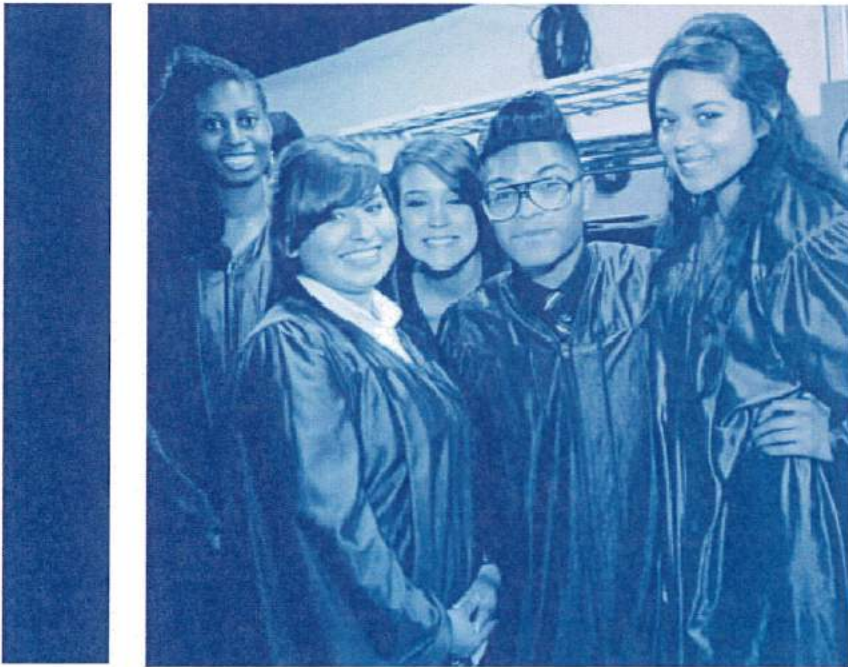




## GRIT & GROWTH MINDSET LINKS AND ACTIVITIES



**UNITED FRIENDS** *of the* **CHILDREN**  
*Preparing Foster Youth for a Future That Works*

Included you will find a sample of activities UFC has used to promote grit and a growth mindset in our scholars.





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# Mindset Quiz

To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements?

Read each statement, and write your answers in the 'Response' column.

Leave the shaded 'Score' column blank until you complete this quiz.

Strongly Agree (SA)

Agree (A)

Disagree (D)

Strongly Disagree (SD)

No.	Statement	Response	Score
1.	Your intelligence is something very basic about you that you can't change very much.		
2.	No matter how much intelligence you have, you can always change it quite a bit.		
3.	You can always substantially change how intelligent you are.		
4.	You are a certain kind of person, and there is not much that can be done to really change that.		
5.	You can always change basic things about the kind of person you are.		
6.	Music talent can be learned by anyone.		
7.	Only a few people will be truly good at sports – you have to be “born with it.”		
8.	Math is much easier to learn if you are male or maybe come from a culture who values math.		
9.	The harder you work at something, the better you will be at it.		
10.	No matter what kind of person you are, you can always change substantially.		
11.	Trying new things is stressful for me and I avoid it.		
12.	Some people are good and kind, and some are not – it's not often that people change.		
13.	I appreciate when people, parents, coaches, teachers give me feedback about my performance.		
14.	I often get angry when I get feedback about my performance.		
15.	All human beings without a brain injury or birth defect are capable of the same amount of learning.		
16.	You can learn new things, but you can't really change how intelligent you are.		
17.	You can do things differently, but the important parts of who you are can't really be changed.		
18.	Human beings are basically good, but sometimes make terrible decisions.		
19.	An important reason why I do my school work is that I like to learn new things.		
20.	Truly smart people do not need to try hard.		
		<b>Total</b>	

## Fixed Mindset Key

Score the following questions with the scores below:

Fixed Questions: 1, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, and 20.

### Fixed Questions Scores

- (SA) Strongly agree      0 point  
(A) Agree                      1 point  
(D) Disagree                2 points  
(SD) Strongly disagree    3 points

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## Growth Mindset Key

Score the following questions with the scores below:

Growth Questions: 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 15, 18, and 19

### Growth Questions Scores

- (SA) Strongly agree      3 point  
(A) Agree                      2 points  
(D) Disagree                1 point  
(SD) Strongly disagree    0 points

## Results

60 – 45 Points	<i>Strong Growth Mindset</i>
44 – 34 Points	<i>Growth Mindset and some Fixed Ideas</i>
33 – 21 Points	<i>Fixed Mindset and some Growth Ideas</i>
20 – 0 Points	<i>Strong Fixed Mindset</i>

Adapted from:

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York: Random House Inc.

# The Science

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## Why the Growth Mindset?

When students and educators have a growth mindset, they understand that intelligence can be developed. Students focus on improvement instead of worrying about how smart they are. They work hard to learn more and get smarter. Based on years of research by Stanford University's Dr. Dweck, Lisa Blackwell Ph.D., and their colleagues, we know that students who learn this mindset show greater motivation in school, better grades, and higher test scores.

## What does a Growth Mindset School look like?

- **Administrators** support teachers' learning. They are responsive to honest feedback, rather than defensive. They seek to build their skills, and are willing to learn from their teachers.
- **Teachers** collaborate with their colleagues and instructional leaders, rather than shut their classroom doors and fly solo. They strive to strengthen their own practice, rather than blame others. They truly believe that all students can learn and succeed—and show it.
- **Parents** support their children's learning both inside and outside the classroom. They partner with teachers, and respond to outreach. They worry less about advocating for their children to get good grades and focus on making sure kids are being challenged and put in the effort needed to grow.
- **Students** are enthusiastic, hard-working, persistent learners. They take charge over their own success.

## What is the Impact of Growth Mindset?

### *Mindsets Predict Motivation and Achievement*

In one study, Blackwell and her colleagues followed hundreds of students making the transition to 7th grade. They found that students with a growth mindset were more motivated to learn and exert effort, and outperformed those with a fixed mindset in math—a gap that continued to increase over the two-year period. Those with the two mindsets had entered 7th grade with similar past achievement, but because of their mindsets their math grades pulled apart during this challenging time. (Blackwell, L.S., Trzesniewski, K.H., & Dweck, C.S. (2007). Implicit theories of intelligence predict achievement across an adolescent transition: A longitudinal study and an intervention. *Child Development*, 78. 246-263, Study 1.)

### *Growth Mindset Training Boosts Motivation and Achievement*

In another study, also with adolescents, Blackwell and her colleagues divided students into two groups for a workshop on the brain and study skills. Half of them, the control group, were taught about the stages of memory; the other half received training in the growth mindset (how the brain grows with learning to make you smarter) and how to apply this idea to their schoolwork. Three times as many students in the growth mindset group showed an increase in effort and engagement compared with the control group. After the training, the control group continued to show declining grades, but the growth-mindset group showed a clear rebound in their grades. (Blackwell, L., Trzesniewski, K., & Dweck, C.S. (2007). Implicit theories of intelligence predict achievement across an adolescent transition: A longitudinal study and an intervention. *Child Development*, 78. 246-263, Study 2).

### *Growth Mindset Training Narrows the Gender Gap in Math*

In a third study with adolescents, students who received growth mindset training (compared to matched controls who received other instruction) showed significantly increases in both their math and verbal achievement test scores. It was interesting to note that girls who received the growth mindset training narrowed the gender gap in math. (Good, C., Aronson, J., & Inzlicht, M. (2003). Improving adolescents' standardized test performance: An intervention to reduce the effects of stereotype threat. *Applied Developmental Psychology, 24*, 645-662.)

### *Growth Mindset Training Narrows the Racial Achievement Gap*

Aronson and colleagues taught college students a growth mindset and taught the control group about multiple intelligence (don't feel bad if you don't do well in one area, you may still be smart in other areas). There was also a no-training control group. The growth mindset group showed significantly higher grades than the control groups. This was particularly true for African American students, who also showed a sharp increase in their valuing of school and their enjoyment of their academic work. (Aronson, J., Fried, C. B., & Good, C. (2002). Reducing the effects of stereotype threat on African American college students by shaping theories of intelligence. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 38*, 113-125.) You can read more about mindset and narrowing the achievement gap by downloading this free report from UNC Greensboro.

### *Research shows that Intelligence is Malleable*

It's also important to know that the growth mindset has been receiving scientific confirmation from cognitive psychology and from neuroscience. For example, neuroscientists tracked students during their teenage years. For many students, they found substantial changes in performance on verbal and non-verbal IQ tests. Using neuroimaging, they found corresponding changes in the density of neurons in the relevant brain areas for these students. In other words, an increase in neuronal connections in the brain accompanied an increase in IQ-test performance, while a decrease in neuronal connections in the brain accompanied a decrease in IQ-test performance. This is just what Brainology teaches. (Ramsden, S., Richardson, F.M., Josse, G., Thomas, M., Ellis, C., Shakeshart, C., Segquier, M., & Price, C. (2011). Verbal and non-verbal intelligence changes in the teenage brain. *Nature 479*, 113–116.

Check out articles about growth mindset: <http://www.mindsetworks.com/media/inthenews.aspx> or read Carol Dweck's book [Mindset: The New Psychology of Success](#).



## Video Links

### One Thousand Steps

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YYb4h8U7Ljw> - (2:08)

- Cute animation and song showing how every huge goal begins with a single step.
- Debrief questions:
  - Did our bird-friend make it to the top? How?
  - How do you think this bird felt as he was climbing the stairs? (both negative and positive emotions...) How do you think he felt when he first got started? As he got higher and higher?
  - How do you think the bird felt when he fell down?
  - What helped him make it to the top? (i.e., one step at a time, patience, he kept trying, determination, etc.).
- Have you felt like the little bird before?

### Growth vs Fixed Mindset

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=2&v=brpkjT9m2Oo> – (1:15)

- A video that explains the difference between a person who has a growth mindset and person who has a fixed mindset.

### Growth Mindset Animation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-oqghnxBmY> - (3:50)

- A short animation explaining the theory of growth and fixed mindsets using the Tortoise and the Hare fable.
- Pause at 0:55 seconds after the quote is shown and ask if anyone can explain what they think it means.
- Pause at 2:26 after the Batman quote and ask if anyone remembers that part of the movie and what the quote means.

### A Study on Praise and Mindsets

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=1&v=NWv1VdDeoRY> – (4:53)

- A video sharing Carol Dweck's study on the effects of praise that involved a series of experiments on over 400 5th graders from all over the country.

### Neuroplasticity

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELpfYZa87g&index=4&list=PL53nCCeNj-RQDhbjE9LjvnFad-wdB5bw7> - (2:03)

- Video that explains how our brains are adaptable and can change over time.
- Ask if students have any personal examples of new mindsets they have developed over the course of their lives? (i.e. learning a new skill, changing a habit, or way of thinking).

## **Play-Doh Brain Easy**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwFA2gZl5VQ> – (5:23)

- Video that demonstrates how to create a brain out of play-doh.
- Use this activity to help students visualize how our brain can change over time.
  - We can ALL have a GROWTH Mindset – because our brain is made TO GROW and CHANGE. Kind of like Play-Doh!
  - Demonstrate creating a brain with play-doh
  - Pass out one little tub of play-doh to each student
  - Play the demonstration video if needed

## **Michael Jordan’s “Failure” Commercial**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=30&v=45mMioJ5szc> – (0:30)

- Commercial where Michael Jordan explains that he succeeds because he has failed so many time.

## **John Legend: Success through Effort**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUtcigWSBsw> – (2:01)

- John Legend shares a personal story about overcoming early rejections in his career to get to where he is today.
- Debrief questions:
  - What qualities did he talk about that led to his success?
  - What comments did he make that show a growth mindset?
  - Is there anything that surprised you about what he said?

## **Grit: The Key to Your Success**

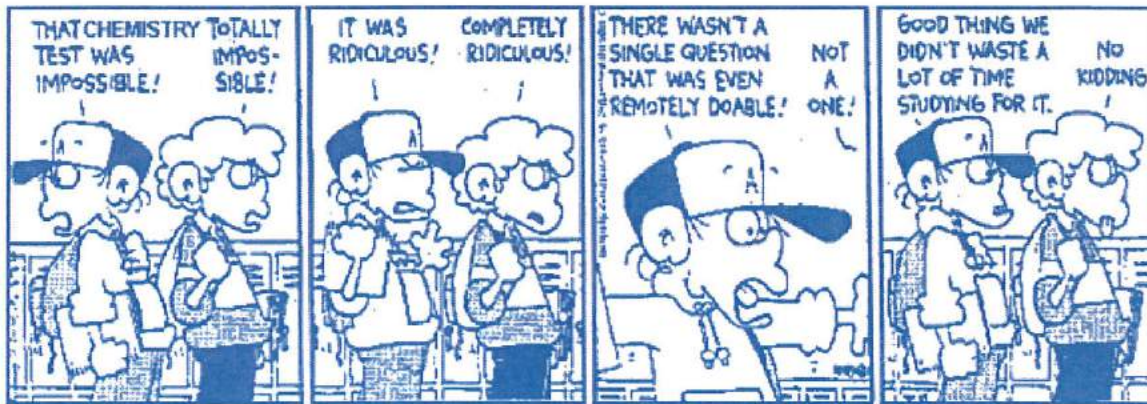
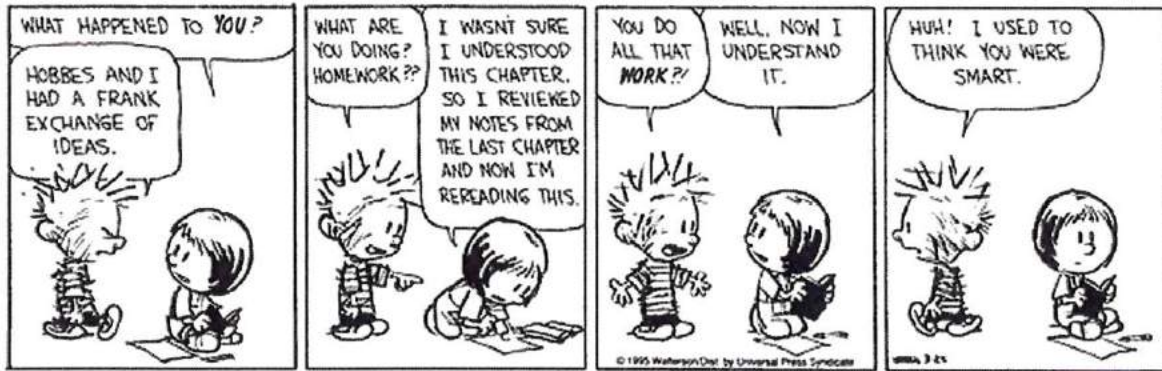
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwsZZ2rprqc> – (2:22)

- What is Grit?
  - Persistence + resilience
  - Strength of character
  - Passion for long-term goals
  - What else? (Write their answers on the board)

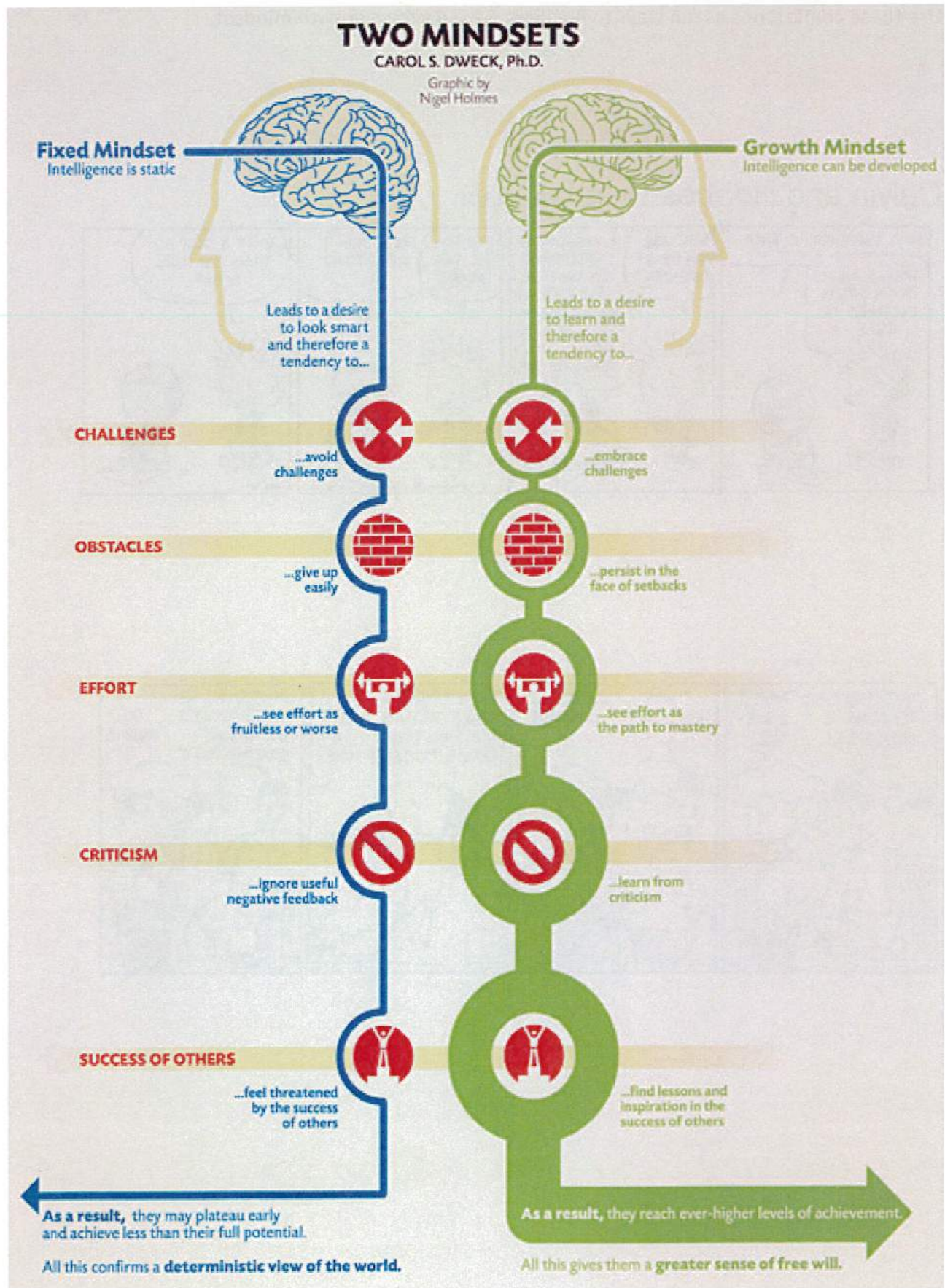
# Growth vs Fixed Mindset Comics

Use these comic strips as fun ways to highlight a fixed versus growth mindset.

## Calvin and Hobbes by Bill Watterson

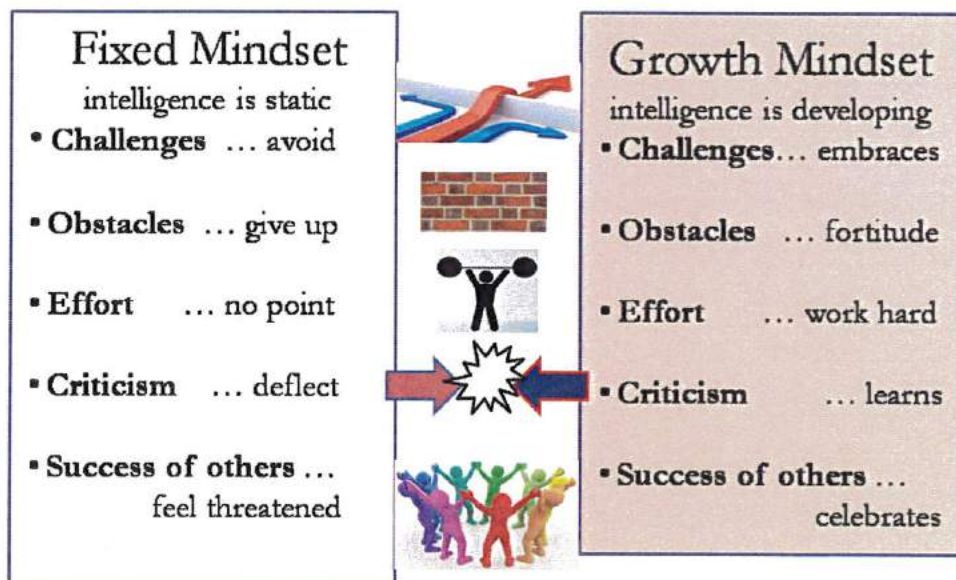


# Growth vs Fixed Mindset Infographics





## Adolescent Brain Development



## **“Minute to Win It” – Defying Gravity**

For this activity, you will need some space – consider playing outside if you can or spreading out into different rooms. You can also have players only go a few at a time (since the activity only takes one minute, you can have multiple rounds). Once each player blows up three balloons, share the instructions as follows. It is harder than it sounds!

- 1) When the clock starts, each player releases all 3 balloons into the air.
- 2) Player may not hold balloons, allow them to rest on the body, or hit the ground, or the game is over.
- 3) To complete the game, player must keep all balloons off the ground for 60 seconds.
- 4) Ideally, you want to allow each scholar to attempt the activity multiple times – maybe 3 each – so that they can reflect on how they approached the challenge each time.

### **Debrief:**

- How many people were able to successfully complete the activity?
- How hard did you think this activity was going to be when we first explained it?
- How hard was it when you tried the first time?
- How was it for each consecutive attempt? How did you feel each time?
- For those of you who were not able to complete it, did you keep trying? Why/why not?
- For those of you who were able to complete it, why do you think you were successful?

# Famous Failures Quote Match Up Game

## Purpose

This tool could be used to help scholars and adults alike understand that challenges can be used to learn, grow, and become better, just as each of these 'successful' people have – helping to cultivate a growth mindset.

This can be used in:

- Large and small group settings
- Individual/ 1-on-1 settings
- Scholars and adults

## Prep Directions

- Cut each square individually to create **one set**. There should be 8 squares with just descriptions, and 8 squares with just the image (16 total squares total, per set). \*Make sure you have one original copy for your answer reference.
- Place all individual 16 squares in an envelope for one set
- If in a large group, have participants get into small groups for each set, or provide one set to an individual you are working with.
- Provide participants with a limited time to complete this task for them to go with their first instinct (between 4-6 minutes, depending on group size).

## Directions for Matching Game

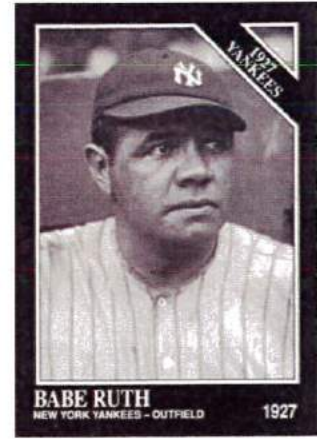
- Read each description, and pair them with the person you think it describes. You will have \_\_\_ to work together to complete this task.
- Once the time is up, we will review each picture with their corresponding description for the answers!

## Example Debrief Questions

- What is one thing that surprised you about these descriptions?
- What is one thing that stood out to you from these descriptions?
- Although each of these people were different, they all had one thing in common. Can anyone help identify what they all had in common? How can you tell?

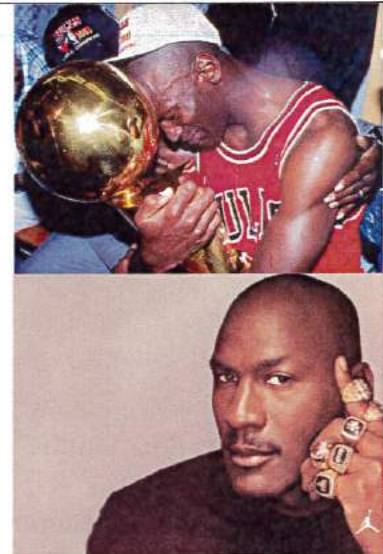
**Key takeaway: Each of these people all had one thing in common – they had a growth mindset, because they learned from their mistakes and kept trying, even when they faced challenging situations.**

For decades this sports player held the record for strikeouts (1,330 in all). When asked about this, this sports player simply said, "Every strike brings me closer to the next home run."



This person was cut from his/her high school basketball team.

*"I have missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I have lost almost 300 games. On 26 occasions I have been entrusted to take the game winning shot, and I missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."*



Michael Jordan

Being fired after just one performance, the manager told this person, "You ain't goin' nowhere, son. You ought to go back to drivin' a truck."



Elvis Presley

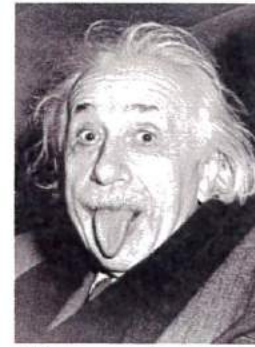
Before this author published a famous series of novels, this person was on welfare, trying to raise a child on his/her own, while attending school and writing a novel.



J.K. Rowling,  
author of  
Harry Potter



This person wasn't able to speak until he/she was almost 4 years old. His/her teachers said this person would "never amount to much."



Albert Einstein

This person was fired by a newspaper editor because he/she "lacked imagination and had no good ideas."



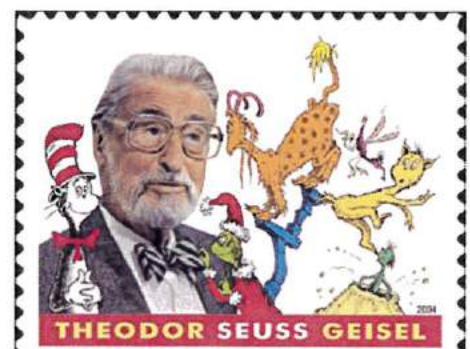
Walt Disney

This person was fired from his/her first television job as an anchor in Baltimore, where he/she faced sexism and harassment.



Oprah Winfrey

This author's first book was rejected by 27 different publishers.



Dr. Seuss

# Grit Games Activity

## Purpose

The purpose of the “Grit Games” is to\*:

- 1) Create a shared opportunity during which scholars all experience some level of challenge and potential opportunity for demonstrating a growth mindset and grit.
- 2) Allow for scholars to showcase strength and struggle by tapping into a variety of challenging situations.

*\* Not to be shared in advance.*

## Introduction (5 min)

There will be 4 rotations in the “Grit Games”

- 1) Solving a puzzle (see Nine Dot Puzzle)
- 2) Singing in front of others
- 3) Stacking cups
- 4) Doing a trust fall

## Game Guidelines

- Divide scholars into four equal groups and assign them to their starting station.
- Have at least one facilitator per station lead the game.
- Each rotation should last 5 minutes.
- You can say that “everyone is expected to work independently. You may or may not be able to complete the activity, but try your best.” (no helping or cheating)
- You don’t want to frame the activity too much because the learning will come through the experience and the debrief. If they are not comfortable or “successful” in doing an activity, that is ok. Just let them do what they can as that will be part of the debrief as well.

## Rotations (20 minutes total – 5 minutes each)

### Rotation 1: Solving a puzzle

- Each scholar should get their own Nine Dot Puzzle and be given the full time to complete it.
- Encourage silence and concentration during the activity.
- Don’t help or give any clues.

### Rotation 2: Singing in front of others

- Scholars should go one at a time and be asked to sing a quick song in front of their rotation group.
- Songs could be simple and something everyone knows such as “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.” Come up with a list of 3 songs that they can choose from.

### Rotation 3: Stacking Cups

- Each scholar should have a set of 21 cups that they must stack with only one hand. Start with all cups in one stack and have them take them one by one with only one hand and place them in a pyramid as follows. Allow each scholar to take 1 minute to complete.
- You can have all scholars compete at the same time if you have enough cups or have them go one by one or in small groups within the 5 minute rotation limit. (If you have 5 scholars in one group, they can go one after the other.)



#### Rotation 4: Trust Fall

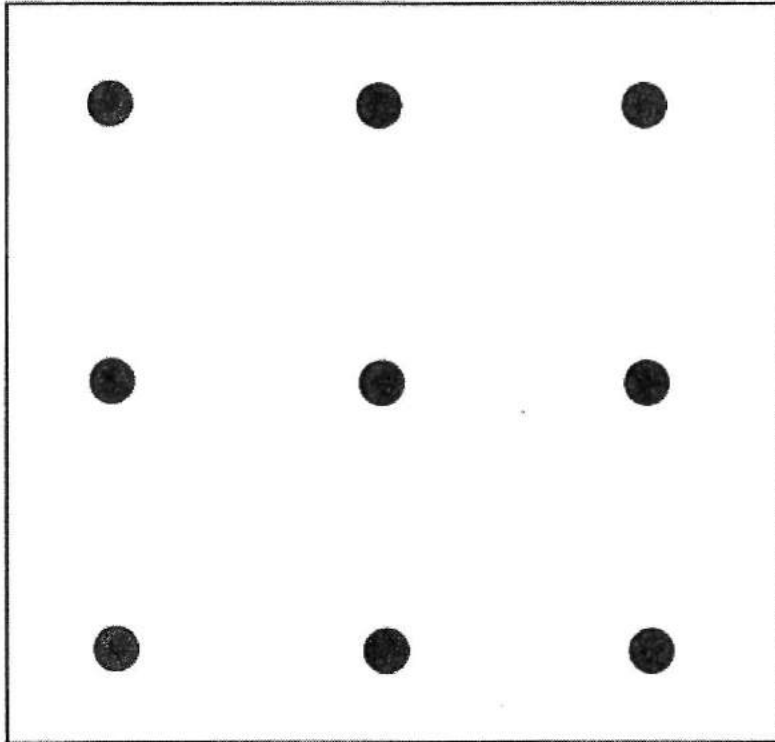
- Pair scholars up and let them know they will be participating in a trust fall. Keep in mind scholars comfort level with touching. Consider having counselors step in as a partner as necessary.
- You can have everyone stand in two lines or have them pair off around the space.
- First, ask the person who will fall to stand with their eyes shut and their hands folded across their chest.
- Then, position the person who will catch the faller – the spotter – behind the faller. The spotter must be close enough to catch the faller, but far enough away that the faller has adequate falling space.
- Instruct the faller to keep their body straight and stiff and to lean back on their heels, allowing themselves to fall into the arms of the spotter or against their hands.
- Instruct the spotter to put one foot in front of the other and put their hands out in front of them – to create a strong catching stance.
- After one person goes, they should switch half-way through.
- As they get more comfortable, they can try different distances – within reason!
- To be safe and model trust, have two counselors demonstrate first. Keep an eye on the distances between scholars.

#### **Debrief (10 min)**

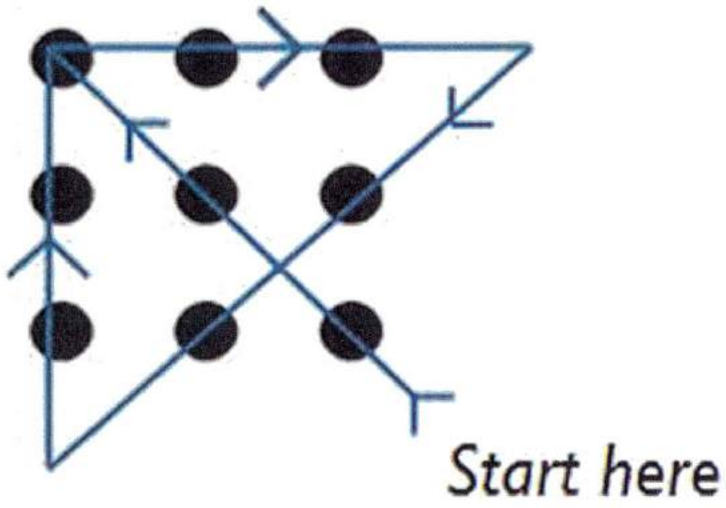
- How many people were able to successfully complete at least one activity?
- Who thought the “Puzzle solving” rotation was easy? Who thought it was hard? (Go through each one and ask for a show of hands. Note the variation in people’s experiences. Or note if there is one that was hard for everyone.)
- How did you feel when you were attempting the “hard” activity?
- For those of you who were not able to complete it, did you keep trying? Why/why not?
- For those of you who were able to complete it, why do you think you were successful?
- Can anyone give an example of when they noticed themselves having a fixed mindset? A growth mindset?
- Did you see anyone display grit during one of the activities? What did that look like?

## The Nine Dot Puzzle

Below are nine dots arranged in a set of three rows. Your challenge is to draw four straight lines which go through the middle of all of the dots without taking the pencil off the paper. If you were using a pencil, you must start from any position and draw the lines one after the other without taking your pencil off the page. Each line starts where the last line finishes.



# Nine Dot Puzzle Solution



## “Change that Babble!”

### Directions

- Divide scholars into small groups of 3-4 scholars each
- Provide each group with a sheet of ‘Fixed Mindset Sayings,’ and post its.
- Together, scholars must rewrite phrases on the post its and paste them over the sayings on the ‘Fixed Mindset sheet.’ The new babble phrases would be ‘growth mindset’ phrases.

Fixed Mindset Phrase	Sample ‘Growth Mindset’ Rephrase
A. Doing that was pointless	<i>What can I learn from that experience?</i>
B. I can’t make this any better	<i>What can I change or add to make this better?</i>
C. I made a mistake	<i>This mistake will help me learn more</i>
D. She’s so smart. I will never be that smart.	<i>I’m going to figure out how she does it so I can try it too</i>
E. I am not a sports person	<i>I haven’t trained in sports enough.</i>
F. I will never be able to ask her out. I’m terrible at those things!	<i>I need to practice on how to ask her out so I can gain confidence</i>
G. I failed a class.	<i>What can I do differently to get a better grade?</i>
H. I am just not smart. I can’t go to college.	<i>I need to train my brain to get better prepared for college.</i>
I. I have a fixed mindset. I will never be able to change that.	<i>We can all re-train our brains!</i>
J. I did that all wrong!	<i>What do I need to do differently to make this right?</i>
K. This is too hard. I can’t do it.	<i>Let me try something different this time</i>
L. I will never be as good as her/him at that.	<i>I need to have more practice in that.</i>
M. I’m just not good at this.	<i>This is going to take some time and effort. I will try again.</i>
N. I give up	<i>What can I do differently to get better at this?</i>

**Change that Babble, Donald!**



**Directions:** Donald Duck has a fixed mindset. Choose 5 of his sayings and turn him into a Donald Duck with a 'growth mindset'!

**A** Doing that was pointless.

**B** I can't make this any better.

**C** I made a mistake.

**D** She's so smart. I will never be that smart.

**E** I am not a sports person.

**F** I will never be able to ask her out. I'm terrible at those things!

**G** I failed a class.

**H** I am just not smart. I can't go to college.

**I** I have a fixed mindset. I will never be able to change that.

**J** I did that all wrong!

**K** This is too hard. I can't do it.

**L** I will never be as good as her/him at that.

**M** I'm just not good at this.

**N** I give up.

## Rock Activity

This is a great activity for groups that have been able to create a safe space and for whom deepening relationships (not just building them) is a priority.

### Small Groups (20 min)

- Before dividing into small groups, remind scholars that keeping a safe space is crucial during the following activity as we will be sharing things that are personal to each of us. Ask for scholar input about what that should look like.
- Divide scholars into smaller groups (6-8) and give each scholar and adult one rock
- In each small group, intro the activity:
  - Each of us is made up of all of our experiences – challenges, accomplishments, joys, and sorrows.
  - We are each holding a rock in our hands that represents a “hard” moment/time in our lives. If you squeeze that rock, you feel it firmly in your hand, just like if you think about that time, you remember it.
  - As we each go around the circle, to the extent you feel comfortable, share with the group a hard moment in your life. As each person shares, place your rock inside this container.
- Have at least one counselor go first to model and help break the ice. It would be good to have counselors share a variety of experiences that model different challenges for the scholars: learning something new, finishing grad school, something challenging happening in your life, going through a difficult transition, etc. Have each person place their rock inside the smaller container (each group should have their own) as they say their challenge.
- Acknowledge everyone for sharing. Then, go around again and have everyone share how that moment changed them, made them stronger, how they learned from it. After you give the basic explanation, go first to demonstrate.
  - As you each share, you will pour a bit of water into the container.
  - You see how this water flows over the rocks. That is like how we are as people, we adapt and grow and change based on our experiences, including the challenges.
  - Like we have learned about having a growth mindset, learning comes from challenge. These challenges are a part of us; they help us learn and grow and become stronger.
  - Like water that flows, we continue to change and define who we are as we get older.

### Large Group (10 min)

- Bring everyone back together once every group has done both circles. Have a large container placed in the center of the room and have everyone sit around it. Have a representative from each group bring their smaller container of rocks to the middle of the room. Show the scholars the large container in the center of the room and explain:
  - We all just shared in our small groups something challenging we have been through and how we learned and grew from that experience.
  - You may not have heard everyone’s experiences but if you look at each of the small containers, you can see that we all have rocks in our lives.
  - Now I am going to place all of these rocks together in this one large container to represent our whole family.
- Pour rocks and water into the large container... gently.
- What have you learned about your fellow scholars? What strengths have they shown today?
- Do you have any new insights about grit and growth mindset based on the activities we did?



## Step Forward

This is a great activity for groups that have been able to create a safe space and for whom deepening relationships (not just building them) is a priority.

It is important to help create a safe space for scholars to feel comfortable enough to step forward and discuss their experience. Remind scholars that we are here to support one another. Ask scholars to come up with classroom norms that would help create an environment that feels safe and welcoming when sharing experiences. Write scholars' responses on the board.

A counselor will read a statement and ask scholars who identify with that statement to step forward. Remind scholars that being honest is a greatly valued quality, especially when being in a safe space. Tell scholars that sometimes being the only one or a few who identify with a statement demonstrates courage. As statements get read, if and when appropriate, have scholars volunteer to share their story in relation to the statement (as time allows). When appropriate have scholars look and acknowledge others who have experienced same statement. Have scholars step back as new statement gets read.

See **"Step Forward Prompts"** on the next page.

**Debrief:** Thank scholars for sharing and being openly honest. Ask scholars:

- Why do you think we did this activity?
- What made this activity difficult, if at all?
- Encourage scholars to make connections between the statements and the video they saw. (*"Give me a few examples of statements that were mentioned that you think showed perseverance? Give me a few examples of statements that you think showed resiliency? If you stepped forward for those statements do you think you have those qualities as well?"*)
- Acknowledge scholars for sharing. Invite scholars to acknowledge each other.

## Step Forward Prompts

- Step forward if you have made new friends this year
- Step forward if you are having a good school year so far
- Step forward if you enjoyed the way one or more of your teachers are teaching this year
- Step forward if you are struggling academically this year
- Step forward if you ever felt like quitting at anything
- Step forward if you actually quit that thing
- Step forward if you ever tried something and failed or were unsuccessful at it once
- Step forward if you ever tried something and failed or were unsuccessful at it multiple times
- Step forward if you ever felt like quitting but kept going and trying"
- Step forward if you faced a challenge or obstacle when learning or trying to accomplish something
- Step forward if someone has ever told you to quit because you would never be able to do it
- Step forward if you stopped trying because of what someone said
- Step forward if you continued trying to prove someone wrong
- Step forward if you have ever succeeded at something
- Step forward if you succeeded at something on the first try
- Step forward if you succeeded at something on the second, third or more tries
- Step forward if you have people who support you when you are getting ready to give up
- Step forward if you ever helped support someone who was ready to give up
- Step forward if you have things you do or say to yourself to keep yourself going

# Grit and Growth Mindset Interview Project

This activity was designed to be broken up into smaller parts and incorporated over several workshops, however, you could collapse all of the activities into one day.

## Project Goals

- You all have your own stories and moments of challenges and successes. There have probably been times in your life when you demonstrated grit and/or a growth mindset.
- We hope that after this project you will be even more likely to use this part of your brain in the future to help you achieve your goals.
- Through this interview project, you will reflect on your own experience and learn about the experiences of others.

## Introduction to Interview Project (10 min)

Share the goals of the project. “You all have your own stories and moments of challenges and successes. There have probably been times in your life when you demonstrated grit and/or a growth mindset. And we hope that after this project you will be even more likely to use this part of your brain in the future to help you achieve your goals. Through this interview project, you will reflect on your own experience and learn about the experiences of others.”

Distribute “Got Grit” handout to each scholar. Review the interview project and its components. Note the page with the visual representation of the interview in a magazine layout format. Scholars will be completing (and recording if possible) their interviews and creating a magazine layout of their interview partner’s story.

## Listen to Recordings of Interviews (10 min)

- A teacher interviews her student about being homeless: <http://storycorps.org/?p=46901>
- A teacher interviews student about struggling in school: <http://storycorps.org/?p=10614>

Explain: “While these interviews are not necessarily in the exact format you might use, they show examples of someone sharing their story and how they demonstrated grit in their life. When you do your interviews next time, we encourage you to have a comfortable and relaxed conversation with your partner and really try to understand each other’s experiences.”

## Brainstorm Challenges (20 min)

Scholars can work individually while adults circle around or in groups with a facilitator. Have scholars review and answer the list of guiding questions to help them explore their own challenges (Step 1). If some scholars finish early, have them pair up with another scholar to help them brainstorm (they will be pairing up next time for interviews).

## Identify a Challenge (30 min)

Scholars can work individually while adults circle around or in groups with a facilitator. If some scholars finish early, have them pair up with another scholar to help them brainstorm. Scholars will be focusing on pages 3, 4, and the first part of 5 (Step 2 but they can go on to Step 3 if they have time). Some scholars

may have already spent time on parts 1 and 2 at the last workshop, so be prepared for scholars to be at different places in their readiness. You can have scholars help each other if they are done or start going ahead. At the very least, they should all have identified a challenge today.

### **Identify Grit and Outcome**

For those scholars who have already identified a challenge, they can continue to complete the handout: pages 5 and 6 (Steps 2-4). They can select a partner if they have time to continue or it might be better to wait until the next session when they can be sure their partner will be there to complete an interview.

### **Select Partners and Begin Interviews**

Try to match scholars based on working with someone they do not know very well. Spread scholars out so they do not hear each other while interviewing. Scholars should write down their partner's responses as they go. And keep in mind quotes that stand out during the interview. Scholars do not have to record their interviews but encourage them to do so. Let them know we will be emailing them to a secure, private account for just their grade.

### **Complete Interviews**

Spread out if possible so they do not disrupt each other while interviewing. Help both partners complete the first sheet before starting to record – this will help guide what they say when they start recording (Step 5-6). Scholars doing the interview are to take notes on their partner's responses (In the supplemental packet, or their own notepad). Remind them to write down any exact quotes they like from their partner (1-2 quotes if possible). Repeat with the new partner.

### **Complete 'Zine Insert**

If there is time, scholars can work on creating their partner's magazine inserts. Insert will be made ABOUT THEIR PARTNER's responses, not their own.

#### *Expectations:*

- Describe your partner's *Challenge*
- Describe your partner's *Grit*
- Describe your partner's *Outcome*
- Include *two quotes* from your partner
- Be creative and enjoy!

#### Scholars can:

- Write questions and answers throughout, *or* summarize the information in their own words for each section. Include scholar quotes if possible!
- They can paste in various magazine cut outs or add any other drawings or designs.