



Lesson 18: Changing Your Mindset

This lesson is designed to help students develop strong study skills and be more aware of their productivity and the factors that impact this.

Level: Pre-intermediate +

Time: 60 minutes

How to use this lesson:

This lesson is about building self-awareness and encourages students to think about themselves, what motivates them and how this links to good study skills.

This lesson can be done in class but if you are short of time, parts of the lesson can be done at home as a written exercise. Try to allow time in class for students to discuss the different exercises. This will give them useful practice with asking and answering questions, as well as an opportunity to use the lesson vocabulary

Procedure:

Lead-in – 15-20 minutes

- Write the following words on the white board:

goals

setbacks

obstacles

not quit

persevere

achieve

(Explain any words students may not be familiar with.)

- Ask students in pairs/groups to discuss “Which words are positive? Which words are negative? Why?” and ask them to complete the table.

Have the groups feed back on which words they put in which section and why.

- Write the following sentence on the board:

Why do some people _____ their _____, **not quit** and _____ despite the _____ and _____ they face?

- Ask the students to work out where the words fit in the sentence (an example has already been completed).

Once students have tried to complete the sentence themselves, reveal the “answer” (completed sentence) so they can check their answers.

Why do some people **achieve** their **goals**, **not quit** and **persevere** despite the **setbacks** and **obstacles** they face?

Get students to brainstorm all the reasons why they think this sentence is true. Go through the list clarifying or expanding on any vocabulary that students produce.

They have a “growth mindset”! (write growth mindset on the board)

Try to help students to link back some of what was elicited in answer to why the sentence is true to the concept of “growth mindset”

Then write next to “growth mindset” the words “fixed mindset” and elicit from students what this might mean and how this might influence their study skills.



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Exercise 1 – 20 minutes

Provide the handout on growth mindset and allow students to read this individually. If you want you can pre-teach some of the vocabulary you think may not be familiar to your students:

Mindset is a simple idea discovered by world-renowned Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck in decades of research on achievement and success – a simple idea that makes all the difference.

In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success – without effort. They're wrong.

In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work – brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. Virtually all great people have had these qualities.

Fostering a growth mindset creates motivation and productivity in the worlds of business, education, and sports. It enhances relationships.

Then split students into small groups and ask them to discuss the following:

- Do you agree that some people have fixed mindsets? Why? Why not?
- What sort of skills would someone with a growth mindset have?
- How would having a growth mindset influence your productivity?

Do some popcorn style feedback – spend longer if this discussion creates more interaction and exchange of opinions.

Exercise 2 – 15 – 20 minutes

FIXED vs. GROWTH MINDSET

Read each sentence below and then circle the number that shows how much you agree with it. There are no right or wrong answers.

A. Your intelligence is something about you that you can't change very much.

1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Mostly Agree	4 Mostly disagree	5 Disagree	6 Strongly Disagree
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B. You can learn new things, but you can't really change your basic intelligence.

1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Mostly Agree	4 Mostly disagree	5 Disagree	6 Strongly Disagree
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"In the fixed mindset, people believe that their talents and abilities are fixed traits. They have a certain amount and that's that; nothing can be done to change it. Many years of research have now shown that when people adopt the fixed mindset, it can limit their success. They become over-concerned with proving their talents and abilities, hiding deficiencies (weaknesses), and reacting defensively to mistakes or setbacks-because deficiencies and mistakes suggest a permanent lack of talent or ability. People in this mindset will actually pass up important opportunities to learn and grow if there is a risk of other people learning their weaknesses."

What is the fixed mindset? What kinds of things would a person with a fixed mindset do or not do? (Get students to jot down their ideas – students to do this in pairs).



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"In the growth mindset, people believe that their talents and abilities can be developed through passion, education, and persistence. For them, it's not about looking smart or grooming their image. It's about a commitment to learning—taking informed risks and learning from the results, surrounding yourself with people who will challenge you to grow, looking frankly at your deficiencies and seeking to remedy them. Most great business leaders have had this mindset, because building and maintaining excellent organizations in the face of constant change requires it."

What is the growth mindset? What kinds of things would a person with a growth mindset do or not do? (Get students to jot down their ideas).

C. How would Carol Dweck respond to the following statements?

- a. Your intelligence is something about you that you can't change very much.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly agree	Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

- b. You can learn new things, but you can't really change your basic intelligence.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly agree	Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Now ask students:

D. How did the passage change your beliefs on what determines your own intelligence?

Exercise 3 – wrap up

Get students to come up with 3 things that they would now consider doing in relation to their study skills to foster a growth mindset.



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Lead-in

Which words do you think have a positive meaning and which do you think have a negative meaning? Why?

Positive Words	because....	Negative words	because...

Complete the sentence using the positive/negative words from above.

Why do some people _____ their _____, **not quit** and _____ despite the _____ and _____ they face?

Exercise 1

Read the following article and think about the three questions below.

Mindset is a simple idea discovered by world-renowned Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck in decades of research on achievement and success – a simple idea that makes all the difference.

In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success – without effort. They're wrong.

In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work – brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. Virtually all great people have had these qualities.

Fostering a growth mindset creates motivation and productivity in the worlds of business, education, and sports. It enhances relationships.

- a) Do you agree that some people have fixed mindsets? Why? Why not?

- b) What sort of skills would someone with a growth mindset have?

- c) How would having a growth mindset influence your productivity?



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Exercise 2

FIXED vs. GROWTH MINDSET

Read each sentence below and then circle the one number that shows how much you agree with it. There are no right or wrong answers.

A. Your intelligence is something about you that you can't change very much.

1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Mostly Agree	4 Mostly disagree	5 Disagree	6 Strongly Disagree
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B. You can learn new things, but you can't really change your basic intelligence.

1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Mostly Agree	4 Mostly disagree	5 Disagree	6 Strongly Disagree
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Now read the statements below

"In the fixed mindset, people believe that their talents and abilities are fixed traits. They have a certain amount and that's that; nothing can be done to change it. Many years of research have now shown that when people adopt the fixed mindset, it can limit their success. They become over-concerned with proving their talents and abilities, hiding deficiencies (weaknesses), and reacting defensively to mistakes or setbacks-because deficiencies and mistakes suggest a permanent lack of talent or ability. People in this mindset will actually pass up important opportunities to learn and grow if there is a risk of other people learning their weaknesses."

What is the fixed mindset? What kinds of things would a person with a fixed mindset do or not do?

"In the growth mindset, people believe that their talents and abilities can be developed through passion, education, and persistence. For them, it's not about looking smart or grooming their image. It's about a commitment to learning-taking informed risks and learning from the results, surrounding yourself with people who will challenge you to grow, looking frankly at your deficiencies and seeking to remedy them. Most great business leaders have had this mindset, because building and maintaining excellent organizations in the face of constant change requires it."

What is the growth mindset? What kinds of things would a person with a growth mindset do or not do?



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C. How would Carol Dweck respond to the following statements?

a. Your intelligence is something about you that you can't change very much.

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b. You can learn new things, but you can't really change your basic intelligence.

1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Mostly Agree	4 Mostly disagree	5 Disagree	6 Strongly Disagree
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D. How did the passage change your beliefs on what determines your own intelligence?

Exercise 3

Which 3 things would you now consider doing (study skills) to foster a growth mindset?

1

2

3
