, I feel threatened.
- _____ 4. I enjoy getting out of my comfort zone.
- _____ 5. When I show others I'm smart or talented, I feel successful.
- _____ 6. I feel inspired by the success of others.
- _____ 7. I feel good when I can do something others cannot.
- _____ 8. It is possible to change how intelligent you are.
- _____ 9. You shouldn't have to try to be smart—you just are or you're not.
- _____ 10. I enjoy taking on a new challenge or task.
- _____ 11. If something is extremely difficult, it means it's probably not for me.
- _____ 12. When I fail at something, I usually just try again.
- _____ 13. Some people are just born good at some things, and that's okay.
- _____ 14. Anybody can improve if they put in the effort.
- _____ 15. It makes me feel good to show off what I'm good at.
- _____ 16. I like taking on a challenge.
- _____ 17. When someone criticizes me, I just ignore it.
- _____ 18. When someone criticizes me, I try to listen with an open mind.
- _____ 19. I don't like asking questions, because people might think I'm dumb.
- _____ 20. I am not afraid to ask questions about things I don't understand.

GROWTH MINDSET

The belief that intelligence and other qualities, abilities, and talents can be improved with effort, learning, and dedication over time.

FIXED MINDSET

The belief that intelligence and other qualities, abilities, and talents are fixed traits that cannot be significantly developed.