

Encouraging a Growth Mindset

Practical ways to help students develop a key competency
in social-emotional learning



Equipping students with the mindsets, skills and habits they need to succeed

Praise Effort Over Results



Praise effort and process, not results: “You did great on that. You must have worked really hard.”

Nurture a culture that tolerates risk: “We value taking on tough challenges more than we value easy success.”

Praise Effort Over Results

Instead of displaying only finished student work, post work in progress or drafts so students can see how work evolves with effort and feedback.



Think of the Brain as Something That Grows



Work with your students to create posters or other reminders that the brain, like a muscle, grows and gets stronger with effort.

Encourage Students to Share Advice

Have students write tweets, blog posts, or letters giving advice to a struggling student who doesn't think he is smart enough to succeed.



Frame Mistakes as Part of the Learning Process



When introducing new material or setting a learning goal, say something like:

“After you do this lesson, I’m going to ask each of you to share a mistake you made while doing your work, because mistakes can help us learn.”

Specifically Reward Effort and Process

Create a grading rubric focusing on effort or process in addition to one focusing on outcomes.



Communicate High Expectations



As part of written feedback to students (especially those who are underperforming), explicitly communicate high expectations:

“I’m giving you these comments because I have high standards, and I know that you can meet them.”



For more free resources on this topic,
download our Growth Mindset Toolkit at
www.transformingeducation.org



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